

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD'S SWIFTRUNNING CURRENT

killed each day that none could believe the hearing of it if he did not see it by his own looking. And they say that this camels flesh is better and more wholesome than any other flesh to be found in that region, as they have proved, and so they use to eat it all the year. Again you may know that there are many very great trees of red sandal in this island as large as are the trees [91c] of our country, & they do great trade in them; and these trees would be sufficiently valuable in another land. And they have many woods of them as we have of other wild trees in our fatherland, and because of the great quantity they are of small value. They have the finest ambergris enough because there are whales or baleens in great abundance in that sea, and there are also the very large fishes which we call capdoilles in plenty. And because they often catch these whales and these capdoilles in plenty and take oil from them they have much oil and ambergris in great quantity, and you know that the whale makes & produces ambergris. And the whales discharge it, and the sea makes it come to the beach, and they gather it. They have many leopards and lynxes & bears, and lions also they have great beyond measure, and other wild animals also such as are stags, roe-deer, fallow-deer, and other like animals they have in abundance. And hunting and fowling of many different animals and birds they have in multitude. They also have very large flocks¹ in plenty. There are many other strange birds, that is very different from ours, so that it is a wonder.² They have moreover much merchandise and many ships come there from different provinces with many wares, and these are cloth of gold and of silk, and with silk of several kinds and of many other things which we will not tell you here, and they sell all the things and change them with the merchants of the island for the wares of the island. And the merchants come there in plenty with their ships loaded and they discharge³ and sell them all, and then they load them with the wares of the island, and being loaded off they go, and they carry them to their countries. For I tell you that the merchants make great profit there and great gain. Moreover I tell you that this island is so far in the midday that the ships cannot go sailing more towards midday to the other islands except to this island and to that of Çanghibar,⁴ because the sea there runs so swiftly towards midday that they would hardly be able to come away to return back, and for this reason the ships do not go there. [91d] Moreover I tell you that the ships which come to this island

¹ *bestiaus* Z: *struços* "ostriches" Other texts seem to omit the words.

² V: *oxelli diuersi dai nostri chiamati chandanzie* The last words are perhaps due to confusion with the following "merchandise".

³ *lescargent* This should possibly be *les cangent*, "they exchange them". Z, V omit the word.

⁴ VA: *ale altre ixolle . . . va poche naue, senom de quelle de Zangibar*