

Moreover, when you travel on that river, and come to a halt at night, unless you keep a good way from the bank the lions will spring on the boat and snatch one of the crew and make off with him and devour him. And but for a certain help that the inhabitants enjoy, no one could venture to travel in that province, because of the multitude of those lions, and because of their strength and ferocity.

But you see they have in this province a large breed of dogs, so fierce and bold that two of them together will attack a lion.⁴ So every man who goes a journey takes with him a couple of those dogs, and when a lion appears they have at him with the greatest boldness, and the lion turns on them, but can't touch them for they are very deft at eschewing his blows. So they follow him, perpetually giving tongue, and watching their chance to give him a bite in the rump or in the thigh, or wherever they may. The lion makes no reprisal except now and then to turn fiercely on them, and then indeed were he to catch the dogs it would be all over with them, but they take good care that he shall not. So, to escape the dogs' din, the lion makes off, and gets into the wood, where mayhap he stands at bay against a tree to have his rear protected from their annoyance. And when the travellers see the lion in this plight they take to their bows, for they are capital archers, and shoot their arrows at him till he falls dead. And 'tis thus that travellers in those parts do deliver themselves from those lions.

They have a good deal of silk and other products which are carried up and down, by the river of which we spoke, into various quarters.⁵

You travel along the river for twelve days more, finding a good many towns all along, and the people always Idolaters, and subject to the Great Kaan, with paper-money current, and living by trade and handicrafts. There are also plenty of fighting men. And after