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KARTOUM, THE NILE, AND CUBA.

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TARTARY, THIBET, AND CHINA.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A JOURNEY

THROUGH

TARTARY, THIBET, AND CHINA,

DURING THE YEARS

1844, 1845, AND 1846.

BY M. HUC,

MISSIONARY PRIEST OF THE CONGREGATION OF ST. LAZARUS.

VOLUME II.

NEW-YORK:
D. APPLETON & COMPANY, 200 BROADWAY.
M.DCCC.LII.

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Two months had passed away since our departure from the Valley of the Black Waters, and during this time we had endured in the desert fatigues and privations of all kinds. Our health had not, indeed, suffered to any great extent; but we felt ourselves weaker than we had been, and we thought it would be necessary, for a time, to change our rude manner of living. In this point of view, a country inhabited by the Chinese could hardly fail to appear desirable, for, compared with Tartary, it offered us every comfort.

As soon as we had crossed the Hoang-Ho, we entered a little frontier town of China, called *Chè-Tsiu-Dzé*, which is only separated from the river by a sandy marsh. We took up our abode at the Hotel of *Justice and Mercy*, a large house newly built of wood, except a solid foundation of grey brick. The innkeeper received us with the eager courtesy which is usually displayed in establishments of this kind which the owner is endeavouring to bring into fashion; but the countenance of the host, it must be owned, did not afford him much assistance in his attempts to be agreeable. His eyes squinted horribly, and always seemed to be turned in the opposite direction to that in which they were really looking. But if the organ of sight performed its functions with difficulty, the tongue, by way of compensation, possessed the most marvellous elasticity. This innkeeper had been a soldier, and, in the way of his profession, seen and heard a great deal. He was well acquainted with the country, and connected with all sorts of people; and his loquacity was by no means on all occasions unwelcome, for he gave us a great deal of information concerning the places we should have to pass through on our way to the Kou-kou-Noor. This part of Tartary was well known to him, for, in the military period of his life, he had been in the war against the Si-Fan. The day after our arrival, he brought us a large sheet of paper on which the names of the towns, villages, and hamlets were written in order; and he then gave us a topographical lecture, with such impetuosity, so many gestures, and in such a tremendously loud voice, that our heads were fairly turned. The time which was not taken up by these long conversations—half volun-

tary, half *obligato*—with the innkeeper, we devoted to visiting the town. *Chè-Tsiu-Dzé* is built on an angle formed by the Yellow River and the Alechan mountains. On the eastern side the Hoang-Ho is bordered by blackish hills, in which coal is found in abundance, and which is the principal source of wealth to the inhabitants. The suburbs of the town consist almost wholly of vast potteries, where are to be seen the immense urns that serve to hold the provision of water for Chinese families, large and admirably-constructed furnaces, and vases of all sizes and shapes, great numbers of which are sent to the province of Kan-Sou.

At *Chè-Tsiu-Dzé* provisions are abundant, various, and very moderate in price, and nowhere is it easier to live. At all hours of the day and night numerous ambulatory restaurateurs carry about dishes of all kinds, soups, ragouts of mutton and beef, vegetables, rice, pastry, vermicelli, &c. There are dinners for all appetites and all purses, from the luxurious and complicated banquet of the rich to the thin broth of the beggar. These restaurateurs are usually Mohammedans; but a blue cap is the only sign which distinguishes them from the Chinese.

We rested and refreshed ourselves for two days at the Hotel of Justice and Mercy, and then we set out again. The environs of Chè-Tsiu-Dzé are uncultivated, and consist only of sand and gravel brought down every year by the Yellow River; but by degrees, as you advance, the ground rises, and the soil improves. About an hour's march from the town we crossed the Great Wall, or rather we crossed some miserable-looking ruins which mark the site of that ancient

rampart of China. The country soon became magnificent, and we could not but admire the agricultural talents of the Chinese nation. The province of Kan-Sou, which we were now passing through, is especially remarkable for its grand and ingenious works for the irrigation of the fields. Large canals formed from the Yellow River feed others of smaller dimensions, and these again supply little rills which flow through all the fields. The most simple but effectual arrangements are made for meeting the inequalities of the ground, and perfect order prevails in the distribution of the water: no proprietor would venture to open the sluices of his small canals before the appointed day; but every one gets his land watered in his turn.

You see few villages, but many farms, large or small, separated from each other by fields. The houses are surrounded by large trees; but there are neither groves nor pleasure gardens, for all the land is devoted to corn. There is not even a small space reserved to deposit the sheaves after the harvest; but the corn is piled up on the tops of the houses, which have all flat roofs. On the days of irrigation the country gives a perfect idea of those famous inundations of the Nile of which the descriptions have become so classical. The inhabitants move about their fields in little skiffs, or in light carts on enormous wheels, and usually drawn by buffaloes. These irrigations, however, so valuable for the fecundity of the soil, are detestable for travellers; for the roads are filled with mud or overflowed, and you are obliged to walk on raised banks that run along the sides of the fields. It is the height of misery to have to lead a camel along one of these paths: we could not make a

single step without fear of seeing our baggage upset into the mud; more than once we were thrown into the greatest embarrassment by accidents of this nature; and if they were not more numerous, our escape must be attributed to the skill of our camels in sliding through the mire,—a talent which they had acquired in the apprenticeship they had served in the marshes of the Ortous.

In the evening of our first day's journey we arrived at a little village named *Wang-Ho-Po*, where we expected to procure food with the same facility as at Chè-Tsiu-Dzé; but we were mistaken. The customs were no longer the same; we saw none of those agreeable restaurateurs, with their ambulatory shops crammed with ready-cooked provisions. The hawkers of forage were the only merchants who came to offer their services; we therefore began by giving their rations to our animals, and then we sallied forth into the village to discover the materials of a supper. On returning to our inn, we found we had to do our own cooking, for the landlord only furnished us with coals, water, and a kettle. Whilst we were peaceably occupied in consuming the products of our culinary industry, a great tumult arose in the court-yard; it was occasioned by a caravan of camels, conducted by some Chinese merchants, who were going to the town of Ning-Hai. As we were also bound for this town, we made acquaintance with them; and they informed us that the roads were impracticable, and that our camels, clever as they were, would not be able to get on. They added, however, that they knew a cross road which was shorter and less dangerous, and they invited us to accompany

them. As we were to set out during the night, we called the master of the inn, to settle our bill, and, according to Chinese custom, the discussion commenced by one party asking a great deal, and the other offering very little; then we disputed a long time, then we made mutual concessions, and at last we came to agreement. As we were taken for Tartars, however, it was deemed proper to ask us at least treble what we really owed, and consequently twice the usual amount of squabbling became necessary. We had to dispute energetically concerning ourselves, our animals, the stable, the room, the watering-place, the coals, the cattle, the lamp,—in short, for everything we had touched. The unlucky Tartar-like appearance that we had, procured us the opportunity of a great deal of practice in these discussions; for during our journey through the province of Kan-Sou, there hardly passed a single day in which we had not occasion to quarrel with an innkeeper. There is no great harm in these quarrels, however, for when they are over, you are generally better friends than before.

It was scarcely more than midnight when the Chinese traders were already on foot, and making, with infinite noise, their preparations for departure. We got up immediately; but it was in vain that we hurried as much as we could in saddling our animals,—our travelling companions were ready before us, and set off, promising, however, to go very slowly till our arrival. The night was dark, and it was impossible to see our guides; but by the aid of a little lantern we endeavored to find their track, though without success, and we were forced to journey on by chance through watery plains

which were entirely unknown to us; and we soon found ourselves so entangled among the inundated lands, that we dared advance no further, and we stopped on the edge of a field to wait for daylight.

As soon as morning dawned, we perceived, at a distance, a great walled town, and directed our course towards it; it was Ping-Lou-Hien, a town of the third order. Our arrival caused a terrible disorder. The country is celebrated for the beauty of its mules, and a mule was tied to the door of almost every house in the long street, which we traversed from north to south. By degrees, as we advanced, all these animals were seized with terror at the sight of our camels; they reared, they rushed with impetuosity against the neighbouring shops; some broke away from their fastenings, and set off at a gallop, overthrowing, in their flight, the establishments of the small traders. The people came running from all quarters, shouting, swearing at the "stinking Tartars," cursing the camels, and increasing the tumult instead of appeasing it. We were excessively vexed to see that our presence had such disagreeable consequences, but what could we do? It was not in our power to render the mules less timid, or the camels less ugly. It was settled that one of us should run on, and warn everybody of the arrival of our ill-looking beasts; and this precaution diminished the evil, but did not entirely prevent it, and the confusion did not cease till we had passed completely through the town. We had intended to stop to breakfast; but we had not sufficiently gained the affections of the inhabitants to venture to make any stay. We had the courage to buy some provisions, but we paid a horrible price for

them, for the moment was not favorable for our bargaining.

At some distance from the town we came to a guard-house, where we stopped for a short rest, and to take our morning meal. These guard-houses are very numerous in China, indeed, they ought, by law, to be found on all the great roads at every two miles' distance. They are built of wood or clay, quite in the Chinese taste, and whitewashed; and they are intended for a refuge for unfortunate travellers, who, during the night, have been overtaken by bad weather, and have not been able to reach an inn. They have only one large opening in front, and on each side of the hall, or barn, two little rooms, with doors and windows, but seldom any other furniture than a wooden bench, painted red. The outside of the building is decorated with coarse paintings, representing the gods of war—horsemen, and fabulous animals. On the walls inside are drawings of sabres, bows and arrows, lances, and all the weapons in use in China. A little way off to the right is a square tower, with five posts in a row to mark the five *lis*, which make the regular distance from one guard-house to another; and very often a large placard, raised on two poles, indicates to the traveller the names of the nearest towns on the route. This one, for instance, stated that there was—

"To the North to Ping-Lou-Kien, five *lis*."

"To the South to Ning-Hai, forty-five *lis*."

In time of war these square towers serve for making signal fires; and the Chinese have a story that a certain emperor, yielding to the foolish solicitations of his wife, ordered that, during the night, signals of alarm should

be made—the empress wishing to divert herself at the expense of the soldiers, and also to ascertain whether the fires would really summon troops to the capital. By degrees, as the signals reached the provinces, the governors sent off the military mandarins to Pekin; but learning, on their arrival, that the alarm had only been raised for the amusement and caprice of a woman, they went back full of indignation. Some time after there was really an irruption of Tartars, who advanced with rapidity to the very walls of the capital. But now no one in the provinces would pay any attention to the signal fires, as they supposed the alarm was only another joke of the empress; and the story adds that the Tartars entered the capital, and massacred the royal family. The profound peace which China has enjoyed so long has much diminished the importance of these fire stations, and when they go to decay they are seldom repaired.

When we had tied up the animals, we went into a room to take our needful refreshment, though the passers-by seemed surprised at our operations, and the elegant travellers did not fail to smile superior at the sight of the three Mongols who had made so little progress in civilisation.

Our halt was not long; for as the placard informed us officially that we were still forty-five *lis* from Ning-Hai, we thought we had no time to lose. We set off therefore along the bank of a magnificent canal, fed by the Yellow River, and destined to the irrigation of the country. Whilst the little caravan advanced slowly along the wet and slippery path, we saw advancing towards us a numerous troop of horsemen; and as they

came up, the swarms of workmen, who were engaged in repairing the banks of the canal, prostrated themselves, and cried—"Peace and happiness to our Father and Mother!"

We understood then that the traveller was a high class mandarin, and, according to the demands of Chinese politeness, we ought to have alighted from our horses and prostrated ourselves too; but we thought that, as Lamas of the west, we could dispense with this troublesome ceremony. We remained seated, therefore, and advanced gravely, and with confidence. At the sight of our camels, the horsemen kept at a respectful distance, all except the mandarin, who urged on his horse, and, coming up to us, saluted us with politeness, and asked us, in Mongol, news of our health and of our journey. But his steed manifested so much alarm at the sight of our camels, that he was obliged to cut short the conversation, and rejoin his cortége. He went away, however, quite triumphant at having found an occasion of speaking Mongol, and so giving the people of his suite a high opinion of his learning. This mandarin was apparently a Mantchoo Tartar, and he was now engaged in making an official visit of inspection to the canals of the province.

At length we came in sight of the lofty ramparts of Ning-Hai, and the numerous kiosks and pagodas, which might have been taken at a distance for great cedars; and the walls are of brick, and very old, though in good preservation. They are almost entirely covered with moss and lichen, which gives them a very venerable and imposing aspect. They are surrounded by marshes, where grow in abundance, reeds, rushes, and water-

lilies. The interior of the town is poor and miserable; the streets are dirty and crooked; the houses dilapidated, and blackened with smoke: it is evidently a town of great antiquity, as well as of great extent.

After having gone through about half of the main street, as we found we had still a league to get to the other end, we resolved to stop. We entered a large inn, and were followed by three individuals, who impudently demanded our passports. We saw immediately that they were sharpers, against whom it would be necessary to defend our purses.

"Who are you that presume to ask our passports?" we said.

"We are officers of the Grand Tribunal. It is forbidden to traverse the town of Ning-Hai without a passport."

Instead of making him any answer, we called the innkeeper, and begged him to write on a piece of paper his name, and the title of his inn. Our demand seemed to surprise him much.

"What is the use of such a paper?" said he; "what would you do with it?"

"We shall want it directely; we mean to go to the Grand Tribunal, and inform the mandarin that in your house three thieves came to plunder us."

At these words the three passport heroes took to their heels, and set off; the innkeeper loaded them with imprecations, and a curious crowd that had collected burst into a hearty laugh; but this little adventure stood us in good stead, and procured us many special attentions.

The next morning, when it was scarcely light, we

were awakened by a frightful tumult that had suddenly arisen in the court-yard; and, in the midst of the uproar, we distinguished the words "camel"—"Tribunal"—and "stinking Tartar."

We dressed ourselves quickly, and went to see the nature of this sudden *émeute*, in which it seemed we were in some way concerned. Our camels, it appeared, had during the night devoured two cart-loads of osiers which happened to be in the court-yard; the fragments still lay scattered about. The owners, strangers like ourselves at the inn, demanded payment for their goods, and nothing could be more just, as far as they were concerned; but, as we had distinctly warned the innkeeper of the danger in which the osiers were placed,—that our camels would certainly break loose and devour them,—we thought he was bound to repair the damage resulting from his carelessness.

