

## The Travels of Sir John Mandeville

### *The version of the Cotton Manuscript in modern spelling*

#### The Prologue

For as much as the land beyond the sea, that is to say the Holy Land, that men call the Land of Promission or of Behest, passing all other lands, is the most worthy land, most excellent, and lady and sovereign of all other lands, and is blessed and hallowed of the precious body and blood of our Lord Jesu Christ ; in the which land it liked him to take flesh and blood of the Virgin Mary, to environ that holy land with his blessed feet ; and there he would of his blessedness enombre him in the said blessed and glorious Virgin Mary, and become man, and work many miracles, and preach and teach the faith and the law of Christian men unto his children ; and there it liked him to suffer many reprovings and scorns for us ; and he that was king of heaven, of air, of earth, of sea and of all things that be contained in them, would all only be clept king of that land, when he said. *Rex sum Judeorum*, that is to say, ‘ I am King of Jews’ ; and that land he chose before all other lands, as the best and most worthy land, and the most virtuous land of all the world : for it is the heart and the midst of all the world, witnessing the philosopher, that saith thus, *Virtus rerum in medio consistit*, that is to say, ‘ The virtue of things is in the midst’ ; and in that land he would lead his life, and suffer passion and death of Jews, for us, to buy and to deliver us from pains of hell, and from death without end ; the which was ordained for us, for the sin of our forme-father Adam, and for our own sins also ; for as for himself, he had no evil deserved : for he thought never evil ne did evil : and he that was king of glory and of joy, might best in that place suffer death ; because he chose in that land rather than in any other, there to suffer his passion and his death. For he that will publish anything to make it-openly known, he will make it to be cried and pronounced in the middle place of a town ; so that the thing that is proclaimed and pronounced, may evenly stretch to all parts : right so, he that was former of all the world, would suffer for us at Jerusalem, that is the midst of the world ; to that end and intent, that his passion and his death, that was published there, might be known evenly to all parts of the world.

See now, how dear he bought man, that he made after his own image, and how dear he again-bought us, for the great love that he had to us, and we never deserved it to him. For more precious chattel ne greater ransom ne might he put for us, than his blessed body, his precious blood, and his holy life, that he thralled for us ; and all he offered for us that never did sin.

Ah dear God ! What love had he to us his subjects, when he that never trespassed, would for trespassers suffer death ! Right well ought us for to love and worship, to dread and serve such a Lord ; and to worship and praise such an holy land, that brought forth such fruit, through the which every man is saved, but it be his own default. Well may that land be called delectable and a fructuous land, that was be-bled and moisted with the precious blood of our Lord Jesu Christ ; the which is the same land that our Lord behight us in heritage. And in that land he would die, as seised, to leave it to us, his children.

Wherefore every good Christian man, that is of power, and hath whereof, should pain him with all his strength for to conquer our right heritage, and chase out all the misbelieving men. For we be clept Christian men, after Christ our Father. And if we be right children of Christ, we ought for to challenge the heritage, that our Father left us, and do it out of heathen men’s hands. But now pride, covetise, and envy have so inflamed the hearts of lords of the world, that they are more busy for to dis-herit their neighbours, more than for to challenge or to conquer their right heritage before-said. And the common people, that would put their bodies and

their chattels, to conquer our heritage, they may not do it without the lords. For assembly of people without a chieftain, or a chief lord, is as a flock of sheep without a shepherd ; the which departeth and disperleth and wit never whither to go. But would God, that the temporal lords and all worldly lords were at good accord, and with the common people would take this holy voyage over the sea ! Then I trow \will, that within a little time, our right heritage before-said should be reconciled and put in the hands of the right heirs of Jesu Christ.

And, for as much as it is long time passed, that there was no general passage ne voyage over the sea ; and many men desire for to hear speak of the Holy Land, and have thereof great solace and comfort ; I, John Mandeville, Knight, albeit be not worthy, that was born in England, in the town of St. Albans, and passed the sea in the year of our Lord Jesu Christ, 1322, in the day of St. Michael ; and hitherto have been long time over the sea, and have seen and gone through many diverse lands, and many provinces and kingdoms and isles and have passed throughout Turkey, Armenia the little and the great ; through Tartary, Persia, Syria, Arabia, Egypt the high and the low ; through Lybia, Chaldea, and a great part of Ethiopia ; through Amazonia, Ind the less and the more, a great part ; and throughout many other Isles, that be about Ind ; where dwell many diverse folks, and of diverse manners and laws, and of diverse shapes of men. Of which lands and isles I shall speak more plainly hereafter ; and I shall devise you of some part of things that there be, when time shall be, after it may best come to my mind ; and specially for them, that will and are in purpose for to visit the Holy City of Jerusalem and the holy places that are thereabout. And I shall tell the way that they shall hold thither. For I have often times passed and ridden that way, with good company of many lords. God be thanked !

