

want of access to some of his most important authorities, such as Brosset's *History of Georgia*, and its appendices.

It will be well, before going further, to give the essential parts of the passage in the History of Bishop Otto of Freisingen (referred to in vol i. p. 229), which contains the first allusion to a personage styled Prester John :

"We saw also there [at Rome in 1145] the afore-mentioned Bishop of Gabala, from Syria. . . . We heard him bewailing with tears the peril of the Church beyond-sea since the capture of Edessa, and uttering his intention on that account to cross the Alps and seek aid from the King of the Romans and the King of the Franks. He was also telling us how, not many years before, one JOHN, KING and PRIEST, who dwells in the extreme Orient beyond Persia and Armenia, and is (with his people) a Christian, but a Nestorian, had waged war against the brother Kings of the Persians and Medes who are called the Samiards, and had captured Ecbatana, of which we have spoken above, the seat of their dominion. The said Kings having met him with their forces made up of Persians, Medes, and Assyrians, the battle had been maintained for 3 days, either side preferring death to flight. But at last PRESBYTER JOHN (for so they are wont to style him), having routed the Persians, came forth the victor from a most sanguinary battle. After this victory (he went on to say) the aforesaid John was advancing to fight in aid of the Church at Jerusalem ; but when he arrived at the Tigris, and found there no possible means of transport for his army, he turned northward, as he had heard that the river in that quarter was frozen over in winter-time. Halting there for some years* in expectation of a frost, which never came, owing to the mildness of the season, he lost many of his people through the unaccustomed climate, and was obliged to return homewards. This personage is said to be of the ancient race of those Magi who are mentioned in the Gospel, and to rule the same nations that they did, and to have such glory and wealth that he uses (they say) only an emerald sceptre. It was (they say) from his being fired by the example of his fathers, who came to adore Christ in the cradle, that he was proposing to go to Jerusalem, when he was prevented by the cause already alleged."

Professor Bruun will not accept Oppert's explanation, which identifies this King and Priest with the Gur-Khan of Karacathay, for whose profession of Christianity there is indeed (as has been indicated—*supra*) no real evidence ; who could not be said to have made an attack upon any pair of brother Kings of the Persians and the Medes, nor to have captured Ecbatana (a city, whatever its identity, of Media) ; who could never have had any intention of coming to Jerusalem ; and whose geographical position in no way suggested the mention of Armenia.

Professor Bruun thinks he finds a warrior much better answering to the indications in the Georgian prince John Orbelian, the general-in-chief under several successive Kings of Georgia in that age.

At the time when the Gur-Khan defeated Sanjar the real brothers of the latter had been long dead ; Sanjar had withdrawn from interference with the affairs of Western Persia ; and Hamadán (if this is to be regarded as Ecbatana) was no residence of his. But it was the residence of Sanjar's nephew Mas'úd, in whose hands was now the dominion of Western Persia ; whilst Mas'úd's nephew, Dáúd, held Media, *i.e.* Azerbeiján, Arrán, and Armenia. It is in these two princes that Professor Bruun sees the *Samiardi fratres* of the German chronicler.

Again the expression "extreme Orient" is to be interpreted by local usage. And with the people of Little Armenia, through whom probably such intelligence reached the Bishop of Gabala, the expression the *East* signified specifically Great Armenia (which was then a part of the kingdom of Georgia and Abkhasia), as Dulaurier has stated.†

It is true that the Georgians were not really Nestorians, but followers of the Greek Church. It was the fact, however, that in general, the Armenians, whom the

* Sic : *per aliquot annos*, but an evident error.

† *J. As. sér. V. tom. xi. 449.*