When we had sufficiently explained the nature of the affair to the public jury, which is always permanent in China, it gave its decision in our favour; namely, that all the expenses should be paid by the innkeeper; but we generously did not insist on his giving us the value of the broken halter. Immediately after this final judgment had been pronounced, we made our preparations for departure, and set off. The southern part of the town was in a still more decayed state than that we had passed through the day before. Several quarters were entirely in ruins; and the only inhabitants we saw were a few hogs, which were routing about amidst the rubbish. In general, the people we saw in the town looked wretchedly poor, and were clothed in little else than dirty rags. Their faces looked pale and lan-

guid, as if they had scarcely the necessaries of life; yet Ning-Hai was probably, at one time, a rich and flourishing city; and it is still considered one of the towns of the first order of the province of Kan-Sou.

On leaving Ning-Hai we entered a magnificent road, bordered almost everywhere with willows and jujube trees; and at certain distances we found small public-houses, where travellers can rest and refresh themselves at a small expense, on tea, hard eggs, beans fried in oil, cakes, and fruits preserved in sugar and salt. This day's journey was a real recreation for us; and our camels also, who had hitherto only travelled in the deserts of Tartary, appeared to be quite sensible of the blessings of civilisation; they turned their heads majestically from one side to the other, and seemed to be making remarks on all they saw, the men as well as the things. Yet they were not so absorbed by their observations on the manners and industry of China, as to neglect the marvellous productions of the soil. The willows often attracted their attention, and they never failed to nibble, as they went on, a few of the tender young sprouts. Sometimes, also, stretching out their long necks, they would snuff at the dainties displayed before the doors of the public-houses; but the owners of the merchandise were apt to enter a rather lively protest against this manifestation of their scientific curiosity.

Towards the end of the day, which had been quite a pleasant one, we arrived at Hia-Ho-Po, a large village without walls, and alighted at the hotel of the Five Felicities. We were still occupied in distributing forage to our animals, when a horseman, wearing a white ball on his hat, rode into the court-yard; and without get-

ting off his horse, or making any of the customary salutations, he called for the innkeeper, and in an abrupt and haughty tone, said, "Let the place be properly swept and cleaned. Let these Tartars go and lodge elsewhere; the Grand Mandarin won't have camels in the inn."

We were not much surprised at the insolence of these expressions from the courier of a mandarin, but we were annoyed. We pretended not to hear him, and went on quietly with our occupation; and the innkeeper, seeing that we took no notice of the order to withdraw, advanced towards us, and, in a tone of politeness mingled with embarrassment, explained the state of affairs.

"Go and tell the White Ball," said we, "that you have received us into your house, and that we shall remain there. The mandarins have no right to take the place of travellers who have established themselves in a lawful manner."

The innkeeper had no need to take the trouble of reporting our words, for they had been pronounced in a tone quite loud enough for the White Ball to hear them distinctly. He got down immediately from his horse, and addressing himself directly to us, said:—

"The Grand Mandarin is coming directly; he has a great number of attendants, and the inn is small; besides, how could the horses remain in this yard with your camels?"

"A man in the suite of a mandarin, and, moreover, a man decorated like you with a white ball, ought to know how to express himself, first, with politeness, and secondly, with justice. We have a right to remain here,

and we will not be driven away. Our camels shall remain tied to the door of our room."

"The Grand Mandarin has given me orders to prepare him a lodging at the hotel of the Five Felicities."

"Very well, prepare his lodging; but don't meddle with our things. If you can't please yourself here, common sense dictates that you should go elsewhere."

"And the Grand Mandarin?"

"Tell the Grand Mandarin that there are here three Lamas of the West, who are quite willing to go back to Ning-Hai and appeal to the law. That they will go to Pekin, if necessary; they know the road."

The White Ball mounted his horse, and disappeared; and the innkeeper then came to us, and begged us to stand firm in our resistance. "If you remain here," said he, "I shall be sure of a little profit; but, if the mandarin comes, he will turn my house topsy-turvy—he will make me work all night, and then he will set off in the morning without paying me. And then, if I were forced to send you away, would it not ruin the reputation of the Five Felicities? Who would come to an inn where they took travellers in to turn them out again?"

While the host was thus exhorting us to courage, the mandarin's courier again appeared, got down from his horse, and made us a polite bow; which we returned with the best grace possible. "My Lord Lamas," said he, "I have been all through Hia-Ho-Po, and there is no other suitable inn. Who would say you are bound to give us your place?—to speak thus would not be to speak in a manner conformable to reason. But you see,

Lord Lamas, we are all travellers—we are far from our own families. Could we not manage the matter quietly, like brothers?"

"Oh! that indeed!" we said. "Men ought always to act like brothers; that is the true principle. When we are travelling, we ought to know how to live with travellers; if every one will put up with a little inconvenience, every one at last will be at his ease."

"Excellent words! excellent words!" and the most profound bows recommenced on either side.

As soon as we had come to this amicable arrangement, we began to discuss, in the pleasantest manner, the method of disposing ourselves in the inn of the Five Felicities. It was agreed that we should keep the room where we were already installed, and that we should tie up our camels in the corner of the court, in such a manner as they should not frighten the mandarin's horses. The courier was to do as he pleased with the rest of the house.

Immediately after sunset, the procession began to arrive. The two great gates of the court-yard were solemnly opened, and there entered a coach drawn by three mules, escorted by a number of horsemen. In the coach was seated a man of about sixty years of age, with grey beard and moustache, and a red cap on his head;—this was the Grand Mandarin. At his entrance his eye had run with a sharp and rapid glance over the inn; and as soon as he caught sight of us, and moreover of our three camels at the end of the court, the muscles of his thin face became suddenly contracted. "What's that?" he cried, with a harsh, angry voice. "Who are these Tartars? where do these camels come

from? Send the landlord to me." At this summons the innkeeper instantly vanished, and the White Ball stood a moment, as if petrified. His face became pale —then red—then olive-coloured. Nevertheless he took courage, advanced to the coach, bent one knee to the ground, and then rising, and approaching his lips to his master's ear, he spoke with him some time in a low voice. When the dialogue was over, the Mandarin expressed a wish to alight; and, after having waved his hand with a protecting air towards us, he retired like a mere mortal into the room that had been prepared for him.

The triumph that we had thus obtained, in a country the very entrance to which was forbidden us under pain of death, gave us great courage. These terrible mandarins, who had formerly caused us so much fear, ceased to be terrible now that we could approach them and look them in the face. We saw, in them, men full of pride and insolence,—pitiless tyrants to the weak, but cowards in the presence of men of a little energy; and from this time, we found ourselves in China as much at our ease as elsewhere.

After two more days' travelling we arrived at Chong-Wei, on the banks of the Yellow River. The town is walled, and of a middling size; but its cleanliness and its air of prosperity contrast strikingly with the poverty and ugliness of Ning-Hai. To judge of it merely by the number of its shops, all seemingly well provided with customers, and by the great population that throngs its streets, it should be an important commercial town. Yet the Chinese of this country appear not to know how to manage boats, for there are none to be

seen on this part of the river. This is a remarkable peculiarity, and it would confirm the idea that the people of this part of Kan-Sou are of Thibetan and Tartar origin; for the Chinese in general are known to be passionately addicted to river navigation. In leaving Chong-Wei we again crossed the Great Wall, here nothing more than a heap of loose stones piled one upon another, and we returned for some days to the kingdom of Alechan, in Tartary. More than once the Mongol Lamas had painted the Alechan mountains to us in frightful colours; but we can declare that the reality exceeded every description that had been given of it. The Alechan is a long chain of mountains composed of moving sand, so fine that it will run through your fingers like water; and over the whole of these immense accumulations there is nowhere the least trace of vegetation. Their monotonous aspect is only varied by the traces of some small insects, which, in their capricious sports, have described a thousand arabesques upon the sand. Its extreme fineness makes it easy to follow the track even of an ant. We experienced the greatest difficulty in making our way across these mountains. At every step our camels plunged in up to their bellies; and the horses were still more embarrassed, as their hoofs took less hold of the sand than the camels' feet. For ourselves, walking on foot, we had to take the greatest care not to roll down into the waters of the Yellow River, which flowed at the foot of the mountains. Fortunately for us, the weather was very calm; if there had been a wind we must have been buried alive under a sandy avalanche. These mountains appear to have been formed from the sand swept

from the great desert of Gobi,—the Yellow River having arrested its progress, and preserved the province of Kan-Sou from destruction; and it is to this it owes the yellowish colour which has procured for it the name of Yellow River, or Hoang-Ho. Above Mount Alechan its waters are always pure and limpid.

As we advanced, the mountains gradually declined to hills, the sand diminished in quantity, and towards the end of the day we reached a village whose Chinese appellation signifies "Waters always flowing," and which was a real oasis of exquisite beauty. The houses were built of the living rock, and often painted white or red; and the numerous trees and rivulets flowing through the streets give it a most picturesque aspect. Exhausted with fatigue as we were, the pleasure of arriving at such a place as the "Waters always flowing" is indescribable, and we were in a position to estimate all its delights. But our poetical enjoyment only lasted till the time came for settling with the innkeeper. As all the provisions, and even the fodder for the animals, had to be fetched from Chong-Wei, they were so frightfully dear as to overthrow entirely our plans of economy. For ourselves and our beasts we had to pay almost eight francs. Had it not been for that, we should have grieved at quitting this charming village. But there is always some motive which aids men to detach themselves from the things of the world.

On leaving *Chong-Lieou-Chouy* (the always flowing waters), we took the road followed by the Chinese exiles, and which leads to Ili. The country was not so frightful as that we had traversed the day before, but it was very dreary. Gravel had taken the place of sand;

but, except some tufts of hard, prickly grass, we found the soil entirely barren.

We passed through Kao-Tan-Dze, a most hideous village, the hovels composing which were of black earth. Provisions were still scarcer here than at the pretty one, and consequently still dearer. Even water has to be fetched from a distance of nearly thirty miles; and its price is so enormous, that though we bought a little for ourselves and our horses, our camels had to wait for better times and a less inhospitable soil.

Kao-Tan-Dze does not even enjoy the tranquillity which its poverty and solitariness would seem to assure it; for it is continually infested by robbers; and almost every house presents traces of fire and devastation. At the inn where we stopped, they asked us whether we wished to have the animals protected against robbers. This question of course astonished us not a little; and the people then entered into some explanations, and informed us that in this town there were two kinds of inns—those where they fought, and those where they did not fight,—and that the prices at the first were four times those of the second. The account made us suspect what was the real state of affairs; but the thing was still not altogether clear.

"Don't you know," said they, as we hesitated, "that Kao-Tan-Dze is continually attacked by robbers?"

"Yes, we know that."

"If you lodge at an inn where they do not fight,—if the robbers come, they will carry away your beasts, because no one has undertaken to defend them. If, on the contrary, you lodge at an inn where they fight,

there's a great chance that you will keep them, unless, indeed, the robbers should be the strongest — that happens sometimes."

All this appeared very strange and very vexatious; but it was necessary to make up our minds; and, after mature consideration, we determined to take up our abode at an inn where they did fight; for it occurred to us that the people of Kao-Tan-Dze probably had an understanding with the brigands to share the profits to be made out of travellers, and that it was better to pay them a good sum at once than to abandon our animals to them, since their loss would probably be followed by our own destruction.

On entering the inn which had been pointed out to us, we noticed that every thing was really on a war footing; there were guns, bows and arrows, and lances; and the presence of these weapons was not calculated to reassure us. We resolved, therefore, not to go to bed, but to keep watch during the night. What with its robbers and its excessive poverty, Kao-Tan-Dze in this martial attitude was a perfect puzzle to us. We could not help asking what could possibly induce people to inhabit a frightful sterile country, without water, far from any inhabited region, and, into the bargain, as it appeared, desolated by the attacks of hordes of robbers. What could they gain by it? What advantage could such a position present? But the problem for us remained insoluble. During the first watch of the night, however, we were talking a good deal with the innkeeper, who seemed to be a frank sort of person enough, and who told us a number of stories, all full of combats, fires, and murder.

"But why in the world," said we, at last, "don't you leave such a detestable country?"

"Oh!" he answered, "we are not free to do that. We people of Kao-Tan-Dze are all exiles. We have to remain here to furnish water to the mandarins and soldiers who conduct the exiles. We have to give it gratis to all government officers."

Here, then, the matter was explained: and we were inclined to think, too, that the people were not in connivance with the robbers; for it appeared they had among them a mandarin charged with their superintendence. For a moment we had hopes of finding some Christians in the town; but the innkeeper assured us that there were none. He said that those who had been exiled for the religion of the Lord of Heaven all went to Ili.

From the account given by the innkeeper we thought we might without danger venture to take a little rest. We went therefore to bed, and slept till dawn, without being at all disturbed by robbers.

The road to Ili, which we followed during a great part of the day, led us as far as the Great Wall; and as this has been often mentioned without a very accurate description being given of it, we will say a few words on the subject. The idea of raising a wall as a defence against enemies is of course not peculiar to China,—antiquity offers many examples of similar works, though none on so grand a scale. Its importance has been very differently estimated by different people—some rating it very highly, and others turning it into ridicule. Mr. Barrow, who visited it in 1793 with Lord Macartney, made the following calculation. He supposes that

there are in England and Scotland 1,800,000 houses; and estimating each on an average to contain 2000 cubic feet of masonry, he maintains that they do not contain as large a quantity of materials as are employed in the Wall of China; and that these would suffice for a wall that should go twice round the globe. But it is evident that he has taken for the basis of his calculation the part of the Wall immediately to the north of Pekin, which is really fine and imposing; but it must not be supposed that this barrier is equally large and solid throughout its whole extent. We have had occasion to cross it at more than fifteen different points, and have often travelled for days together without ever losing sight of it; and, instead of the double battlemented stone wall which is seen at Pekin, it is sometimes a very humble-looking wall of clay; and we have even seen it reduced to its simplest expression, and composed only of stones piled up together. As for the foundations of which Mr. Barrow speaks, and which consist of large free-stones cemented with mortar, we have certainly nowhere seen a vestige of any thing of the kind; and it is reasonable to suppose that, as the Great Wall was built as a rampart against the incursions of the Tartar hordes, the environs of the capital would be fortified in a special manner. The mandarins, also, who were charged with the execution of this work, would probably execute more conscientiously the part that was made under the eye of the emperor, and content themselves with raising the mere pretence of a wall on those distant points, which had besides little to fear from the Tartars,—such, for instance, as the frontiers of Ortous and the Alechan mountains.

