

upon a tree aboven hym ; and than thei seyden amonges hem, that there was no man, be cause that thei saughe that brid there : and so thei wenten hire wey ; and thus escaped the emperour from dethe. And thanne he wente prevylly, alle be nyghte, till he cam to his folk, that weren fulle glad of his comynge, and maden grete thankynges to God immortalle, and to that bryd, be whom here lord was saved. And therefore princypally aboven alle foules of world, thei worschipen the owle : and whan thei han ony of here fedres, thei kepen hem fulle precyously, in stede of relykes, and beren hem upon here hedes with gret reverence : and thei holden hem self blessed, and saf from alle periles, while that thei han hem upon hem ; and therefore thei beren here fedres upon here hedes. Aftr alle this the Cane ordeyned him, and assembled his peple, and wente upon hem that hadden assayed hym before, and destroyed hem, and put hem in subieccioun and servage. And whan he had wovnen and putt alle the londs and contrees, on this half the Mount Belyan, in subieccioun, the whyte knyght cam to him azen in his sleep, and seyde to him, Chan, the wille of God immortalle is, that thou passe the Mount Belyan ; and thou schalt wyne the lond, and thou schalt putten many nacyouns in subieccioun : and for thou schalt fynde no gode passage for to go toward that contree, go to the Mount Belyan, that is upon the see, and knele there 9 tymes toward the est, in the worschipe of God immortalle ; and he schal schewe the weye to passe by. And the Chane dide so. And anon the see, that touched and was fast to the mount, began to withdrawe him, and schewed fair weye of 9 fote brde large ; and so he passed with his folk, and wan the lond of Cathay, that is the grettest kyngdom of the world. And for the 9 knelynges, and for the 9 fote of weye, the Chane and alle the men of Tartarye han the nombre of 9 in gret reverence. And therefore who that wole make the Chan ony present, be it of hors, be it of bryddes, or of arwes, or bowes, or of frute, or of ony other thing, always he most make it of the nombre of 9. And so thanne ben the presentes of grettere plesance to him, and more benygne he wil resceyven hem, than though he were presented with an 100 or 200. For hym semethe the nombre of 9 so holy, be cause the messagre of God immortalle devised it. Also whan the Chane of Cathay hadde wovnen the contree of Cathay, and put in subieccioun and undre fote many contrees abouten, he felle seck. And whan he felte wel, that he scholde dye, he seyde to his 12 sones, that everyche of hem scholde brynge