

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD<sup>s</sup> AT THE COURT OF CUBLAI  
*with which he is supplied with drink. And from that large one comes the wine, or  
 from the two small ones the drinks which are in those lesser ones.<sup>1</sup> The wine or the TA  
 dear drink which may be there is drawn out of those four small ones and great golden VA  
 vessels very beautiful, which are called lacquered bowls are filled with it, which are R  
 indeed such that they hold so much wine or other drink that eight men or ten<sup>2</sup> R  
 would have enough of it. And they are set one lacquer bowl between every two men R R  
 who sit at table, and each of these two men who are at table have a ladle, and the ladles VA R  
 are made like a gold cup with a foot and golden handle, and with that cup they take P  
 wine from that great golden lacquer bowl and are able to drink. And likewise there are L  
 between two ladies who eat at the court one of those large ones and two cups, as the VA  
 [39b] men have. And you may know that these golden bowls and these things are of VA  
 great value; and I tell you that the great lord has so great & inestimable store of vessels P  
 of gold and of silver that all those who see them are dumbfounded and there is not a man P  
 who did not see them who could think or believe it. Also there are some barons deputed who LT R  
 have to arrange in their proper and suitable places the foreigners who come over, who do not  
 know the customs of the court; and these barons go continually here and there through the hall  
 asking those who sit at table if they want anything, and if there are any there who wish for  
 wine, or milk, or meat, or anything else they have it brought to them immediately by the  
 servants. At all the doors of the hall, or of any place where the lord may be, stand two great  
 men like giants, one on one side and the other on the other, with a rod in hand; and this because  
 no one is allowed to touch the threshold of the door, but he must stretch his foot beyond. And  
 if by accident he touches it the said guards take away his clothes, and to have them again he  
 must redeem them; and if they do not take his clothes they give him as many blows as are appointed  
 him. But if they are foreigners, who do not know the rule, there are certain barons appointed  
 to introduce them and warn them of the rule. And this is done because if the threshold is touched  
 it is held as a bad omen. But in coming out of the hall, because some are overcome with drink  
 nor could by any means control themselves, no such ban is required. And you may know  
 that those who do the service of food and drink to the great Kaan at the sideboard VA  
 & at his table are many great barons, and I tell you that they all have their mouths P FB  
 and their noses wrapped in beautiful veils or napkins of silk & of gold, so that R  
 their breath nor their smell should not come into the vessels and cups[or] into the food LT  
 and the drink of the great lord. And always when the great lord must drink, all R*

<sup>1</sup> *Et de cele grant uient le uin au beuraies que sunt en celle mendre* For *au* read *ou*. FA,FB: *Si que le vin de la grant vient au petites que li sont entour aussi (sont aussi pres)*—& so VA,P. Just above, TA: *da ongnj lato di questo vaso ne sono d u e piccholj* and so here *deglj d u e piccholj*

<sup>2</sup> FA,FB, V: x TA,LT have 8 only. P: xviii L,R: 8 or 10