

hawking ; in fact, there is no sport in the world to equal it!

The Emperor himself is carried upon four elephants in a fine chamber made of timber, lined inside with plates of beaten gold, and outside with lions' skins [for he always travels in this way on his fowling expeditions, because he is troubled with gout]. He always keeps beside him a dozen of his choicest gerfalcons, and is attended by several of his Barons, who ride on horseback alongside. And sometimes, as they may be going along, and the Emperor from his chamber is holding discourse with the Barons, one of the latter shall exclaim : "Sire! Look out for Cranes!" Then the Emperor instantly has the top of his chamber thrown open, and having marked the cranes he casts one of his gerfalcons, whichever he pleases ; and often the quarry is struck within his view, so that he has the most exquisite sport and diversion, there as he sits in his chamber or lies on his bed ; and all the Barons with him get the enjoyment of it likewise! So it is not without reason I tell you that I do not believe there ever existed in the world or ever will exist, a man with such sport and enjoyment as he has, or with such rare opportunities.⁵

And when he has travelled till he reaches a place called CACHAR MODUN,⁶ there he finds his tents pitched, with the tents of his Sons, and his Barons, and those of his Ladies and theirs, so that there shall be full 10,000 tents in all, and all fine and rich ones. And I will tell you how his own quarters are disposed. The tent in which he holds his courts is large enough to give cover easily to a thousand souls. It is pitched with its door to the south, and the Barons and Knights remain in waiting in it, whilst the Lord abides in another close to it on the west side. When he wishes to speak with any one he causes the person to be summoned to that other tent. Immediately behind the great tent there is a fine