The barrier of San-Yen-Tsin, which is found at some distance after passing the Wall, is celebrated for the great severity exercised at it with regard to the Tartars who wish to enter the empire. The village possesses only a single inn, kept by the chief of the soldiers who guard the frontier: as we entered we saw in the court-yard several groups of camels; a large Tartar caravan had arrived just before us, but there was plenty of room, for the inn was very large. But we had scarcely taken possession of our room when the master came to ask us for our passports. We replied that we had none; and at these words his face expanded with an expression of extreme satisfaction, and he declared that we could not go on without paying him a considerable sum of money. We declared that we had been at Pekin, and traversed China and Tartary from one end to the other, without having been ever asked for a passport, or spending for such a purpose a single sapeck. He however insisted; and, finding the discussion was extending to an inconvenient length, we at last declared that we would give him whatever he asked,—on one condition, namely, that he should give us a written declaration that he had required such a sum of us previously to allowing us to pass; and this we would show to the first mandarin we should meet, and ask him if it were conformable to the laws of the empire. This settled the business,—the landlord lowered his tone immediately, and said, "Since you have been at Pekin, it may be that the emperor has granted you particular privileges;" and he then added, in a low voice and smiling,—"Do not tell the Tartars that I have let you pass gratis."

It is really pitiable to see these poor Mongols travel-

ling in China: every one tries to cheat them, and every one succeeds; they meet at every step custom-house officers,—people who have to make roads and bridges and build pagodas, and who all recommend themselves to their generosity. Others pretend to give them advice,—to warn them against evil-disposed, wicked persons; they caress them, call them friends and brothers; and if all these methods do not prove effectual in loosening the Tartar's purse-strings, they try that of intimidation; they talk to them of mandarins, laws, tribunals, prisons, tortures; they tell them they are going to be arrested, and, in short, treat them quite like children. The Mongols are easily imposed upon, as they are total strangers to the manners and customs of China. When they come to an inn, instead of lodging in the rooms, they pitch a tent in the middle of the court, and plant stakes all round it, to which they tie their camels. If they are not allowed to do this, and are forced to enter a room which they regard as a prison, they fix their tripod in the centre, place their kettle on it, and light a fire with argols, of which they never fail to bring a good store. It is in vain to tell them that there is a large kitchen in the inn where they can much more conveniently cook their provisions; they greatly prefer boiling their tea in the middle of the room, and when night comes on unrolling their carpet and lying down round it. They take very good care not to lie down on the beds or the kang. The Tartars of the caravan who were lodging with us at the inn of San-Yen-Tsin, carried on all their little domestic operations in the open air; and the simplicity of these children of the desert was such, that they came to ask us seriously whether

the innkeeper would charge them anything for lodging with him.

We continued our journey through the province of Kan-Sou, directing our course towards the south-west. The country is intersected by hills and streams, and is generally fine and rich. The admirable variety of its products is due in some measure to a temperate climate and a fertile soil, and especially to the activity and skill of the cultivators. The principal produce is wheat, and excellent bread, like that of Europe, is made from it; rice is scarcely ever sown, and the little that is used is brought from the surrounding provinces. The goats and sheep are fine, and form, with bread, the chief subsistence of the inhabitants; and the numerous and seemingly inexhaustible mines of coal enable every one to procure a sufficiency of fuel; so that it appeared to us that in Kan-Sou every one had the means of getting an honest living. At two days' journey from San-Yen-Tsin we were assailed by a dangerous hurricane. It was about ten in the morning. We had just crossed a small mountain, and entered on a plain of vast extent, when suddenly we noticed a peculiar calm in the atmosphere; yet profoundly still as the air was, it was excessively cold. By degrees the sky assumed a whitish tint, although we could see no cloud; the wind began to blow from the west, and soon with such violence that our animals could not advance further. The sky now became of a reddish colour, and the furious gusts of wind raised in the air immense columns of dust, sand, and fragments of plants, and then these columns were flung impetuously to the right, the left, and in all directions, and the darkness was so deep that we could not

even see the animals on which we were mounted. We got off our horses, but we could not move on a step, and wrapping up our faces, that we might not be blinded by the sand, we crouched down by the side of the cattle. We did not know where we were; in the uproar and confusion, the world seemed to be falling asunder, and the end of all things approaching. This lasted for an hour; and when the wind had abated a little, and we could see to a short distance round us, we found ourselves flung widely apart from each other. In the midst of the tempest we had called to each other in vain; it was impossible to hear a word. As soon as we could walk a few steps we went towards a farm, to which we happened to be quite near, though we had not seen it before. The hurricane had torn down the great gate, so that it was easy to enter, and the house itself was soon opened to us, for Providence had enabled us to meet, in this our hour of distress, a family really remarkable for hospitality. As soon as we arrived, they heated water for us to wash; for we were in a frightful state, enveloped in dust from head to foot, and not only our clothes, but our very bodies were impregnated with it. Had such a storm overtaken us on the Alechan mountains, we must have been all buried alive, and we should probably never have been heard of again. When we saw that the worst of the hurricane was over, we thought to set out again, but the good peasants would not consent to our leaving the farm. They told us that they could find means to lodge us during the night, and that our animals need not want either water or fodder. Their invitation appeared so sincerely and cordially given, and we were so much in need of rest, that we were glad to accept

the offer. It is very easy to see that the people of Kan-Sou are not of pure Chinese origin, but that the Tartaro-Thibetan element greatly preponderates. You never find among them the affected politeness which distinguishes the Chinese, but they are remarkable for their frankness and hospitality. In their language, too, there are many Tartar and Thibetan phrases, and modes of construction, as, for instance, they do not say, like the Chinese, "Open the window," "Shut the door," but "The window open," "The door shut," &c., like all the Mongols. Their favourite articles of food—milk, curds, butter, &c.—are much disliked by the Chinese, but they differ from them above all things in matters of religion. The Chinese are usually sceptical and indifferent; but in Kan-Sou the Lama colleges or convents are numerous and flourishing, and the worship is a reformed Buddhism. The Chinese have indeed plenty of pagodas, and idols of all kinds in their houses, but all their religion consists in outward representations; whilst in Kan-Sou, on the contrary, the people pray much and often; and it is prayer which forms the most marked distinction between the religious and irreligious man.

After having thoroughly rested from our fatigues, we set out at an early hour on the following morning. Everywhere traces of the ravages of the evening before met our eyes; there were trees broken or torn up by the roots, houses stripped of their roofs, and fields of their vegetable covering. Before the close of day, we arrived at Choang-Long, a rather flourishing commercial town. We went to lodge at the "Hotel of Social Relations," and found the landlord very amiable, but very satirical,—evidently a pure Chinese. To give us a proof

of his penetration, he asked at once whether we were not English (*Ing-Kie-Li*), the marine devils who were making war at Canton.

"We are not English," we replied; "nor are we devils of any sort—land or sea."

"Don't you know," said a man who was lounging about, addressing the landlord, "that all those marine devils have blue eyes and red hair?"

"Besides," said we, "if we were marine monsters, how could we live on shore, and go on horseback?"

"Yes, that's true, that's true," said he; "the Ing-Kie-Li never dare to quit the sea; as soon as ever they come on shore they tremble and die like fish."

Just at nightfall there arose in the inn a great bustle, occasioned by the arrival of a living Buddha with a numerous suite. He was returning from Thibet, his native country, and was going to the great Lama convent in the country of Khalkas, not far from the Russian frontier. As he entered the inn, a great multitude of zealous Buddhists, who were in waiting to receive him, prostrated themselves with their faces to the ground. The Grand Lama then entered the apartment prepared for him; and, when it became quite dark, the crowd retired.

As soon as the inn was quiet, this singular personage apparently felt inclined to indulge his curiosity; and he travelled all over the house, going into every room, and speaking to every body, though without sitting down or stopping anywhere. As we expected, he came also into our room. We were waiting for him, and we had seated ourselves gravely on the kang, and purposely did not rise to receive him, but merely made him a slight

salutation. He appeared much surprised, but not disconcerted; and he stopped a long time in the middle of the room, and looked at us one after the other. We remained profoundly silent, making use meanwhile of the same freedom, and examining him also from head to foot. He was about fifty years of age, of middling height, and very plump; and was dressed in a long robe of yellow silk, with red velvet boots with very high soles. The expression of his countenance was extremely good-natured; and yet, when we looked attentively at it, there appeared something in it strange, haggard, and almost terrific. He addressed us at length in the Mongol language, which he spoke with great facility. At first the conversation turned on the common-place matters on which travellers usually address one another—the road, their health, the weather, the state of their cattle, &c.; but seeing that he was inclined to prolong his visit, we invited him to sit down beside us on the kang. He hesitated a moment, imagining, no doubt, that in his situation it was not proper that he should place himself on a level with simple mortals like us; but, as he had evidently a great desire to gossip, he made up his mind to sit down. Perhaps he was the more willing to do so, because his dignity would, at all events, have been compromised, if he had remained longer standing while we were seated. A Breviary that lay beside us on the table, attracted his attention, and he asked our permission to examine it. This being given, he took it in his two hands, admired the binding and the gilt edges, and, opening it, turned over the leaves for a long time. He then carried it solemnly to his brow, saying—"It is your book of prayer; we must always honour and reverence

prayer." He added afterwards—"Your religion and ours are like that;" and he laid the two forefingers of his hands one against the other.

"You are right," said we; "your faith and ours are in a position of hostility: the object of our journey and of our endeavours is—we do not conceal it—to substitute our prayers for those which are in use among you."

"I know it," said he, smiling; "I have known it for a long time." Then he took up the Breviary again, and asked us to explain the engravings. When we came to that of the Crucifixion, he shook his head in token of compassion, and carried his joined hands to his forehead. He then took the Breviary again, and once more carrying it to his brow, rose, and saluting us with much affability, left the room—we attending him to the door.

When we were left alone after this strange visit, we sought to guess what thoughts must have been passing in the mind of the living Buddha while he was with us; what impressions he had received, when we had afforded him a glimpse of our holy religion. Sometimes we thought they must have been very strange;—and then, again, that perhaps he had felt nothing at all;—that he was merely, perhaps, an ordinary man, who was profiting mechanically by his position without ever reflecting upon it at all, and without attaching any importance to his pretended divinity. Our minds were so full of this singular personage, that we desired to see him once more before setting out again; and, as we were to start at a very early hour the next morning, we resolved to return his visit before going to bed. We found him in his room, seated on large thick cushions, covered with superb tiger skins; he had before him, on a little lackered

table, a silver tea-pot, and a cup made of a precious green stone placed on a richly wrought gold saucer. He appeared to be exceedingly tired of his own company, and was delighted with our visit.

For fear he might take it into his head to leave us standing in his presence, we took seats beside him, without any ceremony, directly we went in. The people of his suite, who were in a neighbouring chamber, were excessively shocked at this familiarity, and uttered a slight murmur of disapprobation; but the Buddha smiled archly at us, and then, ringing a little silver bell, he ordered a young Lama who entered to serve us with tea and milk. "I have often seen your countrymen," said he. "My convent does not lie far from your country. The Russians sometimes cross the frontier, but they do not come as far as you have done."

"We are not Russians," said we. "Our country is a long way from them."

This answer seemed to surprise him. "From what country are you, then?"

"We are from the sky of the West."

"Ah! then you are from *Peling*" (the Thibet word for Hindostan),—"from the Eastern Ganges,—and the town you inhabit is called *Galgata*" (Calcutta).

The Buddha could, of course, only class us among the nations he knew; and in considering us first as Russians, and then as English, he afforded a proof that he was not entirely ignorant. We could not make him understand precisely who we were: "But after all," said he, "what does it matter from what country you are, since all men are brothers? As long, however, as you remain in China, you must be prudent, and not tell everybody who

you are. The Chinese are suspicious and wicked, and they might injure you." He then spoke to us of the route to Thibet, and of the terrible journey we should have to make to get to it;—seeming to doubt whether we were strong enough for such an undertaking. The words and the manner of this Grand Lama were full of affability, but we could not accustom ourselves to the strange look of his eyes. Had it not been for this peculiarity, which after all, perhaps, depended on certain prejudices on our part, we should have thought him very amiable.

We found on examination that our horse and mule had both large tumours on their flanks, caused by the friction of the saddle, and we therefore determined to make some stay at this place in order to try and cure them. As we wished, however, to find ourselves another abode, we set off on a tour of inspection through all the inns in the town, and at last determined to stop at the "Hotel of Temperate Climates." Since our entrance into the province of Kan-Sou, in which the native district of our Dchiahour, Samdadchiemba, is situated, he had never ceased to talk of it; and, though he was very little sentimental, we easily believed that he might wish to see his family again. We therefore, as soon as we were settled in our new inn, allowed him a holiday of eight days (four of which would be consumed in the journey) to visit his home; and, that he might make his appearance in a triumphal manner, we lent him a camel, and put five ounces of silver into his pocket. Until his return, we had to take the care of our cattle ourselves, and to take them to water morning and evening, at a great distance from the hotel; besides buying our own provisions, and doing our own cooking. The land-

lord was one of those good-natured fellows who are always glad to render you a service, but who make themselves so excessively troublesome that one only forgives them by thinking of their good intentions. He would come every moment into our room to give us his advice about our housekeeping; and, after having arranged everything according to his own fancy, he would come up to the fire, take the lid off the kettle, and put in his finger to taste our ragout, adding salt or ginger as he thought proper, to my great wrath, as the cookery was intrusted to me. Then he would take the tongs and pull all the fire to pieces, and arrange it in what he considered the best manner, to the great indignation of M. Gabet, who was intrusted with the business of making the fire.

But it was when night came on that he considered himself as truly indispensable, to lengthen or shorten the wick of our lamp, and make it burn properly. He really seemed, sometimes, to be asking himself how we could possibly have got on above thirty years in the world without his assistance. Among all the attentions that he paid us, however, there was one for which we were really obliged to him; this was the operation of warming our bed; for the mode of performing it was so singular, and so peculiar to the country, that we were never able to acquire it properly.

The *Kang*, the sort of large flat stove upon which we slept, was not entirely made of stone as in the north of China, but partly of moveable planks placed one beside the other, so that they join perfectly. When it is desired to heat the kang, the planks are taken away, and a quantity of dry and pulverised horse-dung is spread

over the interior, and some lighted charcoal thrown upon it. The planks are then replaced, and the fire gradually communicates to the dung, which once kindled does not go out again. The heat and smoke, having no outlet, soon warm the planks, and produce an agreeable temperature, which lasts the whole night, from the slow combustion of the dung. But there is a great art in putting exactly the right quantity, and in arranging the lighted coals so that the combustion may go on simultaneously at several different points, and all the planks may be heated at once. We were ashamed of not being able to perform this office for ourselves, and determined one day to try to do it. But we failed signally. One of us had very nearly been burnt alive, while the other was shivering all night; and, what was worse, though the fire on one side had never caught, on the other the planks were burnt. The master of the "Temperate Climates" was very angry, and with good reason; and, in order that we might not play him such an awkward trick again, he locked up the closet where the fuel was kept, and declared he would prepare our couch for us himself every evening.

