

THE KINGDOMS AND FINE ASSES OF PERSIE  $\neq$  MARCO POLO  
 z Marc Pol<sup>1</sup> in order, and all like this is truth. And again I tell you that one of the  
 z v said three magi was from a city called Sava and the second from Ava & the third  
 L from Caxan,<sup>2</sup> the village of which I have said to you that they worship the fire  
 FB S with all that country. Of all this you shall take that which agrees with the holy Gospel,  
 in saying the magi went to worship our Lord and did offer him those gifts. All the rest are  
 errors of the faithless vulgar and do not reach the truth, but add lies to lies, as the vulgar  
 people without learning are accustomed to do.<sup>3</sup> Now I have told you this fact quite com-  
 pletely and afterwards I shall tell you of many other cities of Persie, of their doings  
 and of their customs.

HERE HE TELLS OF EIGHT KINGDOMS OF PERSIE. Now you may know that  
 in Persie are eight kingdoms because it is a very great province. And  
 so I will tell you them all by their names. The first kingdom, that is  
 L FB from the beginning of the province, has the name Casvin, the second which is towards  
 R midday is called Curdistan, the third is called Lor, toward tramontaine, the fourth  
 Cielstan, the fifth Ispaan, the sixth Çiraç, the seventh Soncara, the eighth  
 L L Tunocain which is at the going out from or at the end of Persie. And all these king-  
 VA doms are towards midday except the last written one only, this is Tunocain, which  
 VB VA is near to the Lone Tree towards tramontaine which the Christians this side of the sea call  
 z the Dry Tree; of which tree we shall tell in its place. In these kingdoms<sup>4</sup> are many very  
 fine war-horses, and they take many of them into Indie to sell. And you may  
 FB know that they are horses of great value, for they sell one for quite as much of that  
 money as two hundred pounds tournois, and all the most are [15a] of this value,  
 FA one more and the other less according to what they are like. There are also the most beautiful  
 z and largest asses of the world which are well worth thirty marks of silver each, for  
 FB VB they are great and good runners and doing well at the amble, which is contrary to the  
 VA z nature of the asses of these our lands, & carry their load very well. And they are sold for  
 much more than horses; and this is the reason. Because they eat little, carry great loads, and go

<sup>1</sup> Z: domino Nicholao paulo It is hard to say whether this may preserve the original, or is a mere slip. V: marcho L has neither name.

<sup>2</sup> Z: & tertius de caxan without the rest of the sentence (p. xi). TA: laltro del chastello LT: tercius de castello FA,FB follow F. Z is supported by L (Chasan) and V (chasa); but B. is not justified in printing the text of F as le terç de Cashan. See PN.

<sup>3</sup> I have ventured to keep this picturesque expansion by S of the text of VL: le qual cosse benche per quelli de quele prouintie fosseno affirmate al dito marco polo esser uere in suma uerita in se contiene perche di tre re chiamati tre magi i quali andono adorare yhesu xpisto nato in bethlem dela uergene maria non piu ne meno di quello recita lo euangelio di xpisto.

<sup>4</sup> VA: In questo regniame de tenochain