

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD^s THE KAAAN'S FALCONRY

who have lost or found the things may see him clearly at once where he is. And in this way no things can be lost which are not soon found and given back. And when the great lord goes this road which I have told you near the Ocean sea, which is two days journeys from his chief city of Cambaluc, on that road one can see many fine sights of taking beasts and birds in great plenty. There is no amusement in the world which is equal to it. And the great lord always goes on two elephants or one, specially when he goes hawking, for the narrowness of the passes which are found in some places, because two or one pass better than many; but in his other doings he always goes on four elephants, on which he has a very beautiful wooden room, which is all covered inside with cloth of beaten gold and outside it is wrapped round & covered with lion skins, in which room the great Kaan always stays when he goes hawking because he is troubled with the gout. And the room is covered over with cloths of silk & of gold. The great lord always keeps there¹ twelve of the best gerfalcons that he has. And several barons, twelve of his favourites with twelve women, stay there also continually to make amusement and company for him. Round these elephants ride other barons who accompany the lord. Moreover I tell you that when the great lord shall go in this room on the elephants and be talking to some of the other barons and knights who ride very close round him, who do not leave him, and, when they see pheasants or cranes or other birds pass, point them out to the falconers who are with the king, and they immediately cry out [and] say to him, Sir, cranes are passing, and the great lord immediately has the room uncovered above and then sees the cranes, he has those gerfalcons taken [42c] which he wishes and lets them go after those cranes. And those gerfalcons often take the cranes and kill before him, fighting with them for a long time. And he sees it always sitting in his room lying on his couch, and it is a very great amusement and great delight to him; and to all the other barons and knights also who ride round the lord. And you may know well in truth that there never was, nor do I believe that there is nor will be, any man in this world who can find so great amusement and so great delight as he does, nor who has the power to do it. And when he is gone hawking for some hours, so far that he is come to a great plain, to a place of his which is called Caccia modun, then he finds his pavilions and tents spread there in order and the tents of his sons and of his barons, knights, and falconers, and of his concubines and of theirs, which tents are indeed more than ten thousand very beautiful and rich. And I will describe to you how his pavilion is made; it is so large. First the tent where he holds his court is indeed so large that² a thousand knights stay under there. And this tent

¹ il FA,FB: laiens LT: ibi

² fait son pavilon. il est si grant la tende . . . est bien si grant qe B. reads very plausibly il est si grant