

The Persian work *Nuzhát-al-Kulúb*:—"KHINZAI is the capital of the country of Máchín. If one may believe what some travellers say, there exists no greater city on the face of the earth; but anyhow, all agree that it is the greatest in all the countries in the East. Inside the place is a lake which has a circuit of six parasangs, and all round which houses are built. . . . The population is so numerous that the watchmen are some 10,000 in number." (*Quat. Rash.* p. lxxxviii.)

The Arabic work *Masálak-al-Absár*:—"Two routes lead from Khanbalik to KHINSÁ, one by land, the other by water; and either way takes 40 days. The city of Khinsá extends a whole day's journey in length and half a day's journey in breadth. In the middle of it is a street which runs right from one end to the other. The streets and squares are all paved; the houses are five-storied (?), and are built with planks nailed together," etc. (*Ibid.*)

Ibn Batuta:—"We arrived at the city of KHANSÁ. . . . This city is the greatest I have ever seen on the surface of the earth. It is three days' journey in length, so that a traveller passing through the city has to make his marches and his halts! . . . It is subdivided into six towns, each of which has a separate enclosure, while one great wall surrounds the whole," etc. (*Cathay*, p. 496 *seqq.*)

Let us conclude with a writer of a later age, the worthy Jesuit Martin Martini, the author of the admirable *Atlas Sinensis*, one whose honourable zeal to maintain Polo's veracity, of which he was one of the first intelligent advocates, is apt, it must be confessed, a little to colour his own spectacles:—"That the cosmographers of Europe may no longer make such ridiculous errors as to the QUINSAI of Marco Polo, I will here give you the very place. [He then explains the name.] . . . And to come to the point; this is the very city that hath those bridges so lofty and so numberless, both within the walls and in the suburbs; nor will they fall much short of the 10,000 which the Venetian alleges, if you count also the triumphal arches among the bridges, as he might easily do because of their analogous structure, just as he calls tigers *lions*; . . . or if you will, he may have meant to include not merely the bridges in the city and suburbs, but in the whole of the dependent territory. In that case indeed the number which Europeans find it so hard to believe might well be set still higher, so vast is everywhere the number of bridges and of triumphal arches. Another point in confirmation is that lake which he mentions of 40 Italian miles in circuit. This exists under the name of *Si-hu*; it is not, indeed, as the book says, inside the walls, but lies in contact with them for a long distance on the west and south-west, and a number of canals drawn from it *do* enter the city. Moreover, the shores of the lake on every side are so thickly studded with temples, monasteries, palaces, museums, and private houses, that you would suppose yourself to be passing through the midst of a great city rather than a country scene. Quays of cut stone are built along the banks, affording a spacious promenade; and causeways cross the lake itself, furnished with lofty bridges, to allow of the passage of boats; and thus you can readily walk all about the lake on this side and on that. 'Tis no wonder that Polo considered it to be part of the city. This, too, is the very city that hath within the walls, near the south side, a hill called *Ching-hoang** on which stands that tower with the watchmen, on which there is a clepsydra to measure the hours, and where each hour is announced by the exhibition of a placard, with gilt letters of a foot and a half in height. This is the very city the streets of which are paved with squared stones: the city which lies in a swampy situation, and is intersected by a number of navigable canals; this, in short, is the city from which the emperor escaped to seaward by the great river Ts'ien-T'ang, the breadth of which exceeds a German mile, flowing on the south of the city, exactly corresponding to the river described by the Venetian at Quinsai, and flowing eastward to the sea, which it enters precisely at the distance which he mentions. I will add that the compass of the city will be 100 Italian

* See the plan of the city with last chapter.