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Marco Polo: His Travels and Adventures

George Makepeace Towle

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From inside the book:
The reader is carried back, in the present volume, to a period two centuries previous to the discovery of the route to India by Vasco da Gama, and to the conquest of Peru by Pizarro. A young Venetian of the thirteenth century, brought up amid luxury and wealth, of a bold spirit and a curious mind, went forth from his home in the beautiful Queen City of the Adriatic, and for many years lived among a far-off Asiatic people, and at a court of barbaric and yet splendid pomp.

He made many far and dangerous journeyings in the wild distant lands and among the fierce tribes of Cathay, Thibet, India, and Abyssinia. His life was passed amid an almost incessant succession ot exciting events, of strange adventures, and of hair-breadth escapes. He rose to high distinction and power at the Tartar court of the mighty Kublai Khan, one of the most famous conquerors and potentates who ever, in either ancient or modern times, have led legions to devastating wars, or have ruled teeming millions with despotic sway.

Nor did his career of valor and stirring action end with his return, middle-aged and laden with riches, to his native Venice. He engaged in the bitter warfare between the two rival republics of the sea, Venice and Genoa; became a prisoner of the latter state; and while in prison, dictated the wondrous narrative of his adventures which still survives, a precious legacy left by this great traveller to later generations.

I have attempted to transform the somewhat dry and monotonous translation of this narrative into an entertaining story, that may engage the attention and the interest of my young readers; for which it certainly presents ample opportunities. If the task is properly done, no one can fail to follow Marco Polo from his Venetian home, across the entire continent of Asia to the court of Kublai Khan, and in his various adventures and journeys while in the far-off Orient, without eager curiosity and ever-deepening interest. The central figure of the story is heroic, for Marco Polo was in all things manly, brave, persevering, intelligent, and chivalrous; and the scenes and incidents in which he was the leading actor were in the highest degree thrilling and dramatic.

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Anthony Green:

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Curtis Hernandez:

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Mary Jacobs:

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