And ye shall understand, that I have put this book out of Latin into French, and translated it again out of French into English, that every man of my nation may understand it. But lords and knights and other noble and worthy men that con Latin but little, and have been beyond the sea, know and understand, if I say truth or no, and if I err in devising, for forgetting or else, that they may redress it and amend it. For things passed out of long time from a man's mind or from his sight, turn soon into forgetting ; because that mind of man ne may not be comprehended ne withholden, for the frailty of mankind.

## I

### *To teach you the Way out of England to Constantinople*

In the name of God, Glorious and Almighty !

He that will pass over the sea and come to land [to go to the city of Jerusalem, he may wend many ways, both on sea and land], after the country that he cometh from ; [for] many of them come to one end. But troweth not that I will tell you all the towns, and cities and castles that men shall go by ; for then should I make too long a tale ; but all only some countries and most principal steads that men shall go through to go the right way.

First, if a man come from the west side of the world, as England, Ireland, Wales, Scotland, or Norway, he may, if that he will, go through Almayne and through the kingdom of Hungary, that marcheth to the land of Polayne, and to the land of Pannonia, and so to Silesia.

And the King of Hungary is a great lord and a mighty, and holdeth great lordships and much land in his hand. For he holdeth the kingdom of Hungary, Sclavonia, and of Comania a great part, and of Bulgaria that men call the land of Bougiers, and of the realm of Russia a great part, whereof he hath made a duchy, that lasteth unto the land of Nyfland, and marcheth

to Prussia. And men go through the land of this lord, through a city that is clept Cypron, and by the castle of Neasburghe, and by the evil town, that sit toward the end of Hungary. And there pass men the river of Danube. This river of Danube is a full great river, and it goeth into Almayne, under the hills of Lombardy, and it receiveth into him forty other rivers, and it runneth through Hungary and through Greece and through Thrace, and it entereth into the sea, toward the east so rudely and so sharply, that the water of the sea is fresh and holdeth his sweetness twenty mile within the sea.

And after, go men to Belgrade, and enter into the land of Bougiers ; and there pass men a bridge of stone that is upon the river of Marrok. And men pass through the land of Pyncemartz and come to Greece to the city of Nye, and to the city of Fynepape, and after to the city of Dandrenoble, and after to Constantinople, that was wont to be clept Bezanon. And there dwelleth commonly the Emperor of Greece. And there is the most fair church and the most noble, of all the world ; and it is of Saint Sophie. And before that church is the image of Justinian the emperor, covered with gold, and he sitteth upon an horse y-crowned. And he was wont to hold a round apple of gold in his hand : but it is fallen out thereof. And men say there, that it is a token that the emperor hath lost a great part of his lands and of his lordships ; for he was wont to be Emperor of Roumania and of Greece, of all Asia the less, and of the land of Syria, of the land of Judea in the which is Jerusalem, and of the land of Egypt, of Persia, and of Arabia. But he hath lost all but Greece ; and that land he holds all only. And men would many times put the apple into the image's hand again, but it will not hold it. This apple betokeneth the lordship that he had over all the world, that is round. And the tother hand he lifteth up against the East, in token to menace the misdoers. This image stands upon a pillar of marble at Constantinople.

## II

### *Of the Cross and the Crown of our Lord Jesu Christ*

At Constantinople is the cross of our Lord Jesu Christ, and his coat without seams, that is clept *Tunica inconsutilis*, and the sponge, and the reed, of the which the Jews gave our Lord eyesell and gall, in the cross. And there is one of the nails, that Christ was nailed with on the cross.

And some men trow that half the cross, that Christ was done on, be in Cyprus, in an abbey of monks, that men call the Hill of the Holy Cross ; but it is not so. For that cross that is in Cyprus, is the cross, in the which Dismas the good thief was hanged on. But all men know not that ; and that is evil y-done. For for profit of the offering, they say that it is the cross of our Lord Jesu Christ.

And ye shall understand that the cross of our Lord was made of four manner of trees, as it is contained in this verse,—*In cruce fit palma, cedrus, cypressus, oliva*. For that piece that went upright from the earth to the head was of cypress ; and the piece that went overthwart, to the which his hands were nailed, was of palm ; and the stock, that stood within the earth, in the which was made the mortise, was of cedar ; and the table above his head, that was a foot and an half long, on the which the title was written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, that was of olive.

