

equity, and extends great favour to merchants and foreigners, so that they are very glad to visit his city.²

This King has some 300 wives; for in those parts the man who has most wives is most thought of.

As I told you before, there are in this great province of Maabar five crowned Kings, who are all own brothers born of one father and of one mother, and this king is one of them. Their mother is still living. And when they disagree and go forth to war against one another, their mother throws herself between them to prevent their fighting. And should they persist in desiring to fight, she will take a knife and threaten that if they will do so she will cut off the paps that suckled them and rip open the womb that bare them, and so perish before their eyes. In this way hath she full many a time brought them to desist. But when she dies it will most assuredly happen that they will fall out and destroy one another.³

[All the people of this city, as well as of the rest of India, have a custom of perpetually keeping in the mouth a certain leaf called *Tembul*, to gratify a certain habit and desire they have, continually chewing it and spitting out the saliva that it excites. The Lords and gentlefolks and the King have these leaves prepared with camphor and other aromatic spices, and also mixt with quicklime. And this practice was said to be very good for the health.⁴ If any one desires to offer a gross insult to another, when he meets him he spits this leaf or its juice in his face. The other immediately runs before the King, relates the insult that has been offered him, and demands leave to fight the offender. The King supplies the arms, which are sword and target, and all the people flock to see, and there the two fight till one of them is killed. They must not use the point of the sword, for this the King forbids.]⁵