

YPRES, Abbot of St. Bertin, otherwise known as Friar John the Long, and himself a person of very high merit in the history of Travel, as a precursor of the Ramusios, Hakluyts and Purchases, for he collected together and translated (when needful) into French all of the most valuable works of Eastern Travel and Geography produced in the age immediately preceding his own.\* In his Chronicle the Abbot speaks at some length of the adventures of the Polo Family, concluding with a passage to which we have already had occasion to refer :

“And so Messers Nicolaus and Maffeus, with certain Tartars, were sent a second time to these parts ; but Marcus Pauli was retained by the Emperor and employed in his military service, abiding with him for a space of 27 years. And the Cham, on account of his ability despatched him upon affairs of his to various parts of Tartary and India and the Islands, on which journeys he beheld many of the marvels of those regions. And concerning these he afterwards composed a book in the French vernacular, which said Book of Marvels, with others of the same kind, we do possess.” (*Thesaur. Nov. Anecdot.* III. 747.)

78. There is, however, a notable work which is ascribed to a rather early date in the 14th century, and which, though it contains no reference to Polo by name, shows a thorough acquaintance with his book, and borrows themes largely from it. This is the poetical Romance of Bauduin de Sebourc, an exceedingly clever and vivacious production, partaking largely of that bantering, half-mocking spirit which is, I believe, characteristic of many of the

Curious borrowings from Polo in the Romance of Bauduin de Sebourc.

\* A splendid example of Abbot John's Collection is the *Livre des Merveilles* of the Great French Library (No. 18 in our *App. F.*). This contains Polo, Odoric, William of Boldensel, the Book of the Estate of the Great Kaan by the Archbishop of Soltania, Maundevile, Hayton, and Ricold of Montecroce, of which all but Polo and Maundevile are French versions by this excellent Long John. A list of the Polo miniatures is given in *App. F.* of this Edition, p. 527.

It is a question for which there is sufficient ground, whether the Persian Historians Rashiduddin and Wassáf, one or other or both, did not derive certain information that appears in their histories, from Marco Polo personally, he having spent many months in Persia, and at the Court of Tabriz, when either or both may have been there. Such passages as that about the Cotton-trees of Guzerat (vol. ii. p. 393, and note), those about the horse trade with Maabar (id. p. 340, and note), about the brother-kings of that country (id. p. 331), about the naked savages of Necuveram (id. p. 306), about the wild people of Sumatra calling themselves subjects of the Great Kaan (id. pp. 285, 292, 293, 299), have so strong a resemblance to parallel passages in one or both of the above historians, as given in the first and third volumes of Elliot, that the probability, at least, of the Persian writers having derived their information from Polo might be fairly maintained.