

VII.—*Remarks on the Voyages to the Northern Hemisphere, ascribed to the Zeni of Venice.* By Capt. C. C. Zahrtmann, R. N., Hydrographer to the Royal Danish Navy; and communicated by him. Read 27th April, 1835.

THE latest researches in Greenland strongly tend to prove the correctness of Eggers's assertion, that the coast to the eastward of Cape Farewell was never colonized by the Icelanders; but that the whole of the bishopric of Greenland must have been situated to the westward of this cape. Greater certainty than we now possess can only be obtained either by the finding of ancient manuscripts hitherto unknown to us, or by further discoveries. From the former but little can be expected, the two last centuries having produced so many distinguished individuals, who made the ancient history of the north the subject of their diligent investigation. And as to making further discoveries, there can only be a very faint hope entertained, when we contemplate the difficulties which Captain Graah had lately to overcome, and when we learn from him that the ice is continually on the increase along this coast, thereby necessitating its thin population to emigrate to the west side, where this increase of ice and decay of the monuments of antiquity are also keeping pace together.

If, then, the present time offers but little probability of further elucidation on this subject, and if any future period presents even less, the present moment is certainly the most favourable to examine all the accounts which exist of the past and present times, and to investigate the degree of credit to which each of these authorities is entitled.

The old Icelandic Sagas, bearing the stamp of their age, are very often obscure and ambiguous, and in many instances even erroneous, owing to the want of scientific knowledge which existed when they were composed; but their authors can hardly be accused or suspected of wilful misrepresentation. The same, however, cannot be said with respect to the Sailing Directions collected by the Archbishop Walckendorph in the beginning of the sixteenth century; for, in this case, it is very possible that, in order to please this mighty prelate, the seamen of Bergen might venture to lay down directions for a navigation which, as it had been left untried for a century, was entirely unknown to them. A similar suspicion attaches to Ivar Bere's Chorography, for the authenticity of which important document we have no satisfactory evidence; and it is surely a very curious coincidence of circumstances, that the Episcopal bailiff of Bratehlið, the individual who must have been best acquainted with the country and its topography, and who himself had led the succours from the eastern part

of the country to the west against the Esquimaux, that this very person should have come from Greenland to the Feröe Islands, and should there have composed this Chorography, which was to remain forgotten for a whole century after the colony had disappeared, until the Archbishop should commence collecting his information. Still it is true that this Chorography, from its being so very minute—from its concordance, in several respects, with the Sagas—and from the circumstance of its appearing to be translated from the Icelandic, is entitled to considerable credit; and as it cannot be disputed that both the Chorography and the Directions are written in a language anterior to Walckendorph's age, there can be no reason to reject their evidence, although they must be considered as less authentic than the Sagas. Certain it is, that the collection of these documents, quite contrary to the intention of Walckendorph, served more to mislead than to guide, as they gave himself and posterity the erroneous idea that the ancient colony was situated on the east coast—an idea which, after having been entertained without dispute for 275 years, has since that time continued so prevalent, that in the Memoirs of the Scandinavian Literary Society for the year 1824, the following sentence appears: "The sounds of the old Sagas must have been more intelligible to Walckendorph than they are to us; and if it was his opinion that the eastern part of the old colony in Greenland was situated on the east coast, then Eggers has been himself mistaken, and has misled others."

It is quite another thing with an account of the North, which was not drawn from its own sources, and which, perhaps for that very reason, obtained for a time so much the greater credit. I mean the voyages of the Zeni of Venice, which were published about 170 years after the time when they were said to have been performed. The great credit which was given to this publication had a very remarkable influence on the ideas which were formed of Greenland. It led Frobisher to suppose that the land about Cape Farewell was an island (the Frisland of the Zeni), and, as a natural consequence, he again supposed the Labrador coast to be the east coast of Greenland, which gave rise to this remarkable circumstance in the history of navigation, that he saw and passed the very land which he thought himself still in search of, although the countries in question—viz., Labrador and Greenland—differ from each other 20° of longitude; and all this merely because he believed in an Italian fable. This mistaken opinion got such firm footing that its erroneous nature was not detected, even although, some years afterwards, other English seamen navigated the same waters, knowing themselves to be off the coast of Labrador; and the consequence was, that, for more than two cen-

turies, Greenland was represented on all globes and charts as intersected by an imaginary strait, called the Straits of Frobisher.

It is true that Frobisher himself says that he landed on the coast of Labrador, from which assertion the late Admiral Lövenörn, in a paper published in the "Transactions of the Danish Royal Society for 1786," was led to deduce the inference that the Strait of Frobisher was not in Greenland; but it must be kept in mind, that, in Frobisher's time, Davis's Strait was not yet discovered, and that he supposed Labrador and Greenland to be continuations of the same coast. After Davis had discovered that Greenland and Labrador were separated by a strait, the Strait of Frobisher was supposed to be a narrower entrance from the North Sea into the Bay of Baffin, and was therefore called *Angustum Frobisher*, in contradistinction to *Fretum Davis*; all which is best seen in the additions to the Ptolemaic Tables, published in 1597 at Louvain, by Cornelius Wythoff, where the chart of these regions proves the assiduity with which the author studied the latest English voyages of those times; and that he was only led into error by a belief in the *Frisland of the Zeni*, which confidence he did not give to their Greenland.

When the fisheries became sources of industry which gave employment to many hundred vessels in the Northern Seas, accounts were from time to time received concerning these seas; but partly from physical circumstances, producing in those latitudes optical delusions which easily induced errors, and partly from want of scientific knowledge among the navigators of that age, the result was, that these accounts frequently tended to mislead, by creating imaginary islands, such as *Enkhuisen* (no doubt a corruption of *Ægis-ey*), *Bus*, &c. Still, even at that period, the *Island of Frisland*, as it was called, was never descried, and accordingly it had already vanished from the sea-charts even before the method of finding the longitude at sea had become generally known, and had thus enabled every seaman to ascertain his position with precision; by which means the charts have been cleared of the errors which had crept into them, and we have now a certainty, that in the Northern Ocean between Europe and America, to the south of the Arctic Circle, there exists neither a greater nor a smaller number of islands than we find mentioned in the old Sagas of 600 or 700 years standing;\* this certainty being, in my opinion, quite sufficient to entitle us to assume, that whatever may have been written about islands large enough to have been inhabited—represented likewise as having risen out of, and again sunk under, the sea, during that interval—is fabulous, except where such statements are supported by undeniable proofs.

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\* *Gunbjörn's Skerries* form a solitary exception, in so far that we are prevented by the ice of later years from ascertaining their existence.

In conformity with this reasoning, the voyages of the Zeni were generally looked upon as an imposture so late as the middle of last century, although there did not at that time exist so many proofs of their falsehood as at present. This opinion was first combated by Forster, who, in his "Account of Discoveries in the Northern Regions," published in 1784, adduces arguments for the genuineness of the voyages. Eggers leans to the same opinion in his well-known prize essay, published in 1792; and, finally, Cardinal Zurla, who is still alive, has attempted to establish their genuineness beyond all doubt, in his treatises published in 1808 and 1818, entitled "Dissertazione intorno ai viaggi e scoperte settentrionali: di Nicolò e Antonio Frat. Zeni;" and "Di Marco Polo e degli altri Viaggiatori Veneziani più illustri." The same opinion has also been adopted by Zach, Buache, Malte Brun, Walckenaer, &c.; and of course such testimonies influenced M. de la Roquette in his late biographical sketch of these Venetians, which appeared in the "Biographie Universelle." Still I venture to combat this opinion, in asserting—

1st. That there never existed an Island of Frisland, but that what has been represented by that name in the Chart of the Zeni is the Ferøe Islands.

2nd. That the said chart has been compiled from hearsay information, and not by any seaman who had himself navigated in those seas for several years.

3rd. That the "History of the Voyages of the Zeni," more particularly that part of it which relates to Nicolò, is so replete with fiction, that it cannot be looked to for any information whatever as to the state of the North at that time.

4th. That both the history and the chart were most probably compiled by Nicolò,\* a descendant of the Zeni, from accounts which came to Italy in the middle of the sixteenth century, being the epoch when information respecting Greenland first reached that country, and when interest was awakened for the colony which had disappeared.

