

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD'S BETEL CHEWING IN CAIL
off from this quarrel and if you did not make peace together, I shall kill myself
immediately and first of all I shall cut off the breast from my chest, that with
which I gave you my milk. *And she says that she will disembowel herself.* And when the Z FB
sons see the great mourning that their mother makes and that she prays them about
it so tenderly, and also because they know that it is better for them, they agree
together and make peace. And this is come to pass several [87b] times. But yet I
tell you that it cannot fail that when their mother shall be dead they make great
quarrel together and that they destroy one the other. Moreover you may know that. Z
all these people of this city, and also all of the whole of Indie¹ have a custom like this, R-Z
namely that from a habit and pleasure they almost always carry in the mouth a certain leaf
called tambur. And they go chewing this leaf and spit out the spittle which is formed. And
nobles and magnates and kings especially do this. They have those said leaves made up with R Z
camphor and other sweet-smelling spices; and so they go continually chewing them, and also R Z
quick lime mixed together.² And I was told that this keeps them very healthy. And if moreover R-Z
anyone does an injury to anyone and wishes to scorn him & to insult him, when he meets
him on the road he takes that chew from the mouth and throws it in his face³ and says, Thou art
not worth this, namely what he throws. But he regarding it as a great injury and insult
immediately runs and complains to the king how such an one has scorned and made nothing R Z
of him, and asks him to give him leave for revenge; namely that if the aggressor has scorned
him and his people he will ask leave and says that he wishes to try his own person and people R Z
with the person of him who did the injury and with his people, and to show whether he is
worth[that] or not. But if he has scorned his own person only, he will ask leave for man to man.
And then the king grants leave to either party. If however it must be a battle of people to people
each one with his people is prepared for the battle; and the armour which they put on and
wear for defence is the skin which their mothers gave them at the beginning. When they are on
the field they begin the battle and strike, wound, and kill one another; for their swords
lightly pierce them and each of them is open to easy attack. The king will be there and a multitude
of people to watch the affair; and when the king sees that many on either side have been killed
and that one of the sides seems to have the better position and to overcome the other, he will put one
end of a cloth which he will have round him to the teeth, and from the other side he will hold
[it] with the hand, and then the fighters cease immediately from the fight nor is another blow
delivered. And it often happens thus. If it is a matter of man to man they will both be naked,

¹ The words or phrases in this line are from R and Z alternately, from *all* (R) to *Indie* (Z).

² See p. lxxxvii and note there. The words or phrases in this line are from R and Z alternately, from *quick* (R) to *if* (Z).

³ R: *come l'incontra gli sputa nel viso di quella foglia, ò spuma,*