

Burma, it is always *Ponent* or W.; and in that from Peking to Zayton in Fo-kien, the port of embarkation for India, it is *Sceloc* or S.E. The line of bearings in which he deviates most widely from truth is that of the cities on the Arabian Coast from Aden to Hormuz, which he makes to run steadily *vers Maistre* or N.W., a conception which it has not been very easy to realise on the map.\*

71. In the early part of the Book we are told that Marco acquired several of the languages current in the Mongol Empire, and no less than four written characters. We have discussed what these are likely to have been (i. pp. 28-29), and have given a decided opinion that Chinese was not one of them. Besides intrinsic improbability, and positive indications of Marco's ignorance of Chinese, in no respect is his book so defective as in regard to Chinese manners and peculiarities. The Great Wall is never mentioned, though we have shown reason for believing that it was in his mind when one passage of his book was dictated.† The use of Tea, though he travelled through the

Singular omissions of Polo in regard to China; Historical inaccuracies.

\* The map, perhaps, gives too favourable an idea of Marco's geographical conceptions. For in such a construction much has to be supplied for which there are no data, and that is apt to take mould from modern knowledge. Just as in the book illustrations of ninety years ago we find that Princesses of Abyssinia, damsels of Otaheite, and Beauties of Mary Stuart's Court have all somehow a savour of the high waists, low foreheads, and tight garments of 1810.

We are told that Prince Pedro of Portugal in 1426 received from the Signory of Venice a map which was supposed to be either an original or a copy of one by Marco Polo's own hand. (*Major's P. Henry*, p. 62.) There is no evidence to justify any absolute expression of disbelief; and if any map-maker with the spirit of the author of the Carta Catalana then dwelt in Venice, Polo certainly could not have gone to his grave uncatechised. But I should suspect the map to have been a copy of the old one that existed in the Sala dello Scudo of the Ducal Palace.

The maps now to be seen painted on the walls of that Hall, and on which Polo's route is marked, are not of any great interest. But in the middle of the 15th century there was an old *Descriptio Orbis sive Mappamundus* in the Hall, and when the apartment was renewed in 1459 a decree of the Senate ordered that such a map should be repainted on the new walls. This also perished by a fire in 1483. On the motion of Ramusio, in the next century, four new maps were painted. These had become dingy and ragged, when, in 1762, the Doge Marco Foscarini caused them to be renewed by the painter Francesco Grisellini. He professed to have adhered closely to the old maps, but he certainly did not, as Morelli testifies. Eastern Asia looks as if based on a work of Ramusio's age, but Western Asia is of undoubtedly modern character. (See *Operetti di Iacopo Morelli*, Ven. 1820, I. 299.)

† "Humboldt confirms the opinion I have more than once expressed that too much must not be inferred from the silence of authors. He adduces three important and perfectly undeniable matters of fact, as to which no evidence is to be found where it would be most anticipated: In the archives of Barcelona no trace of the triumphal