

THE LAKE & PARKS & ANIMALS & GREEN HILL = MARCO POLO

that is all his treasure, gold, silver, precious stones, and pearls, and his vessels of gold and of silver; where his ladies and concubines stay, and where he has his affairs done conveniently and when he pleases; into which places other people do not enter. And between the one wall and the other of those circuits of which I have told you above are very beautiful large lawns & gardens and beautiful and good trees of different sorts of fruits in which too are many kinds of strange beasts; these are white stags, the animals that make the musk (namely *gudder*), roe-deer, fallow-deer, and squirrels, and ermines, & of many [37d] kinds of other strange beautiful animals in great abundance. And all the grounds of this garden, wherever an empty space is found, inside the walls are full of so many of these beautiful animals that there is no way, except the roads alone on which men walk to and fro. The meadows have grass in abundance, because all the streets are paved and raised quite two cubits above the ground, so that no mud ever collects on them nor is the rain water caught there, but running through the meadows it fattens the land and makes the grass grow abundantly. And at one corner of this palace outside, that is toward the plough-beam, is a very large and deep and beautiful lake (of the earth from which was made the hill [to be] mentioned [below]), in which are many kinds of fish and plenty, for the great lord has made them put many kinds of fish there, which are brought from elsewhere to that lake and are fed there, and every time that the great lord wishes some of those fish he has them at his will and at his pleasure. Moreover I tell you that a not very great river flows in there and fills the said hollow and makes a kind of fishpond; and there the animals go to drink; and flows out of the lake afterwards, passing through a conduit near the said hill, and fills another very great and deep hollow between the palace of the great Kaan and that of his son Cinchim, of the earth from which likewise the said hill was raised. And the river departs from the other side of the lake and runs away; but it is so planned that no fish can escape, and this is done and is closed with nets of iron wire and of brass both at the entry of the river in the lake and also at the going out, which do not let them go out on either side. There are also swans and other waterfowl. And again I tell you that towards tramontaine, about one crossbow-shot¹ distant from the palace, he has had a mound made by hand within the circuit of the walls. It is a hill which is quite a hundred paces high, and it is more than a mile round; the which hill is all full and all covered with most beautiful trees which at no time lose the leaves nor fruit in winter nor in summer but are always green, and it is covered with green grass. And I tell you that the great lord, wherever one tells him that there was a beautiful tree

¹ *due aralente* FA: *vne archie* FB: *de my archee* TA': *vna archata* LT: *unam archatam*
R: *vn trarre di balestra* V: *vno trar de balestro* L: *vnum atalentum* VA: *vna liga* LT (margin), P: *unam leucam* These support B.'s emendation *dune arbalestre*.