

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD'S MOUNTAINS & MAGICIANS

change it with those people & give five¹ fine silver saggi of it, and much less, for one of fine gold. And from this the merchants make great profit and derive great gain from this province by this exchange. But let us return to the treatment of the province of Çardandan. You may know then that these people have no idol nor church, but they worship the head of the house and say, Of this one we are sprung. They have no letters nor do writing; and it is no wonder, for they are born in very out of the way wild and woodland places and in great forests and in great mountains to which it is impossible for men from other places to go in summer for anything in the world, because the air is so corrupt and bad, and especially in summer, that no foreigner would escape from death there. For which reason they can have no dealing with the world. But I tell you that when they have to do the one with the other and wish to make their bonds or deeds of it, which they must give and receive, they take a small piece of wood either square or round and split it in the middle, and keep, the one the one half and the other with whom he has to do the other half, as we here do in our way on a tally. But yet it is true that they first make two notches on it or three or four or as many as they wish marking on it the amount of their dealing together. And when the time is come and they come to pay one another the tallies being put together agree in the little marks. And when they have paid then he who must give the money or other thing causes the half of the stick which that one had to be given back to him, and so they remain content and satisfied. Moreover I tell you that all these three provinces of which I have [55a] told you have no physician, these are Caragian and Uncian and Iaci.² But when they are ill they make their physicians, that is magicians come to them, these are the devil-charmers and those who keep the idols³ (and with these the province is well supplied), and ask them to foresee concerning the sick. And when these magi are come they ask about the manner of the sickness; then the sick persons tell them the ills which they have, and the magi, very many of them being gathered together, begin immediately to sound their instruments of music and to sing and to dance and leap in honour and praise of their idols; and they continue this dancing, singing, and playing all together for a long time until some one of these magicians fall all on his back on the ground or on the pavement or on the bed and with great foam at the mouth and seems dead, and then they dance no more. And they say that it is that the devil is entered there inside his body, and he stays thus a great while, in such manner that he seems dead. And when the other magicians his companions, of whom many were there, see that

¹ VB: sie

² R: Nè in questa prouincia, nè in Caidu, Vociam, & Iaci, si trouano medici. ma come si ammala qualche grande huomo, le sue genti di casa, fanno . . .

³ P: qui ydola colunt So R.