

roads be safe to travel until the other lord be proclaimed who is to reign in room of him who is deceased.

Cathay is a province which contained a multitude of cities and towns. Among others there is one in particular, that is to say the capital city, to which is great resort of merchants, and in which there is a vast amount of trade; and this city is called Cambalec. And the said city hath a circuit of one hundred miles, and is all full of people and houses and of dwellers in the said city.

You may calculate that a merchant with a dragoman, and with two men servants, and with goods to the value of twenty-five thousand golden florins, should spend on his way to Cathay from sixty to eighty *sommi* of silver, and not more if he manage well; and for all the road back again from Cathay to Tana, including the expenses of living and the pay of servants, and all other charges, the cost will be about five *sommi* per head of pack animals, or something less. And you may reckon the *sommo* to be worth five golden florins.<sup>1</sup> You may reckon also that each ox-waggon will require one ox, and will carry ten cantars Genoese weight; and the camel-waggon will require three camels, and will carry thirty cantars Genoese weight; and the horse-waggon will require one horse, and will commonly carry six and half cantars of silk, at 250 Genoese pounds to the cantar. And a bale<sup>2</sup> of silk may be reckoned at between 110 and 115 Genoese pounds.

and 160). And the expression in the text (*tutti i Christiani delle parti di Romania innanzi in verso il ponente*) seems to include Romania. Yet I do not think the Greeks were or are regarded as Franks.

<sup>1</sup> Taking the gold-florin or ducat at 9s. 6d., the value of the goods will be nearly £12,000 and the cost of the merchant's journey from £140 to £190 going, and nearly £12 a head on his beasts coming back.

<sup>2</sup> *Scibetto*. I cannot trace this word in any dictionary, but it looks like Arabic. The nearest thing I can find is *sibt*—hides of ox leather (*Freytag*). It is possible that the silk may have been packed in such. From India and China now it is generally packed in mats. Pegolotti writes it in another place in the plural *iscibetti*, with *fardelli* as synonymous (p. 131). The Genoese pound of twelve ounces was equal to about  $\frac{5}{7}$  of the London pound ( $\frac{1 \cdot 00}{1 \cdot 42}$ ), as we learn from Pegolotti in another part of his book.