I. The first point has already been proved by Buache, Eggers, and Malte Brun, by arguments which I shall not repeat, nor shall I relate the voyage itself,—a task already performed by various others. I shall only add a few remarks on the subject.

Of the identity of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Scotland, there can be no doubt; as not only their relative positions, their outline, and the names of many places in them, but also their proper names in Latin, are decisive proofs of this. Of the five groups, Greenland, Iceland, Shetland, the Ferøe islands, and the

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\* Who, for brevity's sake, may be called Nicolò Zeno, Junior, or Nicolò Zeno, the Younger.

Orkneys, we recognise the proper names of the three which end in *land*; whereas the two last, called in those days Fœr-eyar and Orkn-eyar, are not to be found, these sounds being difficult to Italianise, or even to be at all caught or retained by any Italian ear. The name Gronlandia is applied, it is true, to quite a wrong place, where no land is to be found; but that the Engroneland in the chart, which in Antonio Zeno's account is moreover called Gronlandia, corresponds with the present Greenland, is proved so evidently by its shape, that I cannot conceive how Eggers could entertain a moment's doubt on the subject, or could believe that it was land on the opposite side of Baffin's Bay; the more so, as it is now ascertained that in that bay there is no St. James's Island in existence. The identity of Iceland is proved not only by the name *Islanda*, but further by the names of the bishops' sees, Scalodin and Olensis; that these two names in particular should be so easily recognised, and should bear so close a resemblance to the Latin names of the places, seems to indicate that the accounts respecting them were drawn from ecclesiastical sources. Though Shetland is called *Estland*, yet, in the first place, this is only a trifling transposition of the name in the spirit of the Italian language, and not exhibiting any greater deviation than is found in the other appellations given at different times to these islands,—such as *Hialtland*, *Yealtaland*, *Yetland*, *Zetland*, and *Hetland*; and besides, we recognise so many names here that we are almost tempted to believe that this was precisely the part of the chart best known to the author. We find, for example, *Cledere*, *i. e.* *Queendal*, *Sumbercouit* (*Sumburgh Head*), *St. Magnus* (*St. Magnus Bay*), *Scaluogi* (*Scalloway*), *Bristund* (*Brassa Sound*), *Itlant* (*Fetlar*), *Lonibies* (*Lambness*), *Onlefort* (*Olna-Firth*), and *Oloford* (*Onze Firth*).\* And further, the placing of *St. Magnus* and *Scalloway* on the east side instead of the west side, naturally leads to the inference that these names were not copied from any other chart, but laid down from verbal depositions.

These points being admitted, the Orkneys must naturally be looked for between Shetland and Scotland; and this Eggers has done, but, in my opinion, not in a very satisfactory manner. He supposes that the name *Contanis* may be assumed as *Continent*, or, in other words, *Mainland*, the largest of the Orkneys. I, on the other hand, consider beyond all doubt that it means *Caithness* (formerly called *Katanes*), the most northern county in Scotland, a province which, from the evidence of the ancient code of laws called the *Grágás*, we know belonged, in the middle ages, to the crown of Norway. The only name I find to have a resemblance to any name in the Orkneys is *Podalida*, not unlike *Pomonia*, the

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\* Firth, or Fiord, was, in the ancient language of the North, called *Fjörðr*.

principal island in the Orkneys, or Pentland (formerly Petland) the name of the strait which separates them from Caithness. Podalida corresponds with Pomonia in this respect also, that it is represented as a large island, surrounded by several smaller ones. This, however, is not quite satisfactory; we have, therefore, two groups remaining unaccounted for,—viz. the Orkneys and the Ferøe Islands, one of which must of necessity be Frisland: unless we would suppose that a seaman, who had for several years navigated the Northern Sea in all directions, should have remained ignorant of the existence of the Orkneys and the Ferøe Islands, and at the same time known and laid down a country which has since disappeared, and of which, moreover, all the inhabitants of the north in those ages had ever remained in utter ignorance; this appears to me so very highly improbable, that we may safely pronounce it to be impossible. If we subsequently compare names and positions, we shall find that Frisland can be nothing else than the Ferøe islands; as the Rock Monaco, at the southern point, exactly corresponds to the position of the Rock Munk; in respect to the Ferøe islands, as the names Sudero Colfo, Streme, and Andeford must of necessity be considered homonymous with Suderö Sound, Strömöe, and Andafer; and finally, as the absolute geographical position of Frisland corresponds better to that of the Ferøe islands, than is the case with almost any of those places on the chart concerning the identity of which no doubt can be entertained. The south end of Frisland, for example, is placed in the latitude of the Ferøe islands, whereas the northern extremity of Scotland is placed  $2^{\circ}$ , and all places in Greenland, Iceland, Shetland, Norway, and Denmark, are placed about  $6^{\circ}$  too far northward. In like manner, the eastern extremity of Frisland is laid down exactly as much to the westward of the Naze as the western extremity of the Ferøe islands is distant from that point; whereas Iceland is placed  $10^{\circ}$ , and Cape Farewell  $20^{\circ}$  of longitude nearer to the Naze than they really are. This was, therefore, the place which Antonio Zeno, who knew as little about Frisland as we do, would, according to his brother's description, be most likely to fall in with when he went in search of him. It is further mentioned that Estland (Shetland) lies between Frisland and Norway, which is its relative position to the Ferøe islands; and finally, it is expressly stated that Frisland was subject to the King of Norway; but as we know with certainty, from the Grágás Code, that no other islands were in this predicament than those now known to us, it follows that the country in question was the Ferøe Islands.

II.—As to the second point, it is in the first place hardly credible, that a seaman acquainted with the navigation of the Northern

Seas should have assigned so incorrect a relative position to the different places. For example, that Shetland (from which may be seen the Orkneys, lying close under the coast of Scotland) should be represented as situated near Norway, far distant from Scotland, and without any intermediate islands. The same fault, however, is found, to a greater or less degree, in all the maps published in the sixteenth century, which shows that the chart of the Zeni is, in this respect, a copy. We are perfectly acquainted from the Landnama-Book with every particular of Iceland in the thirteenth century, and we know that it was then just the same as now; how then is it possible that a seaman, who had resided there for so long a time, should represent it like an archipelago of several considerable islands? How could he have remained ignorant of the *native* names of the places, particularly of the harbours, and have only learned the *Latin* names of the island and its two dioceses? How could he give it a shape which, though it is called by Malte-Brun, in his "Précis de la Géographie universelle," "bonne à l'exception de la partie Nord Ouest," in truth resembles any other place as much as Iceland? How could he lay down to the north-east of Iceland a continent upon which he pretends to have been, when we know that in that direction there exists no continent, but only the island of Jan Mayen? And finally, how could he have been in the Ferøe islands, and yet represent them as one large island surrounded by some smaller ones? The whole chart bears the most palpable marks of having been compiled by a person who had never been at the places themselves, and who knew nothing of either the language or the history of the North; for the Sagas and Sailing Directions prove, that in those days the inhabitants of the North had much juster ideas of the relative position of places, and that they knew, for example, that a line drawn from Bergen, between Shetland and the Ferøe Islands, would pass about sixty geographical miles to the southward of Iceland. The chart is dated 1380, an epoch at which Zurla has proved that both Nicolò and Antonio Zeno were in Italy; which shows that they had not drawn the chart at the places themselves,—for as to the possibility of their having antedated it, it is to be presumed that in those days there was as little inducement as there is now for the framer of a chart to publish it as older than it really was. Finally, the comparative correctness of the delineation of Denmark and Norway is the best proof that the chart was not drawn in 1380, but about the middle of the sixteenth century. Zurla himself mentions that in the Isolario of Benedetto Bordone, published at Venice in 1534, Norway and Greenland are very erroneously laid down,—a topic to which we shall have to return hereafter. The exiled Archbishop of Upsala, Olaus Magnus Gothus, published at Venice, in 1539, a map of

the three Scandinavian kingdoms, which I have not seen, as it appears doubtful whether any copy of it remains in existence ; but undoubtedly this map, and those published at Antwerp, particularly those of Ortelius, were the first that gave a tolerably correct representation of these countries, an accurate knowledge of which it was impossible for the Zeni to have procured at any of the places visited by them,—viz. Frisland, Esland, Iceland and Greenland.