And the Jews made the cross of these four manner of trees ; for they trowed that our Lord Jesu Christ should have hanged on the cross, as long as the cross might last. And therefore made they the foot of the cross of cedar ; for cedar may not, in earth nor water, rot, and therefore they would that it should have lasted long. For they trowed that the body of Christ

should have stunken, they made that piece, that went from the earth upwards of cypress, for it is well-smelling, so that the smell of his body should not grieve men that went forby. And the overthwart piece was of palm, for in the Old Testament it was ordained, that when one was overcome he should be crowned with palm ; and for they trowed that they had the victory of Christ Jesus, therefore made they the overthwart piece of palm. And the table of the title they made of olive ; for olive betokeneth peace, as the story of Noe witnesseth ; when that the culver brought the branch of olive, that betokened peace made between God and man. And so trowed the Jews for to have peace, when Christ was dead ; for they said that he made discord and strife amongst them. And ye shall understand that our Lord was y-nailed on the cross lying, and therefore he suffered the more pain.

And the Christian men, that dwell beyond the sea, in Greece, say that the tree of the cross, that we call cypress, was of that tree that Adam ate the apple off ; and that find they written. And they say also, that their scripture saith, that Adam was sick, and said to his son Seth, that he should go to the angel that kept Paradise, that he would send him oil of mercy, for to anoint with his members, that he might have health. And Seth went. But the angel would not let him come in ; but said to him, that he might not have of the oil of mercy. But he took him three grains of the same tree, that his father ate the apple off ; and bade him, as soon as his father was dead, that he should put these three grains under his tongue, and grave him so : and so he did. And of these three grains sprang a tree, as the angel said that it should, and bare a fruit, through the which fruit Adam should be saved. And when Seth came again, he found his father near dead. And when he was dead, he did with the grains as the angel bade him ; of the which sprung three trees, of the which the cross was made, that bare good fruit and blessed, our Lord Jesu Christ ; through whom, Adam and all that come of him, should be saved and delivered from dread of death without end, but it be their own default.

This holy cross had the Jews hid in the earth, under a rock of the mount of Calvary ; and it lay there two hundred year and more, into the time that St. Helen, that was mother to Constantine the Emperor of Rome. And she was daughter of King Coel, born in Colchester, that was King of England, that was clept then Britain the more ; the which the Emperor Constance wedded to his wife, for her beauty, and gat upon her Constantine, that was after Emperor of Rome, and King of England.

And ye shall understand, that the cross of our Lord was eight cubits long, and the overthwart piece was of length three cubits and a half. And one part of the crown of our Lord, wherewith he was crowned, and one of the nails, and the spear head, and many other relics be in France, in the king's chapel. And the crown lieth in a vessel of crystal richly dight. For a king of France bought these relics some time of the Jews, to whom the emperor had laid them in wed for a great sum of silver.

And if all it be so, that men say, that this crown is of thorns, ye shall understand, that it was of jonkes of the sea, that is to say, rushes of the sea, that prick as sharply as thorns. For I have seen and beholden many times that of Paris and that of Constantinople ; for they were both , one, made of rushes of the sea. But men have departed them in two parts : of the which, one part is at Paris, and the other part is at Constantinople. And I have one of those precious thorns, that seemeth like a white thorn ; and that was given to me for great specialty. For there are many of them broken and fallen into the vessel that the crown lieth in ; for they break for dryness when men move them to show them to great lords that come thither.

And ye shall understand, that our Lord Jesu, in that night that he was taken, he was led into a garden ; and there he was first examined right sharply ; and there the Jews scorned him, and made him a crown of the branches of albespine, that is white thorn, that grew in that

same garden, and set it on his head, so fast and so sore, that the blood ran down by many places of his visage, and of his neck, and of his shoulders. And therefore hath the white thorn many virtues, for he that beareth a branch on him thereof, no thunder ne no manner of tempest may dere him; nor in the house, that it is in, may no evil ghost enter nor come unto the place that it is in. And in that same garden. Saint Peter denied our Lord thrice.

Afterward was our Lord led forth before the bishops and the masters of the law, into another garden of Annas ; and there also he was examined, reproved, and scorned, and crowned eft with a sweet thorn, that men depeth barbarines, that grew in that garden, and that hath also many virtues.

And afterward he was led into a garden of Caiphas, and there he was crowned with eglantine.

And after he was led into the chamber of Pilate, and there he was examined and crowned. And the Jews set him in a chair, and clad him in a mantle ; and there made they the crown of jonkes of the sea ; and there they kneeled to him, and scorned him, saying, *Ave, Rex Judeorum !* that is to say, ‘ Hail, King of Jews !’ And of this crown, half is at Paris, and the other half at Constantinople. And this crown had Christ on his head, when he was done upon the cross ; and therefore ought men to worship it and hold it more worthy than any of the others.

And the spear shaft hath the Emperor of Almayne ; but the head is at Paris. And natheles the Emperor of Constantinople saith that he hath the spear head ; and I have often time seen it, but it is greater than that at Paris.

