

The Dominican Friar Jacopo of Acqui was a contemporary of Polo's, and was the author of a somewhat obscure Chronicle called *Imago Mundi*.* Now this Chronicle does contain mention of Marco's capture in action by the Genoese, but attributes it to a different action from Curzola, and one fought at a time when Polo could not have been present. The passage runs as follows in a manuscript of the Ambrosian Library, according to an extract given by Baldelli Boni :—

“In the year of Christ MCCLXXXVI, in the time of Pope Boniface VI., of whom we have spoken above, a battle was fought in Arminia, at the place called Layaz, between xv. galleys of Genoese merchants and xxv. of Venetian merchants; and after a great fight the galleys of the Venetians were beaten, and (the crews) all slain or taken; and among them was taken Messer Marco the Venetian, who was in company with those merchants, and who was called *Milono*, which is as much as to say ‘a thousand thousand pounds,’ for so goes the phrase in Venice. So this Messer Marco Milono the Venetian, with the other Venetian prisoners, is carried off to the prison of Genoa, and there kept for a long time. This Messer Marco was a long time with his father and uncle in Tartary, and he there saw many things, and made much wealth, and also learned many things, for he was a man of ability. And so, being in prison at Genoa, he made a Book concerning the great wonders of the World, *i.e.*, concerning such of them as he had seen. And what he told in the Book was not as much as he had really seen, because of the tongues of detractors, who, being ready to impose their own lies on others, are over hasty to set down as lies what they in their perversity disbelieve, or do not understand. And because there are many great and strange things in that Book, which are reckoned past all credence, he was asked by his friends on his death-bed to correct the Book by removing everything that went beyond the facts. To which his reply was that he had not told *one-half* of what he had really seen!” †

This statement regarding the capture of Marco *at the Battle of Ayas* is one which cannot be true, for we know that he did not reach Venice till 1295, travelling from Persia by way of Trebizond and the Bosphorus, whilst the Battle of Ayas of which we have purposely given some detail, was fought in May, 1294.

* Though there is no precise information as to the birth or death of this writer, who belonged to a noble family of Lombardy, the Bellingeri, he can be traced with tolerable certainty as in life in 1289, 1320, and 1334. (See the Introduction to his Chronicle in the Turin *Monumenta*, *Scriptores* III.)

† There is another MS. of the *Imago Mundi* at Turin, which has been printed in the *Monumenta*. The passage about Polo in that copy differs widely in wording, is much shorter, and contains no date. But it relates his capture as having taken place at *Là Glazà*, which I think there can be no doubt is also intended for Ayas (sometimes called *Giàzza*), a place which in fact is called *Glaza* in three of the MSS. of which various readings are given in the edition of the Société de Géographie (p. 535).