III. & IV. As to the fabulous parts of the narrative, it is difficult to select one passage in preference to another for refutation, the whole being a tissue of fiction. If we judge from the statement of Nicolò Zeno, junior, (which was published along with a chart, by Marcolini, in 1558,) Nicolò Zeno did not commence his voyage till immediately after the conclusion of the peace with the Genoese, on the 24th of August, 1381, and subsequently Antonio followed him in consequence of a letter which reached him at Venice, from his brother in Frisland. But if we are to judge from the chart, they had already been in the North in the year 1380. From the above, as also from subsequent letters, we are to infer that there existed a communication between Frisland and Venice, which would lead us to the further inference that Frisland was a place well known in the north ; but this we know with certainty was not the case ; and then how small is the probability that a series of letters written from the Ferøe Islands should regularly find their way to Venice. If we even suppose that this were possible by means of pilgrims and merchants by the way of England and Bruges, still Zurla's own data will not admit of so slow a conveyance. For, according to him, Nicolò cannot have left Venice before the year 1390 ; and it is certain that in 1406 Antonio was already dead. Of that interval Antonio is said to have spent fourteen years in Frisland. There remain, therefore, scarcely two years for Nicolò to have completed his perilous voyage, to have been wrecked, to have made his first brilliant campaign, which ended in the conquest of Frisland, and to have forwarded the report thereof to Antonio, in Venice, who, on the other hand, is said to have made the necessary preparations for a similar voyage, and to have actually performed it, (although, according to the description, it was both tedious and dangerous,) to have found Frisland, to have returned from thence to Venice, and to have died there, and all this within the above-mentioned brief interval of two years. Even now-a-days this would scarcely be allowed to range under the class of possibilities ; and yet Zurla, when making the computation, says, “ *Così mirabilmente tutte l'epoche si accordano.*”

Yet it is on the authority of such letters, which Nicolò Zeno,



junior, pretends to have had in his possession, that he has written the narrative ; from the same letters he must have drawn his dates, as such could not be omitted in a correspondence carried on between the Feròe Islands and Venice, and a solitary error in this respect could easily be detected, as there were several letters. Now, as the dates of these letters correspond exactly with the time at which Zurla has clearly proved that the brothers were in Italy, it follows that the letters from Frisland were either fabrications, or that they never existed. Cardinal Zurla having thus shown that Nicolò Zeno's narrative is false, it only remains to demonstrate from historical facts, that the cardinal's hypothesis of the voyage having been performed later does not hold good. Our principal authority for the age of the brothers is to be found in the life of the celebrated Carlo Zeno, written with considerable detail by his grandson, Jacopo Zeno, who died in the year 1481, when Bishop of Padua, but who in 1458—the period we allude to—was Bishop of Feltre and Belluno. This prelate, who was born in 1417, must necessarily have known the children of Nicolò and Antonio, and consequently it is quite inconceivable that he should be ignorant of their exploits and letters, if these were anything else than fiction ; and yet, in his dedication to Pope Pius II., when alluding to his family, he thus expresses himself :—“ Most holy father ! this family was always eminently distinguished by men who made themselves famous as citizens, acquiring glory abroad and at home, in war and in peace, and of whom many have, as commanders by sea and by land, earned for their country pre-eminent advantages,”—without making any the least allusion to the remarkable discoveries in question.

No mention whatever is made of any of Carlo's brothers, either in his life, which is written with great detail, nor yet in the funeral oration pronounced in honour of him in 1418, by Leonardo Giustiniani, in which, after portraying the merits of Carlo and of his father in the brightest colours, the orator simply adds, “ I will not say anything of his children or of his nearest relations.”

All that we gather from the life of Carlo is, that the ten children were born in rapid succession ; and, as their father married in 1326, we may assume that Nicolò, as the eldest brother, was born about the year 1328. In the annals of Venice mention is made of Nicolò Zeno as one of the most opulent patricians ; as having been an elector at two elections of Doges ; as having been ambassador of the republic ; and, finally, on the 26th November, 1388, he is mentioned as one of the syndics who were appointed to take possession of Treviso.\*

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\* This is the opinion of Cardinal Zurla, but which I by no means believe to be correct. What he finds mentioned in the Annals of Venice, from 1365 to 1388, he

It is after this period, consequently after he had passed the 60th year of his age, that he is said to have formed the design of making a voyage of discovery. After having suffered shipwreck at the Ferøe Islands, he finds them ravaged by a foreign potentate, called Zichmi, Lord of Porlanda and Sorano, the former of these being distant only half a day's sail from Frisland. If Frisland was not the Ferøe Islands, then it and the other countries mentioned have all sunk under the ocean; but if, on the other hand, it is assumed to be the Ferøe Islands, which is beyond doubt the only supposition we can form, then the whole story is false, since the countries so described by Zeno bear no resemblance whatever to what the Ferøe Islands now are, or ever have been; and as to the war asserted to have been waged between Zichmi and the King of Norway, this assertion is the less entitled to belief from the circumstance that there was then no king in Norway, that country being at that period under the government of Queen Margaret. Forster's opinion that Zichmi might have been Henry Sinclair, Earl of the Orkneys, is altogether destitute of foundation, as that lord, on whom the said earldom was bestowed in 1380 by King Haagen, both in 1388 and 1389—as a Norwegian councillor of state—signed the act by which Eric of Pomerania was acknow-

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attributes entirely to the hero of our history, although he at the same time informs us, on the authority of a MS., "11 Campidoglio Veneto," by Girolamo Capellari, which still exists in the library of St. Mark, that in the year 1379 there were in Venice two other persons of the name of Nicolò Zeno, for which reason our hero was by way of distinction called Nicolò quondam Ser Dracone. Admitting this, it appears to me that the passages occurring in the Venetian Annals refer to three different persons of the name of Nicolò Zeno; and of these,

1. The first was ambassador to the sultan in 1349, was amongst the forty-one electors at the elections of the Doges Dolfino, Celsi, and Cornaro, in 1356, 1361, and 1365, and was sent to accompany the pope from Marseilles in 1367.

2. The second was, in 1379, captain (master?) of a galley commanded by Victor Pisano and Carlo Zeno.

3. The third, Nicolò Zeno quondam ser Dracone, does not occur in the history of Venice before the year 1382, when his brother Carlo had saved the republic, which so much increased the reputation of the family, that Carlo was appointed governor of Negroponte, Marco, ambassador to the King of Sicily, and Nicolò, ambassador to the Duke of Ferrara: during this same year he was one of the electors at the election of the Doge Morosini. In 1388, on the 14th December, he took possession of the city of Treviso as syndic and provenditor.

If, as stated by Zurlo, an old manuscript mentions a Nicolò Zeno as one of the most opulent citizens of Venice, I suppose this person to have been the eldest of the three, or the one first mentioned in this note; inasmuch as at the election of Cornaro in 1365, he is styled Zeno il grande, whereas the ten children of Pietro Dracone were left by him in great poverty.

He who was master of the galley under the command of Carlo Zeno could not have been his elder brother, Nicolò, the head of the family; a subordinate station of this sort was, however, filled at the same period by Donato Zeno and Pietro Zeno, who were both made prisoners at the battle of Pola, on the 29th May, 1379.

All doubts on this subject would have been removed, if Zurlo had communicated the genealogy of this numerous family with a little more minuteness. To me it appears evident beyond all dispute that the third-mentioned Nicolò Zeno was neither the man of opulence nor the seaman; and yet he must have been both to enable him to undertake and perform the voyage which has been ascribed to him.

ledged true heir of the realm, and therefore at that time could not have been in rebellion against the crown. Neither is there any reason for supposing that his earldom, which comprehended Shetland, was in the meantime attacked and completely ravaged, and yet the Danish history make no allusion to any such circumstance; more especially when we again in 1397 find that Jonas, Bishop of the Orkneys, signed in Calmar the Coronation Act of Eric of Pomerania, which shows that the connexion between the islands and the mother country had continued without interruption.