### III

#### *Of the City of Constantinople, and of the Faith of Greeks*

At Constantinople lieth Saint Anne, our Lady’s mother, whom Saint Helen let bring from Jerusalem. And there lieth also the body of John Chrisostome, that was Archbishop of Constantinople. And there lieth also Saint Luke the Evangelist : for his bones were brought from Bethany, where he was buried. And many other relics be there. And there is the vessel of stone, as it were of marble, that men clepe enydros, that evermore droppeth water, and filleth himself every year, till that it go over above, without that that men take from within.

Constantinople is a full fair city, and a good, and well walled ; and it is three-cornered. And there is an arm of the sea Hellespont : and some men call it the Mouth of Constantinople ; and some men call it the Brace of Saint George : and that arm closeth the two parts of the city. And upward to the sea, upon the water, was wont to be the great city of Troy, in a full fair plain : but that city was destroyed by them of Greece, and little appeareth thereof, because it is so long sith it was destroyed.

About Greece there be many isles, as Calliste, Calcas, Oertige, Tesbria, Mynia, Flaxon, Melo, Carpate, and Lemnos. And in this isle is the mount Athos, that passeth the clouds. And there be many diverse languages and many countries, that be obedient to the emperor ; that is to say, Turcople, Pyncynard, Comange, and many other, as Thrace and Macedonia, of the which Alexander was king. In this country was Aristotle born, in a city that men clepe Stagyra, a little from the city of Thrace. And at Stagyra lieth Aristotle ; and there is an altar upon his tomb. And there make men great feasts for him every year, as though he were a saint. And at his altar they holden their great councils and their assemblies, and they hope, that through inspiration of God and of him, they shall have the better council.

In this country be right high hills, toward the end of Macedonia. And there is a great hill, that men clepe Olympus, that departeth Macedonia and Thrace. And it is so high, that it passeth the clouds. And there is another hill, that is clept Athos, that is so high, that the shadow of him reacheth to Lemne, that is an isle ; and it is seventy-six mile between. And above at the top of the hill is the air so clear, that men may find no wind there, and therefore may no beast live there, so is the air dry.

And men say in these countries, that philosophers some time went upon these hills, and held to their nose a sponge moisted with water, for to have air ; for the air above was so dry. And above, in the dust and in the powder of those hills, they wrote letters and figures with their fingers. And at the year's end they came again, and found the same letters and figures, the which they had written the year before, without any default. And therefore it seemeth well, that these hills pass the clouds and join to the pure air.

At Constantinople is the palace of the emperor, right fair and well-dight : and therein is a fair place for joustings, or for other plays and desports. And it is made with stages, and hath degrees about, that every man may well see, and none grieve other. And under these stages be stables well vaulted for the emperor's horses ; and all the pillars be of marble.

And within the Church of Saint Sophia, an emperor sometime would have buried the body of his father, when he was dead. And, as they made the grave, they found a body in the earth, and upon the body lay a fine plate of gold ; and thereon was written, in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, letters that said thus ; *Jesu Christus nascetur de Virgine Maria, et ego credo in eum* ; that is to say, ' Jesu Christ shall be born of the Virgin Mary, and I trow in him.' And the date when it was laid in the earth, was two thousand year before our Lord was born. And yet is the plate of gold in the treasury of the church. And men say, that it was Hermogenes the wise man.

And if all it so be, that men of Greece be Christian yet they vary from our faith. For they say, that the Holy Ghost may not come of the Son ; but all only of the Father. And they are not obedient to the Church of Rome, ne to the Pope. And they say that their Patriarch hath as much power over the sea, as th Pope hath on this side the sea. And therefore Pope John XXII. sent letters to them, how Christian faith should be all one ; and that they should be obedient to the Pope, that is God's Vicar on earth, to whom God gave his plein power for to bind and to assoil, and therefore they should be obedient to him.

And they sent again diverse answers ; and among others they said thus : *Potentiam tuam summam circa tuos subjectos, firmiter credimus. Superbiam tuam summam tolerare non possumus. Avaritiam tuam summam satiare non intendimus. Dominus tecum ; quia Dominus nobiscum est.* That is to say : ' We trow well, that thy power is great upon thy subjects. We may not suffer thine high pride. We be not in purpose to fulfil thy great covetise. Lord be with thee ; for our Lord is with us. Farewell.' And other answer might he not have of them.

And also they make their sacrament of the altar of Therf bread, for our Lord made it of such bread, when he made his Maundy. And on the Shere-Thursday make they their Therf bread, in token of the Maundy, and dry it at the sun, and keep it all the year, and give it to sick men, instead of God's body. And they make but one unction, when they christen children. And they anoint not the sick men. And they say that there is no Purgatory, and that souls shall not have neither joy ne pain till the day of doom. And they say that fornication is no sin deadly, but a thing that is kindly, and that men and women should not wed but once, and whoso weddeth oftener than once, their children be bastards and gotten in sin. And their priests also be wedded.

