

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD A VERY GREAT DESCENT
 many other likenesses on cloth of gold and of silk of all colours better than other L VB
 women. And they work the curtains for the beds of the barons and of the great men TA R
 so well and so richly that it is a great wonder to see. And coverlets and cushions
 and pillows and all other things they work also very subtilly. And their work is carried FB VB
 through all those parts. And in the mountains of this land are bred the best falcons,
 & the bravest, and the best fliers, of the world. And they are rather smaller than our TA VB VB
 peregrine falcons and are red on the breast and under the tail between the legs.
 Moreover I tell you that they are so immensely swift that there is no bird which
 can escape before them by flight. And when one leaves the city of Cherman he
 rides seven¹ days journeys through a plain always finding villages and towns and R
 fair dwellings enough; and there is too good riding through that country and one FB VA FB
 finds there chase enough and fowling of great enjoyment, for there is game enough and
 partridges in abundance. And when one has ridden seven days journeys through
 this plain then he finds a very steep great mountain and when one has climbed that VB FB
 mountain then one finds the very great descent,² for he rides good two days journeys
 always down hill and always finding many sorts of trees which bear fruit in great VA FB
 abundance and good. For long [15d] ago they had many dwellings but now they are TA L FB VB
 all dispersed and there are none, but many shepherd people stay there with their grazing TA V
 flocks. And from the said city of Cherman up to this descent there is so great FB
 cold in winter that one hardly escapes by always wearing many clothes and many Z
 garments and furs,³ and even so many cannot escape death. A certain experiment will be V Z
 narrated which was made in the kingdom of Cherman. For the people of Cherman are good,
 plain, humble, and peaceful and serve one another as much as they can. Wherefore the king of
 Cherman said to his wise men when they were before him, Sirs, I wonder much not knowing
 what may be the reason of this, namely, while in the kingdoms of Persie which are so near
 to our district there are such bad people and most evil who continually kill one another, yet
 among us who are as it were one with them offence almost never arises nor anger. And the
 wise men answered him that of the land was the reason why. Then the king sent to the parts
 of Persie, and specially to the kingdom of Ispaan named above, whose inhabitants exceeded

¹ VL,R: eight V: nuoue and below oto

² montangne & desendunt & The second & must be omitted; the first may possibly be for en, and in any case the phrase may be intended to mean a mountain not for ascent but for descent. TA³ and LT support in shorter form the expansion found in FA,FB. V: vna gran desmontada L: mons et descendens P,R omit the mountain. Z omits the whole sentence. VB: "the said mountain, which has so bad a descent that it is necessary to dismount[& go]on foot."

³ aseç dras & aseç pannes Z: multas uestes & peles L: pellibus et pannis V: molte uestimente e pelle onde che molti non puono . . . VB: pani e fodre