These multiplied cares of housekeeping, with the recitation of our Breviary, prevented our feeling any weariness during our stay at Ho-Kiao-Y. The time passed quickly, and on the eighth day, as it had been agreed, Samdadchiemba reappeared. He was not alone, but was accompanied by a little fellow, who it was easy to see was his brother. After presenting themselves to us, they instantly disappeared again, and we supposed that they had gone to pay their respects to the landlord; but it was not so. They came back again, and, entering

in a solemn manner, Samdadchiemba said to his brother, "Babdeho, prostrate yourself before our masters, and make them the offering from our poor family." The young Dchiahour saluted us three times in the oriental fashion, and then presented to us two large dishes, one filled with fine nuts, and the other with three large loaves, which were shaped like those of our own country. To prove to Samdadchiemba how sensible we were of his attention, we immediately began to eat them, and made a delicious repast. We had not tasted such bread since we had left France.

We were surprised to observe that Samdadchiemba, who had gone away very well dressed, had come back with his costume reduced to its lowest terms. We asked him how this happened; and he then spoke to us of the state of wretchedness in which he had found his family. His father had been long dead, and his aged mother was blind. He had two brothers—the one whom he had brought with him, and another who was the sole support of the family, whom he maintained by cultivating a little plot of ground and keeping sheep for hire. After this account it was easy to guess what Samdadchiemba had done with his clothes. He had left them all with his poor mother, not excepting even his travelling blanket. We thought we ought to propose to him to remain and devote himself to the care of his family; but he said, "How could I have the cruelty to do such a thing? Of what use could I be to them? I know no trade, nor even how to till the earth. I should but devour the little that remains to them." We did not think this very generous on his part; but, as we knew his character, we were not surprised, and we did not urge him fur-

ther, for we were quite of his opinion, that he was really not good for much, and that his family would probably not be much better off for his help. We did what we could for the relief of these unfortunate people, by giving a considerable alms to the brother; and then made our preparations for continuing our route.

During this eight days' rest, our cattle had recovered sufficiently to attempt the painful road we should have to traverse. But the rugged path by which we had to climb the mountain of Ping-Keou presented difficulties which our camels found almost insurmountable; and we were continually obliged, as we went on, to utter loud cries to warn muleteers who might be advancing towards us on this narrow and dangerous road, where two animals could not pass abreast, that they might have time to turn aside their mules, lest they should be terrified by the sight of our camels, and rush down the precipice.

We had set out before daylight, and we scarcely got to the top by mid-day. Here we found a small inn, where an infusion of roasted beans was sold to us instead of tea; but we made an excellent repast, for we had also some nuts, a slice of the famous bread (which we had been using very sparingly), and—a great appetite.

When we had passed the mountain, we came to a village whose Chinese appellation signifies the Old Duck; and what struck us most in this place, was that the art of knitting, which we had imagined unknown in China, was here carried on very busily; and, moreover, not by women, but by men. Their work appeared to be very clumsy; the stockings they made were like

sacks; and their gloves had no separation for the fingers. It looked very odd, too, to see moustachioed fellows sitting before their doors, spinning, knitting, and gossipping, like so many old women. On the second day after leaving the "Old Duck," we came to Ning-Pey-Hien, a town of the third order, and stopped at a hostelry outside the western gate, to take our morning meal. Many travellers were already assembled in a dry large kitchen, and occupied the tables ranged along the walls. In the centre were some immense stoves, where the innkeeper, his wife, and children, were actively engaged in preparing the dishes demanded by the guests. But, whilst the whole company was thus busied, some in the preparation, and others in the consumption, of the viands, a loud cry was heard. It was from the hostess, who gave utterance thus to the pain she felt from a heavy blow of a shovel which her husband had just bestowed on her head. All the travellers started up, the woman ran screaming into a corner, and the innkeeper explained to the company that he had done quite right to correct this insolent and disobedient wife, who took no care of his house, and whose neglect would ruin the reputation of the inn. But before he had got to the end of his speech, the hostess commenced an animated reply from the corner where she was crouching. She declared that her husband was a lazy fellow, who did nothing but drink and smoke, while leaving her to attend to the customers, and that he would spend her week's earnings in the course of a day or two in liquor and tobacco. During this scene the audience remained quite calm and imperturbable, giving no sign of approbation, or the contrary, to either of the bel-

ligerent parties. The woman then issued from her corner, as if to present a kind of challenge to her lord and master. "Since I am a wicked woman," said she, "you had better kill me! Come, kill me!" and she planted herself right before the wrathful landlord. He did not kill her, but he gave her a tremendous box of the ears, which sent her back, uttering doleful howlings, to her corner. The pit now seemed to find the piece rather amusing, for it burst into a loud laugh; but the matter soon became serious enough; for after a good deal more of bitter abuse from one side, and fierce menaces from the other, the innkeeper tucked up his garments under his girdle, and rolled his long plaits of hair round his head: it was the signal that he was preparing for a *coup-de-main*. "Very well," said he, "since you tell me to kill you, I will;" and with these words he snatched the tongs from one of the stoves, and rushed with fury at his wife. The company ran towards them, with loud exclamations; some neighbours came running in; but they did not succeed in separating the combatants till the hostess had her hair torn down and her face all bleeding. Then a man of rather advanced age, who spoke like one having authority in the house, said, in a grave tone, "What's this? What's this? A husband and wife, and in presence of their children, in presence of a crowd of travellers?" And these words, repeated three or four times over, seemingly produced a great effect; for a few minutes afterwards, the company were going on gaily with their dinner, the hostess was again frying cakes, and the landlord smoking a pipe as if nothing had happened. In settling our bill before setting off again, we found that the landlord

had charged us fifty sapecks for the privilege of tying our cattle up in the yard during our meal. Samdad-chiemba was excessively indignant at this. "Do you think," said he, "that we don't know the rules of inns? Did any body ever hear of paying for just tying up beasts to a log of wood? I say, landlord—how much do you charge for that play that you and your wife acted just now?" It was a palpable hit; and the shout of laughter from the whole company settled the matter in our favour.

The road which leads to *Si-Ning-Fou* is in general good and well kept; it winds through a fertile, well cultivated country, scattered over, in a picturesque manner, with groups of trees, hills, and numerous rivulets. The principal growth is tobacco. We noticed, also, on our way, many water-mills of very simple construction, which can be worked with a very small quantity of water, as it is made to fall on the wheel like a cascade from a height of at least twenty feet. On the last day before arriving at *Si-Ning-Fou*, we had to traverse a very dangerous path along the edge of a rocky precipice, with a tumultuous torrent boiling at our feet; a single false step must have been our destruction, and we trembled, especially for our camels, heavy and awkward as they are on a rugged road. Thank God, however, we arrived in perfect safety at Si-Ning. This is an immense town, but thinly peopled, and in many parts falling to ruin, as its commerce has been intercepted by Tan-Keou-Eul, a little town on the frontier of Kan-Sou and Thibet. We betook ourselves to one of the inns called "Houses of Repose," where alone such travellers as Tartars and Thibetans are received. In these estab-

lishments you are lodged and boarded gratuitously, but the owner has a right to a per centage on all the commercial transactions of his guests, who are mostly traders: for the privilege of keeping such a house, he pays annually a certain sum to the government; but he has an understanding with the merchants of the town, and gets his profit from them as well as from the Tartars. As we were not traders, he could, of course, gain no advantage in this way from us; and we therefore paid him our expenses at the ordinary rate of inns in this country.

CHAPTER II.

Account of the Road to Thibet.—Caravan of Khalkas.—Tartar Son of the King of Kou-kou-Noor.—Sandara the Bearded.—Study of the Thibetan Language.—Knavish Character of Sandara.—Samdadchiemba is pillaged by Robbers.—Frightful Tumult at Tang-Keou-Eul.—The Long-Haired Tartars.—Mussulmans in China.—Religious Ceremonies presided over by the Mufti.—Independence of the Mussulmans.—Festival of New-Year's Day.—Our Tent at the Pawnbroker's.—Departure for the Lamaserai of Kounboom.—Arrival at Night.—Loan of a Habitation.—Singular Custom.—Old Akaye.—The Chinese Lama.—Pilgrims to Kounboom.—The celebrated Feast of Flowers.

It was about four months after leaving the valley of the Black Waters, that we reached Tang-Keou-Eul, the bustling little frontier town before mentioned. It was a real Tower of Babel. There were Oriental Thibetans, Long-haired Tartars, Eleuths, Kolos, Chinese, Tartars of the Blue Sea, Mussulmans, descendants of the ancient migrations from Turkestan,—all marching about the streets with long sabres, and affecting the most ferocious independence of aspect. It was impossible to go out without witnessing some battle. We settled ourselves at a "House of Repose;" but then the question arose—what were we to do next? So far we had followed pretty well the Itinerary that we had traced for ourselves; but by what means were we to penetrate to Lha-Ssa, the capital of Thibet? We learned that *almost every year* caravans left Tang-Keou-Eul for this destination, and in the end reached it; but a terrible account

was given to us of the road. A journey of four months had to be made across countries entirely uninhabited, and where travellers were often frozen to death or buried under the snow. During the summer, it was said many were drowned; for it was necessary to cross great rivers without bridge or boat; and besides this, these deserts were ravaged by hordes of robbers, who plundered those who fell into their hands even of their clothes, and left them naked and starving in the wilderness. We suspected these accounts of exaggeration, but we found them alarmingly uniform; and we met also with some vouchers for these tragical histories in the persons of some Mongol-Tartars, who had escaped the year before from an attack made on a great caravan, and of which they were the only survivors. We resolved, nevertheless, to keep to our original plan. It should not be said that Catholic missionaries would enounter less peril for their faith than traders for a little lucre; but we determined not to hasten our departure, but to wait for a good opportunity.

We had not, however, been above six days at Tang-Keou-Eul, when a small caravan of Khalkas Tartars stopped at our "House of Repose." It had just arrived from the frontiers of Russia, and was going to Lha-Ssa to pay homage to a young child, said to be the famous Guison-Tamba newly transmigrated. When these men heard that we were waiting for an opportunity to go to Thibet, they appeared at the height of joy;—their little troop would be increased by three pilgrims, and, in case of war with the Kolos, three combatants. Our beards and mustachios gave them apparently a high idea of our valour, and they bestowed on us immediately the

title of *Batourou* (braves). All this was very agreeable, but we wished to consider the matter maturely before setting out with them on such a journey. The caravan, though it filled the large court-yard, only counted eight men; the rest consisted of camels, horses, tents, luggage, and cooking utensils. These eight men, it is true, were by their own account most terrible fellows; and they displayed to us a large assortment of guns, lances, bows and arrows, &c., which they carried, —not to mention a piece of artillery—a cannon about as thick as a man's arm—mounted, in default of a carriage, between the two humps of a camel. This was expected to produce a marvellous effect; but this warlike array did not tend to reassure us; and, for our own parts, we counted only moderately on the moral influence of our long beards.

It was necessary to come to a decision; the Tartars urged us strongly to join them; and of some disinterested persons to whom we applied for advice, some assured us it was an excellent opportunity, and we should by all means profit by it; others that it would be excessively imprudent to do so, and that so small a troop would be inevitably *devoured* by the Kolos. We had better, as we were not hurried, wait for the Thibetan embassy. But the embassy had only just arrived at Pekin, and might not return for eight months: such a delay as that would be ruinous to us. How with our slender resources were we to defray the expenses of so long a stay, with five beasts, at an inn. At length, having thoroughly considered the question we made up our minds. "We are in the hands of God," we said; "let us go."

We announced our resolution to the Tartars, and it was received with enthusiasm; and the master of the hotel was immediately charged to buy us flour for four months.

"Why for four months?" asked our new associates.

"We are told that the journey will last at least three; and it is well to provide for four in case of accidents."

"Oh!" said they, "the Thibet embassy takes that time to be sure; but we Tartars travel in a different manner. We gallop all the way, and we don't take more than six weeks."

These words occasioned a sudden change in our resolution: it was impossible for us to keep up with such a caravan as that; we should have been dead at the end of a few days; and our cattle, worn as they were with the fatigues of four months, could never have supported such a journey. The Tartars had with them forty camels, and might kill twenty with impunity; but with our three they agreed it would be impossible to get on, and they advised us to buy a dozen; but though the advice was good enough in itself, it was not worth much to us, for a dozen good camels would have cost three ounces of silver, and we had very little more than two.

These eight Tartars belonged to a royal family; and the evening before their departure they received a visit from the son of the king of the Kou-kou-Noor, who happened to be at Tang-Keou-Eul; and as the room which we occupied was the cleanest in the house, it was chosen for the interview. We were surprised by the elegant appearance and graceful manners of the young prince, who, it was easy to see, had not passed his whole life in a Mongol

tent. He was handsomely dressed in a robe of sky-blue cloth, over which he had a violet-coloured jacket, richly embroidered with black velvet. His left ear was ornamented, in the Thibetan fashion, with a gold ear-ring, from which hung several jewels; his countenance was mild and pleasing, and the exquisite cleanliness of his whole dress as well as the fairness of his complexion had but little in them of this Tartar. As this princely visit was a grand event, we ordered Samdadchiemba to prepare some refreshments,—that is to say, a great jug of boiled milk and tea, of which his royal highness deigned to accept a cup, and the rest was then distributed to his suite, who were waiting in the *antechamber*,—videlicet, in the midst of the snow in the yard.

The conversation turned on the journey to Thibet, and the prince promised the Tartars an escort during their passage through his states. "Beyond that," he added, "I can answer for nothing; all must depend on your good or bad destiny." He told us that we had done quite right to wait for the Thibet embassy, as with it we could travel more easily and more safely.

The next day the Tartars set off, and we could not see them go without a feeling of regret that we were not in their company; but we soon banished these vain regrets, and began to consider how we could make the best use of the intermediate time. It was settled that we should go on diligently with our study of the Thibet language and the Buddhist books, and look out for a master who might assist us.

About forty miles from Tang-Keou-Eul, in the country of Si-Fan, or eastern Thibet, there was, we found,

a famous Lamaserai, inhabited by nearly 4000 Lamas, and it was agreed that M. Gabet should make an excursion thither, and try to engage a Lama to teach us. After an absence of five days he returned accompanied by a Lama of about thirty years of age, whom we regarded as quite a treasure. He had passed ten years in a convent of Lha-Ssa, spoke and wrote pure Thibetan with ease and fluency, and was well acquainted with the Buddhist books, besides being familiar with the Mongol-Chinese, &c.,—in short, he was quite a distinguished philologist. He was by birth a Dchiahour, and a cousin-german to Samdadchiemba; and to his name of Sandara was commonly added the appellation of the Bearded, on account of the remarkable length of that appendage. As he seemed to set about his task with great zeal and devotion, we rejoiced that we had not, by accompanying the Tartars, lost so favorable an opportunity of making ourselves better acquainted with the language and religion of these celebrated countries.

