

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD'S ROBES & BELTS & BOOTS

.89.

the others in such a way and so arranged as I have told you; so that all the men sit L  
 on the right side, namely on the side of the great Kaan, and all the ladies themselves sit  
 at the side of the empress just as I have told you. And briefly, at this feast he keeps L  
 table all in such a way as I have described to you the other time. And when they  
 have eaten, the musicians and many jugglers and buffoons come and amuse the court R V V  
 just as you have heard the other time. And after they have done all this each goes FB  
 back with great joy and gladness to his lodging & to his house. Now I have told you of V  
 the rejoicing of the white feast of the beginning of the year. Now I shall tell you of LT  
 a very noble thing which the great lord has done every year for the honour of his feast V  
 aforesaid, who has ordained [40d] certain robes of various colours to be made for certain V  
 barons to come to his appointed feasts of which I have told you. FB

**H**ERE HE TELLS OF THE TWELVE THOUSAND BARONS WHO CAME TO THE .90.  
 FEASTS. Now you may know again quite truly that the great lord has VA  
 ordained<sup>1</sup> his 12000 barons who are called in their own tongue quesitan, V  
 which means to say in our tongue the lord's nearest trusty ones, as I have told you before. V FB  
 He has given to each of these 12000 men thirteen suits of robes<sup>2</sup> of great value, each of a FB FB L  
 colour different the one from the other, that is to say that all the 12000 are of one FB  
 colour, and then the second 12000 of another, so that they are divided one from the other in  
 thirteen varieties of colours; and they are decked with pearls and with precious stones FB  
 and with other great and rich things very nobly, and therefore they are of very extremely LT L  
 great value. He has also given to each of these twelve thousand barons with each FB  
 robe thirteen times a year a belt of gold, of crimson cunningly worked with threads of gold V  
 & of silver, very rich and very beautiful and of great value. And again he gives to FB  
 each a pair of boots of leather called camut, which is bourgal, and a hat, worked very FB L FB VL  
 cunningly with silver thread, which are very beautiful and dear. They all have  
 ornaments so noble and so beautiful that it seems indeed when they have put them  
 on that each one is a king. And he makes thirteen feasts in the year, so that those twelve VA  
 thousand barons are robed thirteen times in the year, and at every feast the colours are changed.  
 And it is ordered that these twelve thousand be at each feast which the lord makes, and these V  
 gentlemen are of the best that there may be.<sup>3</sup> And at each feast of the thirteen of the year L

<sup>1</sup> B. reads *ordree[xiii festes a les quelz doivent venir les]sien . . .* but with no MS. support, unless it is the sentences of VA,V below.

<sup>2</sup> TA,LT read "twelve barons" and LT "twelve robes", here & below. There seems to be some confusion between the 12000 guards (*quesitan*, who were hardly barons) and these barons, whatever their number. VA: *tredexemilia vestimenti alano per zaschadum*

<sup>3</sup> B., p. clxxv, quotes this as one of the pitiful corruptions of V; and it may indeed be a misunderstanding of the following sentences. But it also gives some support to B.'s own addition