As to the attack on Iceland—independently of what has already been said of the non-existence both of the uninhabited Grislanda, and of the other seven islands, which Nicolò Zeno is said to have plundered—it must be remarked, that the annals of Iceland at that period are much too circumstantial to have passed over in silence either such an attack, or the building of a fort such as Nicolò is said to have built on the island of Bres. Finally, the names ascribed to the seven islands are not at all northern, but are evidently the fabrication of a person entirely unacquainted with the northern languages.

With respect to the voyage to Engrovelant (in the chart called Gronlandia), this, like all the other parts of the narrative, bears the most evident marks of fiction. No continent exists in the direction indicated by Zeno, and few will be inclined to believe with Estnip, that there existed convents in Greenland out of the bishopric of Garde, that is to say, out of the Icelandic Colony. That this colony was not situated at Gæle-Hamkes land, or in Scoresby Sound, but near Cape Farewell (whether to the west or to the east of it), is certain, and therefore no navigator could steer north, or a northerly course, to reach it, but he would necessarily be obliged to steer to the westward. As to the volcanos and hot springs, which served to warm the houses, to cook the victuals, and to make the fruits of the south thrive in the latitude of 74°, I do not think this part of the romance worth a refutation. It is clearly nothing but a plausible selection from Olaus Magnus's fables about the north, particularly those regarding Iceland and Hekla; while no mention whatever is made of what in those days ought to have struck every Venetian with astonishment, and which, therefore, Nicolò Zeno could not fail to have recorded, I mean, that when he, in the month of July, steered northwards from Iceland, he found no longer any appearance of night, but, on the contrary, an uninterrupted day!

The Venetian patrician—in the sixty-fifth year of his age—must have felt that for his great merits he received their appropriate reward when dubbed a knight by Prince Zichmi himself!

As to the exploits of Antonio Zeno, they certainly have a less fabulous appearance, and he cannot be held responsible for the

accounts about Estotiland and Drogeo given him by the fishermen of Frisland. But with respect to the vanished island of Icaria, and also King Dedalus of Scotland and his son Icarus, the very names prove that he did not know enough of northern mythology to enable him to extract the materials of his fables from it. By what means, with a north-east course—that is, running right before a south-west wind, he could fetch the southern cape of Greenland, it is difficult to conceive, unless we suppose that he took his departure from Newfoundland; accordingly, both Zurla and the other champions of the voyage maintain that Icaria was Newfoundland. But they forget that Zeno, in the beginning of the voyage, steered for six days with a fair wind due west from Icaria, which it is quite impossible to do from Newfoundland. The courses, west during six days, and north-east three days, both with a fair wind, indicate the situation of Icaria to be (in concordance with the chart) to the eastward of Cape Trin (Farewell), the place he came to, which proves that also this island had no existence but in the narrative of Zeno. On the other hand, the satisfactory explanation of which the Cape and Harbour of Trin are susceptible deserves to be particularly noticed. In Zeno's chart, for instance, we find the Cape Af and the Firth Auer placed in the precise part of Greenland where the Cape Af-Hvarf must have been situated, if we suppose the position of the ancient eastern colony to be that of the present district of Juliane's Haab; and, following up this supposition, Cape Trin corresponds with Herjolfnæs, and the harbour of Trin with Sandhavn, mentioned by Ivar Bere in his sailing directions as lying between Herjolfnæs and Hvarf, and as that harbour in Greenland which was most frequented by Europeans.

In this respect, therefore, Zeno's chart agrees better than any other with the accounts we have from "the olden time," and, with respect to the general outline of Greenland, it is more correct than any known chart published before the sixteenth century. This would be a strong proof of the genuineness of the chart and of the voyage, if Nicolò Zeno the younger had not, in 1558, any other authorities from which to lay down Greenland, than the common maps of that period. But it is easy to find reasons which make it highly probable that he had verbal sources of better information, and quite certain that he was able to avail himself of written sources not generally known. As he was so great a proficient in geography, that his own countrymen looked upon him as the greatest geographer of his time, nothing is more probable than that, in order to get information concerning the northern regions, he applied to the higher Catholic clergymen who were banished at this very time, and had repaired to Italy, and who, of course, were able to communicate more correct ideas of the north. Among

them may be mentioned Walkendorph,\* at that time the best-informed individual on the subject in question, and who died at Rome in the year 1533; and the brothers Olaus and Johannes Magnus of Lindkioping and Upsala, the former of whom published at Venice, in the year 1539, the map already alluded to, and which may very well have contained some information on this head.† Both brothers, also, wrote about the North during their residence in Italy. This is the only way of explaining how the map alluded to by Eggers (which is preserved in the University Library of Copenhagen, and which was engraved in Venice in 1562) should represent Scandinavia so much more correctly than any other contemporary map; and when we compare this map with similar ones, published previously at the same place, we see clearly what a great advance had been made in this part of geographical knowledge, precisely within the period of a few years before Zeno published his chart.

That Zeno, moreover, in the framing of this chart, had also the assistance of earlier models, may with certainty be inferred from the following circumstance. In the University Library of Copenhagen, there is a very old MS. map, in which Greenland is laid down exactly as it is laid down in Benedetto Bordone's "Isolario," of which work Zurla has mentioned and described two editions in 1526 and 1534, while that in the Royal Library of Copenhagen is of 1547. This map contains what we do not find in that of Bordone, viz., names, and these names agree almost uniformly with those in Zeno's "Greenland," follow each other in the same order, and the few that are missing are precisely those of the places which the Zeni are said to have visited! Now, as it is not to be imagined that, after the publication of Zeno's chart, anybody would take an outline of Bordone to fill up with names supplied by Zeno, the natural inference is that the original of this map has

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\* As early as 1520 he sent to Pope Leo X. the head of a northern sea monster as a natural curiosity.

† In favour of this supposition it may be mentioned, that it is by no means certain that the map of the northern regions in Fickler's translation of the work of Olaus Magnus, printed at Basil in 1567, corresponds in all points with the map which that prelate himself published at Venice in 1539, although many authors have adopted this opinion (in the Latin original, it may be observed, there is no such map, and in the Italian translation only an imperfect one). It is argued in behalf of those who maintain the identity of the two maps, that in the map which Olaus Magnus annexed to his brother Johannes Magnus's "Gothic History," published by him in 1557, the delineation of Scandinavia corresponds exactly with the delineation given in Fickler's map. But, on the other hand, Fickler's map does not correspond with the text of the original; for example, we look in vain for the rock Huitsark, of which so much mention is made. It may here be mentioned, that this is the first map which shows an open sea to the northward of Norway—a navigation first opened by Willoughby and Chancellor in 1553, and which Ramusio mentions was still imperfectly known. To this map we are also indebted for the imaginary town of Alba in Greenland, and I am not aware of the existence of any older map on which the Feröe Islands are laid down.

served as a model—to Bordone for his outline, and to Zeno for his names;\* although the latter himself says that he supposes that Zichmi has discovered and surveyed the country on both sides, “as he finds it minutely described in the Navigation Chart.” The names in Zeno’s chart which are not to be found in the map now mentioned are, the Convent of St. Thomas and Cape Trin, and also the two westernmost firths on the coast, which, consequently, have been added by Zeno, and which are precisely the only two of which the names are to be found in the ancient descriptions (or chorographies), namely, Diurfiumen (Dyrefjord) and Pederf (Pedersviig). At an arm of the sea towards the north-east, the map has the two Capes Cadi and Na; these Zeno has transferred to the south-east coast: at Cape Farewell we find an island, Margarester, which Zeno has omitted, but which has been inserted again by the later Flemish geographers, and placed by them to the southward of the Convent of St. Thomas. Lastly, we find to the westward of Cape Farewell a firth called Spichbod, which Zeno has omitted, being the only instance where the name bears the mark of Dutch origin. In the “Memoir of Sebastian Cabot,” published in 1832, it is shown that Ramusio, who had hitherto uniformly been cited as an authority in favour of the genuineness of these voyages, is very far from being so, as they are not contained in the first edition of his second volume, published in 1559. But in the third edition, published in 1574, they are adopted † to their full extent, together with their splendid descriptions of the riches of Estotiland, which last part of the story, however, it was thought fit to leave out in the fourth edition, published in 1583, Frobisher having in the meanwhile performed his voyages, and, as we all know, without finding any gold.

