

passengers, is of great interest, and suggests an inquiry as to the channels of former communication between Europe and the East.

According to Robertson, the Phenicians procured the products of India, brought overland, to Rhinocolura, in the Mediterranean, a port, according to the best maps I have had an opportunity of consulting, not far distant from the modern El-Arish, and conveying them by a short transport, thence to Tyre, made the latter city the great emporium of that most profitable commerce. The conquests of Alexander, and the founding of that city which still exists as an enduring monument of his far-sighted sagacity, drew commerce into a new channel, and transferred to Alexandria the trade of which the Phenicians had had the monopoly. Subsequently, a portion of this trade appears to have been carried on up the Euphrates and by land carriage to Palmyra, and thence to the Mediterranean, until the conquest of Palmyra by Aurelian destroyed this commerce. Some portion of the trade was also carried on through the Provinces which extend along the northern frontier of India, either by land carriage into the interior parts of Persia, or by means of rivers through Upper Asia to the Caspian, and thence to the Euxine sea.

It was through such channels of communication that Constantinople obtained its supply of East Indian products. The hostilities that sprang up between the Christians and the Mahomedans, almost, if not entirely, put an end to European intercourse with Alexandria, and with such parts of Syria as had been the marts of Indian commodities. At a later period Venice obtained a great control over this trade, which continued as long as Constantinople remained the capital of the Latin Empire. The restoration of the Imperial family to the throne, however, aided as it was by the Genoese, gave these in turn the advantages which the Venetians had monopolized, and the merchants of Venice were consequently driven to re-establish that commercial intercourse with Alexandria which had been so long interrupted. But the final overthrow of the Greek Empire by Mahomet II., in 1453, deprived the Genoese of their advantages and possessions both at Constantinople and in the Crimea, and again limited the introduction of the commodities of the East into Europe to purchases made in Egypt, or in certain ports in Syria, and this state of things continued until the Portuguese doubled the Cape of Good Hope, towards the close of the 15th century, and thus discovered a new route by ocean navigation to the East. This discovery, and the events consequent upon it, resulted in the almost total extinction of the commerce which Venice had so long enjoyed,