We set to work with the utmost ardour. Our first task was to compose in Mongol two dialogues, in which we introduced all the most customary expressions. Sandara then translated them for us carefully into Thibetan. Every morning he wrote a page under our eyes, giving us almost a grammatical account of every phrase; this was our lesson for the day, and we wrote it out several times, in order to accustom ourselves to the Thibetan writing. Afterwards we sung it, according to the method practised in the Lamaserais, until it was well fixed in our memory; and in the evening our master made us repeat the dia ogue which he had

written for us in the morning, correcting whatever was faulty in our pronunciation. Sometimes during the day, by way of recreation, he gave us very interesting details concerning Thibet, and the Lama convents he had visited. We could not listen to him without a strong feeling of admiration for his talents; we had never heard any one express himself with so much ease and spirit, and the simplest and commonest things assumed a picturesque charm in his description; while, when he wished to make any one adopt his opinions, his eloquence was most persuasive.

After having surmounted our first difficulties, we endeavoured to give our studies a religious turn, and got Sandara to translate to us, in the sacred style, the most important Catholic prayers,—the Lord's prayer, the commandments, &c.; and we took this opportunity of explaining to him the truths of the Christian religion. He seemed at first much struck with the new doctrine, so different from the vague and incoherent teachings of Buddhism. He soon began to attach so much importance to the study of the Christian religion, that he completely abandoned the Lama books that he had brought with him, and set to learning our prayers with an ardour that filled us with joy. From time to time during the day he interrupted his occupations to make the sign of the cross; and he performed this religious act in a manner so grave and respectful, that we never doubted his being a Christian at heart. We entertained the warmest hopes of him, and pleased ourselves with thinking of him as a future apostle, who would one day labour with success at the conversion of the Buddhists.

Whilst we were all thus entirely absorbed in important studies, Samdadchiemba, who had no vocation towards things intellectual, was passing his time in loitering about the streets of Tang-Keou-Eul, drinking tea. But as we did not at all approve of his leading such an idle life, we determined to give him something to do in his capacity of camel driver. We ordered him, therefore, to take the three camels to feed in a certain valley of the Kou-Kou-Noor, which is famous for the abundance and excellence of its pastures; a Tartar promising us meanwhile to receive him into his tent. This was all well; but by this time all the fine qualities that we thought we had discovered in Sandara had vanished like a dream, and we found that this young Lama, who had appeared so pure, was a regular roué, whose only real object was to get out of us as many sapecks as possible. When he thought he had rendered himself necessary to us, he threw away the mask, and exposed all the detestable peculiarities of his character. He showed himself self-conceited, haughty, and outrageously insolent. The civil and engaging manners which he had at first were entirely changed, and he behaved to us with a rudeness that a pedagogue would hardly have used towards a child. If, for instance, we asked an explanation of any thing a second time, he would say, "What!—you call yourselves learned men, and want a thing explained three times over! Why, if I were to tell a mule a thing three times, he would recollect it I think."

It would have been easy, no doubt, for us to put an end to this impertinence by dismissing him, and more than once we had a mind to do so; but, on considera-

tion, we thought it better to submit to this humiliation, for his talents were indisputable, and he might be of use to us. His excessive rudeness might, indeed, contribute to our progress; for we were quite sure he would never pass over any of our faults, but that, on the contrary, we should be reproved in a manner to make us remember it. This mode of proceeding, though painful enough to our pride, was far more really advantageous to us than that adopted by the Chinese Christians, who, in the excess of their politeness and devotion, always go into extasies at everything their "spiritual father" says, and even take to imitating his vicious mode of expressing himself; the consequence of which is, that the spiritual father is greatly disappointed when he comes afterwards to hold intercourse with those who are not sure to admire his pronunciation. On such occasions one might be tempted to regret not having Sandara the Bearded, for a master. For these reasons we resolved to put up with his abuse, and get all the profit we could from his lessons, and, moreover, to shut our eyes to certain little knaveries of his,—such as his having a secret understanding with the people who supplied to us our daily provisions.

One day, a short time after the departure of Samdadchiemba, he made his appearance again quite unexpectedly. His voice was hollow—his face pale and haggard, for he had eaten nothing for a day and a half. He had been pillaged by robbers, who had carried away his store of flour, butter, and tea. Seeing but one camel in the court, we thought the robbers had stolen the cattle also; but he said he had confided them to the care of the Tartar family, who had afforded him hospitality.

At this story, Sandara knitted his brows, saying, "Samdadchiemba, you are my younger brother, so I have a right to ask you some questions;"—and accordingly he commenced a cross-examination, with all the skill and cunning of a practised lawyer. He made his "younger brother" enter into the most minute details, and then applied himself to entrapping him into various contradictions; and when he had finished, added, maliciously, —"I have asked you a few questions, but it was out of mere curiosity. I don't care at all about the matter. It is not I who will have to make up the loss."

We sent out the young Dchiahour to get some dinner at a neighboring eating-house, as he was very hungry; and then Sandara returned to the subject. "They won't persuade me," said he, "that my brother has been really robbed; the robbers of this country manage matters differently. Most likely Samdadchiemba, when he got among the Tartars, wanted to play the generous, and distributed his provisions right and left to make himself friends. What did it cost him?" But the probity of Samdadchiemba was well enough known to us to make us despise these malicious insinuations.

Sandara was jealous of the confidence we reposed in his cousin; and he wished to make us believe that he was sincerely attached to our interests, and, by that means, to remove any suspicions we might entertain concerning his own small modes of pillage. Samdadchiemba, on his side, seemed to have no suspicion of the treachery of his cousin: we gave him some more provisions, and he set out again for the Kou-kou-Noor.

The next day the town of Tang-Keou-Eul was the scene of terrible confusion. Bands of robbers had

appeared in the neighbourhood, and had carried off two thousand oxen belonging to the Long-Haired Tartars, who came every year to Tang-Keou-Eul to sell skins, butter, and a kind of wild tea that grows in their country. Whilst they are occupied with their trading transactions, their numerous flocks and herds graze in some vast meadows a little way off the town, and which are dependent on the Chinese authorities. It was quite unexampled, we were told, for the robbers to approach so near the frontiers of the empire; and their recent audacity, as well as the violent demeanour of the Long-Haired on the occasion, threw the whole place into commotion. They rushed, with drawn sabres, to the Chinese tribunals, demanding justice and vengeance with loud cries. The mandarin who presided there took fright, and immediately sent off two hundred Chinese soldiers; but the Long-Haired, knowing that men on foot could never overtake the thieves, who were excellent horsemen, themselves galloped off in pursuit. But they came back the next day, and in the utmost rage, for they had seen nothing; but they had been compelled to return, for they had not thought to take provisions with them, and there was nothing in the desert by which they could support life. The Chinese soldiers had been more provident, for they had taken with them —whatever warlike stores and ammunition they might have had—sufficient store of victuals, and a "*batterie de cuisine.*"

As they were not at all anxious to go and fight for oxen that did not belong to them, they only made a little military excursion, and then stopping on the bank of a river, had passed several days in eating, drinking, and amusing

themselves, as if no such thing as a robber had existed in the world. When they had consumed their provisions, they came quietly back to Tang-Keou-Eul, declaring that they had traversed the desert without being able to find any trace of the robbers; and that once, just as they were on the point of seizing them, the villains had made use of magical means, and had suddenly disappeared from their sight.

It is not impossible that some of the Chinese soldiers may have believed this story, for robbers are generally supposed to be more or less of sorcerers; the mandarins are certainly not deceived; but provided the persons robbed can be brought to be content with the story, that is all they care about. For several days the Long-Haired remained furious. They traversed the streets uttering a thousand imprecations, and brandishing their swords, so that every one who could, took good care to keep out of their way. The aspect of these men, even when they are in good humour, is formidable enough. They are dressed in sheep-skin robes, which, when left to themselves, are long enough to reach the feet, but they are usually worn tucked up under their girdles, so as to make their bodies appear of a monstrous bulk; their legs are half naked, as their large leather boots do not reach above the calf; and their black, greasy, matted hair hangs down on their shoulders, and sometimes half over their faces. The right arm is always bare, being drawn out of the sleeve; the hand grasps the hilt of the long broadsword, which is passed through their girdles; and their sonorous voices, and rapid, energetic movements, correspond well with this fierce appearance. Some of them are very rich, and they display their

wealth in jewels on the scabbard of their swords, or in tiger skins to border their robes.

As these men are brave and ferociously independent, they give, in a great measure, the tone to society at Tang-Keou-Eul; for every one who wishes to acquire a reputation for valour, mimics their demeanour; the result is, that the male population of the town might be taken for an immense gang of robbers. In the middle of winter, though the cold is very severe, they go with arms and legs bare, for it would be considered a mark of pusillanimity to cover them. *A good brave*, they say, should be afraid of nothing,—neither of man nor of the elements. In this town even the Chinese lose the extreme urbanity and polite forms of their language, and involuntarily exhibit signs of the influence of the Long-Haired, who, on their part, converse among themselves much as one might suppose the tigers in the woods might do. On our first entrance into the town we met one of these men, who had been down to the banks of the river to water his horse: Samdadchiemba saluted him courteously, saying in the Tartar language, "Brother, are you at peace?" But the Long-Haired turned abruptly round, and roared out, with the voice of a stentor, "What's that to you whether I am at peace or at war, and what business have you to call a man you don't know your brother?" Samdadchiemba was somewhat confounded, but he did not fail to admire the pride of the Long-Haired one.

The want of cleanliness among the numerous population renders the town of Tang-Keou-Eul a very unwholesome residence. There is a constant sickening odour of butter and grease; and certain quarters, where

the poorest of the people live, are almost insupportable from their foul smell. Those who have no home in which to take shelter sleep about the nooks and corners of the streets on heaps of straw which have gradually become almost changed into dunghills. Crippled children, impotent old men, sick people of all kinds, are stretched out on them; and sometimes even dead bodies, which no one will take the trouble to bury. When they are in a complete state of putrefaction, perhaps some one will drag them out into the middle of the street, and then they are carried away by the public authorities. This miserable poverty gives birth to a generation of little thieves and sharpers, whose address and audacity would leave Robert Macaire far behind; and their numbers are so great, that the government has given up in despair all attempts to meddle with them. Every one here must look after his own goods and watch over his own sapecks. The class of operatives above alluded to carry on their occupation, by preference, in the houses of repose and hotels, and they usually provide themselves with small articles of merchandise, boots, skins, brick tea, &c., which they offer to strangers, and thus find opportunities of carrying off whatever they can lay their hands on. They have, too, an astonishingly skilful method of counting out sapecks, so as to make them disappear without its being possible to conceive how. Two of them made their appearance one day in our room, and, after some haggling, we concluded a bargain for a pair of boots; but when the merchants retired, we found that our sapecks were a hundred and fifty short, and that two immense bars of iron, which we had placed in

the court-yard to tie our horses to, had been carried off.

The house in which we were lodging was, as we have said, kept by Mussulmans, and one day a Mufti arrived from the chief town of Kan-Sou, to preside, we were told, at a religious ceremony, the object of which he would not explain to us. Sandara the Bearded said the Mufti came to show the Mussulmans how to cheat in trade.

For two days all the principal professors of this faith who were at the place, assembled in a large hall near our room, where they remained quite silent, with their heads bent down on their knees. As soon as the Mufti appeared, they all began to utter sobs and groans, and after they had had a good cry, the Mufti recited some Arab prayers with terrific volubility; then they cried a bit again, and then every one retired. This lachrymose ceremony was repeated three times a day; and on the morning of the third, they all went into the court-yard, and ranged themselves round the Mufti, who was seated on a stool covered with a handsome red carpet. The master of the house then led up to him a magnificent sheep, decorated with flowers and ribbons. A knife was presented to him on a silver plate, and, gravely approaching the victim, he plunged it up to the handle in its neck. Immediately cries and groans burst forth on all sides. The sheep was promptly skinned, cut up, and sent to cook in the kitchen, and the ceremony was concluded by a grand gala at which the Mufti presided.

We have often asked ourselves how it happened that, whilst the Mussulmans in China walk erect, and compel the Chinese to respect their faith, the Christians are

constantly oppressed, and living merely at the pleasure of the tribunals. It is certainly not because the religion of Mahomet is most in harmony with Chinese manners; on the contrary the Christians can, without failing in their duty, live in intimacy with Pagans,—interchange presents with them—celebrate the new year and other festivals with them, all which would be forbidden by the despotic and exclusive spirit of Mahometanism. But if the Christians are oppressed in China, it is greatly to be attributed to the isolation in which they live. When one of them is dragged before the tribunal, the others all hide themselves, instead of coming to his assistance and repressing by their boldness the insolence of the Mandarins. At present, especially, when the new imperial decrees are favourable to Christianity—if the Christians were to rise at once at all points of the empire, enter energetically into possession of their rights, giving publicity to their worship, and performing their service fearlessly in the face of the sun, probably no one would attempt to interfere with them. In China, as every where else, we are only free when we will be so, and this will results only from the spirit of association.

We were now approaching the first day of the Chinese year, and already preparations were every where making for its celebration. The sentences written on red paper, which decorate the fronts of houses, were renewed; the shops were filled with purchasers, and a more than ordinary activity reigned in all quarters of the town, while the children, who every where like to anticipate days of festival and rejoicing, began to let off crackers. The last days of the old year are usually for the Chinese days of violence and irritation. It is at

this epoch that every one sets his accounts in order, and goes to dun his debtors; and as there is no Chinese who is not at the same time a debtor and a creditor, it follows that every body is running after somebody, and himself being pursued by somebody else. This man who comes making such a noise to induce his neighbor to pay what he owes, goes home and finds his house turned topsy-turvy by a creditor of his own. Vociferations, abuse, even cuffs are being exchanged in all quarters. On the last day the confusion is at its height; so many people are anxious to raise money by any means, that the avenues to the pawnbrokers' are choked up. Clothes, bedding, cooking utensils, furniture of every kind, is carried thither, and those who have emptied their houses begin to cast about for other resources. They run to their relations and friends, and borrow things which they say they are going to return immediately, but the moment they get hold of them away they go to the pawnbroker.