As Ramusio died on the 10th July, 1557, ‡ and as he in another place expressly says, that nobody can dispute the title of Columbus to the first discovery of America, and that he envies Genoa for having produced such a son, it is evident that he is by no means an authority for the genuineness of those voyages; on

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\* A trifling circumstance enables us to distinguish with certainty between the original and the copy. The map in the University Library has Hestleff where Zeno has Elest'e. Here it is easy to see that the Italian, in copying, has dropped the *h*, as appearing to him harsh and unnecessary. We also find in Zeno's “Ice-land” the following names corresponding with names in the aforesaid map—Olenis (i. e. Holm) corresponds with Holesis (here again the *h* is dropped), Honos with Hanos, Tuhos with Turhos, Dos with Dos, and Noder with Naderos.

† But in my opinion not, as the English author supposes, with a view of giving them to the world as part of Ramusio's own work. In the edition of 1574, they, along with some other voyages, are formally announced as supplementary, being probably the work of the editor, Tommaso Giunti; among these other voyages, or travels, is Herberstein's “Travels in Russia,” with an introduction written at Vienna in 1559, and which, consequently, could not have been inserted in the first edition, which was published that very same year at Venice.

‡ Camus, *Memoire sur la Collection des grands et des petits Voyages.*

the contrary, this is a proof that, up to his time, there did not exist in Venice any documents to prove it, or else so able and assiduous an inquirer, who was at the same time secretary to the Council of Ten, and had access to all the sources of information, would not have failed to use them to the best advantage. Ramusio further mentions Catarino Zeno in terms of praise, and, according to the statement of all authors who have treated of the subject, he regretted that he had not been able to procure a copy of his "Travels in Persia," that work having become so rare, that in his time not a copy was to be found in Venice. This opinion is deduced from the following expressions of Ramusio:—"Cosi la fortuna ci fosse stata favorevole a farne venire nelle mani il viaggio del magnifico Mr. Catarino Zeno il Cavalier, che fu il primo ambasciatore ch' andava in detta provincia al Signore Ussumcassano; ma la lunghezza del tempo, auvegne che fossa stampato, ha fatto si, che l' habbiamo smarrito."—*i. e.* "We were fortunate enough to get possessed of the Travels of the noble knight Catarino Zeno, who was the first ambassador to Ussumcassan of Persia; but although it was printed, the length of time has been the cause of our losing it."

In the above sentence there is, strictly speaking, no meaning; for the book being printed could not surely make it more difficult to be lost by a collector like Ramusio, who in this case would naturally have taken notice of the remarkable circumstance that his missing copy was the last, and that not another was to be found—a thing that, with regard to time, place, and object, is quite incredible; and besides, if we were to suppose this to be the meaning of the sentence, the construction would scarcely be correct, for then the words "auvegne che fossa stampata" ought to have closed the period.

But if for "auvegne" we substitute "avanti" (*i. e.* "before" for "although"), the construction will be correct, and the meaning of the sentence intelligible, though quite different from that hitherto adopted. The meaning will then be, that the long time it took before Ramusio's own work got printed, caused him to lose the manuscript of Zeno's Voyage; and this meaning is the more natural, as in reality the printing of his work encountered singular obstacles. There exist, for instance, editions of the first volume of the years 1550, 1554, 1563, 1588, and 1613; of the second, of 1559, 1564, 1574, and 1583; and of the third, of 1556, 1565, and 1606. The reason of the third volume being published before the second is explained by Giunti in his preface to the second volume, by the death of Ramusio, and the burning of his own printing-office; and it is precisely this volume which contains the above-mentioned expressions of Ramusio. If now it be permitted to suppose, in a posthumous work, an error of the

press so trifling, and, as it appears to me, so likely to have occurred, the incredible assertion that the account of Catarino Zeno's travels, performed in 1473, should have been printed, and still not a copy to be procured in Venice, rests, in that case, solely on the testimony of Nicolò Zeno, his own great-grandson, and who, as we shall afterwards have occasion to see, was, as far back as 1533, employed under Catarino's son Pietro, and in that situation occupied himself chiefly in collecting such accounts. This appears to me not only incredible, but very suspicious; and leads to another idea, which, however, I only mention as a conjecture. It will be allowed to be very improbable that so zealous a collector as Ramusio should have actually thrown away a composition of so much importance, as he himself alleges Zeno's Voyage to have been, whether it was in print or in manuscript: were it in manuscript, and he had lost it, he could have found no great difficulty in procuring it again from the same source, which was most probably Nicolò Zeno. I am therefore led to the supposition that he did not wish to admit this voyage in his collection, and that he already mistrusted Nicolò Zeno's accounts of his ancestors—accounts which obtained for him the following compliment from Francesco Patrizi: "*Sopra tutti gli uomini maraviglioso Storico;*" so extravagant a praise for historical knowledge, that it appears to border on irony. Ramusio might have other and very good reasons for such mistrust. In 1533, when Nicolò Zeno was only eighteen years old, he was already attached to the embassy of his grandfather, Pietro Zeno, who was then ambassador from the republic to Sultan Soliman I., in Constantinople. Among many other rare books and manuscripts which he bought there, was also the manuscript of Carlo Zeno's biography. This manuscript, it would appear, had been in the library of the King of Hungary, Mathias Corvinus, at the time that it was carried away by the Turks, when they overran and plundered Hungary; in this way it came to Constantinople, where it was bought by Nicolò Zeno. This is related by Hieronimo Diviaco in the dedication of his Italian translation of this work to Catarino Zeno, son of Nicolò. Now, allowing that there was nothing impossible in this, still it must naturally have appeared very surprising that Nicolò Zeno should have such uncommon good luck as to get possessed of all the most valuable documents concerning his own family. Though Ramusio perhaps did not think it prudent to express any surprise of this kind with reference to a person in Zeno's high station, I still think I trace in his above-mentioned expressions a doubt in Zeno's veracity;\* and that similar doubts were entertained by others in Venice may be inferred from a book published

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\* It would be interesting to see this account of Catarino Zeno's travels critically examined by an Orientalist, in order to judge how far its details can be relied upon.



there in 1576, entitled “ *L'isole più famose del Mondo discritte da Thomaso Porcacchi da Castiglione (et intagliate da Gerolamo Porro).*” This book not only mentions England, Scotland, Ireland, the Hebrides, the Orkneys, and Shetland,\* but also Iceland, about which island it is said, that by some it is called “ *isola perduta,*” on account of its lying so far away. The description of this island is taken from Olaus Magnus, and the map of it is copied from the chart of the Zeni. But these voyagers themselves are not mentioned, nor is any allusion made to Frisland or to their other discoveries, although the work treats exclusively of islands, and although it appears from the preface to be a second edition, much enlarged. It is therefore evident that the author considered the voyages and discoveries of the Zeni as a fiction, and that it is only with respect to Iceland (of the existence of which he was persuaded) that he has preferred Nicolò Zeno's chart to that of Olaus Magnus.

Still more reasons may be assigned for this conclusion: the ignorance in Italy respecting Greenland was in the 15th century so gross, that the pope's bull of 1448 shows, that the papal chancery believed that Christianity had been established there for 600 years antecedent to that period, and it cannot be supposed that the disappearance of the colony would excite more sensation in Italy than it did in the north, where nobody seems to have paid any attention to it during a whole century; an indifference which can only find its apology in the agitation produced by the union wars. It was not until the noble-minded Walckendorph had retired from the larger stage to his archiepiscopal see, that, through him, attention was drawn that way; and it is very probable that he not only brought many documents relating to these matters away with him from Drontheim to Italy, but that moreover he called the attention of the public to an event which, to southern ears in particular, must have sounded so very strange, namely, that a whole bishopric had been severed from the rest of Christendom by ice. It is extremely probable that the information contained in Jacob Ziegler's *Schondia* was derived from Walckendorph himself,† a supposition

\* That the Ferøe Islands are not mentioned is an additional reason for believing that Frisland can be nothing else than these islands.

