

TABLETS OF GOLD & OTHER MARKS OF DIGNITY = MARCO POLO

L that all those who have these tablets have also warrants on paper with writing of all  
 R V that they must and can do in their command & domain. Now we have told you  
 V enough of these facts. Now we will tell you further of this same. For I tell you that  
 FB V TA he who has a great command of 100000 men or who is lord, that is captain, of some  
 province with a great general army, these have a tablet of gold which weighs 300  
 FB saggi, and there are letters written which say just as the others of which I have told you  
 FB P above. And below the letters on the tablet is portrayed the lion or the image of the  
 FB TA gersfalcon or of different animals, and above the lion on the other side are imaged the sun  
 L V and the moon. And again beside this they have the great Kaan's warrants of great  
 R authority as is seen in this noble tablet and of great power. And these who have these  
 R important tablets have also for an order that whenever he rides in public he must  
 LT FB carry a golden canopy which is called an umbrella, which is carried on a pole above his head  
 R as a sign of great authority and power which they have. And every time that he sits  
 TA in the chief hall he must sit on a silver<sup>1</sup> chair. And again to such as these the great  
 V lord gives a gersfalcon tablet; and he gives this tablet to the very<sup>2</sup> great barons &  
 L nobles that they may have full authority like himself. For it is of such power that  
 L L when he who has it wishes to send [36c] both envoys and other men, then he provides  
 VA him with such a tablet, namely of a gersfalcon, that if it is necessary he can take all the horses  
 L LT of any person & wherever they may be, and can take when he pleases and lead from place to  
 VA R place with him the whole army of any great prince who is subject to the great Kaan for his  
 L R guard; for he can take the horses of a king, and can take the horse of the great Kaan if he  
 wishes. And since I have spoken to you of the horses of kings, therefore you may  
 R LT know that he can take from all other men of less dignity. And thus all things in which  
 he ought to be obeyed are defined in very good order for those who hold the abovesaid tablets;  
 and if any dared not to obey in everything according to the will and command of those who  
 FB have those tablets, he must die as a rebel against the great Kaan. Now we will leave telling  
 you this matter and we will tell you of the fashion of the great Kaan and of his face.

V R R **H**ERE HE TELLS THE FASHION OF THE GREAT KAAH. The great lord of lords,  
 V R R that is of all those of his dominion, who is called Cublai Kaan is like this.  
 P He is of good & fair size, neither too small nor too large, but is of middle  
 R size. He is covered with flesh in a beautiful manner, not too fat, nor lean; he is more  
 V V R V than well formed in all parts. He has his face white and partly shining red like  
 V P LT the colour of a beautiful rose, which makes him appear very pleasing; and he has the eyes  
 black and beautiful; and the nose very beautiful, well made and well set on the face.

<sup>1</sup> V: doro

<sup>2</sup> LT: tribus apparently mistaking tres