And they say also that usury is no deadly sin. And they sell benefices of Holy Church. And so do men in other places : God amend it when his will is ! And that is great sclaundre, for now is simony king crowned in Holy Church : God amend it for his mercy !

And they say, that in Lent, men shall not fast, ne sing Mass, but on the Saturday and on the Sunday. And they fast not on the Saturday, no time of the year, but it be Christmas Even or Easter Even. And they suffer not the Latins to sing at their altars ; and if they do, by any adventure, anon they wash the altar with holy water. And they say that there should be but one Mass said at one altar upon one day.

And they say also that our Lord ne ate never meat ; but he made token of eating. And also they say, that we sin deadly in shaving our beards, for the beard is token of a man, and gift of our Lord. And they say that we sin deadly in eating of beasts that were forbidden in the Old Testament, and of the old Law, as swine, hares and other beasts, that chew not their cud. And they say that we sin, when we eat flesh on the days before Ash Wednesday, and of that that we eat flesh the Wednesday, and eggs and cheese upon the Fridays. And they accurse all those that abstain them to eat flesh the Saturday.

Also the Emperor of Constantinople maketh the patriarch, the archbishops and the bishops ; and giveth the dignities and the benefices of churches and depriveth them that be unworthy, when he findeth any cause. And so is he lord both temporal and spiritual in his country.

And if ye will wit of their A.B.C. what letters they be, here ye may see them, with the names that they clepe them there amongst them : Alpha, Betha, Gama, Deltha, *e* longe, *e* brevis, Epilmon, Thetha, Iota, Kapda, Lapda, Mi, Ni, Xi, *o* brevis. Pi, Coph, Ro, Summa, Tau, Vi, Fy, Chi, Psi, Othomega, Diacosyn. [1]

And ail be it that these things touch not to one way, nevertheless they touch to that, that I have hight you, to shew you a part of customs and manners, and diversities of countries. And for this is the first country that is discordant in faith and in belief, and varieth from our faith, on this half the sea, therefore I have set it here, that ye may know the diversity that is between our faith and theirs. For many men have great liking, to hear speak of strange things of diverse countries.

[1] The letters themselves in clumsy forms, as well as the names, are written in the manuscript, but the scribe has inserted “ an A. B.C. of another manner” in the midst of them. The passage can be adequately represented only by a facsimile.

#### IV

*[Of the Way from Constantinople to Jerusalem.] Of Saint John the Evangelist. And of the Ypocras Daughter, transformed from a Woman to a Dragon*

Now return I again, for to teach you the way from Constantinople to Jerusalem. He that will through Turkey, he goeth toward the city of Nyke, and passeth through the gate of Chienetout, and always men see before them the hill of Chienetout, that is right high ; and it is a mile and an half from Nyke.

And whoso will go by water, by the brace of St. George, and by the sea where St. Nicholas lieth, and toward many other places—first men go to an isle that is clept Sylo. In that isle groweth mastick on small trees, and out of them cometh gum, as it were of plum-trees or of cherry-trees.

And after go men through the isle of Patmos ; and there wrote St. John the Evangelist the Apocalypse. And ye shall understand, that St. John was of age thirty-two year, when our Lord suffered his passion ; and after his passion, he lived sixty-seven year, and in the hundredth year of his age he died.

From Patmos men go unto Ephesus, a fair city and nigh to the sea. And there died St. John, and was buried behind the high altar in a tomb. And there is a fair church ; for Christian men were wont to holden that place always. And in the tomb of St. John is nought but manna, that is clept angels' meat ; for his body was translated into Paradise. And Turks hold now all that place, and the city and the church ; and all Asia the less is y-clept Turkey. And ye shall understand, that St. John let make his grave there in his life, and laid himself therein all quick ; and therefore some men say, that he died not, but that he resteth there till the day of doom. And, forsooth, there is a great marvel ; for men may see there the earth of the tomb apertly many times stir and move, as there were quick things under.

And from Ephesus men go through many isles in the sea, unto the city of Patera, where St. Nicholas was born, and so to Martha, where he was chosen to be bishop ; and there groweth right good wine and strong, and that men call wine of Martha. And from thence go men to the isle of Crete, that the emperor gave sometime to [the] Genoese.

And then pass men through the isles of Colcos and of Lango, of the which isles Ypocras was lord of. And some men say, that in the isle of Lango is yet the daughter of Ypocras, in form and likeness of a great dragon, that is a hundred fathom of length, as men say, for I have not seen her. And they of the isles call her Lady of the Land. And she lieth in an old castle, in a cave, and sheweth twice or thrice in the year, and she doth no harm to no man, but if men do her harm. And she was thus changed and transformed, from a fair damosel, into likeness of a dragon, by a goddess that was clept Diana. And men say, that she shall so endure in that form of a dragon, unto [the] time that a knight come, that is so hardy, that dare come to her and kiss her on the mouth ; and then shall she turn again to her own kind, and be a woman again, but after that she shall not live long.

