

Chinese who has embraced Mohammedanism or speaks Arabic."

At the present time (1832 C. S. G. M.) no Arabian ships, as such, come to China; nor do any Chinese ships reach Calcutta, though they are frequently seen, and in considerable numbers, at Penang, at Bangkok, and in many of the ports of the Eastern Archipelago. The following is an abridged account of the course to China, as given by the first traveller.

"As for the places whence ships depart, and those also they touch at, many persons declare that the navigation is performed in the following order. Most of the Chinese ships take in their cargo at Siraf, where also they ship their goods which come from Bassorah, and other ports; and this they do, because in this sea, there are frequent storms and shoal water in many places. When ships have loaded at Siraf, they there water also; and from thence make sail for a place called Maskat, which is in the extremity of the Province of Oman, about two hundred leagues from Siraf. From Maskat ships take their departure for the Indies: and first they touch at Kaucammali; and from Maskat to this place, is a month's sail with the wind aft. Kaucammali is a frontier place, and the chief arsenal in the province of the same name; and here the Chinese ships put in and are in safety. Having watered at this last place, they begin to enter the Sea of Harkand: and having sailed through it, they touch at a place called Lajabalus, where the inhabitants understand not the Arabesque, or any other language in use with merchants. From this place, ships steer towards Calabar, the name of a place and a kingdom on the coast, to the right hand beyond India. In ten days after this, ships reach a place called Betuma, where they may water. It is worth the notice, that in all the islands and peninsulas of the Indies, they find water when they dig for it. In ten days from the last mentioned place, they arrive at Sonef; here is fresh water, and hence comes the aromatic wood. Having

watered at this place, it is ten days' passage to Sandarfulat, an island where is fresh water. Then they steer upon the Sea of Sanji, and so to the Gates of China; for so they call certain rocks and shoals in the sea, between which is a narrow strait, through which ships pass. It requires a month to sail from Sandarfulat to China, and it takes up eight whole days to steer clear of these rocks. When a ship has got through these Gates, she, with a tide of flood, goes into a fresh water gulf, and drops anchor in the chief port of China, which is that of Canfu; and here they have fresh water, both from springs and rivers, as they have also in most of the other ports of China."

Of the situation of foreign residents in China, the first traveller says: "When merchants enter China by sea, the Chinese seize on their cargo, and convey it to warehouses; and so put a stop to their business for six months, till the last merchantman be arrived. Then they take three in ten, or 30 per cent. of each commodity, and return the rest to the merchant. If the Emperor wants any particular thing, his officers have a right to take it preferably to any other person whatsoever; and paying for it to the utmost penny it is valued at, they dispatch this business immediately, and without the least injustice."

Referring again to the question,—At what time, and in what way did the Mohammedans first enter China?—we quote from Renaudot: "It is the belief of many that the Mohammedans went first to China by land, and that the track pursued by some modern travellers, ought to point out to us the road the ancients may have taken. Marco Polo, say they, went into China by the way of Tartary; Mandeville almost trod in his very footsteps; Jenghiz Khan, the first emperor of the Moguls, conquered a part of China, and marched thereto from the ancient Mogulistan or Turkestan; we have a Persian account of an embassy from a Tartar prince to the emperor of China, and this ambassador went also by land; at the beginning of this century, Benet Goetz, a Jesuit, travelled also from

the Indies to Peking; the fathers Grueber and Orville did, a few years ago, perform the same journey the Muscovite ambassadors do when they go to China, and they even assure us, this route which is not always the same, is pretty well frequented by the caravans of the merchants of upper Asia. These different routes are pricked down in the map of Cathay, published by Kircher in his *China Illustrata*. All these instances sufficiently prove, that we may go to China by land, and there is no doubt of it; but the way held by a small number of travellers does not seem to prove that, for certain, the same was held by the caravans and merchants; which ought to have been the case, for such a number of Mohammedans to get into China that way. For, according to the old method of travelling in caravans, it was a very hard matter for the merchants of Persia and Mesopotamia to go thither by land, unless the track was well frequented; and it seems not only certain that it was far from being so, but also, that it was considered only as a by-way—a short cut.” To put this matter in the clearest light possible, Renaudot stops here to “survey the extent” of the Mohammedan empire, at the time under consideration; and then says: “But this way by land, whether by Samarcand, by Cabul, by Gaznah, or by Cashgar, was very impracticable in the days of our Arabs, exclusive of the natural inconveniences of the roads they were to travel. All the trade of the East was then in the hands of the merchants of Persia, Basorah, and of the coast quite down to the Red Sea, which was the center of the Egyptian trade, and partly of the Mediterranean. They traded to the Indies by land, in many places, and particularly at Cabul. The products of Arabia, Egypt, Persia and the adjacent provinces, they exchanged with the merchants of Turkestan and the Indies, for musk, precious stones, crystals, spices and drugs; it was almost impossible for them to go farther, or to drive a trade quite home to China, because of the desert—a dangerous track; and still more because of the