

the Pope, begging him to despatch a number of wise and learned teachers to instruct them in our faith. But on account of the hindrances which these ambassadors met with they turned back without reaching Rome. And in later times there came an ambassador to Pope Eugenius IV,<sup>1</sup> who rehearsed to him the great friendship that those princes and their people bore towards Christians. And I myself discoursed at length with this ambassador on many subjects, as of the greatness of their royal buildings, and of the vastness of their rivers in length and breadth. And he told me many things that were wonderful as to the multitudes of cities and towns which are built on the banks of those rivers; as that upon one river alone are to be found two hundred cities, all of which have their marble bridges of great width and length, and adorned with a profusion of marble columns. The country indeed is as fine a country as has ever been discovered; and not only may one have great gain, and get many valuable wares by trading thither, but also they have gold and silver and precious stones, and great abundance of all kinds of spices such as are never brought into our part of the world. And it is a fact that they have many men of great acquirements in philosophy and astrology, and other persons of great knowledge in all the arts, and of the greatest capacity who are employed in the administration of that great territory, and in directing the ordering of battle.

“From the city of Lisbon going right to the westward there are in the map which I have mentioned twenty-six spaces, each containing two hundred and fifty miles, to the great and very noble city of QUINSAI, which has a circuit of one hundred miles or thirty-five leagues.”

---

NOTE XVI.

EXTRACTS REGARDING CATHAY FROM THE NARRATIVE  
OF SIGNOR JOSAFABA BARBARO.

(Written about 1480, but the information acquired about 1436.)

“And in this same province of Zagatai is the very great and populous city of SAMMARCANT, through which all those of CHINI and MACHINI pass to and fro, and also those of CATHAY, whether traders or travellers. . . . I have not been further in this direction myself, but as I have heard it spoken of by many people, I will tell you that Chini and Machini are two very great provinces inhabited by idolaters. They are, in fact, the country in which they make plates and dishes of porcelain. And in those places there is great store of wares, especially of jewels and of fabrics of silk and other stuffs. And from those provinces you go on into that of Cathay, about which I will tell you what I learned from

<sup>1</sup> 1431-1447.