

garnished with battlements. And within this wall is the king's palace, so great and fine that no one could imagine a finer. There are in it many great and splendid halls, and many chambers, all painted and embellished with work in beaten gold. This Mangalai rules his realm right well with justice and equity, and is much beloved by his people. The troops are quartered round about the palace, and enjoy the sport (that the royal demesne affords).

So now let us quit this kingdom, and I will tell you of a very mountainous province called Cuncun, which you reach by a road right wearisome to travel.

---

NOTE 1.—[“*Morus alba* is largely grown in North China for feeding silkworms.” (*Bretschneider, Hist. of Bot. Disc. I. p. 4.*)—H. C.]

NOTE 2.—Having got to sure ground again at Kenjanfu, which is, as we shall explain presently, the city of SI-NGAN FU, capital of Shen-si, let us look back at the geography of the route from P'ing-yang fu. Its difficulties are great.

The traveller carries us two days' journey from P'ing-yang fu to his castle of the Golden King. This is called in the G. Text and most other MSS. *Caicui*, *Caytui*, or the like, but in Ramusio alone *Thaigin*. He then carries us 20 miles further to the Caramoran; he crosses this river, travels two days further, and reaches the great city Cachanfu; eight days more (or as in Ramusio *seven*) bring him to Si-ngan fu.

There seems scarcely room for doubt that CACHANFU is the HO-CHUNG FU [the ancient capital of Emperor Shun—H. C.] of those days, now called P'U-CHAU FU, close to the great elbow of the Hwang Ho (*Klaproth*). But this city, instead of being *two days west* of the great river, stands *near its eastern bank*.

[The Rev. C. Holcombe writes (pp. 64-65): “P'u-chau fu lies on a level with the Yellow River, and on the edge of a large extent of worthless marsh land, full of pools of brackish, and in some places, positively salt water. . . . The great road does not pass into the town, having succeeded in maintaining its position on the high ground from which the town has *backslided*. . . . The great road keeping to the bluff, runs on, turning first south, and then a trifle to the east of south, until the road, the bluff, and Shan-si, all end together, making a sudden plunge down a precipice and being lost in the dirty waters of the Yellow River.”—H. C.]

Not maintaining the infallibility of our traveller's memory, we may conceive confusion here, between the recollections of his journey westward and those of his return; but this does not remove all the difficulties.

The most notable fortress of the Kin sovereigns was that of T'ungkwan, on the right bank of the river, 25 miles below P'u-chau fu, and closing the passage between the river and the mountains, just where the boundaries of Ho-nan, Shan-si, and Shen-si meet. It was constantly the turning-point of the Mongol campaigns against that Dynasty, and held a prominent place in the dying instructions of Chinghiz for the prosecution of the conquest of Cathay. This fortress must have continued famous to Polo's time—indeed it continues so still, the strategic position being one which nothing short of a geological catastrophe could impair,—but I see no way of reconciling its position with his narrative.

The *name* in Ramusio's form might be merely that of the Dynasty, viz. *Tai-Kin*