

the earth intercepted it. And in that country the heat is so excessive that all folk there, both men and women, go naked, not clothing themselves in any wise.¹ And they mocked much at me on this matter, saying that God made Adam naked, but I must needs go against His will and wear clothes. Now, in that country all the women be in common; and no one there can say, this is my wife, or this is my husband! But when a woman beareth a boy or a girl she giveth the child to whom she listeth of those with whom she hath consorted, and calleth him the father. The whole of the land likewise is in common; and no one can say with truth, this or that part of the land is mine. But they have houses of their own, and not in common.²

It is an evil and a pestilent generation, and they eat man's flesh there just as we eat beef here. Yet the country in itself is excellent, and hath great store of flesh-meats, and of wheat and of rice; and they have much gold also, and lign-aloes, and camphor, and many other things which are produced there. And merchants come to this island from far, bringing children with them to sell like cattle to those infidels,³ who buy them and slaughter them in the shambles and eat them.⁴ And so with many other things both good and bad, which I have not written.

¹ PAL. *Unless it be that some women when they be near child-bearing wear the leaf of a tree to cover their nakedness, and tie it on with a strip of bark.*

² I cannot point out any one region of Sumatra of which all these strange stories are true. But Odoric did not invent them, though it may be doubted if he *witnessed* all that he tells here. The community of women is positively asserted to exist among the Pogy or Pagi Islanders off the west coast of Sumatra, whilst their clothing is the merest strip of bark cloth; and *they* have not even individual houses. Such a state of things may have been found on the main island of Sumatra five hundred and fifty years ago. Very strange things *have* been found there even in our own day. (For Pagi Islanders see *Tydschrift voor Indische Taal-Landen-Volken Kunde*, second year, No. 4.)

³ This from VEN. PAR. has *men*; HAK. *fat men*; PAL. *white men*; for *black men*, like themselves, they eat not.

⁴ Gold, aloeswood, and camphor, are all true products of Sumatra;