

an embassy to China in 1427. These embassies were subsequently often repeated. The country, which lay 22 days' voyage west of *Kuli* (supposed Calicut, but perhaps Káyal), was devoid of grass or trees. (*Bretschneider, Med. Res.*, II. pp. 305-306.)

[Ma-huan (transl. by Phillips) writes (*J. R. A. S.*, April 1896): "In the nineteenth year of Yung-lo (1422) an Imperial Envoy, the eunuch Li, was sent from China to this country with a letter and presents to the King. On his arrival he was most honourably received, and was met by the king on landing and conducted by him to his palace."—H. C.]

NOTE 2.—The words describing the horses are (P.'s text): "*de bons destriers Arrabins et chevaux et grans roncins à ij selles.*" The meaning seems to be what I have expressed in the text, fit either for saddle or pack-saddle.

[*Roncins à deux selles.* Littré's great Dictionary supplies an apt illustration of this phrase. A contemporary *Eloge de Charles VII.* says: "*Jamais il chevauchoit mule ne haquenée, mais un bas cheval trotier entre deux selles*" (a cob?).]

In one application the *Deux selles* of the old riding-schools were the two styles of riding, called in Spanish *Montar á la Gineta* and *Montar á la Brida*. The latter stands for the old French style, with heavy bit and saddle, and long stirrups just reached by the toes; the former the Moorish style, with short stirrups and lighter bit. But the phrase would also seem to have meant *saddle and pack-saddle*. Thus Cobarruvias explains the phrase *Hombre de dos sillas*, "Conviene saber de la gineta y brida, *ser de silla y albarda* (pack-saddle), *servir de todo*," and we find the converse expression, *No ser para silla ni para albarda*, good for nothing.

But for an example of the exact phrase of the French text I am indebted to P. della Valle. Speaking of the Persian horses, he says: "Few of them are of any great height, and you seldom see thoroughbreds among them; probably because here they have no liking for such and don't seek to breed them. For the most part they are of that very useful style that we call horses for both saddles (*che noi chiamiamo da due selle*)," etc. (See *Cobarruvias*, under *Silla* and *Brida*; *Dicc. de la Lengua Castellana por la Real Academia Española*, under *Silla*, *Gineta*, *Brida*; *P. della Valle*, Let. XV. da Sciraz, § 3, vol. ii. p. 240.)

NOTE 3.—The supposed confusion between Adel and Aden does not affect this chapter.

The "Soldan of Aden" was the Sultan of Yemen, whose chief residence was at Ta'izz, North-East of Mokha. The prince reigning in Polo's day was Malik Muzaffar Shamsuddín Abul Mahasen Yusuf. His father, Malik Mansúr, a retainer of the Ayubite Dynasty, had been sent by Saladin as Wazir to Yemen, with his brother Malik Muazzam Turan Shah. After the death of the latter, and of his successor, the Wazir assumed the government and became the founder of a dynasty. Aden was the chief port of his dominions. It had been a seat of direct trade with China in the early centuries of Islam.

Ibn Batuta speaks of it thus correctly: "It is enclosed by mountains, and you can enter by one side only. It is a large town, but has neither corn nor trees, nor fresh water, except from reservoirs made to catch the rain-water; for other drinking water is at a great distance from the town. The Arabs often prevent the townspeople coming to fetch it until the latter have come to terms with them, and paid them a bribe in money or cloths. The heat at Aden is great. It is the port frequented by the people from India, and great ships come thither from Kunbáyat, Tána, Kaulam, Kálikút, Fandaráina, Sháliát, Manjarúr, Fákanúr, Hinaur, Sindábúr,\* etc. There are Indian merchants residing in the city, and Egyptian merchants as well."

The tanks of which the Moor speaks had been buried by débris; of late years they have been cleared and repaired. They are grand works. They are said to have been formerly 50 in number, with a capacity of 30 million gallons.

\* All ports of Western India: Pandarani, Shalia (near Calicut), Mangalore, Baccanore, Onore, Goa.