

SCIER · HORSES TUNNIES AND EARLESS SHEEP ≠ MARCO POLO

with their clothes or garments, and with some necessary food for themselves, and¹ afterwards they tie everything together like a boat or raft so that if it happen through the tossing of the sea that the ship is sunk they all remain upon the sacks; and then they are driven by the course of the winds from day to day toward land, however far out they were to sea, if they were two hundred miles distant from land. And while they are at sea on sacks of this kind, whenever they wish to eat or to drink they take food and drink from the sacks, making them swell up afterwards by blowing. And by this way they escape, but the ships with the other large goods
 Z are lost. Now however, having dealt with these things, we will leave you this sultan and
 Z Z will proceed farther to tell you of a very great city which belongs to the same province
 of Aden and has a little king, which is toward the plough-beam and is called Scier.
 Z ABOUT THE CITY OF SCIER. Scier is a very great city which is toward the plough-
 V beam and is 400² miles distant from the port of Aden. And this city has a count
 TA Z who well maintains his land in *right and justice*. He has also several *other* cities and
 V LT villages under him, though it is true that this count is subject to the sultan of
 Aden. And they are *all* Saracens who worship Mahomet. And this city has a very
 good port, for I tell you quite truly that many ships and many merchants come
 there from Indie with many wares. And from this city the ships and the merchants
 go again with many wares to Indie. And again[I tell]you truly that the merchants
 carry into Indie from this city many good war-horses and many good horses-of-two-
 saddles³ which are very dear and of great value, and the merchants make very
 VA great [95b] profit from them and great gain, and there is not a man in the world who
 P VB could know the number. Very great quantities of incense white and very good grow
 V in this province. And dates also grow there in great abundance. And they have
 no corn but rice alone, and they have little of that; but I tell you that one carries
 TA Z Z corn in plenty there from abroad⁴ and the merchants they make great profit and gain
 R from it. They are great fishers, these people, and have fish in great abundance, and
 LT specially they have many and large & very good tunnies, and there is so great wealth
 of them there that you would have two large ones for a Venetian groat. They
 FB live on rice and on flesh & on milk and on fish. They have no wine from grapes,
 VB LT but they make it from sugar and from rice, and they make wine from dates & delicate
 VB spices, very good to drink. Moreover I tell you again another thing. For you may
 L know quite truly that they have sheep which have no ears nor seem to have even the

¹ itaquod & itaquod should presumably have been cancelled.

² P,R: 40 LT: 4 G: 300

³ chaulz de .ii. selles FA (under Aden): grans roncins de .ii. selles Z, p. ciii. cf. Y., II, p. 440, where the conclusion is that the term means horses which would take a riding saddle or a pack-saddle. VB: boni destrieri dale do ixolle ⁴ doure pais