

COTTON TREES & LEATHER WORK IN GOÇURAT ≠ MARCO POLO

Z a certain drug called tamarind and sea-water, so that the merchants go much below
 Z and pass or vomit all that they have in belly. The corsairs have all that the merchants
 P pass collected and have it searched[to see]if there are pearls or any other precious
 stones. For the corsairs say that when the merchants are taken that they used to eat
 the pearls and the other precious stones so that the corsairs may not find them.
 And therefore those wicked corsairs give the merchants that drink for that malice
 Z of which I have told you. And so the merchants can in no way escape without losing
 TA V everything if they were taken. Now you have seen if this is not great malice. In this kingdom
 FB LT they have great multitude of pepper; and they have also ginger enough & many
 Z other spices; and they have indigo in abundance. They have also cotton enough, for
 L they have the trees which make cotton abundantly very large, which are [89b]
 VA VB commonly six paces high, and straight; and these have quite twenty years. But yet it
 is true that when these trees are so old they do not make cotton which is good to
 Z spin, but they use it for wadding and for the quilts and other coarse things. And this
 comes about from these trees.¹ For up to twelve years they make good cotton to
 TA spin, but from twelve years up to twenty these trees are called old[and]do not make
 P such good cotton as when they are young. Beyond[twenty years]it is worth nothing.
 L A very exceedingly great quantity of very good skins are dressed in this kingdom,
 FB that is to say that they tan leather of goat & of ox and of buffalo and of wild ox
 and of unicorn and of many other beasts. And I tell you that so great quantity of
 L them are tanned that very many ships a year are loaded with them and they set out
 Z for Arabie² and for many other cities and parts, for many kingdoms and many
 provinces are supplied with them from this kingdom. And again I tell you that
 R many beautiful mats of red³ and blue leather decorated with birds and with beasts
 are made in this kingdom, and they are embroidered very cunningly with thread
 of gold and of silver. They are so beautiful that it is a wonder to see them. And
 Z understand that those mats of which I have told you are of leather, upon which
 VB Z L the Saracens sleep; and they say it is too good sleeping there. And again in the same way

¹ *mes la ourent a uanter & as trapontes a ce auent de ceste arbres uanter*, as Y. understood, is for *uater, ouater*, "to wad". P: *pro quiltis uel diploydis aut pro opere simili* but FG,TA,LT seem to have been puzzled. Some texts (e.g. VB) more plausibly make this a general statement that cotton trees will reach a height of six paces and an age of twenty years. LT says that cotton from trees is good & will last for twelve years.

² *se partent por atabi* FA,FB: *vont par arabie (arrabe)* L (ambiguously): *naues que portant* TA,LT,P omit. Z: *ferruntur* V: *se portano* R: *portansi* So it is possible that we should read, with B., *se portent*

³ *narces de cure uermoil* and below *nares . . . nates* Read *nates* or *nattes* in every case.