

·13·

THEY COME TO THE GREAT KAAAN AT CHEMEINFU  $\neq$  MARCO POLO  
FB R L very great damage through the country, ravaging and burning, and for this reason when  
FB P FB FB they took their way these said messengers were often in very great danger to be slain or  
L taken. And when the two Brothers Preachers saw this & when at last by God's mercy  
FB R P they escaped, they have very great fear to go on farther, being afraid for their life that they  
V could never reach the king of the Tartars. Whereupon it was said to those Brothers that they  
VL ought not to go on farther; & with this they were well content, and wrote letters to the great Kaan  
how they had come there and the reason of their stay. Then they said that they will not  
R go at all. They give all the privileges and letters and the gifts from the Pope which they  
VA P had to Master Nicolau and Master Mafeu and departed from them and stayed in  
VB Armenie and go off with the Master of the Temple back to Acre by way of the sea.

·14·

HOW THE TWO BROTHERS AND MARC CAME TO THE CITY OF CHEMEINFU THE  
FB PLACE WHERE THE GREAT KAAAN WAS. (HOW THE TWO BROTHERS AND MARC  
GO.) And so the two brothers Master Nicolau and Master Mafeu and Marc  
TA R VB VB the son of Master Nicolau leaving Armenie not long afterwards set themselves with no small  
R peril on the way and ride [7b] both by winter and by summer not regarding any danger or  
hardship and, crossing deserts of a length of many days and many difficult passes, went forward  
VB always in the direction of the Greek wind and tramontaine till they were come with safety to  
TA the place of the great Kaan who was then at a city that was called Chemeinfu which  
VB was very rich and great. And he received them the more joyfully in proportion as their journey  
had been longer. On which journey they found and saw many strange and noble things. And  
FB we will make you no mention of that which they find on the way both in going and in  
FB VA returning, and that because we shall tell it you all clearly and all in order in another place  
VA in our book below. Moreover you may know that they hardly go riding from Laias to  
FB V the land where the great Kaan was on the return in quite three years and a half<sup>1</sup> before they  
VB VB could accomplish this their business, and this was for the very great snow and ice and for the  
FB V rain, for the bad weather which they had and for the great cold and for the great rivers, and  
VB for the great south-west gales which were in the countries which they were obliged to pass, which  
much lengthened & hindered their journey, and because they cannot ride by winter as by  
FB summer. And he tells you for truth that when the great Kaan knows that his envoys  
L Master Nicolau and Master Mafeu were coming back from the lands of the Christians,  
R TA and how they were much toil-worn, he was very glad and he sends his messengers quite forty  
R days marches to meet them and had all that they needed prepared for them in every place, so  
that with the help of God they were conducted at last to his court. And they were very much  
FB served and honoured with every thing which they could order, going and coming.

<sup>1</sup> S: de la giaza a Bemeniph vn año & medio where Bemeniph vn may be corrupted from an original Bemeniphu.iii. VL: a demenif tre anni