

to one of the hostels which are established for this very purpose, and saith to the host thereof: "Make me a dinner for such a number of my friends, and I propose to expend such and such a sum upon it." Then the host does exactly as ordered, and the guests are better served than they would have been in the entertainer's own house.

This city hath also a vast amount of shipping.

About ten miles from this city, towards the mouth of that great river Talay, there is a certain other city called MENZU.¹ This city hath shipping finer and more numerous peradventure than any other city in the world. And all the vessels are as white as snow, being coated with whitewash.² And on board of them you find halls and taverns and many other conveniences, as handsome and well ordered as are anywhere to be found. Indeed it is something hard to believe when you hear of, or even when you see, the vast scale of the shipping in those parts.³

¹ I believe that Odoric's expression, "*in capite hujus fluminis*", is correctly rendered above, though our inconsistent idiom puts a river's head and its mouth at opposite extremities. Thus Polo says of the same great river (Ramusian edition), "*E per lunghezza fine dove mette capo nel mare Oceano*, etc. And Barbaro says of the Erdil or Wolga, "*il quale mette capo nel Mar di Bachu*." Fra Mauro, however, has not understood it so; for though here evidently making use of Odoric, he has put the name of Menzu up the river from Iamzai.

The distance and direction assigned would bring us to about Chinkiangfu, which was indeed celebrated for the vast numbers of vessels that used to be gathered there. But it does not seem to have borne any name resembling Menzu.

The fact is, that Mingchu (or Menzu in Odoric's spelling) is the old name of Ningpo, and there can be little doubt that there is some mistake in the text as to the position assigned to it. Perhaps Odoric was here speaking only from hearsay, and had not visited the place himself. *Mingio* appears in the Catalan map as the next seaport northward from Zayton. (See Biot, *Diction. des Noms Anciens et Mod. compris dans l'Empire Chinois*.)

² "*Gesso depicta*." The Chinese caulk with "a kind of composition of lime, oil, or rather rosin which distils from the tree called *tongshu*, and okam of Bambu. When the stuff is dry one would take it for lime, which is the chief ingredient, and nothing else." (Astley, iv, 128.)

³ Two examples are worth quoting of the view taken by more modern