

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD^s AND HIS BIRTHDAY FEAST
among the months of the year, so as I shall relate it to you after this. Now you may know that he keeps the feast of his nativity in this way. For on the day of his birth the LT
great Kaan is drest in the most noble cloth of the purest beaten gold that he has. And FB L FB
quite twelve thousand barons and knights¹ who are called the faithful companions of P
the lord are dressed afterwards with him in a colour and in a fashion like that of the FB VA
robe of the great lord; not that they are so dear robes as those of the king, but they are LT
of one colour and all are cloth of silk and of gold, and all those who are robed have FB FB
great girdles of great value, of leather worked with thread of gold and silver very cunningly, P R R
given them, and a pair of shoes of leather worked with silver thread very skilfully. And the P
great lord gives them all these robes which are of very great value. Moreover I tell you L L
that, although the king's robe is more costly, yet there are some of these robes which are P
worth, the precious stones and the pearls which were on them are worth, more
than 10000 bezants of gold.² And there are many like this, as are those of the barons R
who for loyalty are nearest to the lord and are called quesitan. And you may know that
thirteen times³ a year, solely for the thirteen solemn feast-days which the Tartars keep with R
great ceremony according to the thirteen moons of the year, the great Kaan gives rich robes
adorned with gold pearls and precious stones with the girdles and shoes aforesaid, altogether P
to the number of 156000, to those twelve thousand barons⁴ and knights, and he clothes
them all with a like clothing with himself and of great value, so that when they are R
dressed and thus richly adorned they all seem to be kings. And when the lord wears any robe
these barons and knights are likewise dressed in one of the same colour; but those of the lord VA R
are of more value and more costly ornament. And the said robes of the barons are always ready;
not that they are made every year, on the contrary they last ten years and more and less.
And so for each time one colour is distinct from the other. And from this you can see that FB R
it is a very great thing, the great excellency of the great Kaan, for there is no other lord R
in all the [39d] world who could do this nor continually keep it up, but he alone. R VA

ONCE MORE ABOUT THE FESTIVAL WHICH THE KAAAN MAKES ON HIS BIRTHDAY. .88.
 And you may know that on this same day of his birth all the Tartars of FA
 the world, all the kings & princes and barons who are subject to his jurisdiction, P
 and all the provinces and regions and cities which hold land of him⁵ make great feast L LT

¹ LT: duodecim barones, et duodecim milia milites TA²: xii R: circa ventimila
² que ualent les pieres presioses & les perles qe soure hi estoient uailent plus.de.x^m.biçanç dor LT:
 que ualent cum lapidibus preciosis et perlis que sunt ibi ultra mile milia biçantis de auro So perhaps
 read con les pieres and omit uailent.
³ LT: duodecim uicibus
⁴ VA: dodexe baronj—and so below: but dodexe milia above
⁵ munde & toutes les prouences & region qe de lui tenent tere & regions For the first & V,LT: de
 FA,TA,