

NOTE 2.—The remarks of a Chinese historian on Kúblái's administration may be appropriately quoted here: "Hupilai Han must certainly be regarded as one of the greatest princes that ever existed, and as one of the most successful in all that he undertook. This he owed to his judgment in the selection of his officers, and to his talent for commanding them. He carried his arms into the most remote countries, and rendered his name so formidable that not a few nations spontaneously submitted to his supremacy. Nor was there ever an Empire of such vast extent. He cultivated literature, protected its professors, and even thankfully received their advice. Yet he never placed a Chinese in his cabinet, and he employed foreigners only as Ministers. These, however, he chose with discernment, *always excepting the Ministers of Finance*. He really loved his subjects; and if they were not always happy under his government, it is because they took care to conceal their sufferings. There were in those days no Public Censors whose duty it is to warn the Sovereign of what is going on: and no one dared to speak out for fear of the resentment of the Ministers, who were the depositaries of the Imperial authority, and the authors of the oppressions under which the people laboured. Several Chinese, men of letters and of great ability, who lived at Hupilai's court, might have rendered that prince the greatest service in the administration of his dominions, but they never were intrusted with any but subordinate offices, and they were not in a position to make known the malversations of those public blood-suckers." (*De Mailla*, IX. 459-460.)

AHMAD was a native of Fenáket (afterwards Sháh-Rúkhia), near the Jaxartes, and obtained employment under Kúblái through the Empress Jamui Khatun, who had known him before her marriage. To her Court he was originally attached, but we find him already employed in high financial office in 1264. Kúblái's demands for money must have been very large, and he eschewed looking too closely into the character of his financial agents or the means by which they raised money for him. Ahmad was very successful in this, and being a man of great talent and address, obtained immense influence over the Emperor, until at last nothing was done save by his direction, though he always *appeared* to be acting under the orders of Kúblái. The Chinese authorities in Gaubil and De Mailla speak strongly of his oppressions, but only in general terms, and without affording such particulars as we derive from the text.

The Hereditary Prince Chingkim was strongly adverse to Ahmad; and some of the high Chinese officials on various occasions made remonstrance against the Minister's proceedings; but Kúblái turned a deaf ear to them, and Ahmad succeeded in ruining most of his opponents. (*Gaubil*, 141, 143, 151; *De Mailla*, IX. 316-317; *D'Ohsson*, II. 468-469.)

[The Rev. W. S. Ament (*Marco Polo in Cambaluc*, 105) writes: "No name is more execrated than that of Ah-ha-ma (called Achmath by Polo), a Persian, who was chosen to manage the finances of the Empire. He was finally destroyed by a combination against him while the Khan was absent with Crown Prince Chen Chin, on a visit to Shang Tu." Achmath has his biography under the name of *A-ho-ma* (Ahmed) in the ch. 205 of the *Yuen-shi*, under the rubric "Villanous Ministers." (*Bretschneider*, *Med. Res.* I. p. 272.)—H. C.]

NOTE 3.—This term *Bailo* was the designation of the representative of Venetian dignity at Constantinople, called *Podestà* during the period of the Latin rule there, and it has endured throughout the Turkish Empire to our own day in the form *Balios* as the designation of a Frank Consul. [There was also a Venetian *bailo* in Syria.—H. C.] But that term itself could scarcely have been in use at Cambaluc, even among the handful of Franks, to designate the powerful Minister, and it looks as if Marco had confounded the word in his own mind with some Oriental term of like sound, possibly the Arabic *Wáli*, "a Prince, Governor of a Province, . . . a chief Magistrate." (*F. Johnson*.) In the *Roteiro* of the Voyage of Vasco da Gama (2nd ed. Lisbon, 1861, pp. 53-54) it is said that on the arrival of the ships at Calicut the King sent "a man who was called the *Bale*, which is much the same as *Alquaide*." And the Editor gives the same explanation that I have suggested.