

abundance of game. Lions, great and strong, are also very numerous. The country produces ginger and galingale in immense quantities, insomuch that for a Venice groat you may buy fourscore pounds of good fine-flavoured ginger. They have also a kind of fruit resembling saffron, and which serves the purpose of saffron just as well.¹

And you must know the people eat all manner of unclean things, even the flesh of a man, provided he has not died a natural death. So they look out for the bodies of those that have been put to death and eat their flesh, which they consider excellent.²

Those who go to war in those parts do as I am going to tell you. They shave the hair off the forehead and cause it to be painted in blue like the blade of a glaive. They all go afoot except the chief; they carry spears and swords, and are the most savage people in the world, for they go about constantly killing people, whose blood they drink, and then devour the bodies.³

Now I will quit this and speak of other matters. You must know then that after going three days out of the six that I told you of you come to the city of KELINFU, a very great and noble city, belonging to the Great Kaan. This city hath three stone bridges which are among the finest and best in the world. They are a mile long and some nine paces in width, and they are all decorated with rich marble columns. Indeed they are such fine and marvellous works that to build any one of them must have cost a treasure.⁴

The people live by trade and manufactures, and have great store of silk [which they weave into various stuffs], and of ginger and galingale.⁵ [They also make much cotton cloth of dyed thread, which is sent all over Manzi.] Their women are particularly beautiful. And there is a strange thing there which I needs must tell you. You