

original word was *Sings* (see I. 432, *supra*); anyhow that was the proper term for the thing meant.

In his note on this chapter, Pauthier produces evidence that Yang-chau was the seat of a *Lu* or circuit* from 1277, and also of a *Sing* or Government-General, but only for the first year after the conquest, viz. 1276-1277, and he seems (for his argument is obscure) to make from this the unreasonable deduction that at this period Kúblái placed Marco Polo—who could not be more than twenty-three years of age, and had been but two years in Cathay—in charge either of the general government, or of an important district government in the most important province of the empire.

In a later note M. Pauthier speaks of 1284 as the date at which the *Sing* of the province of Kiang-ché was transferred from Yang-chau to Hang-chau; this is probably to be taken as a correction of the former citations, and it better justifies Polo's statement. (*Pauthier*, pp. 467, 492.)

I do not think that we are to regard Marco as having held at any time the important post of Governor-General of Kiang-ché. The expressions in the G. T. are: "*Meser Marc Pol meisme, celui de cui trate ceste livre, seigneurie ceste cité por trois anz.*" Pauthier's MS. A. appears to read: "*Et ot seigneurie, Marc Pol, en ceste cité, trois ans.*" These expressions probably point to the government of the *Lu* or circuit of Yang-chau, just as we find in ch. lxxiii. another Christian, Mar Sarghis, mentioned as Governor of Chin-kiang fu for the same term of years, that city being also the head of a *Lu*. It is remarkable that in Pauthier's MS. C., which often contains readings of peculiar value, the passage runs (and also in the Bern MS.): "*Et si vous dy que ledit Messire Marc Pol, celui meisme de qui nostre livre parle, sejourna, en ceste cité de Janguy. iii. ans accompliz, par le commandement du Grant Kaan,*" in which the nature of his employment is not indicated at all (though *sejourna* may be an error for *seigneurie*). The impression of his having been Governor-General is mainly due to the Ramusian version, which says distinctly indeed that "*M. Marco Polo di commissione del Gran Can n' ebbe il governo tre anni continui in luogo di un dei detti Baroni,*" but it is very probable that this is a gloss of the translator. I should conjecture his rule at Yang-chau to have been between 1282, when we know he was at the capital (vol. i. p. 422), and 1287-1288, when he must have gone on his first expedition to the Indian Seas.

CHAPTER LXIX.

CONCERNING THE CITY OF NANGHIN.

NANGHIN is a very noble Province towards the west. The people are Idolaters (and so forth) and live by trade and manufactures. They have silk in great abundance, and they weave many fine tissues of silk and gold. They have all sorts of corn and victuals very cheap, for the province is a most productive one. Game also is

* The *Lu* or Circuit was an administrative division under the Mongols, intermediate between the *Sing* and the *Fu*, or department. There were 185 *lu* in all China under Kúblái. (*Pauth.* 333). [*Mr. E. L. Oxenham, Hist. Atlas Chin. Emp.*, reckons 10 provinces or *sheng*, 39 *fu* cities, 316 *chau*, 188 *lu*, 12 military governorships.—H. C.]