

therefore believed that the Franciscan Friar had been a companion to Mandeville, and plagiarized his diaries. Purchas would not reckon the Friar amongst his pilgrims, but entertained a very high opinion about his countryman.<sup>1</sup> ASTLEY says that after Marco Polo's time »we meet with no European traveller into Tartary for above three hundred years, excepting our Mandeville, who went thither fifty years after».<sup>2</sup> He does not believe at all in Odoric: »This is a most superficial Relation and full of Lies . . . In short, though he relates some Things of the Tartars and Mancis, which agree with Polo's Account; yet it seems plain, from the Names of Places and other Circumstances, that he never was in those Countries, but imposed on the Public the few Informations he had from others, mixed with the many Fictions of his own.»<sup>3</sup>

As a matter of fact Odoric was a simple but honourable man, and Mandeville a well-read and intelligent impostor. He has stolen every word in his narrative, except the description of the Sultan of Egypt and the life at his court. He has, in a most unscrupulous way, stolen whole passages, verbally, from Odoric, Haiton, Plano Carpini, and even from Pliny and other classics, as well as from many books of his own time. He never made the journey he describes.<sup>4</sup>

One place, however, he generously confesses not to have visited; the talk is of the first Persian kingdom which begins toward the east, toward the kingdom of Turkestan, and stretches toward the west, »unto the Ryvere of Phison, that is on of the 4 Ryveres, that comen out of Paradys», but: »of Paradys ne can not I speken properly: for I was not there . . .» So much is sure that in the middle of paradise, and at its highest place there is a well, »that casteth out the 4 Flodes, that rennen be dyverse Londes: of the whiche the first is clept Phison or Ganges, that is alle on; and it rennethe thorghe out Ynde or Emlak: in the whiche Ryvere ben manye precieuse Stones, and mochel of Lignu Aloes, and moche gravelle of Gold».

The Ganges water is in some places clear, in others troubled, in some places hot, in others cool. And no mortal man can approach Paradise; »and be the Ryveres may no man go; for the water rennethe so rudely and so sharply, because that it cometh down so outrageously from the highe places aboven . . .»<sup>5</sup>

Under such conditions it is clear that the wonderful, though brief observations Odoric brought back from Tibet would not be left alone by the noble knight, in

<sup>1</sup> Henri Cordier in Yule's Marco Polo, II, p. 602.

<sup>2</sup> A new General Collection of Voyages and Travels, London 1747, Vol. IV, p. 542.

<sup>3</sup> Op. cit. IV, p. 620.

<sup>4</sup> Untersuchungen über Johann von Mandeville und die Quellen seiner Reisebeschreibung. Von ALBERT BOVENSCHEN. Zeitschr. d. Gesellsch. f. Erdkunde zu Berlin. Band 23. Berlin 1888, p. 305. »Comme on le sait, Mandeville paraît devoir être l'ouvrage d'un habile géographe en chambre qui ne serait autre que le médecin Jean de Bourgogne ou Jean à la Barbe, d'après un passage d'un chroniqueur de Liège, Jean d'Outremeuse, découvert par le Dr. S. Bormans.» Cordier, T'oung pao, Vol. I, Leide 1890, p. 345.

<sup>5</sup> The Voiage and Travaile of Sir John Maundevile, Kt. Reprinted from the Edition of A. D. 1725. J. O. HALLIWELL. London 1883, p. 258 and 303 et seq.