

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD^s F. PIPINO'S PROLOGUE

THE PROLOGUE TO THE BOOK OF SIR MARCUS PAULUS OF VENICE ABOUT THE CONDITIONS AND CUSTOMS OF THE EASTERN REGIONS BEGINS.¹ The book of the prudent, honourable, and most faithful Sir Marcus Paulus of Venice concerning the conditions of the eastern regions, by him faithfully published and written out in the common tongue, I brother Francis Pipino of Bologna of the Order of the Brothers Preachers am forced by many of my fathers and masters to reduce by true and faithful translation from the common tongue to Latin, that those who are more pleased with Latin than with the common speech, and these too who on account of the variety of tongues of every kind or on account of the difference of idioms are unable to understand the proper meaning of another tongue easily or at all, may either

¹ Following the example of RAMUSIO, I have thought it best to prefix the opening paragraphs of certain important families of manuscripts which could not be worked into the text of F. The Latin version by Pipino was made from a Venetian text which has been identified by B. with the prototype of VA. RAMUSIO says twice (*Pref.* fol. 8v^o, p. 588 below, and in the title of Pipino's Prologue, which he also translates) that it was made in 1320, but no corroboration of this has been found. It seems that General Chapters of his Order, at the earlier of which Pipino was perhaps told to make the translation, were held at Bologna in 1302 and 1315, and that he was sent to Palestine in 1320 (QUÉTIF & ECHARD *Script. Ord. Praed.*, I. p. 539). According to L. MANZONI ("Frate Francesco Pipino da Bologna" in *Atti e Mem. della R. Dep. di Storia Patria*, 3a serie vol. XIII., 1896, pp. 262-273) Pipino's *Chronicon* was finished near the end of 1314 (*id.* p. 270), and since in lib. 24 cc. 71,89 he mentions his own translation of Polo that must probably have been finished before 1314, but not before 1310, as the Prologue was clearly written after the death in or soon after that year of Matteo Polo.

The division into three books, which is found in some texts, is indicated in F only by the use of special initials.

After these prologues to P, FA', and FB', the translation of F begins on page 63 with the Table of Chapters. In this Table the first number is the correct number of the chapter, followed by the title or rubric of the chapter. This is followed by two Roman numbers in brackets. The first of these is the number given to the chapter in the original Table, and the second the number given to it in the original text. These are followed by the page on which the chapter begins in this volume so that the whole will serve as a Table of Contents to the present version. Owing to the omission of c. 21 from the original Table and the failure to number c. 20 in the text, c. 23 is numbered 22 in both places, and thenceforward the numbers are generally at least one wrong. This error was corrected in 1824, but B. divided c. 95 and c. 194 so that his numbers also are wrong by one or two. It is with regret that I have been obliged to make the chapter numbers differ from those of B., but comparison of this translation with his French text is made easy by the fact that both books mark the pages of the original manuscript in the same way, namely the number of the leaf, followed by the letters *a* or *b* for the two columns of the *recto*, and by *c* or *d* for the two columns of the *verso* page.