

very cheap, insomuch that for a Venice groat you can buy three dishes so fine that you could not imagine better.⁵

I should tell you that in this city (*i.e.* of Zayton) they have a peculiar language. [For you must know that throughout all Manzi they employ one speech and one kind of writing only, but yet there are local differences of dialect, as you might say of Genoese, Milanese, Florentines, and Neapolitans, who though they speak different dialects can understand one another.⁶]

And I assure you that the Great Kaan has as large customs and revenues from this kingdom of Chonka as from Kinsay, aye and more too.⁷

We have now spoken of but three out of the nine kingdoms of Manzi, to wit Yanju and Kinsay and Fujū. We could tell you about the other six, but it would be too long a business; so we will say no more about them.

And now you have heard all the truth about Cathay and Manzi and many other countries, as has been set down in this Book; the customs of the people and the various objects of commerce, the beasts and birds, the gold and silver and precious stones, and many other matters have been rehearsed to you. But our Book as yet does not contain nearly all that we purpose to put therein. For we have still to tell you all about the people of India and the notable things of that country, which are well worth the describing, for they are marvellous indeed. What we shall tell is all true, and without any lies. And we shall set down all the particulars in writing just as Messer Marco Polo related them. And he well knew the facts, for he remained so long in India, and enquired so diligently into the manners and peculiarities of the nations, that I can assure you there never