

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD≈ THE SHIPS OF THE SEA  
*and four sails, and they often add to them two masts more which are raised and put P  
 away every time they wish,<sup>1</sup> with two sails, according to the state of the weather. Some VB Z  
 ships, namely those which are larger, have besides quite thirteen holds, that is divisions, on the  
 inside made with strong planks fitted together, so that<sup>2</sup> if it happens by accident that the ship  
 is staved in any place, namely that either it strikes on a rock or a whale fish striking against  
 it in search of food staves it in. And this often happens; for if the ship sailing by night making  
 the water ripple passes near a whale, the whale seeing the water glisten as it is moved thinks  
 that there will be food for it, and moving quickly forward strikes against the ship and often  
 staves the ship in some part of it. And then the water entering through the hole runs to the bilge,  
 which never remains occupied with any things. And then the sailors find out where the ship is  
 staved, and then the hold which answers to the break is emptied into others, for the water cannot  
 pass from one hold to another, so strongly are they shut in; and then they repair the ship there  
 and put back there the goods which had been taken out. They are indeed nailed in such a Z  
 way; for they are all lined, that is that they have two boards one above the other. Z  
 And all round them it is lined with one board above the other. And the boards of Z P  
 the ship inside and outside are thus fitted together, that is they are, in the common speech of P  
 our sailors, caulked both outside and inside, and they are well nailed inside and Z L  
 outside with iron pins. They are not pitched with pitch, because they have none of  
 it in those regions; but they oil them in such a way as I shall tell you, because they P  
 have another thing which seems to them to be better than pitch. [71d] For I tell  
 you that they take lime and hemp chopped small<sup>3</sup> and they pound it all together Z  
 mixed with an oil from a tree. And after they have pounded them well, these three  
 things, together I tell you that it becomes sticky and holds like birdlime. And with this L  
 thing they smear their ships, and this is worth quite as much as pitch. Moreover  
 I tell you that these ships want some 300 sailors, some 200 sailors, some 150, some more, Z Z  
 some fewer, according as the ships are larger and smaller. They also carry a much greater  
 burden than ours. And formerly in time past the ships were larger than they are now at present;  
 because the violence of the sea has so broken away the islands in several places that in many  
 places water was not found enough for those ships so great, and so they are now made smaller;  
 but they are so large that they carry quite five thousand baskets of pepper, and  
 some six thousand.<sup>4</sup> Moreover I tell you that they often go with sweeps, that is with P  
 great oars, and four sailors row at each oar. And these larger ships have such large P Z*

<sup>1</sup> P: "but two of the foresaid masts are so arranged that they can easily be raised and lowered." Of this and other peculiarities of P in this place there is no sign in VA.

<sup>2</sup> itaque(?) Read ita quod R: di modo, che

<sup>3</sup> P: Tortum autem canabum minutatim . . . cum aloe

<sup>4</sup> TA: e di datteli vj<sup>m</sup>. misunderstanding e de tel.vi<sup>m</sup>.