† In the memoirs of the Scandinavian Literary Society for 1824, this opinion is brought forward, and there are cited three of the six positions given by Ziegler for the east coast of Greenland, with the additional remark, “ that this author has, on the whole, laid down the coast with much correctness, making it to begin in 60° of latitude, and continuing it to 72°, placing the Hvidserk about midway in 67°.” This statement is, however, by no means correct, for Ziegler makes Greenland begin, according to the erroneous notions of those days, 1° to the north, and only  $\frac{1}{2}$ ° to the west of Wardohuus. He makes it stretch to the southward as far as the land discovered by Cabot, and called by him *Baccalaos*, (Labrador,) for we must remark that he says, “ *Inde continuatur littori terræ Baccallaos,*” and not as his translator renders it, “ *Baccallaos at the southern extremity of the land.*” As Cape Farewell lies in the latitude of Labrador, the coincidence of parallel happens to be correct,

which receives additional confirmation from the circumstance that the latitude of Wardöehuus is given very correctly, and the positions in Greenland, particularly that of "the Hvidserk," correspond with Walckendorph's hypothesis concerning the eastern colony, (Ostbygden,) though since Graah's voyage we are now able to pronounce with tolerable certainty, that in this latitude of  $67^{\circ}$  north there does not exist any such striking promontory, unless we suppose the whole colony to have been placed on the coast between  $67^{\circ}$  and  $65^{\circ} 18'$  north latitude; that is to say, more to northward than Iceland. But this is in opposition to every account of former times which has come down to us, and is moreover at variance with all the reports we have about the distance between the two parts of the colony, "Ostbygden" and "Westbygden." It is therefore probable that about the middle of the sixteenth century some confused notions were entertained in Italy, both concerning this Greenland which had vanished, and the voyages which had been undertaken from it in former times. It was on this foundation, I presume, that Nicolò Zeno reared his fabulous structure—the voyages ascribed by him to his ancestors; and for materials to his chart he undoubtedly availed himself not only of earlier charts—those of the Dutch, for example, as we see from several names—but also of such reports and accounts as had reached Italy through various channels, chiefly ecclesiastical.

It cannot be denied that the story has been composed with great ingenuity, but still it contains contradictions. We may ask, for example, how was Nicolò Zeno informed that Antonio spent fourteen years in Frisland, when no mention is made of this either in the last complete letter, or in that fragment which was the last discovered, and in which he says he has only made some alterations in the style and the obsolete expressions, but not in the substance? If it was from the dates of the letters, he certainly could not, as I have already remarked, mistake ten years in fixing the epoch when the voyages were performed. Neither is it to be believed, that in a family like that of the Zeni, where not less than

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though the pretended junction with Baccallaos is erroneous. In determining the position of Huethsark, assumed by Zieger as an intermediate point, he has been guided by the remark made by Walckendorph, and also mentioned by himself, that at sea it could be seen at the same time with Hekel-Jök (Sneefields Jökul). As this point of Iceland is laid down by him in  $67^{\circ}$  north latitude and  $25^{\circ}$  east longitude, he places "the Hvidserk" in  $67^{\circ}$  north latitude and  $22^{\circ}$  east longitude; that is to say, he lays it down about twenty-seven leagues to the west of the Sneefields Jökul, which was a very natural conclusion for a person who did not know the countries in the north. But now we know that the Sneefields Jökul is situated in  $64^{\circ} 48'$  north latitude, about 140 leagues from Skram's Islands, lying due west from it, on the coast of Greenland; and we have the greatest reason to suppose that no part of this coast is nearer than seventy-five leagues to the Sneefield's Jökul. Ziegler, therefore, has no other merit in regard to the geography of Greenland than to have laid it down as a peninsula, and as such it was always known to the navigators of the north, but not to the geographers of the south.

three—viz., Jacopo, Nicolò, and Pietro, each in his century—published descriptions of the exploits of their ancestors,\* the children should have been suffered to destroy the family archives, or that records similar to Antonio's description of the North should have been left unnoticed and unpublished for upwards of a century—at a period, too, when Columbus's transcendent discovery attracted universal attention to the West. That the family could not have been ignorant of their contents is proved by the circumstance of Nicolò knowing what he had destroyed, which, as he was himself a child at the time, he could only have learned at a later period from his parents. Allowing, however, that Nicolò when a child really did destroy the work of his own direct ancestor, Antonio, it still remains to be explained how he had it in his power to destroy several of the letters, they being all addressed to Carlo, the most respected of the brothers, who survived all the rest, and whose direct descendants did not become extinct till a whole century later, viz., in 1653. Even supposing that the whole of the family archives were deposited with the senior branch, the chance of their falling into the younger Nicolò's hands remains as unlikely as ever, inasmuch as he was descended from Antonio, the second son, whose elder brother's lineage was not extinct before the year 1756.

Zurla attempts to prove the existence of Frisland by assuming that other navigators had seen it, namely, two Icelanders (Adelbrand and Thorwald), the sons of Helge, in 1285; Johannes Sciolvus, a Pole, in 1476; Columbus in 1477; Frobisher in 1578; and Maldonado in 1588.

As to the discovery of the Icelanders, King Eric of Norway sent Lande Rolf to search for it, which he did unsuccessfully. What the Icelanders saw, without landing on it, may as well have been the coast of America as anything else, but it may also have been one of the icebergs, which in those latitudes are frequently mistaken for land by navigators. Such a mistake led Hall, during his voyage with Lindenow, to imagine that he had seen the Island of Bus, which we know does not exist, but which has been laid down in nearly the same situation as Frisland.

As to Johannes Sciolvus, he is mentioned by Wytfliet only, who believed in the existence of Frisland according to Zeno's account. What is said of him is, "that in 1476 he sailed to the other side of Norway, Greenland, and Frisland; and that after having passed Fretum Boreale, within the arctic circle itself, he was carried to the land of Laborator and Estotilandia." It is

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\* This does not correspond well with the Venetian modesty praised by Zurla ("fu sempre singolare costume dei Veneti il non cercar plausi, ed ostentar loro meriti"), and which he believes may be assigned as the reason why the Zeni, during such a very long period, kept the voyages of their ancestors a secret to the world.

easy to perceive, that in this superficial notice there is no more proof of Johannes Sciolvus having seen Frisland than of his having seen Norway. How Frobisher mistook Greenland for Frisland has already been shown; and as it has been known and proved long ago that the whole of Maldonado's voyage is a fabrication, there only remains further to show what the Frisland of Columbus was.

In a note preserved by his son in his father's biography, Columbus mentions that he visited the Island of Tile in February, 1477. He says that its southern part is situated in  $73^{\circ}$  N. lat., and not in  $63^{\circ}$ , as had been said by others; that it lies much more to the westward than the first meridian of Ptolemy; that it is as large as England, and that the English, particularly those from Bristol, trade there; that the sea was not frozen when he was there; and that the tide rises and falls twenty-six fathoms. Finally, he says that this is the true Tile, which Ptolemy mentions, but which the moderns call Frisland.

Though the situation above-mentioned does not at all correspond with that assigned by the Zeni to Frisland, Zurla still supposes it to be that island, particularly on account of the trade with England, which he says we know (on Zeno's authority) was carried on from Frisland; whereas we know nothing of the kind with regard to Iceland (*quale si sa della Frislanda, e s'ignora della Islanda*). The truth is precisely the reverse.

In the first volume of Hackluyt there is an old poem entitled "The true processe of the Libeel of English policie exhorting all England to keepe the sea environ." It states the relations with different countries, as well as the objects of their commerce, and goes on to say, p. 201—

“Of Island te write is litle nede,  
Save of stock-fish; yet forsooth in deed  
Out of Bristowe, and costes many one,  
Men have practised by nedle and by stone  
Thider wardes within a litle while,  
Within twelue yere, and without perill  
Gon and come, as men were wont of old  
Of Scarborough unto the costes cold.  
And now so fele shippes this yere there ware,  
That moch losse for unfreyght they bare:  
Island might not make hem to bee fraught  
Unto the Hawys: thus much harme they caught.”

