

ALL DEBTS AND WAGES ARE PAID WITH PAPER ≠ MARCO POLO

you without any mistake that many times a year the merchants bring so many
 VA VB things that they are well worth 400000 bezants of gold and the [44d] great lord buys of
 them each year so much that it is without end, and he has them all paid with those sheets,
 FB VB FB a thing which costs him little or nothing, as you have heard. And again I tell you that
 P many times a year an order goes through the town of Cambaluc that all those who
 FB LT have precious stones and pearls and gold and silver or any other dear things must bring
 FB P them to the mint of the great lord, & he will have them well and liberally paid with
 FB that money according to the proper value. And they do it and bring them there very
 P willingly, because they would not receive so much for them from any other, in so great
 FB abundance that it is without number, and all are paid with sheets without delay or
 loss to them. And he who should not wish to bring them, stays at home.¹ And in this way
 the great lord has all the gold and the silver and the pearls and the precious stones
 of all his lands. And again I tell you another thing which does well to say. For
 R when one has kept these sheets so long that they are torn and are spoilt through too
 FB TA great age, though they are very durable, then he takes them to the mint of the great lord
 and they are changed for new and clean ones, so, indeed, that he leaves three in
 VB a hundred of them for the stamp. And again I shall tell you a pretty fact which does
 FB FB well to tell in our book. For if a baron or other man whoever he might be wishes to buy
 FB gold or silver or precious stones or pearls to make his vessels or his girdles or his other
 work,² he goes off to the mint of the great lord and carries some of those sheets
 and gives them in payment for the gold and for the silver which he buys from the
 VB R P master of the mint. And never is gold or silver spent, but all his armies and officials
 R VB come to be paid with this sort of money of paper (of which he has as much made as he pleases),
 R P of which the value is the same to them as if it were of gold or of silver; and everything necessary
 for the court is bought. Now I have told you the way and the reason why the great
 FB lord must have and has more treasure than any man of this world, and you have well
 VA heard how and in what manner; & it costs him nothing, so that he can well spend marvellous
 P sums. And everyone is obliged to buy those moneys from him. Moreover I will tell you a
 greater thing, that all the lords of the earth have not so great riches, treasures, and
 expenses as the great lord has alone. Now I have told you and described all the facts
 how the great lord [45a] makes money of sheets; now I shall tell you of the great lord-
 ships which go out from this city of Cambaluc for the great lord.

¹ VB: *ne per cossa del mondo alcuno ardiria star de portarlle*

² FA which is here carelessly written, having e.g. *aleuesque* twice for *a la seque*, has *autres couues choses* which PAUTHIER prints as *autres riches choses*. FB omits the doubtful word, which should perhaps be *chieres*.