

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD'S PUNISHMENTS & CATTLE ·70·  
 themselves *very much* in the manner of Saracens & hold the faith & laws of Mahomet. And  
 they [29d] maintain justice and judgement in such a way as I shall now describe to you. For  
 a murderer there is no ransom. Indeed if a man strikes with steel or with a sword, whether he hits  
 or not, or threatens one, he loses his hand. He who wounds must receive a like wound from the  
 wounded. It is true that when a man has taken some little thing for which he ought  
 not to die, they condemn him to be beaten. There is given him by the government at least seven  
 blows with a rod or, if he has stolen two things, seventeen blows or, if three things twenty-  
 seven blows or thirty-seven or forty-seven, and in this way it goes up sometimes to a  
 hundred and seven, always increasing by ten blows for each thing which is stolen, according  
 to what he has taken and the measure of the crime. And many of them die of this beating.  
 And if the man steals 15 oxen so that it would come to exceed 107 blows[or] a horse or  
 other thing for which he ought to lose life he is cut in two with a sword and killed;<sup>1</sup>  
 so, truly, that if he who steals can pay and will give nine<sup>2</sup> times as much as the value  
 of that which he has stolen he escapes from death and they do not despatch him with the  
 sword. And the country is so secure that each lord or the other men who have animals  
 in plenty, they have them marked with their seal stamped on the hair, that is the horses  
 and the mares and camels and oxen and cows and other large beasts; then he lets  
 them go safely to graze anywhere over the plains and over the mountains without a  
 watchman; and if on their return they are mixed the one with the other, each man  
 who finds them recognizes the owner's mark and immediately takes pains to inquire for him  
 and quickly gives back his own to him whose mark is found. And in this way each  
 finds his own animals. But the flocks and small animals, the rams & the sheep and the goats  
 they have indeed watched by men, without a stamp. Their flocks are all very large  
 and fat and very fine<sup>3</sup> beyond measure. And again I shall tell you another wonderful  
 usage which they have which I had forgotten to write, that they make among themselves  
 marriages of their dead children. You may know quite truly that when there are two  
 men who, the one has had a male child [30a] who is dead, and he may be dead at  
 four years or when he pleases before he is married, and he inquires for another man who  
 may have had a female child suited to him, and she also may be dead before she is  
 married; these two parents they make a marriage of these two dead together in this way,  
 when he is at the age that he should take a wife if he were alive. For they give the dead girl  
 to the dead boy for wife, and they have documents made about it in corroboration

<sup>1</sup> P: *per transuersum in uentrem mucrone percutitur et occiditur* seems rather to suggest disem-  
 bowelling. VB: *i fa monzar la testa*

<sup>2</sup> FB: viii VA, VB: .x.

<sup>3</sup> *bestes for belles* VA: *grande grosse e belle oltra muodo*