This sort of anarchical state lasts till midnight, and then all is suddenly calm, for no one is permitted any longer to claim a debt, or even to make the least allusion to it. There are no words heard but those of peace and benevolence, the whole world fraternises; and those who but a few minutes before were on the point apparently of cutting each other's throats, exchange only expressions of politeness and cordiality. In other respects the new year is celebrated much as it is in Europe, that is, by the interchange of visits of ceremony and pure etiquette; and conjurors, tumblers, the theatre, squibs, and fireworks form also important features in the festival. After a few days the shops are

opened again, and all things resume their accustomed aspect.

Sandara had been absent during the rejoicings for the new year, as his presence had been required in his convent, and we had such a delightful quiet time while he was away, that we could not see him return without a feeling of fright, like that of school-boys, at the sight of a severe master. Sandara, however, was amiable and charming beyond expression, and he not only wished us a happy new year, but poured out a profusion of the most sentimental phrases of fraternal affection. After talking this nonsense for a while, he said that since we had decided to wait for the Thibet Embassy—he would invite us to pass the time at his Lamaserai; and he pointed out, with his accustomed eloquence, all the advantages which such a residence afforded for men of study and prayer. The proposal was particularly welcome to us, but we took good care not to express ourselves enthusiastically on the subject, but replied coldly, "Well, let us try. We will go and see." The next day was devoted to preparations for the journey, and on announcing our intended departure to the master of the house, we asked him to give us back our tent, which he had borrowed, as he said, for a few days, in order to make a pleasure excursion with some friends to the Land of Grass. He replied, that he would send it to us directly, but that one of his friends had got it. We waited, but in vain; and night came on without our seeing any signs of our tent. At length we were told that the person who had it was not at home, but that it would be sent after us to the Lamaserai. Sandara, however, could no longer restrain his impatience at these excuses.

"One may see very well," said he, "that you are not men of this world. Don't you perceive clearly enough that your tent has gone to the pawnbroker's?"

"The pawnbroker's! It is surely not possible!"

"I think it's more than probable. The *Hœi-Hœi* (Mussulman) has been in want of money to pay his debts at the end of the twelfth moon, and he was a lucky fellow to have you in his house. He borrowed your tent to pawn it, and not for a pleasure party, and now he has no money to get it out again."

We sent for the landlord, and Sandara made him a speech declaring his opinion on the point, and ending with a blow of his fist on the table that made our three wooden bowls jump up into the air. He threatened, if the tent were not sent back before we had finished our tea, to get legal redress. "He would see whether a Lama Dchiahour was going to be cheated by a Turk."

The landlord had nothing to reply, and we felt sure that Sandara was right in his conjecture; very soon afterwards we heard a great bustle in the court-yard, and found that the people were collecting saddles, bedding, old chandeliers, kitchen utensils, and a variety of articles to send to the pawnbroker's, in order to procure the release of our tent; and before we went to bed we had it snugly secured at the top of the cart which we had hired to transport our baggage to the Lamaserai.

We set off at dawn of day, across a country, partly occupied by nomadic Si-Fan and their flocks, partly by Chinese, who in Eastern Tartary are insensibly advancing on the desert, building houses, and cultivating small portions of the Land of Grass. The only incident of our journey was the upsetting and breaking of our cart

in crossing a little river on the ice. In France we should have wanted a blacksmith and a wheelwright to repair the damage, but fortunately our Chinese Phaeton was a genius who could get out of any difficulty with a stone, a bit of wood, and an end of rope; and we escaped with no more harm than a little loss of time.

At a short distance from the Lamaserai, we met four Lamas, friends of Sandara, coming to meet us. Their religious costume, the red scarf in which they were wrapped, their yellow cap in the form of a mitre, their grave modest manners and low voices, made a great impression on us. They seemed to waft towards us a breath of the cenobitical religious life. It was more than nine o'clock in the evening when we reached the first houses of the Lamaserai: and, in order not to disturb the profound silence that reigned around, the Lamas stopped our driver, and filled with straw the bells that were hung to the horses' collars. We proceeded slowly, and without uttering a word, through the calm and deserted streets of the Great Lama city. The moon had already set; but the sky was so pure, the stars so brilliant, that we could easily distinguish the numerous small houses of the Lamas, scattered over the side of the mountain: and the grand and singular forms of the Buddhist temples, which rose into the air like gigantic phantoms. What struck us most was, the solemn and majestic silence that reigned in all quarters of the Lamaserai; interrupted only by the occasional bark of a dog, who was a bad sleeper: and by the hollow and melancholy sound of a marine shell, which marked at intervals the watches of the night.

We reached at length the small habitation of Sandara; and, as it was too late to seek another, our pedagogue gave it up to us, and went to get a lodging with one of his neighbours. The Lamas we had met did not leave us till they had prepared us a repast of tea and milk, a large dish of mutton, fresh butter, and most delicious little rolls. We supped with an excellent appetite, and our hearts seemed filled with a peace for which we could scarcely account.

During the night we tried in vain to sleep—sleep would not come. This country of Amdo, a country unknown in Europe,—this great Lamaserai of Kounboum, so renowned amongst the Buddhists,—these conventual manners,—the Lama's cell in which we were lying,—all seemed to float through our brains like the vague impalpable forms of a dream. We passed the night in forming plans, and as soon as day dawned we were on foot. All was still profoundly silent while we made our morning prayer, not without a sensation of joy and pride that we had been permitted thus to invoke the true God in this famous Lamaserai, consecrated to an impious and lying worship. It seemed to us as if we were about to conquer the vast realms of Buddhism to the faith of Jesus Christ.

Sandara soon made his appearance, and served us with milk, tea, dried grapes, and cakes fried in butter, and whilst we were occupied with breakfast he opened a little closet, and took from it a wooden trencher, neatly varnished, and ornamented with flowers and gilded on a red ground. After having dusted it with his red scarf, he spread over it a sheet of rose-coloured paper, placed on it four fine pears symmetrically

arranged, and covered them with an oval silk handkerchief, called a Khata. It was with this present, he said, we were to go and borrow a house.

This *Khata*, or "scarf of happiness," plays so important a part in Thibetan manners, that it is well perhaps to say a few words about it. It is usually a piece of bluish-white silk fringed at the two ends; but as it is an article indispensable to rich and poor, it of course varies greatly in richness and value. No one ever travels without a stock of *khatas;* if you go to pay a visit of ceremony, or to ask a service, or to return thanks for one, you always begin by displaying a khata to the person whom you wish to honour. If two friends have not seen each other for a long time, and have met by accident, their first care is to offer each other a khata; when you write a letter you enclose a khata in it: in short, the importance attached, by the Thibetans, the Si-Fan, and all the nations who inhabit the country to the west of the Blue Sea, to this ceremony of the khata, is scarcely credible. They form a most considerable article of commerce for the Chinese at Tang-Keou-Eul; and the Thibetan Embassies, when they pass through the town, carry away a prodigious quantity of them. As soon as we had done breakfast, we went out to borrow a lodging, preceded by Sandara the Bearded, bearing solemnly in his two hands the famous dish of four pears. This proceeding appeared to us so odd that we felt ashamed of it, and thought all eyes must be fixed upon us. But the Lamas whom we met went silently on their way, without turning their heads or paying the slightest attention to us. The little *Chabis*, merry and mischievous as school-boys always

are, were the only persons who appeared to know or care what we were doing.

At length we entered a small house, the master of which was in the yard, busied in spreading out horse-dung to dry in the sun; but seeing us, he wrapped himself in his scarf, and went into his cell. We followed him with Sandara, who offered the khata and the plate of pears, and accompanied them with an harangue in the Oriental Thibetan language, of which we did not understand a word. During this time we kept ourselves modestly retired, like unfortunate men who were not even capable of asking a favour for ourselves. The Lama made us sit down on a carpet, offered us milk-tea, and said to us in the Mongol language, "that he was happy that strangers from the far West should have deigned to cast their eyes on his poor habitation." Had we been speaking French we might have responded by some equivalent compliment; but in Mongol, we could only say, that we were indeed from far off; but, that one found in some measure a country wherever one met with such hospitality as his. After drinking a cup of tea, and talking a minute or two of France, Rome, the Pope, and the Cardinals, we rose to visit the dwelling assigned to our use. For poor wanderers like us it was superb. There was a vast chamber with a great kang, a separate kitchen with stoves, a kettle, and some utensils; and even a stable for our horse and mule. We were overjoyed, and only regretted not having at our disposal another khata, wherewith to express our gratitude to the excellent Lama. How powerful is the empire of religion over the heart of man, even when that religion is false and

ignorant of the true object of worship! What a difference between these Lamas, so hospitable, generous, and fraternal, in their treatment of strangers, and the Chinese, that nation of traders, with their dry and covetous heart, selling to the traveller even a glass of cold water. The reception which we had met with in the Lamaserai of Kounboum, involuntarily carried our thoughts back to the convents raised by the hospitality of our religious ancestors, which were formerly so many hostelries, where travellers and the poor could always find needful refreshment for the body, and consolation for the soul.

We took possession of our house the same day; and the neighbouring Lamas helped us to move our baggage, carrying the things for us on their shoulders, as if it were a real pleasure to them to give their assistance. They swept our rooms, lighted the fire under the kang, and set the stable ready for the reception of our animals; and when all was done, the master of the house, according to a rule of hospitality among them, prepared a feast for us. It is thought that, on a moving day, one cannot have time to attend to cookery.

A brief description of our mansion may, perhaps, not be quite uninteresting. Immediately after the entrance, came an oblong court-yard, surrounded by stables, conveniently distributed. To the left of the door was a corridor, which led straight to a second square court, the four sides of which were formed by Lama's cells. The side opposite to the corridor in the first court, was occupied by the abode of the master of the house, called Akayé, that is to say, "Aged brother." He was turned of sixty, had a tall figure, but was extremely thin

and withered, so that his face looked only like a collection of bones, covered by wrinkled skin; and when he left bare his arms, blackened as they were by the sun, you might have taken them for the branches of an old vine. He walked very upright, but with a rather unsteady jerking step, as if he were moved by machinery. In eight-and-thirty years, during which he had been employed in the administration of the temporal affairs of the convent, he had amassed a moderate competence; but it had all been lost again in loans that had never been repaid, or in various ways, and he had nothing but this house, which he had built in the days of his prosperity. He had not been able to find a purchaser for it, and it is against the rules to let it, as the Lamaserai admits of no medium between the sale and the gratuitous loan of a house. To complete his misfortunes, the poor old Akayé could not profit by the distributions which are sometimes made to the Lamas who have attained a certain rank, for having been occupied only with things temporal, he had never gone through the course of study, and could neither read nor write.

To the right of Akayé's habitation, there dwelt a Lama, of Chinese birth, said to be extremely rich, and to keep a treasure of silver ingots in his cell. He was wretchedly dressed, lived parsimoniously, and had a habit of turning his head perpetually from one side to the other, like a man who fears being robbed. We used to hear him every evening disputing with his pupil—a good-hearted but mischievous little fellow—whom he accused of using too much butter in the housekeeping, ing the tea too strong, or putting too large a wick

into the lamp. Opposite to that of the Chinese Lama was our lodging, and by the side of us lived a young Lama of about twenty-four, a stout young man, whose heavy-looking face accused him strongly of making too large a consumption of butter in his little cell, and whom we could never look at without thinking of La Fontaine's rat, who, out of devotion, had retired from the world into a Dutch cheese.

The side opposite Akayé's house was composed of a row of little kitchens, belonging to the four *families*, as they are called in the Lamaserai. Notwithstanding this union of several families in a single habitation, every thing was perfectly quiet and orderly; visits are seldom interchanged, and every one attends to his own business, without minding other people's. Though we lived in one house, we seldom saw each other, for, as it was the middle of winter, the cold was very severe, and only when the sunshine came into the court did the four families issue from their cells and crouch on their felt carpets to warm themselves; the Chinese Lama, with his sharp eyes, hastily patching his clothes with some old rags, while old Akayé scratched his arms, and muttered a form of prayer, and the student of medicine sung out his lesson of therapeutics. As for ourselves, we had on our knees the book of Thibetan dialogues, but we were more occupied in observing the other families than in attending to it.

The situation of the Lamaserai of Kounboum is enchanting. Imagine a mountain intersected by a broad, deep ravine, whence spring up large trees, filled with a numerous population of ravens, magpies, and yellow-beaked crows On either side the ravine, and

up the sides of the mountain, rise, in amphitheatrical form, the white dwellings of the Lamas, each with its little terrace and wall of enclosure, adorned only by cleanliness, while here and there tower far above them the Buddhist temples, with their gilt roofs glittering with a thousand colours, and surrounded by elegant peristyles. The houses of the superiors are distinguished by pennants, floating above small hexagonal turrets, and on all sides the eye is struck by mystical sentences, in the Thibetan character, in red and black, on the doors, on the walls, on the stones, on pieces of linen fixed, like flags, on masts reared above the houses. Almost at every step you meet with conical niches, in which incense and odoriferous wood are burning; and through the streets of the Lamaserai circulates the population of Lamas, in their red and yellow dresses, grave in their deportment, and, although under no obligation to silence, speaking little, and that little in a low voice. It is only, however, at the commencement and the close of the public prayers and the schools, that many of them are to be met with in the streets, for during the rest of the day they generally keep their cells, unless when they are seen descending, by winding paths, to the bottom of the ravine to fetch water.

This Lamaserai enjoys such a great reputation, that the worshippers of Buddha make pilgrimages to it from all parts of Tartary and Thibet, and at the festivals the confluence of strangers is immense. There are four grand fêtes in the year, but the most famous is that which occurs on the fifteenth day of the first moon, and which is called the Feast of Flowers. It was the sixth of the first moon when we took up our abode at Koun-

boum, and already numerous caravans of pilgrims were arriving by all the roads leading to it, and every one was talking of the fête. The flowers this year, it was said, would be enchanting; the council of the Fine Arts had examined them, and declared them superior to all that had been seen in preceding years. Of course we were very eager for information concerning these marvellous flowers and a festival so entirely unknown to us, and we were greatly surprised at the details communicated to us.

The *Flowers* of the fifteenth of the first month consist of certain representations, secular and religious, in which all Asiatic nations appear in their appropriate costume, and in which the characters, dresses, landscapes, and decorations are all made out of *fresh butter!* Three months are employed in preparation for this singular spectacle. Twenty Lamas, chosen from among the first artists that can be found, are employed all day in working at the butter, plunging their hands continually in water, lest the heat of their fingers should injure the work; and as this is during the most rigorous cold of winter, they have much to suffer.

They begin by mixing and kneading the butter well in water, to make it firm; and when the material has been sufficiently prepared, every one devotes himself to the part which has been confided to him. All work is under the direction of a chief, who has furnished the design for the flowers of the year, and who presides over its execution. When the modellers have finished their work, they give it over to another company of artists, who undertake the colouring, but still under the direction of the same chief.

