

The Persian history of Wassáf thus exalts Kúblái : “ Although from the frontiers of this country (’Irák) to the Centre of Empire, the Focus of the Universe, the genial abode of the ever-Fortunate Emperor and Just Kaan, is a whole year’s journey, yet the stories that have been spread abroad, even in these parts, of his glorious deeds, his institutes, his decisions, his justice, the largeness and acuteness of his intellect, his correctness of judgment, his great powers of administration, from the mouths of credible witnesses, of well-known merchants and eminent travellers, are so surpassing, that one beam of his glories, one fraction of his great qualities, suffices to eclipse all that history tells of the Cæsars of Rome, of the Chosroes of Persia, of the Khagans of China, of the (Himyarite) Kails of Arabia, of the Tobbas of Yemen, and the Rajas of India, of the monarchs of the houses of Sassan and Búya, and of the Seljukian Sultans.” (*Hammer’s Wassaf*, orig. p. 37.)

Some remarks on Kúblái and his government by a Chinese author, in a more rational and discriminative tone, will be found below under ch. xxiii., note 2.

A curious Low-German MS. at Cologne, giving an account of the East, says of the “ Keyser von Kathagien—syn recht Name is der groisse *Hunt!*” (Magnus Canis, the Big Bow-wow as it were. See *Orient und Occident*, vol. i. p. 640.)

CHAPTER II.

CONCERNING THE REVOLT OF NAYAN, WHO WAS UNCLE TO THE GREAT KAAAN CUBLAY.

Now this Cublay Kaan is of the right Imperial lineage, being descended from Chinghis Kaan, the first sovereign of all the Tartars. And he is the sixth Lord in that succession, as I have already told you in this book. He came to the throne in the year of Christ, 1256, and the Empire fell to him because of his ability and valour and great worth, as was right and reason.¹ His brothers, indeed, and other kinsmen disputed his claim, but his it remained, both because maintained by his great valour, and because it was in law and right his, as being directly sprung of the Imperial line.

Up to the year of Christ now running, to wit 1298, he hath reigned two-and-forty years, and his age is about eighty-five, so that he must have been about forty-three years of age when he first came to the throne.² Before that time he had often been to the wars, and had shown himself a gallant soldier and an