

is worthy of notice;* it is a remark capable of application wherever the East and West come into habitual contact. Favourable opinions among the nations on their frontiers of Chinese dealing, as expressed to Wood and Burnes in Turkestan, and to Macleod and Richardson in Laos, have been quoted by me elsewhere in reference to the old classical reputation of the Seres for integrity. Indeed, Marco's whole account of the people here might pass for an expanded paraphrase of the Latin commonplaces regarding the Seres. Mr. Milne, a missionary for many years in China, stands up manfully against the wholesale disparagement of Chinese character (p. 401).

NOTE 9.—Semedo and Martini, in the 17th century, give a very similar account of the Lake Si-hu, the parties of pleasure frequenting it, and their gay barges. (*Semedo*, pp. 20-21; *Mart.* p. 9.) But here is a Chinese picture of the very thing described by Marco, under the Sung Dynasty: "When Yaou Shunming was Prefect of Hangchow, there was an old woman, who said she was formerly a singing-girl, and in the service of Tung-p'o Seen-sheng.† She related that her master, whenever he found a leisure day in spring, would invite friends to take their pleasure on the lake. They used to take an early meal on some agreeable spot, and, the repast over, a chief was chosen for the company of each barge, who called a number of dancing-girls to follow them to any place they chose. As the day waned a gong sounded to assemble all once more at 'Lake Prospect Chambers,' or at the 'Bamboo Pavilion,' or some place of the kind, where they amused themselves to the top of their bent, and then, at the first or second drum, before the evening market dispersed, returned home by candle-light. In the city, gentlemen and ladies assembled in crowds, lining the way to see the return of the thousand Knights. It must have been a brave spectacle of that time." (*Moule*, from the *Si-hu-Chi*, or "Topography of the West Lake.") It is evident, from what Mr. Moule says, that this book abounds in interesting illustration of these two chapters of Polo. Barges with paddle-wheels are alluded to.

NOTE 10.—Public carriages are still used in the great cities of the north, such as Peking. Possibly this is a revival. At one time carriages appear to have been much more general in China than they were afterwards, or are now. Semedo says they were abandoned in China just about the time that they were adopted in Europe, viz. in the 16th century. And this disuse seems to have been either cause or effect of the neglect of the roads, of which so high an account is given in old times. (*Semedo*; *N. and Q. Ch. and Jap.* I. 94.)

Deguignes describes the public carriages of Peking, as "shaped like a palanquin, but of a longer form, with a rounded top, lined outside and in with coarse blue cloth, and provided with black cushions" (I. 372). This corresponds with our author's description, and with a drawing by Alexander among his published sketches. The present Peking cab is evidently the same vehicle, but smaller.

NOTE 11.—The character of the King of Manzi here given corresponds to that which the Chinese histories assign to the Emperor Tu-Tsong, in whose time Kúblái commenced his enterprise against Southern China, but who died two years before the fall of the capital. He is described as given up to wine and women, and indifferent to all public business, which he committed to unworthy ministers. The following words, quoted by Mr. Moule from the *Hang-Chau Fu-Chi*, are like an echo of Marco's: "In those days the dynasty was holding on to a mere corner of the realm, hardly able to defend even that; and nevertheless all, high and low, devoted themselves to dress and ornament, to music and dancing on the lake and amongst the hills, with no idea of sympathy for the country." A garden called Tseu-king ("of many prospects") near the Tsing-po Gate, and a monastery west of the lake, near the Lingin, are mentioned as pleasure haunts of the Sung Kings.

* *Foreigner in Far Cathay*, pp. 158, 176.

† A famous poet and scholar of the 11th century.