On the evening before the fête the concourse of strangers was immense. Kounboum was no longer the calm and silent retreat, where all breathed the gravity and earnestness of a religious life,—but a worldly city, full of tumult and agitation. In all quarters we heard the piercing cries of camels, and the lowing of the long-haired oxen, which had brought the pilgrims. On the higher parts of the mountain rose numerous tents, where were encamped those who had not been able to find a lodging in the houses of the Lamas, and during the whole of the fourteenth an immense number of pilgrims were engaged in performing a pilgrimage round the Lamaserai, in which the pilgrim is required to prostrate himself at every step! Among these zealous Buddhists were a great number of Mongol Tartars, who came from a great distance, and who were remarkable for their heavy, stupid look, as well as for the scrupulous accomplishment of the ordinances of this kind of devotion. The Long-haired ones were there also, not looking at all more engaging than at Tang-Keou-Eul, walking proudly as usual, and with the right-arm bare, their long swords and guns slung in their belts. The most numerous of all, however, were the *Si-Fan*, whose faces expressed neither the rudeness of the long-haired, nor the simple good faith of the Tartars, but they performed their pilgrimage with a sort of nonchalance, as if they would say, "We understand all that sort of thing, we belong to the parish."

Among the crowd of pilgrims, we were surprised to find some Chinese, with chaplets in their hands, making all the customary prostrations. They were, as Sandara the Bearded informed us, dealers in khatas, who did

not believe in Buddha, but who performed all these ceremonies to get custom and sell their wares better. Whether this were truth or calumny we had no means of ascertaining; but as far as we knew, it perfectly harmonised with the Chinese character. On the fifteenth, the pilgrims making the tour of the Lamaserai were not so numerous as on the preceding days, for curiosity carried most of them in the direction where the preparations for the feast of flowers were going on. In the evening we all went out, leaving nobody but old Akayé to keep house for us. The *flowers* were placed in the open air before the Buddhist temples, on light scaffoldings of various designs, interspersed with innumerable vases of red and yellow copper, and the whole most beautifully and tastefully illuminated. The flowers really astonished us; we should never have imagined that in the midst of these deserts, and among a half civilised people, there could have been found artists of such merit. They were bas-reliefs, in colossal proportions, representing various subjects taken from the history of Buddhism. The figures were animated, the attitudes natural, the costumes easy and graceful, and at the first glance you could distinguish the kind and quality of texture meant to be represented. The furs, especially, were admirable. The skins of the sheep, tiger, wolf, and other animals were so well executed, that one was tempted to touch them with the hand, to assure one's self that they were not real. In all the reliefs it was easy to recognise Buddha, for his noble and majestic face belonged quite to the Caucasian type, and this agrees with the Buddhist traditions, which always point to the sky of the West as his place of birth. The com-

plexion was fair, and delicately tinged with red, the eyes and nose large, the hair long, waving, and soft to the touch. The other personages showed the Mongol type, with the various Thibetan-Chinese and Tartar varieties, all clearly distinguishable. We saw also some heads of Hindoos and negroes, all equally well represented, and the latter especially greatly exciting the curiosity of the spectators. These grand reliefs were framed in by decorations with animals, birds, and flowers, all of course in butter, and exquisite in their form and colour.

In the street leading from one temple to another, we found, at intervals, reliefs in miniature, representing battles, hunts, scenes of nomadic life, and views of the principal Lamaserais of Thibet and Tartary. The work which excited most enthusiasm among the spectators, though we could not ourselves feel much inspired by it, was a sort of puppet theatre, erected before the principal temple, and in which the *dramatis personæ*, scenery, and decorations, were all of butter. The whole performance consisted of two processions of Lamas, coming out of two little doors, remaining for a few moments on the stage, and then going back again.

As we did not find this very interesting, we soon went away to examine some groups of devils, as grotesque mostly as those of Callot; and while we were so engaged, we suddenly heard a grand burst of trumpets and marine shells. The Grand Lama, we were told, was just issuing from his sanctuary, to visit the flowers. We asked nothing better, for we had a great curiosity to see him, and he soon reached the spot where we were standing. This living Buddha was

about forty years of age, of ordinary figure, commonplace physiognomy, and swarthy complexion; and if he noticed the fine face of the first Buddha, as here represented, he must certainly have thought he had strangely degenerated from his original type. He was on foot, surrounded by the principal dignitaries of the Lama-serai, and preceded by a crowd of Lamas, who cleared the way for him with great whips. If we were but little struck with the person of the Grand Lama, we were much so with his dress, which was precisely that of a bishop, for he had on his head a yellow mitre, a long staff in the form of a crozier in his right hand, and on his shoulders a mantle of violet-coloured taffeta, fastened in front with a clasp, and exactly resembling a cope. We had, indeed, subsequently often occasion to remark the analogies between the Catholic and Buddhist costume and ceremonial.

The spectators appeared to pay but little attention to their living Buddha—being much more occupied with the Buddhas in fresh butter, which were certainly much prettier. The only ones who showed any signs of devotion were the Tartars, who joined their hands and bowed their heads in token of respect, and even seemed afflicted that the crowd in the streets prevented their prostrating themselves.

The Grand Lama, when he had finished his tour, returned to his sanctuary; and this was the signal for the people abandoning themselves to the wildest transports of joy. They sang till they were fairly out of breath; they danced; they pushed each other about; they tumbled head over heels; and shouted till one might have thought they had all gone crazy. As, in

the midst of this disorder, it would have been easy for the butter decorations to have been destroyed, the Lamas were armed with lighted torches to keep off the mob, which was roaring around them like a tempestuous sea.

We returned home at a late hour, and by sunrise there was no longer a trace of the grand Feast of Flowers. All had disappeared;—the bas-reliefs had been demolished, and the enormous quantity of butter thrown down into the ravine, to serve as food for the crows. These grand works that had cost so much time, so much labour, and one may say so much genius, had served but for the spectacle of a single night. With the flowers the pilgrims also had disappeared. We saw them, in the morning, slowly climbing the sides of the mountain, to return each to his own wild country. They walked in silence, with their heads cast down; for the mind of man can, in this world, support so little joy, that the day after a gay festival is commonly one of bitterness and melancholy.

CHAPTER III.

RELATIONS BETWEEN BUDDHISM AND CATHOLICISM.

Tsong-Kaba.—The Tree of Ten Thousand Images.—Lamanesque Instruction.—Faculty of Prayer.—Police of the Lamaserai.—Offerings of the Pilgrims.—Lama Industry.—Favorable disposition of the Lamas towards Christianity.—Singular practice for the assistance of Travellers.—Nocturnal Prayers.—Departure for the Lamaserai of Tchorgartan.

It is known that in the fourteenth century, in the time of the dominion of the Mongol emperors, there existed frequent relations between the Europeans and the people of central Asia. We have already spoken of the embassies which the victorious Tartars sent to Rome, France, and England; and there is no doubt that these barbarians were struck by the pomp and splendour of the ceremonies of the Catholic worship, and they carried back to their deserts profound impressions of them. It is known, also, that at the same period monks of different orders undertook long journeys to introduce Christianity into Tartary. It was shortly after this period that Tsong-Kaba, the great Buddhist reformer, born a shepherd in the country south of the Kou-kou-Noor, introduced into the Buddhist worship the changes concerning which he is said to have received instruction from a wonderful stranger from the West, who had a large nose and brilliant eyes; and, setting aside many

marvels with which the legend is accompanied, it seems by no means improbable, that this high-nosed stranger from the West may have been one of the Catholic missionaries from Europe. During our stay at Kounboum we several times heard remarks upon the singularity of our cast of features; and it was said, without hesitation, that we resembled the master of Tsong-Kaba. It may be supposed that a premature death did not permit the Catholic to complete the religious instruction of his disciple, who in the sequel only applied himself to reforming the Buddhist liturgy. We shall afterwards have occasion to enquire whether the numerous relations existing between Buddhism and Catholicism are likely to prove an obstacle, or an advantage, to the propagation of the true faith in Tartary and Thibet. It is to a legend concerning Tsong-Kaba that the Lamaserai of Kounboum owes its name. It signifies "Ten Thousand Images;" and it is said that when the mother of the reformer, in devoting him to a religious life, according to custom cut off his hair and threw it away, a tree sprang up from it, which bore on every one of its leaves a Thibetan character. This tree is still to be seen at the foot of the mountain on which the principal Buddhist temple stands, in a large square enclosure formed by four brick walls. Within this stands the wonderful tree, which appears of great antiquity; and though now not more than eight feet high, three men could hardly embrace its trunk. The wood is of a reddish colour, and exquisite odour, very much resembling cinnamon. We were told that during the summer, towards the eighth moon, it produces superb large red flowers; but what most excited our astonishment was that every leaf

was really, as we had been before told it was, distinctly marked with a Thibetan character, sometimes lighter, sometimes darker than the leaf, but quite plain. After the most minute investigation, we could discover no traces of fraud on the part of the Lamas; and though, doubtless, people will smile at our ignorance, that will matter little if they do not suspect the veracity of our account.

The celebrity of the Lamaserai of Kounboum, due at first to the renown of Tsong-Kaba, is maintained at present by its good discipline, and the superiority of its instruction. The Lamas are regarded as students during their whole lives, for religious science is considered inexhaustible. They are distributed into four classes or faculties, according to the nature of the studies to which they apply themselves. 1st. The faculty of *mysticism*, which embraces the rules of a contemplative life, and the examples contained in the lives of the Buddhist saints. 2ndly, The faculty of liturgy, or the study of religious ceremonies, with the explanation of all that belongs to the Lamanesque worship. 3rdly, The faculty of medicine, having for its object the four hundred and forty maladies of the human body, besides medical botany, and pharmacy. 4thly, The faculty of prayer; which, being the most esteemed, and the best remunerated, attracts the greatest number of students.

The voluminous works which serve as the basis of the instruction in prayer, are divided into thirteen classes, which are like so many degrees in the hierarchy. The place which each student occupies in the school and the choir, is assigned to him according to the theological books which he has studied, and you often find in the

lowest classes old Lamas proclaiming thus their idleness or incapacity, while there are young people who have reached the summit of the hierarchy. To obtain degrees in the Faculty of Prayer, all that is required is that the student shall recite perfectly the appointed books.

When he thinks himself sufficiently prepared he announces the fact to the Grand Lama of Prayer, by presenting to him a magnificent *khata*, a plate of dried grapes, and some ounces of silver—according to the importance of the degree that he thinks to obtain; some presents are also to be made to the Examining Lamas, though of course the judges are said to be incorruptible: but at Kounboum, as elsewhere, a few presents are found of service to carry you honourably through an examination.

Before the principal temple of Kounboum is a vast court paved with broad flag stones, and surrounded by twisted columns, loaded with coloured sculptures. It is in this enclosure that the Lamas of the Faculty of Prayer assemble for their classes, to which they are called by the conch. The professors alone are under shelter, being mounted on a sort of pavilion; the student Lamas all crouch down on the flags, and remain exposed alike to the rain and sun in summer, and the piercing winds and snows of winter: and after some of them have recited the appointed lesson, the professors give what is called an explanation, but it is an explanation no less vague and incomprehensible than the text. No one makes any difficulty about it, however, and indeed it is their opinion that the sublimity of a doctrine is in a direct ratio with its obscurity and

impenetrability. After this the lesson is ordinarily concluded by a thesis, held by appointment by one of the students, and every one is at liberty to interrogate him upon any subject that comes into his head—and preposterous enough these subjects are sometimes, reminding one strongly of the famous discussions in the schools of the middle ages, when they used to dispute furiously *de omni re scibili.*

At Kounboum it is the rule that the victor in the argument shall mount on the shoulders of the vanquished, and be carried by him in triumph out of the school. One day we met our friend Sandara the Bearded coming back in this manner, with a face more expanded and radiant than usual, and we learned that he had been the hero of the thesis, having vanquished his opponent on the important question of "Why fowls and other birds are without one of the vital functions common to all other animals?" I mention this, in order to give an idea of the sublime character of the Lamanesque studies. During the lessons one of the Lamas, armed with an iron crow-bar, is occupied with maintaining order among the students; and there is a class of Lamas, wearing a grey dress and a black mitre, who perambulate the streets, carrying a large whip for the admonition of the thoughtless. The smallest theft is punished by expulsion from the Lamaserai, after the culprit has been branded with a hot iron on the forehead and cheeks.

The Buddhist convents, though resembling in many respects Christian monasteries, yet differ essentially from them. The Lamas are subjected it is true to the same discipline, but one cannot say that they live in commu-

nity. You find among them all the gradations of wealth and poverty to be met with in any worldly city. We have often seen Lamas covered with rags, begging at the doors of their rich brothers, for a handful of barley meal. Every three months a distribution of flour is made among the Lamas, but varying greatly in quantity, according to their rank in the hierarchy. The pilgrims also make them voluntary offerings, both of tea and silver. They announce to the superior that it is their intention to offer to the Lamas a general or a particular tea; the general, is for any one who chooses to come; the particular, for any one of the four Faculties which the pilgrim may select.

On the day fixed for the offering of a general tea, the presiding Lama, after morning prayers, gives the signal for the assembly to keep their places, and immediately about forty young *Chabis* rush off to the kitchen, and re-appear directly afterwards, with large pitchers of tea and milk, and as they advance the Lamas draw from their bosoms their little wooden bowls, which are then filled to the brim. As they silently quaff their tea, every one draws his scarf round the bowl, as a sort of apology for the impropriety of performing an act so worldly, and so little in harmony with the sanctity of the place. The tea is usually prepared in sufficient quantity to go round twice, and is stronger or weaker, according to the generosity of the pilgrim donor. Some add a slice of fresh butter for each Lama to the tea, and those who wish to be quite magnificent give also wheaten flour cakes. When the feast is over, the Lama-president proclaims solemnly the name of the pious pilgrim, who has procured for himself the great merit

of regaling the holy family of the Lamas; and immediately the pilgrim, who is almost always present, prostrates himself with his face to the ground; while the Lamas set up a psalm in his honour, and then make a procession round their benefactor, who does not, however, rise from his prostrate position, till every one is gone. Offerings of this kind, though they profit but little to each individual Lama, are rather expensive to the pilgrim; for even a simple tea, when the tea party amounts to 4,000, cannot be given for less than fifty ounces of silver (20*l.*). The offerings of silver are still more expensive, for the tea must be given all the same. In that case the presiding Lama announces after morning prayers that such a pilgrim has offered so many ounces of silver, which, exactly divided, give such a quotient. There is no time fixed for these offerings, but they are most numerous at the four grand festivals, when there is the greatest concourse of pilgrims. After the Feast of Flowers, the king of Souniot, who was present, offered, before his return to Tartary, 600 ounces of silver, and a general tea with an accompaniment of cakes and butter for eight days together. Sometimes when the offering is made by a very distinguished personage, the living Buddha is present at the ceremony, and then fifty ounces of silver are offered to him in a basket, ornamented with flowers and ribbons, and accompanied by a piece of red or yellow silk, a mitre, a khata of the costliest kind, and a pair of boots. The pilgrim prostrates himself at the foot of the altar, on which the Buddha is seated, and deposits the basket at his feet. The chabi receives it, and presents the pilgrim in return with a khata in the name of the living Buddha

—whose part on the occasion is to preserve the impassibility proper to a divinity. But besides the distributions and offerings, the Lamas have other means of increasing their worldly wealth; some of them keep cows, and sell milk and butter to their brethren; some undertake the furnishing of general teas, when they are required; others become tailors, bootmakers, dyers, &c., and others, again, keep shops, and sell things which they have bought wholesale at Tang-Keou-Eul, or Si-Ning-Fou.

