

her in marriage to the Bailo Achmath (for they called him 'the Bailo,' or, as we should say, 'the Vicegerent'),³ and we will arrange for his giving you such a government or such an office for three years." And so the man would surrender his daughter. And Achmath would go to the Emperor, and say: "Such a government is vacant, or will be vacant on such a day. So-and-So is a proper man for the post." And the Emperor would reply: "Do as you think best;" and the father of the girl was immediately appointed to the government. Thus either through the ambition of the parents, or through fear of the Minister, all the beautiful women were at his beck, either as wives or mistresses. Also he had some five-and-twenty sons who held offices of importance, and some of these, under the protection of their father's name, committed scandals like his own, and many other abominable iniquities. This Achmath also had amassed great treasure, for everybody who wanted office sent him a heavy bribe.

In such authority did this man continue for two-and-twenty years. At last the people of the country, to wit the Cathayans, utterly wearied with the endless outrages and abominable iniquities which he perpetrated against them, whether as regarded their wives or their own persons, conspired to slay him and revolt against the government. Amongst the rest there was a certain Cathayan named Chenchu, a commander of a thousand, whose mother, daughter, and wife had all been dishonoured by Achmath. Now this man, full of bitter resentment, entered into parley regarding the destruction of the Minister with another Cathayan whose name was Vanchu, who was a commander of 10,000. They came to the conclusion that the time to do the business would be during the Great Kaan's absence from Cambaluc. For after stopping there three months he used to go to