

in the year of the Lord M.CCC.XXX, in the month of May, and at the house of St. Anthony in Padua. Nor did he trouble himself to adorn the matter with difficult Latin and conceits of style, but just as the other told his story so Friar William wrote it, so that all may understand the more easily what is told herein.

51. Friar Marchesino of Bassano addeth his say; and telleth a pretty passage that he heard of Odoric.

I, Friar Marchesino of Bassano,¹ of the Order of Minorites, desire to say that I heard the preceding relations from the aforesaid Friar Odoric when he was still living; and I heard a good deal more which he has not set down. Among other stories which he told, this was one:—He related that once upon a time, when the Great Khan was on his journey from Sandu to Cambalech, he (Friar Odoric), with four other Minor Friars, was sitting under the shade of a tree by the side of the road along which the Khan was about to pass. And one of the brethren was a bishop.² So when the Khan began to draw near, the bishop put on his episcopal robes and took a cross and fastened it to the end of a staff, so as to raise it aloft; and then those four began to chaunt with loud voices the hymn, *Veni Creator Spiritus!* And then the Great Khan hearing the sound thereof, asked what it meant? And those four barons who go beside him replied that it was four of the Frank Rabbans (*i.e.*, of the Christian monks). So the Khan called them to him, and the bishop thereupon taking the cross from the staff presented it to the Khan to kiss. Now at the time he was lying down, but as soon as he saw the cross he sat up, and doffing the cap that he

¹ I take this from FAR. and BOLL. The story as told by Marchesino in their versions is more simple and genuine than as related in the other manuscripts.

² This may have been the venerable John of Monte Corvino, or one of his suffragans appointed in 1312. The Khan was almost certainly Yesontimur, called by the Chinese Taiting, a great-grandson of Kublai, who reigned from 1323 to 1328.