

MARKET SQUARES BIRDS BEASTS FRUIT & FISH \neq MARCO POLO
 which are square, that is half a mile for a side. And along the front of those there is a main street forty paces wide, which runs straight from one end of the city to the other with many bridges which cross it level and conveniently; and every four miles is found one of these squares such as have two miles (as has been said) of circuit. There is in the same way a very broad canal which runs parallel to the said street at the back of the said squares, and on the near bank of this there are built great houses of stone where all the merchants who come from Indie and from other parts deposit their goods & merchandise that they may be near and handy to the squares. And on each of the said squares three days a week there is a concourse of from forty to fifty thousand persons who come to market and bring everything you can desire for food, because there is always a great supply of victuals; of game, that is to say of roebuck, red-deer, fallow-deer, hares, rabbits, and of birds, partridges, pheasants, francolins, quails, fowls, capons, and so many ducks and geese that more could not be told; for they rear so many of them in that lake that for one Venetian silver groat may be had a pair of geese and two pair of ducks. There are too the shambles where they slaughter the large animals like calves, oxen, kids, and lambs, the which flesh the rich men and great lords eat. But the rest who are of low position do not abstain from all the other kinds of unclean flesh, without any respect. There are always on the said squares all sorts of vegetables and fruits, and above all the rest immense pears, which weigh ten pounds a piece, which are white inside like a paste, and very fragrant; peaches in their seasons, yellow and white, very delicate. Grapes nor wine do not grow there, but very good dried ones are brought from elsewhere, and likewise wine, of which the inhabitants do not make too much count, being used to that of rice and spices. Then there comes every day, brought from the Ocean sea up the river for the space of twenty-five miles, great quantity of fish; and there is also a supply of that from the lake (for there are always fishermen who do nothing else), which is of different sorts according to the seasons of the year, and because of the impurities which come from the city it is fat and savoury. Whoever saw the quantity of the said fish would never think that it could be sold, and yet in a few hours it has all been taken away, so great is the multitude of the inhabitants who are used to live delicately; for they eat both fish and flesh at the same meal. All the said ten squares are surrounded by high houses, and underneath are shops where they work at all sorts of trades, and sell all sorts of merchandise, and spicery, jewels, pearls; and in some shops nothing else is sold but wine made of rice with spices, for they continually go making it fresh and fresh, and it is cheap.¹ In other streets are stationed the courtesans, who are

¹ Here R inserts a paragraph about the public baths, which cannot be at all well fitted into the text of F, as follows: "There are many streets which open on to the aforesaid squares, and in some of these there are many baths of cold water, supplied with many men-servants and maids who are in waiting to bathe both men and women who go there; because from childhood they are used to be bathed in cold water at all times, which thing they say is much to be recommended for health. They keep also in the said baths some rooms with hot water for foreigners who