This poem, which is clear of all suspicion, was written, as is proved by other passages in it, about the middle of the fifteenth century, and clearly shows that at that time the English knew as little as all the rest of the north about either a Frisland, or a trade to Frisland. It proves further, that the island visited by Columbus

was Iceland. We see that he believed this to be the Thule of Ptolemy; that the southern navigators of that period called it Frisland; and that the idea generally entertained of its position was correct, viz., that the south side of Iceland lay in 63° N. lat. Finally, the poem furnishes an additional proof of the increase of the sea-ice in the fifteenth century, and the effect which it produced on the navigation of the northern seas, which increase most probably put a stop to the trade with England; for Hackluyt, in his preface, written in 1598, says, that from his book may be learned the most extraordinary facts, and, among others, that Bristol once carried on a trade with Norway and Ireland—a proof that at the time he wrote such trade no longer existed. It is easy to see here that Ireland is a misprint for Iceland, since we cannot conceive that a trade between Bristol and Ireland could ever be looked upon as anything very extraordinary.

It is further mentioned by John Dee, that Nicolas de Linne, a Franciscan friar, who, in 1360, travelled in the north, and wrote a book about it called “*Inventio Fortunata*,” set forth upon his voyages from the harbour of Linne (now King’s Lynn) in Norfolk, from whence, under ordinary circumstances, it took a fortnight to reach Iceland, which “had been of many yeeres a very common and usual trade.” He goes on to say, that by acts of the 2nd, 4th, and 31st of Edward III., the fishermen of Blackey, in Norfolk, were exempted from the King’s common service by reason of their trade to Iceland.

In like manner we find on the globe constructed by Martin Behaims the following remark:—“*In der Insel Islandt fengt mann den Stockfish, den mann in unser Laandt bringt.*”

Moreover, Zurlo might also have found in Italian authors arguments for the existence of a commercial intercourse between England and Iceland. Porcacchi da Castiglione, for example, says—“*Il mare agghiacciato dove è l’Islanda, alle quale vanno la state ogni anno i mercanti inglesi, per pescare e per comperar pesci.*”

The further proofs adduced by Zurlo are founded on the assumption that Bianchi’s ‘*Hydrographical Atlas*,’ executed in 1436, and Fra Mauro’s ‘*Mappomondo*,’ finished in 1459, bear evidence that the discoveries of the Zeni were known in Venice long before the younger Zeno brought them to light; this evidence, however, is entirely destitute of foundation. Agreeably to Zurlo’s own detailed explanation, the seventh chart of Bianchi contains an island called Huiles, another called Stilanda, and, to the north of Stilanda, another still larger island called Novercha and Stockfis. What resemblance is here to be found with Zeno’s chart, and what probability is there that the island, Stockfis, should represent any place not now existing? Reasoning from what has

just been mentioned, have we not every reason to believe that it means Iceland? And what is to hinder us from adhering to this latter opinion, even supposing the name Frisland were really marked on a little island lying close to the coast of Norway, as mentioned by Zurla (p. 18) in direct contradiction to his own detailed explanation of the chart in page 335? Zurla's book contains a copy of the mappamondo of Fra Mauro; a single glance at it is enough to convince us, that the latter never saw nor knew the chart of the *Zeni*; and besides, how can the island of Ixiland prove the existence of Frisland, grounded on a chart so incorrect as to represent Denmark as an island? Is there not much more reason for assuming that it represents the Feröe Islands, of the existence of which, at all events, there could be no doubt; but which we should in vain look for in the chart, if we suppose Ixiland to mean the imaginary Frisland?

On the other hand, Zurla himself mentions that in the *Mappamondo*, edited by Bernardo Silvano in 1511, Greenland is represented as a peninsula; there are also found three islands in the latitude, and to westward, of Great Britain and Ireland; but the name of Frisland is nowhere to be found, nor is there any island with a position corresponding to that assigned by Zeno to Frisland. This map contains, however, the names of Engrovelant, Gruenlant, and Islant.

In the *Isolario* of Benedetto Bordone, which we have already referred to, and which was published in 1526,\* we find nearly the same delineations, but more complete; inasmuch as the coast of Labrador is represented as connected with the New World. Greenland, on the contrary, under the name of l'Engrovelant, appears like a peninsula belonging to the Old World. Zurla mentions this as the first instance of the northern and eastern coasts of Greenland having been laid down in a *Mappamondo*; and which is really done here, they being represented as bounded by the Frozen Sea, to which I have already alluded, *mare congelatum*. At the same time, he remarks, as I have already mentioned, that Norway and Greenland are very incorrectly laid down in this chart, and that Greenland is placed at a great distance from its true position; this is very true, but still it has the form of a peninsula, and its misposition must be ascribed to the idea entertained, that it was continous with the northern extremity of Norway. That part of Norway, immediately opposite to it, is curiously enough called *Gottia Orientale*, at the same time that an island in the Baltic is named *Gottia*. The clue to this striking geographical anomaly is to be found in Porcacchi da Castiglione, where, speaking of the island *Gothland* (p. 9), he says, "E detta Got-

\* In the edition of 1547, the Pope's letter is dated 5th of June, 1521, and the privilege of "la Signoria di Venezia," 6th of March, 1526.

landia, che vuol dir buona terra (benche Gruntlandia la dicano non rettamente alcuni, i quali della terra prima Settentrionale a questa non fanno differentia).” Thus, by confounding Gothland with Greenland, the latter was in the south called Gottia, and the province of Norway, supposed to lie immediately to the eastward of it, was called Gottia Orientale.

Now, as these authors can scarcely be supposed to have had the same access to the accounts of the Zeni that Ramusio had, we are naturally led to infer from this very circumstance, that Nicolò Zeno, in constructing his chart, has in a great measure taken his materials from the other charts then generally in use, and, consequently, has retained nearly all their errors. Among these, one of the most remarkable was the laying down all the northern countries in much too high latitudes, in conformity with the exaggerated ideas, at that time entertained, of the cold which prevailed there: another, was the placing Shetland too near the coast of Norway: in fact, this last error is still to be observed in a chart made for King Christian IV. by Resen the elder, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, and which is preserved in the Royal Hydrographical Office in Copenhagen; nay, in the “Manual for Navigators,” published by Lauritz Benedict in 1567, printed in Copenhagen, and dedicated to Sir Hans Skovgaard, the distance from Skudesnæs to Shetland is only made to be twenty-five leagues, (whereas it is sixty-two,) though all the other distances along the coast of Norway are correct.

As to the word Frisland, it was natural enough for Zeno to hit upon this name, partly because we know from Columbus that in the south it was the name which was given to Iceland, and partly that English navigators, up to the beginning of the seventeenth century, still called the Ferøe Islands Ferris Islands,\* or Ferris Land (see Hall’s ‘Voyages in Purchas’s Pilgrims’), which gives us Frisland with much less alteration of orthography than the Italians generally permitted themselves to use with northern names.

What Zurla mentions concerning other authors who have written about Frisland, is a mere argument in a circle, which leads to no proof; for these authors, namely, Sanuto, Moletti, Ortelius, Mercator, Cluverio, &c., all lived later than Nicolò Zeno, and borrowed from him the theme, to which some of them in addition composed their own variations. When Ortelius, in his later editions, says, that it has been seen again, and called West England, this is evidently a repetition of Frobisher’s mistake in regard to the southern extremity of Greenland, as already explained. When Cluverio says, that in his time it belonged to the English crown, he decidedly contradicts the Zeni, unless we suppose the north to

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\* In old Danish, also, these islands were called Færøisland.

have been so destitute of historical information, that the different governments remained ignorant of what one had ceded to another. When Dudley goes so far in physical description as to report the variation of the compass, stating that it differs from that observed at the Ferøe Islands—and further, reports the temperature to be considerably below that of Iceland, which is situated so much nearer the Pole—his book may well be said to merit its title, ‘*Arcano del Mare* ;’ but it is strange that it should have induced Zurla to derive the name Frisland from the word signifying “to freeze,” an etymology which is not even applicable in the case of the countries which really bear the name. When Baubrand, on the other hand, contends that the island has never existed, otherwise it must have been known by the English, Dutch, Danish, and French navigators, he asserts a positive truth, and not, as Zurla calls it, “*ultra falsità*,” a denunciation which ought to be supported by better proofs than the quoting of a passage from ‘*La Martinière’s Grand Dictionnaire Géographique*,’ which is entirely written in the spirit of Zeno’s chart. When, finally, Zurla makes the remark, that a voyage from the Straits of Gibraltar, when the vessel had been driven to the westward of Ireland, could not terminate in a shipwreck at the Ferøe Islands, but that such a catastrophe must have happened much more to the westward, the refutation of such an assertion will naturally appear superfluous to every one who has the least idea of navigation, where the paths are so very different from those on land.

