

·167·

RED & WHITE WINE FROM TREES IN SUMATRA ≈ MARCO POLO

TA³ FB VB have no wheat but live on abundance of rice. And also they have no wine of grapes but
FB they have such as I shall describe to you. You may know quite truly that they have a
FB kind of tree of which when they want wine they cut off the branches of that tree,
LT LT and from the branches flows water, and that water which falls is wine; and one puts a
VA FB trough or a very large jar tied at the stump which is left on the tree where the branch is
VA VA cut off, just as they catch the sap of the vines. And I tell you that those branches drop very
VB quickly, and in a day and in a night it is filled, and it is very good wine to drink, like
Z our local wine; which wine is of so great virtue that it cures the dropsical and those who have
VB cough and spleen. The trees [76c] are like small dates in size, as I have told you; and there
VA V V VA are commonly four branches of which one cuts off one at a certain time of the year; and
P VA you another thing, that they empty the jars and put them back again; and this lasts several
VB days, and when the liquor of the arm cut off is used up and those arms throw out wine no
Z more, they take water through conduits as they see to be necessary, which conduits are drawn
Z from streams, and throw some of it at the feet of the tree, and afterwards, when they
FB have been watered for an hour, it does not stay long before the arms begin again to throw
Z VB out the wine as before, and it is not red as the first, but more clear and of as good taste as white
VA Z home-made wine, and that they use for their drink. And I tell you that there is some of it
white and some red, which really appears to be wine; for there are some trees which naturally
give out the liquor red, but some white. They have a very great quantity of Indie nuts
VB FB VB very large—as large as a man's head—and good to eat fresh; but in the middle of the shell
of the fresh nut it is full of liquid of a taste like wine or syrup, and this people never drinks
L Z VB any[other]drink. They eat indifferently of all flesh in general both good and bad of
FB coarse and unclean animals. Now we have told you enough of this kingdom. Now we
V will leave you it and will go to the next, and will tell you of Dagroian.

·168·

FB **H**ERE HE TELLS OF THE KINGDOM OF DAGROIAN. And when one leaves this
VB kingdom of Sumatra then one finds the next kingdom which is named Dagroian, the
L Z own language. They are of this same island and have a separate king. The people are
very savage, and they are claimed for the great Kaan. They are idolaters. And I will
Z relate to you first of all a very evil custom which they observe as I shall tell you. For
P you may know quite truly that when any of them either male or woman falls very
FB VB ill, that is to say ill of any sickness, they send at once for their relations and then their
TA Z VB relations send for their diviners and the magicians and make them examine and see the
L sick person if the sick is sure to recover or if he must die of such a sickness. And these
VB Z magicians after using their enchantments say that they learn and know by their enchant-
V Z ments and diabolical art and by their idols whether he must recover or die. And do