

We do not know, as has been said, how long Marco survived the making of this will, but we know, from a scanty series of documents commencing in June of the following year (1325), that he had *then* been some time dead.*

48. He was buried, no doubt, according to his declared wish, in the Church of S. Lorenzo; and indeed Sansovino bears testimony to the fact in a confused notice of our Traveller.† But there does not seem to have been any monument to Marco, though the sarcophagus which had been erected to his father Nicolo, by his own filial care, existed till near the end of the 16th century in the porch or corridor leading to the old Church of S. Lorenzo, and bore the inscription: "SEPULTURA DOMINI NICOLAI PAULO DE CONTRATA S. IOANNIS GRISOSTEMI." The church was renewed from its foundations in 1592, and then, probably, the sarcophagus was cast aside and lost, and with it all certainty as to the position of the tomb.‡

Cicogna, Iscrizioni Veneziane, III. 489-493. We give Marco's in the original language, line for line with the facsimile, in *Appendix C*.

There is no signature, as may be seen, except those of the Witnesses and the Notary. The sole presence of a Notary was held to make a deed valid, and from about the middle of the 13th century in Italy it is common to find no actual signature (even of witnesses) except that of the Notary. The peculiar flourish before the Notary's name is what is called the *Tabellionato*, a fanciful distinctive monogram which each Notary adopted. Marco's Will is unfortunately written in a very cramped hand with many contractions. The other two Wills (of Marco the Elder and Maffeo) are in beautiful and clear Gothic penmanship.

* We have noticed formerly (pp. 14-15, *note*) the recent discovery of a document bearing what was supposed to be the autograph signature of our Traveller. The document in question is the Minute of a Resolution of the Great Council, attested by the signatures of three members, of whom the last is MARCUS PAULLO. But the date alone, 11th March, 1324, is sufficient to raise the gravest doubts as to this signature being that of our Marco. And further examination, as I learn from a friend at Venice, has shown that the same name occurs in connection with analogous entries on several subsequent occasions up to the middle of the century. I presume that this Marco Polo is the same that is noticed in our *Appendix B*, II. as a voter in the elections of the Doges Marino Faliero and Giovanni Gradenigo. I have not been able to ascertain his relation to either branch of the Polo family; but I suspect that he belonged to that of S. Geremia, of which there *was* certainly a Marco about the middle of the century.

† "Under the *angiporta* (of S. Lorenzo) [see plate] is buried that Marco Polo surnamed Milione, who wrote the Travels in the New World, and who was the first before Christopher Columbus to discover new countries. No faith was put in him because of the extravagant things that he recounted; but in the days of our Fathers Columbus augmented belief in him, by discovering that part of the world which eminent men had heretofore judged to be uninhabited." (*Venezia Descritta*, etc., f. 23 v.) Marco Barbaro attests the same inscription in his *Genealogies* (copy in Museo Civico at Venice).

‡ *Cicogna*, II. 385.