

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD<sup>s</sup> ITS PLAN AND CUSTOMS

.85.

along the town, by the roads. And everywhere along the sides of each main street are stalls FB R  
 and shops of every kind. And there are about the city many palaces beautiful and great, FB FB  
 and many beautiful inns, & many beautiful houses in great abundance. And all the FB R  
 pieces of land on which the dwellings are built throughout the city are square and set out by  
 line, and on every piece there are spacious and great palaces with corresponding courts and  
 gardens. And pieces of land like these are given to each head of a house; that is, such a one of  
 such a clan would have this plot, and such a one of such would have that other, and so from  
 hand to hand. And round each such square plot are fine roads by which one walks. And in  
 this way all the city inside is laid out by square, as a chessboard is, and is so beautiful and  
 so skilfully planned that in no way would it be possible to tell of it. And in the middle of FB  
 the city there is a very large and high palace in which is a great town clock, that is a R L  
 very great bell, which sounds three times at night; so that none may go about the TA V  
 town after it shall have sounded three times every evening. For after that bell has P  
 sounded so many times as they have ordained none dares leave his house till day to P  
 go through the town by night except the nurses who go for the needs of women in V S  
 childbirth and physicians who go for the needs of sick men, and those who go for this VL  
 good purpose must carry lights with them. And I tell you that it is ordered that each R R  
 gate of the city be guarded at night by a thousand men who stay continually; and do FB VA V  
 not understand that they stay on this guard, nor believe that such a thing is done, for V R  
 fear that they may have of any people, but they do it for love only and honour and V V R  
 excellency of the great lord who dwells inside, and also because they do not wish  
 the robbers<sup>1</sup> to do harm to any in the town where he dwells. For the great Kaan has LT VA LT  
 great care that for his own honour thieves and robbers who are often found in the city may VA LT VL LT  
 be restrained and caught. They have, none the less, owing to the saying of the astrologers, I R  
 know not what suspicion of the people of Catai. Besides this the guards always ride through  
 the city by night, by thirty and by forty, searching and inquiring if anyone is going about the  
 city at an unusual hour, that is after the third sounding of the bell. And if they find anyone he  
 is arrested and put in prison at once. And in the morning the officials deputed for this examine  
 him, and if they find him guilty of any offence they punish him, according to the degree of it,  
 with more or less blows with a rod; by which they sometimes die. And in this way men are  
 punished for their crimes, and they do not wish to shed blood among them because their bacsi,

part and porte and in other ways the MSS. have introduced a number of unimportant variations. *con les autres* perhaps "with the others"? VL: "that you may see a fire from one end to the other."

<sup>1</sup> *lairons* FA: *barrons* FB: *barons* VA: *li tartarj* R gives very slight indirect support to barons; others have robbers or omit.