

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD= THE NICKNAME MILION to 240 *denari* (*grossi*); or alternatively it was equal in 1283 to 13.3 gold ducats and later to 10 gold ducats, the ducat being thus 1.5 (or 2) *soldi* and 18 (or 24) *denari*. The *lira dei grossi* was also equal to 20 *lire ai grossi* (*ad grossos*) each of which was thus equal to one *soldo dei grossi*, and to 32 *lire dei piccoli* each of which was thus equal to 7.5 *denari* (*grossi*). *Lira* without definition is generally to be understood as *lira dei piccoli*. G. CASTELLANI, writing in 1924, confirms the statement that in 1284 the gold ducat was 18 *denari*, and it was raised to 24 in 1328.

Following these two authorities as carefully as I have been able to do through the intricate calculations required, and allowing (for 1924) 100 modern *lire* as the rough equivalent of the pound sterling, I obtain the following very rough result :—

Charitable bequests, 2000 <i>lire</i>	- - - - -	£280
Annuity, 8 <i>lire dei grossi</i> , £36 at 6 per cent.(?)	- - - - -	(at most) £600
Goods as in Inventory, 306l. 15s. 2d. (<i>dei grossi</i>)	- - - - -	£1373
Part value of House (£960 ?)	- - - - -	£700
		£2953

To this must be added the value of the furniture, linen, etc., left to the widow, but on the other hand the capital sum to produce the annuity of £36 may have been far less than £600. And so it seems as if Marco Polo's property at the time of his death may have been about the equivalent of £3000; and that would hardly have earned the owner the nickname of Million.¹

Milion or Milione, nevertheless, he and his book were called in his lifetime, and *Il Milione* remains the ordinary name of the book in Italy to this day, while the Corte Sabbionera near the site of the Polo house is officially labelled Corte del Milion. A contemporary, Iacopo d'Acqui, writes in his *Imago Mundi*, "In the year of Jesus Christ 1296, in the time of Pope Boniface VI, a battle took place in the sea of Armenia at the place called Layas between 15 ships of Genoese merchants and 25 of Venetians, and after a great fight the ships of the Venetians are defeated and all are killed and captured. Among whom is captured Sir Marchus of Venice, who was with those merchants, who was called Millonus (or Milionus), which is the same as wealth of a thousand thousands of pounds; and so he is called at Venice. This Sir Marchus Milonus of Venice with others of the

¹ Y. II. p. 591; Giuseppe CASTELLANI "I valori delle monete espresse nel testamento di Marco Polo" in *Rivista mensile della Città di Venezia*, Sett., 1924; Or. d.14 (for 25 read 55), p. 538 below.