

THE DEFEAT AND DEATH OF PRESTER JOHAN \neq MARCO POLO
to see what will result from the canes, the diviners began to read and to say their words over the canes; and when they had ended their prayer, behold the cane on which was written the name of Zinzino mounted on the cane where was written the name of Umenchan to the no small joy of Zinzino and of all his host with firm hope of certain victory.

When the day appointed for the battle was come, both the armies being prepared with the greatest order in battalions according to their usage, encouraged by each of their lords and captains with firm hope of victory, they came to the battle and as the armies attacked each other with all eagerness and speed so that it was a wonderful thing to see and hear, the clash of arms, the killing and wounding on either side, the spilling of blood. The captains each one strove with the utmost zeal and carefulness to control and encourage their horsemen to be constant and vigorous in the fight. The fortune for a long time appeared to be equal, with the very greatest killing and spilling of blood in both the armies, so that you might have believed a very great quantity of blood to be shed in that plain. But since this equality of fortune could not last for long without her showing her face to one of the sides, the army of Umenchan being unable to bear the fierceness of the men of Zinzino turned their backs. Umenchan as a gallant captain, when he saw the fear of his cavaliers, putting himself in the front wherever he saw that the matter was most dangerous nor forgetting any part of a good captain, exhorted them with promises and prayers that they should be firm to resist and to strike. Struck by an arrow and fallen he died immediately. When Umenchan was dead the whole army without any restraint set itself to flee. Zenzino following them with very great slaughter of the enemy was victor of the battle.

Following the victory Zinzino conquered all the land and domain of Umenchan, all the lands and castles surrendering themselves, some by force and some by fear, and he took the principal land and dwelling of Umenchan. He captured the daughter and immediately took her for wife, giving infinite thanks to the gods who had granted him not the wife which Umenchan had sought to give him, but her whom he had desired. Having got all the domain of Umenchan he was not content with that, having put all that country in the greatest terror by the victory, and was so great a lord, having conquered all those countries for six years, that I believe there was never so great a lord in the world. But fortune which does not promise the wheel of fortune to stay long in any happiness, being now wearied of the glory of Zinzino, while he was attacking a castle he was struck by an arrow in the knee. And of that wound Zenzino after a few days died. (VB² fol. 11c-13a).