

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD^s COULD NOT BE STOPPED
 lord of all the Tartars, reigned and was their lord in this province, then it was reported P FB
 to him how those of this province of Camul so made their wives commit adultery LT
 with strangers, and he loathed such a custom. And that Mongu, having learnt the habits LT R
 and so shameful customs, sends to them immediately commanding under very great LT VB
 penalties that they and all of that province must for the future leave this so indecent belief VB R
 [and]not dare to lodge the strangers any more in that way; but preserving the honour of VB VA P
 their wives should provide the wayfarers with public lodgings; & that they do not maintain any VA
 more that shaming of their wives. And when they of Camul had had this order they
 were much grieved by it, and sadly obeyed the commandments of the king for about three R
 years; and then in the end, seeing that their lands were not yielding the accustomed fruits and R
 that in their houses many misfortunes followed one another, they were in counsel how to VB
 remedy so great a loss and counsel and do that which I shall tell you. For they sent LT
 their ambassadors who took a great & beautiful present and carry it to Mongu and VB
 pray him [25a] that so great a wrong with so great loss to them & danger should not be VB
 done, & that he would be content that they might observe that which by their old fathers and R
 grandfathers had been left them with such solemnity[and]would leave them to make the use
 of their wives which their ancestors had left them, and that otherwise they knew not FB
 how to live, and could not; and they tell him how their ancestors had said that for
 the pleasure which they made for the strangers with their wives and with their
 things that their idols held them in great favour and that their corn and their
 labour on the land multiplied greatly because of it; for since they failed to do these R
 pleasures & kindnesses to the strangers their houses went from bad to worse & to ruin. And when VB
 the ambassadors, furnished with their great & most notable gifts, were come to the lands of
 the great Kaan they were joyfully received, as is the custom with those who come with their
 hands full (I do not speak of the rulers of these our parts, for they are far removed from this
 opinion), & when the great Kaan had heard their embassy he laboured to remove this con-
 temptible belief from their minds, but they remained ever more sure that they could not hope
 for any good from their gods when they felt displeasure & if they dared to do contrary to their
 laudable commandments.¹ And when Mongu Kaan heard it he says, For my part I have LT
 done my duty; but since you wish your shame and contempt so much, then you may have R
 it. Go and live according to your customs, and make your wives a charitable gift to travellers. R
 And then he revoked the order which he had made about this and consents that they do their LT
 will with their evil usage. And I tell you that with this answer they went home with the FB R
 greatest joy of the whole people and from that time till now they have always kept up and V
 still keep up that custom throughout that province. Now let us leave speaking of Camul VA FB

¹ VB has two columns (fol. 10 c,d) in this manner, with much repetition.