And it is not long sithen, that a knight of Rhodes, that was hardy and doughty in arms, said that he would kiss her. And when he was upon his courser, and went to the castle, and entered into the cave, the dragon lift up her head against him. And when the knight saw her in that form so hideous and so horrible he fled away. And the dragon bare the knight upon a rock, maugre his head ; and from that rock, she cast him into the sea. And so was lost both horse and man.

And also a young man, that wist not of the dragon, went out of a ship, and went through the isle till that he came to the castle, and came into the cave, and went so long, till that he found a chamber ; and there he saw a damosel that combed her head and looked in a mirror ; and she had much treasure about her. And he trowed that she had been a common woman, that dwelled there to receive men to folly. And he abode, till the damosel saw the shadow of him in the mirror. And she turned her toward him, and asked him what he would ? And he said, he would be her leman or paramour. And she asked him, if that he were a knight ? And he said, nay. And then she said, that he might not be her leman ; but she bade him go again unto his fellows, and make him knight, and come again upon the morrow, and she should come out of the cave before him, and then come and kiss her on the mouth and have no dread,—for I shall do thee no manner of harm, albeit that thou see me in likeness of a dragon ; for though thou see me hideous and horrible to look on, I do thee to wit that it is made by enchantment ; for without doubt, I am none other than thou seest now, a woman, and therefore dread thee nought. And if thou kiss me, thou shalt have all this treasure, and be my lord, and lord also of all the isle.



And he departed from her and went to his fellows to ship, and let make him knight and came again upon the morrow for to kiss this damosel. And when he saw her come out of the cave in form of a dragon, so hideous and so horrible, he had so great dread, that he fled again to the ship, and she followed him. And when she saw that he turned not again, she began to cry, as a thing that had much sorrow; and then she turned again into her cave. And anon the knight died. And sithen hitherward might no knight see her, but that he died anon. But when a knight Cometh, that is so hardy to kiss her, he shall not die ; but he shall turn the damosel into her right form and kindly shape, and he shall be lord of all the countries and isles above-said.

And from thence men come to the isle of Rhodes, the which isle Hospitallers holden and govern ; and that took they some-time from the emperor. And it was wont to be clept Collos ; and so call it the Turks yet. And Saint Paul in his epistle writeth to them of that isle *ad Colossenses*. This isle is nigh eight hundred mile long from Constantinople.

## V

*[Of diversities in Cyprus ; of the Road from Cyprus to Jerusalem, and of the Marvel of a Fosse full of Sand] [2]*

AND from this isle of Rhodes men go to Cyprus, where be many vines, that first be red and after one year they become white ; and those wines that be most white, be most clear and best of smell.

And men pass by that way, by a place that was wont to be a great city, and a great land ; and the city was clept Cathailye, the which city and land was lost through folly of a young man. For he had a fair damosel, that he loved well to his paramour ; and she died suddenly, and was done in a tomb of marble. And for the great lust that he had to her, he went in the night unto her tomb and opened it, and went in and lay by her, and went his way. And when it came to the end of nine months, there came a voice to him and said. Go to the tomb of that woman, and open it and behold what thou hast begotten on her ; and if thou let to go, thou shalt have a great harm. And he yede and opened the tomb, and there flew out an adder right hideous to see ; the which as swithe flew about the city and the country, and soon after the city sank down. And there be many perilous passages without fail.

From Rhodes to Cyprus be five hundred mile and more. But men may go to Cyprus, and come not at Rhodes. Cyprus is right a good isle, and a fair and a great, and it hath four principal cities within him. And there is an Archbishop at Nicosea, and four other bishops in that land. And at Famagost is one of the principal havens of the sea that is in the world ; and there arrive Christian men and Saracens and men of all nations. In Cyprus is the Hill of the Holy Cross ; and there is an abbey of monks black, and there is the cross of Dismas the good thief, as I have said before. And some men trow, that there is half the cross of our Lord ; but it is not so, and they do evil that make men to believe so.

In Cyprus lieth Saint Zenonimus, of whom men of that country make great solemnity. And in the castle of Amours lieth the body of Saint Hilarion, and men keep it right worshipfully. And beside Famagost was Saint Barnabas the apostle born.

In Cyprus men hunt with papyonnns, that be like leopards, and they take wild beasts right well, and they be somewhat more than lions ; and they take more sharply the beasts, and more deliver than do hounds.

