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BRAZIL AND PEPPER AND INDIGO IN COILUM ≄ MARCO POLO

R Z R as they always use to go; and the king gives them the weapons, and each will have a sword and a shield; and all the people run together there. And here they fight till one of them lies dead.
Z They cannot strike with the point because that is forbidden by the king. They know indeed how to guard themselves excellently with those swords, for they cover themselves and attack the opponent with them very well. Indeed they do thus. As you have understood they are black. And one will make for the other a circle of white colour on his flesh wherever he likes, and will say to him, Know that I will strike thee in the circle and nowhere else; guard thyself as well as thou canst. And so will the other do to him. Well for him who does better, worse for him who does worse, for wherever one may touch the other he can feel him well enough. Now we
V have told you something of this king¹ and we will leave him because in that realm there is nothing else to say, and will tell you of the kingdom of Coilum.

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VB **H**ERE HE TELLS OF THE KINGDOM OF COILUM. Coilum is a city and kingdom

Z FB P V which indeed is found² towards the south-west wind when one sets out from the province of Maabar and has gone 500³ miles by the other side. The

TA V G people of it they are all idolaters and there are also many Christians and Nestorians and

VB G Z V Z Saracens and many Jews. And they have a language for themselves. And the king of this kingdom pays tribute to none. Now I wish to tell you what is found in this kingdom and what grows there. Now you may know that the Coilomin brazil grows there

VB FB in great quantity which is very good; and there is also Coilomin ginger; and pepper also

FB Z grows there in great abundance. And I will tell you how it grows. For through all the fields and woods it grows in great abundance, and is gathered in the month of May and of June and of July. And I tell you that the trees which make pepper are planted

VB L VB in the winter and they often water them and they are domestic trees. That pepper is [not]dried in ovens, as is said in our parts. There would need to be many ovens to dry the great quantity of pepper that is produced; but the pepper is naturally crinkled.⁴ Pepper in those

Z regions is loaded on the ships in bulk, as wheat is loaded in our parts. They have also very

Z P good indigo in great abundance there, which the dyers use; and I tell you that it is

V Z made from sap of an herb. For they take that herb and put it without the roots into

Z L a great tub and afterwards put water there and leave it to stay so until all that herb

L Z is rotted & wholly dissolved and the sap is left there. Then that sap is put in the sun. Then

FB VA VB they leave it in the sun which is very hot in that region till it is partly dry; & then

VB take it out & cut it up small. And if the sun is too hot they take it out. And it makes it

Z work and stick together, and because of the fervent heat of the sun it boils away till it is

¹ V: reame

² *ge bien[se]trouue* FB: *si treuve len*

³ FB: 600 G: v myle

⁴ cf. CORDIER *Les Merveilles de l'Asie* p. 116 (pl. IXa).