As an additional argument Zurla mentions that allusion is made to the voyages of the Zeni in the genealogical table of their family, drawn up by Marco Barbaro, and inserted in vol. vii. of his “*Discendenze Patrizie*,” which was written by him in 1536. Here it must be observed that this work is a manuscript, and that it is therefore impossible to decide when or by whom any article in it was written. The families of Zeno and Barbaro were related to each other, and were on such friendly terms, that Nicolò Zeno’s work was dictated to Daniel Barbaro, Patriarch of Aquileia, and a brother of Marco. In 1536 Nicolò Zeno had already completed the 21st year of his age; had been attached to the embassy in Constantinople; was the first-born of the family, and consequently might very well have been intrusted with the drawing up of the family genealogy. Ramusio, too, who was so diligent, and who besides knew of Catarino Zeno’s voyage, was certainly as likely to know of the other voyages as Barbaro was. Finally, Barbaro’s account, short as it is, contains considerable deviations from Nicolò Zeno’s account; for it refers the discoveries of Antonio to the year 1390, consequently to an epoch somewhat later, yet still to a year during which he resided in Venice; and moreover it mentions, that he “*si portò nel continente d’Estoti-*



landa, nell' America settentrionale ;” \* in other words, expressly ascribing to him the priority of discovery before either Columbus or Vespuccius, a thing which not even Nicolò Zeno himself had the effrontery to do.

As to Cardinal Zurla's last argument, the respectability and trustworthiness of Zeno and Barbaro, the examples of our own times furnish the best answer to it ; since we have lately witnessed a scientific voyage, undertaken at the expense of a powerful and enlightened government, all the observations of which, though published at the public expense, were anything but trustworthy ; and we have moreover seen, in another country, a respectable scientific body select an individual as their organ, and honour him with their gold medal, for a voyage of which the scientific part was a pure fiction, and the narrative by no means so well put together as that of Zeno.

Although I have endeavoured to refute the arguments of Cardinal Zurla in support of the genuineness of these voyages, still the attentive perusal of his work could not but inspire me with the highest respect for the diligence and the accuracy with which he has collected and communicated to the literary world information which could be found only in Venice, and perhaps was accessible only to an Italian. I trust that, while detailing my opposite views, I have clearly expressed my sentiments of respect, not only for the merits just alluded to, but also for that calm and dispassionate tone which distinguishes his work, and makes it so widely different from what was lately published in “ *Les Annales des Voyages,*” in a letter from Baron de Walckenaer to M. de la Roquette. The whole contents of this letter, and more particularly the contempt with which the author treats every one who does not subscribe to his hypothesis, makes it evident that any attempt at answer or refutation would be quite superfluous. I hope that this renowned savant will himself hereafter admit this, when, to use his own expressions, “ he can find leisure to make himself acquainted with old northern history, in order to ascertain from it how far it may be true that the inhabitants of the North were the first discoverers of America.” Until that period we must be allowed to consider his hypothesis as furnishing an additional proof that it is not from the south that we are to expect elucidations of the olden north. †

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\* It is extremely improbable that this expression should have been used in 1536. D. Martin Fernandez de Navarete, who has investigated this subject with the greatest diligence, found that the first instance of the name America occurring in print is in Glarcano's Geography, published at Basil in 1529. According to Herrera, the southern continent was at that time understood by this name, and it was not till much later that the distinction between North and South America was established.

† This remark is of course not meant to apply to the libraries of the south of Europe, so much richer in documents, and so much better preserved than ours. I believe, on

It is remarkable enough that the year when Nicolò Zeno is said to have commenced his voyages proves to be the identical one in which the famous Vitalian Freebooters commenced a career in the north, which bore the strongest resemblance to that which Zeno describes as having been pursued by his ancestors. If, therefore, at that period a couple of Venetians did really navigate the northern seas in the manner described, they most probably belonged to this band, composed of adventurers from all nations.

It is not a new conjecture that the Greenland colony may have owed its destruction to the ravages of these freebooters. That the pirates of those days had intercourse with Greenland is confirmed by Olaus Magnus Gothus, in his work intituled '*Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus*,' chap. ix., where he says, "We will now show the course from the port of Vestrabord,\* in Iceland, to the high rock Huitsark, which is situated in the sea about half way to Gruntland. This rock is the resort of a set of pirates, who make use of vessels constructed of leather, and during their voyages go in quest of merchant vessels, which they destroy by perforating them, not from the inside but from below water. I myself saw, in 1505, two such small boats made of leather, which were suspended, as a trophy, over the western entrance of the cathedral church of Opslo, consecrated to Halvard. They were said to have been captured by Haagen (who governed that country) when on a cruise to the coast of Greenland." Farther, he says, in chap. xi., "In the preceding chapter we have spoken about the high rock Huitsark, situated between Iceland and Greenland; still it may not be superfluous to mention some more particulars concerning it. About the year 1494, it was the abode of two well-known pirates, named Pining and Porthort, who, along with their whole gang, were, by a severe edict of the northern monarchs, denounced as outlaws to the whole human race, on account of their horrible piracies; the tolerance of which was looked upon as an insult and disgrace to all kingdoms and independent nations. Issuing from this rock they committed the most infamous misdeeds against all who navigated the seas far or near to them."

In Purchas, also, we find it mentioned, in vol. iii. page 520,

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the contrary, that it would be of the greatest importance to the history of the north, if a person, well furnished with the previous necessary acquirements, would spend the best years of his life in minutely investigating the library of the Vatican.

\* We shall in vain search for this name in all the existing maps, it is not even to be found in the one annexed to the translation of Olaus Magnus's work published in 1567; it is nowhere to be found but in the chart of the Zeni! Nicolò Zeno, by using the name *Votrabord*, has made it very clear that he really did avail himself of all the existing sources of information. The name is not to be found in the annals of Iceland, and appears to be one of the innumerable fictions of Olaus Gothus.

that "Punnus and Pothorse have inhabited Island certayne yeere, and sometimes have gone to sea, and have had their trade in Groneland," &c. This piece of information is said to have been found, together with Ivar Beres' Chorography, in the Ferøe Islands, written in an old account book. How little the Ferøe Islands were known, even at that time, 1625, may be concluded from Purchas adding "that they are situated between Scotland and Iceland."

As Hvidtfeldt mentions, that in the year 1485 King Johannes took Pinnick and Pyckhorst into his pay, for the purpose of punishing one set of pirates by means of another, it is not improbable that during the fifteenth century Greenland may have served as an asylum to the numerous freebooters then infesting the northern seas, and, in this way, may have been better known to them than to the geographers of those days. How far the Zeni may have belonged to these marauders is, of course, mere matter of conjecture,—the more so, as their relation does not inform us of the manner in which Antonio returned to Venice. If he returned by sea, and in company with the remnants of the two Venetian crews, it is not likely that their exploits would have remained a secret in Venice for one hundred and seventy years, excepting indeed that the parties concerned had all of them their good reasons for keeping silence. It is, on the whole, remarkable enough that though the letters written by the Zeni were addressed to the common native metropolis, they have nevertheless in none of them deigned to notice by name any of their associates.

These reflections have led me to the firm conviction that the voyages of the Zeni, at least in all the main points, are mere fabrications. I feel perfectly convinced that there must exist still more complete proofs leading to the same conviction, but the literary resources of this place (Copenhagen), as well as my own intimacy with this branch of literature, are too limited to enable me to bring more to light. I have been induced to publish my views from this consideration, that while much industry and ingenuity have been exerted in the attempt to prove the genuineness of the voyages, only the most superficial efforts have been made to combat an opinion which, it appears to me, is erroneous.

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