In Cyprus is the manner of lords and all other men all to eat on the earth. For they make ditches in the earth all about in the hall, deep to the knee, and they do pave them ; and when they will eat, they go therein and sit there. And the skill is for they may be the more fresh ; for that land is much more hotter than it is here. And at great feasts, and for strangers, they set forms and tables, as men do in this country, but they had lever sit in the earth.

From Cyprus, men go to the land of Jerusalem by the sea : and in a day and in a night, he that hath good wind may come to the haven of Tyre, that is now clept Surrye. There was some-time a great city and a good of Christian men, but Saracens have destroyed it a great part ; and they keep that haven right well, for dread of Christian men. Men might go more right to that haven, and come not in Cyprus, but they go gladly to Cyprus to rest them on the land, or else to buy things, that they have need to their living. On the sea-side men may find many rubies. And there is the well of the which holy writ speaketh of, and saith, *Fons ortorum, et puteus aquarum viventium* : that is to say, ‘ the well of gardens, and the ditch of living waters.’

In this city of Tyre, said the woman to our Lord, *Beatus venter qui te portavit, et ubera que succisti* : that is to say, ‘ Blessed be the body that thee bare, and the paps that thou suck-edst.’ And there our Lord forgave the woman of Canaan her sins. And before Tyre was wont to be the stone, on the which our Lord sat and preached, and on that stone was founded the Church of Saint Saviour.

And eight mile from Tyre, toward the east, upon the sea, is the city of Sarphen, in Sarepta of Sidonians. And there was wont for to dwell Elijah the prophet ; and there raised he Jonas, the widow’s son, from death to life. And five mile from Sarphen is the city of Sidon ; of the which city, Dido was lady, that was Aeneas’ wife, after the destruction of Troy, and that founded the city of Carthage in Africa, and now is clept Sidonsayete. And in the city of Tyre, reigned Agenor, the father of Dido. And sixteen mile from Sidon is Beirout. And from Beirout to Sardenare is three journeys and from Sardenare is five mile to Damascus.

And whoso will go long time on the sea, and come nearer to Jerusalem, he shall go from Cyprus by sea to port Jaffa. For that is the next haven to Jerusalem ; for from that haven is not but one day journey and a half to Jerusalem. And the town is called Jaffa ; for one of the sons of Noah that hight Japhet founded it, and now it is clept Joppa. And ye shall understand, that it is one of the oldest towns of the world, for it was founded before Noah’s flood. And yet there sheweth in the rock, there as the iron chains were fastened, that Andromeda, a great giant, was bounden with, and put in prison before Noah’s flood, of the which giant, is a rib of his side that is forty foot long.

And whoso will arrive at the port of Tyre or of Surrye, that I have spoken of before, may go by land, if he will, to Jerusalem. And men go from Surrye unto the city of Akon in a day. And it was clept some-time Ptolemaïs. And it was some-time a city of Christian men, full fair, but it is now destroyed ; and it stands upon the sea. And from Venice to Akon, by sea, is two thousand and four score miles of Lombardy ; and from Calabria, or from Sicily to Akon, by sea, is a 1300 miles of Lombardy ; and the isle of Crete is right in the midway.

And beside the city of Akon, toward the sea, six score furlongs on the right side, toward the south, is the Hill of Carmel, where Elijah the prophet dwelled, and there was first the Order of Friars Carmelites founded. This hill is not right great, nor full high. And at the foot of this hill was some-time a good city of Christian men, that men clept Caiffa, for Caiaphas first founded it ; but it is now all wasted. And on the left side of the Hill of Carmel is a town, that men depe Saffre, and that is set on another hill. There Saint James and Saint John were born ; and, in worship of them there is a fair church. And from Ptolemaïs, that men clepe now

Akon, unto a great hill, that is clept Scale of Tyre, is one hundred furlongs. And beside the city of Akon runneth a little river, that is clept Belon.

And there nigh is the Foss of Mennon that is all round ; and it is one hundred cubits of largeness, and it is all full of gravel, shining bright, of the which men make fair verres and clear. And men come from far, by water in ships, and by land with carts, for to fetch of that gravel. And though there be never so much taken away thereof in the day, at morrow it is as full again as ever it was ; and that is a great marvel. And there is evermore great wind in that foss, that stirreth evermore the gravel, and maketh it trouble. And if any man do therein any manner metal, it tumeth anon to glass. And the glass, that is made of that gravel, if it be done again into the gravel, it turneth anon into gravel as it was first. And therefore some men say, that it is a swallow of the gravelly sea.

Also from Akon, above-said, go men forth four journeys to the city of Palestine, that was of the Philistines, that now is clept Gaza, that is a gay city and a rich ; and it is right fair and full of folk, and it is a little from the sea. And from this city brought Samson the strong the gates upon an high land, when he was taken in that city, and there he slew in a palace the king and himself, and great number of the best of the Philistines, the which had put out his eyen and shaved his head, and imprisoned him by treason of Dalida his paramour. And therefore he made fall upon them a great hall, when they were at meat.

