

NOTICES OF THE LAND ROUTE TO CATHAY AND  
OF ASIATIC TRADE IN THE FIRST HALF OF  
THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

BY FRANCIS BALDUCCI PEGOLOTTI.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICES.

THE original of the curious work from which the extracts in the following pages are derived, was first published as an appendix to an anonymous book called "*A Treatise on the Decima and the various other burdens imposed on the community of Florence; also on the currency and commerce of the Florentines up to the Sixteenth Century.* (In four vols., 4to.) Lisbon and Lucca, 1765-66." (*Della Decima, etc.*). The imprint is fictitious, as the work was really published at Florence, and the author was Gian Francesco Pagnini del Ventura of Volterra.<sup>1</sup>

The work of Pegolotti occupies the whole of the third volume. It was taken by Pagnini from a MS., apparently unique, in the Riccardian Library at Florence, called by the author (*Libro di Divisamenti di Paesi, etc.*) "*The Book of the Descriptions of Countries,*"<sup>2</sup> etc., though Pagnini gave it the more descriptive title of

<sup>1</sup> *Canonico Moreni, Bibliografia Storico-Ragionata della Toscana*, ii, p. 144-5. Pagnini was born at Volterra in 1715, and studied law at Rome. He filled a succession of considerable offices connected with Finance and Agriculture under the Tuscan Government, and died in 1789. There is a monument and bust erected by his friends in the cloister of S. Annunziata and S. Pier Maggiore at Florence. Besides the work named above he published in cooperation with Angelo Tavanti (1751) a translation of Locke upon Interest and the Value of Money, with a dissertation of his own on the True Price of Things, on Money, and on the commerce of the Romans. He also published letters on agricultural subjects, and was the editor of *Applausi Poetici per la gloriosa Esaltazione all' Augusto Trono Imperiale di Francesco III, Granduca di Toscana*, Firenze, 1745. (See *Scritt. Class. Ital. di Economia Politica, Pte. Moderna*, tom. II; and *Moreni, u.s.*)

<sup>2</sup> I imagine this to be the proper translation of *Divisamenti* here, as Marco Polo's book is in some copies termed "*Divisement des Diversités,*" etc. (*Pauthier, p. 33*).