

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD & THE TUTTY OF COBINAN

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The animals however drink a little of it with great pain and with great effort,¹ and for great compelling thirst because they have no other, and I tell you too that the water immediately makes them purge beyond measure, so that they sometimes die of it. And in all these three days marches there is found no dwelling, but it is all desert and land of great drought. Wild animals are not found there because they will find nothing there to eat, for the land is so hard & so dry that grass could not grow. And on the fourth day one arrives at a river of sweet water which runs underground, and in some places there are certain openings cut out and dug by the flow of the river, through which it is seen to pass, and then immediately it goes in under ground. None the less one has abundance of water. And near this the wayfarers, tired by the hardship of the preceding desert, rest themselves, refreshing themselves with their beasts. And at the end of these three days marches a little inhabited place is found; but after this little space of habitation is passed we find another place [17d] which lasts four days marches no more nor less, which also is all dry desert, and the water is also bitter; where no house is found, and there are no trees, nor animals because they would have nothing to eat nor to drink, except that wild asses only are found in some places. And at the end of these four days marches the kingdom of Cherman ends and we find the city of Cobinan.

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VA FB Z
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TA
VB
LT LT VB

HERE HE TELLS OF THE GREAT AND NOBLE CITY OF COBINAN. Cobinan is a

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very great city. And the people of that country worship the abominable Mahomet. There is iron and steel and andanique enough, and many mirrors of the finest steel are made there very beautiful and large. And tutty is made there, which is not made elsewhere, which is very good for disease of the eyes. And with it spodium is made there also; which I saw made, and I will tell you how they are made. They take an earth or a vein of earth which they dig from a mountain in that country, which they think is good for making this, and they put it in a great furnace of burning fire, and above in the mouth of the furnace is set an iron grating very fine. And the smoke and the steam which comes up from that water & earth by virtue of the fire and is caught on the iron grating hardens when it is cooled, and that is tutty, and that which remains of that earth in the fire, that is the coarse which remains at the bottom of the furnace when burnt, is called spodium; which is called cane spodium, and this because the said spodium or burnt earth remains light as cane. So that you have heard how tutty and spodium are made.² And now let us leave this city and go forward.

V V FB P
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V Z
FB VB
LT VB
VA V V FB
L VA LT
VB LT V
L R
R
L R L VB
V

¹ a grant force Z: uiolenter

² Tutty, tutia, is "a crude oxide of zinc found adhering to the flues of furnaces in which brass is melted". (S.O.D.). Spodium is "a fine powder obtained from various substances by calcination".