And from thence go men to the city of Cesarea, and so to the Castle of Pilgrims, and so to Ascalon ; and then to Jaffa, and so to Jerusalem.

And whoso will go by land through the land of Babylon, where the soldan dwelleth commonly, he must get grace of him and leave to go more siker through those lands and countries.

And for to go to the Mount of Sinai, before that men go to Jerusalem, they shall go from Gaza to the Castle of Daire. And after that, men come out of Syria, and enter into wilderness, and there the way is full sandy ; and that wilderness and desert lasteth eight journeys, but always men find good inns, and all that they need of victuals. And men clepe that wilderness Achelleke. And when a man cometh out of that desert, he entereth into Egypt, that men clepe Egypt-Canopac, and after other language, men clepe it Morsyn. And there first men find a good town, that is clept Belethe ; and it is at the end of the kingdom of Aleppo. And from thence men go to Babylon and to Cairo.

[2] This rubric is omitted in the manuscript.

The *Travels of Sir John Mandeville* were edited anonymously in 1725, in the version for which a ‘ Cotton’ manuscript in the British Museum is our only extant authority. From 1499, when they were first printed by Wynkyn de Worde, the *Travels* had enjoyed great popularity in England, as in the rest of Europe ; but the printed editions before 1725 had all followed an inferior translation (with an unperceived gap in the middle of it), which had already gained the upper hand before printing was invented. Another manuscript in the British Museum, belonging to the ‘ Egerton’ collection, preserves yet a third version, and this was printed for the first time by Mr. G. F. Warner, for the Roxburghe Club, in 1889, together with the original French text, and an introduction, and notes, which it would be difficult to over-praise. In editing the Egerton version, Mr. Warner made constant reference to the Cotton manuscript, which he quoted in many of his critical notes. But with this exception, no one appears to have looked at the manuscript since it was first printed, and subsequent writers have been content to take the correctness of the 1725 text for granted, priding themselves, apparently, on the care with which they reproduced all the superfluous eighteenth century capitals with which every line is dotted. Unluckily, the introduction of needless capitals was the least of the

original editor's crimes, for he omits words and phrases, and sometimes (a common trick with careless copyists) a whole sentence or clause which happens to end with the same word as its predecessor. He was also a deliberate as well as a careless criminal, for the paragraph about the Arabic alphabet at the end of Chapter XV. being difficult to reproduce, he omitted it altogether, and not only this, but the last sentence of Chapter XVI. as well, because it contained a reference to it.

That it has been left to the editor (who has hitherto rather avoided that name) of a series of popular reprints to restore whole phrases and sentences to the text of a famous book is not very creditable to English scholarship, and amounts, indeed, to a personal grievance ; for to produce an easily readable text of an old book without a good critical edition to work on must always be difficult, while in the case of a work with the peculiar reputation of ' Mandeville ' the difficulty is greatly increased. Had a critical edition existed, it would have been permissible for a popular text to botch the few sentences in which the tail does not agree with the beginning, and to correct obvious mistranslation without special note. But ' Mandeville ' has an old reputation as the ' Father of English Prose, ' and when no trustworthy text is available, even a popular editor must be careful lest he bear false witness. The Cotton version is, therefore, here reproduced, ' warts and all, ' save in less than a dozen instances, where a dagger indicates that, to avoid printing nonsense, an obvious flaw has been corrected either from the ' Egerton ' manuscript or the French text. When a word still survives, the modern form is adopted : thus ' Armenia ' and ' soldiers ' are here printed instead of ' Ermony ' and ' soudiours. ' But a new word is never substituted for an old one, and the reader who is unfamiliar with obsolete words, such as ' Almayne ' (Germany) or ' dere ' (harm),—there are surprisingly few for a book written five centuries ago,—must consult the unpretentious glossary. Of previous editions, that of 1725 and the reprints of it, including those of Halliwell-Phillipps, profess, though they do not do so, to reproduce the manuscript exactly. Thomas Wright's edition is really a translation, and that issued in 1895 by Mr. Arthur Layard often comes near to being one, though the artist-editor has shown far more feeling for the old text than his too whimsical illustrations might lead one to expect. It is hoped that the plan here adopted preserves as much as possible of the fourteenth century flavour, with the minimum of disturbance to the modern reader's enjoyment.

A.W. Pollard

The travels of Sir John Mandeville; the version of the Cotton manuscript in modern spelling, with three narratives, in illustration of it, from Hakluyt's " Navigations, voyages & discoveries. " (1900)

Author : Mandeville, John, Sir; Pollard, Alfred W. (Alfred William), 1859-1944, ed ;

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