

him a precious collection of Greek manuscripts, now buried in the rarely-used library of the Escorial.* The first Greek book was printed only fourteen years before the discovery of America, although the invention of printing was probably made simultaneously and wholly independently by Guttenberg in Strasburg and Mayence, and by Lorenz Yansson Koster at Haarlem, between 1436 and 1439, and, therefore, in the fortunate period of the first immigration of the learned Greeks into Italy.†

Two centuries before the sources of Greek literature were opened to the nations of the West, and twenty-five years before the birth of Dante—one of the greatest epochs in the history of the civilization of Southern Europe—events occurred in the interior of Asia, as well as in the east of Africa, which, by extending commercial intercourse, accelerated the period of the circumnavigation of Africa and the expedition of Columbus. The advance of the Moguls in twenty-six years from Pekin and the Chinese Wall to Cracow and Liegnitz, terrified Christendom. A number of able monks were sent forth as missionaries and ambassadors: John de Plano Carpini and Nicholas Ascelin to Batu Khan, and Ruisbrock (Rubruquis) to Mangu Khan at Karakorum. The last-named of these traveling missionaries has left us many clear and important observations on the distribution of languages and races of men in the middle of the thirteenth century. He was the first who recognized that the Huns, the Baschkirs (inhabitants of Paskatir, the Baschgird of Ibn-Fozlan), and the Hungarians were of Finnish (Uralian) race; and he even found Gothic tribes who still retained their language in the strong-holds of the Crimea.‡ Rubruquis excited the eager cupidity of the

* Villemain, *Mélanges Historiques et Littéraires*, t. ii., p. 135.

† The result of the investigations of the librarian Ludwig Wachler, at Breslau (see his *Geschichte der Litteratur*, 1833, th. i., s. 12-23). Printing without movable types does not go back, even in China, beyond the beginning of the tenth century of our era. The first four books of Confucius were printed, according to Klaproth, in the province of Szüt-schun, between 890 and 925; and the description of the technical manipulation of the Chinese printing-press might have been read in Western countries even as early as 1310, in Raschid-eddin's Persian history of the rulers of Khatai. According to the most recent results of the important researches of Stanislas Julien, however, an iron-smith in China itself, between the years 1041 and 1048 A.D., or almost 400 years before Guttenberg, would seem to have used movable types, made of burned clay. This is the invention of Pi-sching, but it was not brought into application.

‡ See the proofs in my *Examen Crit.*, t. ii. p. 316-320. Josafat Barbaro (1436), and Ghislin von Busbech (1555), still found, between