

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD^s BLACK LIONS & PARROTS

.180.

dried, and it becomes like paste, and then they spread it out to dry, and being dry it is cut ^{VB}
up into pieces so as you can see it; and that is indigo. Moreover I tell you that there is ^{V VB}
so great heat in this country and the sun there is so hot that one can scarcely bear
it there. For I tell you that *even the water is so hot that* if you were to put an egg into ^G
some river *when the sun was shining brightly on it* it would be cooked before you were ^{VL}
gone at all far *just as in boiling water*. And again [87c] I make you know that the ^{VL}
merchants come to this kingdom with their ships¹ *in numbers bringing many goods* ^L
from Mangi and from Arabie and from the Levant and make there very great gain. ^{FB}
of this merchandise which they bring in from their country and which they carry ^Z
away afterwards with their ships *to their own country*, of the merchandise of this ^V
kingdom. There are *in this kingdom* many strange beasts different from all the others ^L
in the world. For I tell you that there are black lions without any other colour
or mark. *And there are also* parrots of several kinds *more beautiful than those which* ^{FB Z P}
are brought to us this side of the sea, for there are some *parrots* all white as snow and they ^Z
have the feet and the beak red, and again there are some *parrots* red and some white² ^{Z FB}
and green which are the most beautiful thing in the world to see; *and green ones also*. ^{V FB}
There are some again very small which are likewise very beautiful. There are also
peacocks much more beautiful and larger and of another sort *and size* than are ours. ^Z
And also they have hens very different from ours *and better than ours*. And what shall ^{FB L V}
I tell you about it? They have all things different from ours, and they are more
beautiful and better. For *they have many fruits*, but they have no fruits like ours, nor ^{VB}
any beasts nor any birds; and this comes to pass, *they say*, through the great heat ^R
which is *the rule* there. Grain have they none except rice alone.³ They make wine ^Z
also of a palm sugar,⁴ *of which there is much*. This is a very good drink and makes a ^{Z R G}
man become drunken sooner than grape-wine would do. Of all *other* things which ^Z
are needed by the body of man for life they have in great abundance *different from* ^{VA}
ours and very cheap, except that they have no corn but rice only, *of which they have* ^G
plenty. They have *indeed* astrologers enough and good. [87d] *And they have many* ^{Z Z VA}
physicians who know well how to *care for and keep* mens bodies in health. They ^Z
are all black, *both* men and women *& children*, and go all naked except that they ^{FB FB}
cover their natural parts with very beautiful⁵ cloth. They do not hold for sin any
act of self-indulgence nor any carnal sin. *And the marriages* are made in this way ^{VB V}

¹ Z,V: "wares"

² FB: *et de blans* Z,V: "blue" L': *azuri* only.

³ *semblemant* perhaps a slip for *seulemant*. FB: *seullement*

⁴ Z,V: "dates"

⁵ TA: *biancho*