

of the patriotic romance, so far as I have heard, brought none of them into the lists in its defence.

But since Castaldi has got his statue from the printers of Lombardy, would it not be mere equity that the mariners of Spain should set up a statue at Huelva to the Pilot Alonzo Sanchez of that port, who, according to Spanish historians, after discovering the New World, died in the house of Columbus at Terceira, and left the crafty Genoese to appropriate his journals, and rob him of his fame?

Seriously; if anybody in Feltre cares for the real reputation of his native city, let him do his best to have that preposterous and discreditable fiction removed from the base of the statue. If Castaldi has deserved a statue on other and truer grounds let *him* stand; if not, let him be burnt into honest lime! I imagine that the original story that attracted Mr. Curzon was more *jeu d'esprit* than anything else; but that the author, finding what a stone he had set rolling, did not venture to retract.

88. Mr. Curzon's own observations, which I have italicised about the resemblance of the two systems are, however, very striking, and seem clearly to indicate the derivation of the art from China. But I should suppose that in the tradition, if there ever was any genuine tradition of the kind at Feltre (a circumstance worthy of all doubt), the name of Marco Polo was introduced merely because it was so prominent a name in Eastern Travel. The fact has been generally overlooked and forgotten\* that, for many years in the course of the 14th century, not only were missionaries of the Roman Church and Houses of the Franciscan Order established in the chief cities of China, but a regular trade was carried on overland between Italy and China, by way of Tana (or Azov), Astracan, Otrar and Kamul, insomuch that instructions for the Italian merchant following that route form the two first chapters in the Mercantile Handbook of Balducci Pegolotti (*circa* 1340).† Many a traveller besides Marco Polo might therefore have brought home the block-books. And this is the less to be ascribed to him because

Frequent opportunities for such introduction in the age following Polo's.

\* Ramusio himself appears to have been entirely unconscious of it, *vide supra*, p. 3.

† This subject has been fully treated in *Cathay and the Way Thither*.