

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD<sup>s</sup> AND A FOUNTAIN OF OIL

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for their beasts. And in a certain village which is called *Paperth* there is a very large silver mine; Z  
 and this village is found as one goes from *Trepesonde* to *Tauris*. And again I tell you that in  
 the middle of this Great *Armenie* is the ark of *Noe*, as it is said, on a great mountain. Z VB  
 It is indeed a very great and high mountain like a cube,<sup>1</sup> upon which *Noe's* ark is said to have Z  
 rested, and from this that mountain is called the mount of *Noe's* Ark. And it is so broad and  
 long that it could not be encircled in two days; and on the top of the mountain there is always  
 so abundant a quantity of snow that none is able to go up to the top, because the snow never  
 melts altogether, but one falls upon the other and so it grows. And this ark is seen from R I  
 very far because the mountain on which it is is very high, and there is snow there almost all  
 the year, and in one part there is as it were a spot and a large black thing is seen from far  
 amidst those snows; but close by nothing of it is seen. For this *Armenie* has many very great  
 and high mountains and among others there is a certain mountain which is called *Mount Baris*  
 or *Mount Olympus*, and this mountain seems as if to touch the sky. And some say that many  
 were saved there from the waters of the great flood. In those parts *Noe's* ark is called the ship  
 of the world. And they speak as little about it as if it were not there, unless visitors ask  
 about this thing, and then they speak; it is said that that black thing is the ship of the world.  
 But on the slopes toward the plain, owing to the moisture of the snow which runs down when R  
 it melts, the mountain is so fat and abounding in grass that in the summer all the flocks around  
 are brought together from far to stay there; nor do they ever fail there. And moreover through  
 the running down of the snow deep mud is formed on the mountain. Now on the borders Z  
 of *Armenie* toward the south are these provinces, *Mosul*, *Mus*, and *Meridin*, about which it  
 will be told below; and there are many others which it would be long to recount. It is  
 bounded from the direction of midday toward the sunrising by a city and kingdom VB  
 which is called *Mosul*, who are Christian people; they are *Jacobites* and *Nestorians*;  
 of whom I will tell you below; on which here we shall only touch. Towards tramontaine VB  
 it is bounded by the *Giorgiens* of whom again I shall speak below. And on this  
 boundary towards the *Giorgiens* to the north is a fountain which sends up a liquid P VB  
 like oil in great abundance so that sometimes a hundred great ships<sup>2</sup> can load & do load P I Z  
 there easily at one time; but it is not good to eat. But it is good to burn, and to I  
 anoint men and any animals for the scab, [and] the camels for the itch and for the mange. Z  
 And the men come for this oil from very far, and all the country round they burn  
 no other oil but this liquid or oil from that fountain, and it avails for many diseases. Now VB Z  
 let us leave the great *Armenie* and we will tell you of the province of the *Giorgiens*.

<sup>1</sup> Or perhaps, "cup".

<sup>2</sup> Z makes it "ships of the desert", *mile cameli* V: *zento ganbeli* Just below both Z & LT  
 read *simul* & *semel*, where *semel* is hard to understand.