Besides these industrial Lamas, there are many who seek for profit in occupations somewhat more consonant to the spirit of a religious life; and occupy themselves in printing or transcribing books. The printing is all stereotype, by means of blocks of wood, for moveable types are not in use. The Thibetan books are like large packs of cards; that is, the leaves are all separate, and placed, without sewing, between two boards tied with yellow ribbons. The manuscripts are magnificent, enriched with fanciful designs, and the characters most elegantly formed.

Sandara the Bearded followed none of these occupations, but one peculiar to himself, namely, that of serving as *cicerone* to strangers, and by means of his suppleness of character and persuasive tongue, he generally ended by making himself their man of business. We learned afterwards that he had been obliged to leave Lha-Ssa, on account of some knavery, and that for three years he had been going about the provinces of Sse-Chouan and Kan-Sou, in the quality of teller of stories and actor. We were not at all surprised at this intelligence, for we had often thought that when San-

dara was off his guard, he had quite the manners of a player.

When the Feast of Flowers was fairly over we resumed zealously our study of Thibetan, and Sandara came every morning to assist us. Our task was the composition of an abridgment of the sacred history, from the Creation to the preaching of the Apostles. This work was put into the form of a dialogue between a Lama of Buddha, and a Lama of Jehovah, and we now soon found out that the disposition he had manifested at Tang-Keou-Eul, his signs of the cross, and his inclination towards the Christian doctrine, had been all pure acting. Religious feelings had no hold on his covetous and worldly heart. From his long residence in China he had brought back a habit of incredulity, which he was very fond of parading. In his eyes no religion was anything better than a branch of industry, invented by certain clever fellows, to impose upon the fools. Virtue was but an idle word, and the man of merit was the one who best knew how to take advantage of others. After a time we found that we had begun to make something of a sensation in the Lama-serai; people began to talk of the Lamas of Jehovah, and of the new doctrine which they taught; they noticed that we never prostrated ourselves before Buddha, that we prayed three times a day, that our prayers were not those of Thibet, and that we had a language between us that no one else understood. This was enough to pique public curiosity; every day we had visitors, and the conversation always took a religious turn. Among all the Lamas we found no other of the sceptical cast of mind of Sandara; on the contrary, they all

appeared sincerely religious, full of good faith, and earnestly desirous to know the truth. We took care to banish from the instruction we gave them everything that might breathe the spirit of contention or dispute,—and gave them merely a simple and concise exposition of our religion, leaving it to them to draw from what we told them conclusions unfavourable to Buddhism. Proper names and dates we found made much more impression on them than the most logical reasonings; when they knew the names of Jesus of Jerusalem, and Pontius Pilate, and the date of 4000 years after the creation of the world, they seemed no longer to doubt of the mystery of the redemption. From our experience we are convinced that it is by the way of instruction, and not that of controversy, that we can most successfully labour for the conversion of infidels. Polemics may reduce an adversary to silence,—irritate, humble, but never convince him. When Jesus Christ sent his Apostles he said, "Go and *teach* all people;" he did not say go and argue with them. In our day, two philosophical schools who recognise for chiefs, the one Descartes, the other Lamennais, have disputed much whether Paganism is an error or a crime; it appears to us that it is neither, but simply the effect of ignorance. The mind of the Pagan is enveloped in darkness, and we have but to bring light into it, for it to become day. What he needs is instruction.

The eagerness of the Lamas to visit us, and the good disposition they manifested towards Christianity, appeared to give great offence to Sandara; he would give us our lesson in the driest and most laconic manner, and then shut himself up the rest of the day in a

sullen and insolent silence. If we asked him humbly the Thibetan names of anything, or the explanation of any phrase in the dialogue, he would not even deign to answer. In this extremity, we had recourse to our neighbour the young student of medicine, who was always eager to oblige us, and who, though he was not very learned, was very useful; and, in return for his services, we complied with all our hearts with his request, that we should instruct him in the Christian religion. He received with much respect the truths we announced to him, but his timid and irresolute character prevented him from renouncing Buddhism. He wished to be a Christian and a Buddhist at the same time, and in his prayers he used to invoke by turns, Tsong-Kaba and Jehovah; and he carried his simplicity so far, as to invite us to take part in his religious exercises.

One day he proposed to us to join in a certain act of devotion which he was going to undertake, he said, for the sake of travellers all over the world. We said we did not understand him, and begged he would give us some explanation.

"You know," he said, "travellers often find themselves on toilsome and difficult roads; sometimes they are holy Lamas on a pilgrimage, who cannot go on because they are exhausted by fatigue; in that case, we come to their assistance, and send them horses."

"Oh!" we cried, "that is a beautiful practice and quite according to the principles of Christian charity; but consider that it is not possible for poor travellers like us to take part in this excellent work. We have but one horse and a mule, and we must let them rest, that they may be able to undertake the journey to Thibet."

"Tsong-Kaba!" cried the Lama, and burst into a shout of laughter, that seemed as if it would never end.

"What are you laughing at?" said we. "You know we have only a horse and a mule"—and then, having a little recovered from his hilarity, he explained that the horses that were sent after travellers were not real, but only *paper* horses. It was now our turn to laugh at this odd mode of Buddhist charity; but we preserved our gravity, for we made it a rule never to turn the practices of the Lamas into ridicule. Our friend now retired for a moment to his cell, and presently re-appeared, bringing with him some pieces of paper, on each of which was a representation of a horse saddled and bridled, and going in full gallop.

"Those," said he, "are the kind of horses we send to the travellers. To-morrow we will climb a high mountain fourteen miles off, and we will pass the day in saying prayers, and sending off the horses."

"What means do you employ to send them to travellers?" we asked.

"Oh! a very simple method; after having said the prayers, we take a packet of the horses, and fling them into the air; the wind carries them away, and by the power of Buddha they are changed into real horses, which offer themselves to the travellers."

We stated sincerely to our dear neighbour, our views concerning this practice, and the motives which prevented our taking part in it, and he seemed to approve of all that we said; but that did not hinder him from passing the night in fabricating a prodigious number of the paper horses; and, at break of day, he set off, with ome of his brethren, full of devotion for the poor tra-

vellers. They carried with them a tent, a kettle, and some provisions. During all the morning there was an outrageous wind, which did not go down till the middle of the day; and then the sky became dark and heavy, and snow began to fall in large flakes. Towards night the poor Lama returned, numbed with cold, and exhausted with fatigue; and we invited him to rest in our cell, and got him some milk-tea, and rolls fried in butter.

"This has been a terrible day," said he; "the wind has been bad enough here, but it has been nothing to what it was at the top of the mountain. Our tent, our kettle, everything was carried away in the hurricane, and we were obliged to lie flat down on the ground not to be carried away ourselves."

"It must have been very vexatious," said we, "to lose your tent and your kettle."

"Yes! it was a misfortune," he replied; "but then the weather was very favourable for sending horses to travellers. When we saw it was going to snow, we sent them all off at once, and the wind carried them to all the four quarters of the world. If we had waited longer, the snow would have wetted them, and they would have remained sticking to the side of the mountain." And so, all things considered, the poor fellow was not at all dissatisfied with his day's work.

The twenty-fifth of the moon is the day appointed for this curious act of devotion, but it is left to the piety of each individual; the twenty-eighth, however, is fixed for another in which all the Lamas take part. Our medical friend had said to us the day before,—"perhaps we shall disturb your rest to-night;"—but thinking he only

alluded to the nocturnal prayers which are not uncommon, we paid little attention to what he said; and went to bed at our usual time. But we did not remain long asleep. At first we half thought we were dreaming, but we gradually became conscious of a confused noise of a multitude of voices, and we soon distinguished the chant of one of the Lama prayers.

We got up immediately, dressed ourselves, and went out into the court-yard, and found it illuminated by the reflection of a pale light, that seemed to come from above. Old Akayé was crouched in a corner, counting his beads, and we enquired of him the meaning of this strange noise. "If you wish to know," he said, "go up to the top of your house." A ladder was standing in readiness against the wall, and we immediately ascended to the terrace, whence we beheld a singular spectacle. The terraces of all the houses were illuminated by red lanterns, suspended to long poles; and the whole congregation of Lamas, in their mitres and mantles of ceremony, were seated on the tops of their houses, chanting prayers in a slow and monotonous voice. On our terrace we found the medical Lama, the Chinese, and his chabi, all entirely absorbed in the ceremony; we did not therefore attempt to disturb them, but contented ourselves with looking and listening. The innumerable lanterns, with their strange red lights; the edifices of the Lamaserai vaguely seen by the tremulous glow; the 4000 voices ascending into the air, and accompanied, from time to time, by the sound of trumpets and marine shells, altogether formed a strange and exciting spectacle. After gazing at it for a while, we went down again into the court, and found old Akayé still in the same place; and,

to our enquiry, he gave the following explanation: "These nocturnal prayers had been established to drive away demons by which the country had formerly been desolated. They had caused all kinds of maladies among the cattle; corrupted the cows' milk; disturbed the Lamas in their cells; and even carried their audacity so far, as to force themselves into the choir at the hour of prayer; their presence being ascertained by the confusion they created in the psalmody. During the night these devils used to assemble at the bottom of the ravine, and frighten every body out of their wits by cries and groans so strange, that nobody could imitate them. A learned Lama then contrived this plan of the nocturnal prayers, and since then, the demons have entirely vanished; or, if from time to time one makes his appearance, he is not able to do any harm."

"Did you ever see any, Akayé?" said we.

"Oh no! never!" he replied, "and I am sure that you have not either."

"How do you know that?"

"Because the demons only appear to the bad Lamas; the good can never see them."

At this moment the songs of the Lamas suddenly stopped, and the drums, trumpets and shells sounded three times, then the 4000 Lamas together uttered a fearful cry like the howling of a multitude of wild beasts, and then the ceremony was over, the lanterns were extinguished, and soon all was darkness and silence. We wished old Akayé good night, and retired again to our beds.

We had now been three months at Kounboum, enjoying the sympathy of the Buddhist brethren, and

the good will of the authorities, but we had, nevertheless, been living in flagrant opposition to a positive law of the Lamaserai, which ordained, that those who wished to make a long stay, should put on the sacred vestments of a Lama, that is to say, the red robes, the little dalmatic without sleeves, and the yellow mitre. Accordingly the Grand Lama sent to us one morning one of his attendants, to invite us to a more strict observance of the statutes. We replied, that not being of the religion of Buddha we could not adopt this habit without outraging our faith, but that not wishing to occasion any disorder, we were quite willing to retire from the Lamaserai, if a dispensation could not be granted us on this subject. After the lapse of several days the Lama government sent back to say that the law was inflexible, and that they were grieved to find that our *holy* and *sublime* religion did not permit us to conform to it. They added, that they should see with pleasure that we had established ourselves in the neighbourhood, and they invited us to take up our abode at Tchogortan, where we might wear what dress we pleased.

We had often heard of this little Lamaserai—which is like a country house for the faculty of medicine, and is distant about half an hour's ride from Kounboum. The Grand Lamas, and the students of the medical section, generally go there, towards the end of every summer, to gather medicinal plants on the neighbouring mountains; but during the rest of the year it remains nearly deserted, or inhabited, perhaps, by a few solitary Lamas who have dug their cells in the steepest rocks they can find.

The proposal that we should leave Kounboum could not have come at a more convenient time, for spring was coming on, and Samdadchiemba had just arrived with the three camels from pasture. We bought, therefore, a khata and a dish of dried grapes, and went to pay a visit of ceremony to the Lama who administered the affairs of Tchogortan. He received us with affability, and gave orders to prepare for us, immediately, a suitable habitation; and then, after giving a splendid farewell banquet to the medical Lama, the Chinese, and old Akayé, we loaded our camels with our baggage and set off gaily towards the little Lamaserai.

CHAPTER IV.

Appearance of the Lamaserai of Tchogortan.—Contemplative Lamas.—Cowherd Lamas.—The Book of the forty-two points of Instruction.—The Black Tents.—Morals of Si-Fan.—Long-haired Oxen.—Valuable Discoveries in the Vegetable Kingdom.—Camels' hair Ropes.—Visitors to Tchogortan.—Classification of Argols.—History of Robbers.—Pyramid of Peace.—Faculty of Medicine at Tchogortan.—Thibetan Physicians.—Departure for the Blue Sea.

The country between Kounboom and Tchogortan appears to be well supplied with pastures, but, from the cold of the climate, vegetation is very late. Although we were now in the month of May, there was scarcely enough grass to give a yellowish tint to the valley.

When we reached the Lamaserai, a Lama, with a plump red face, came to meet us, and conduct us to the habitation that had been prepared for us. It was a large apartment, which, only the evening before, had served as a lodging for some young calves, too weak yet to follow their mothers to the mountains. Great efforts had been made to cleanse it, but it still bore very evident traces of its late tenants; although it was, nevertheless, the best lodging the Lamaserai could afford us.

The aspect of Tchogortan is very picturesque, especially in summer. The habitations of the Lamas, at the foot of a high mountain, rising almost perpendicu-

larly above them, are shaded by trees, centuries old, whose thick branches serve for a retreat to numerous kites and crows. A few yards below the houses there flows an abundant stream, intersected by numerous dams, constructed by the Lamas to turn their prayer mills. At the bottom of the valley, and on the neighbouring hills, appeared the black tents of the Si-Fan, and some flocks of goats. The mountain wall itself serves as a habitation to a few contemplative anchorites, who have built their eyries, like eagles' nests, on the highest and most inaccessible spots; some have hollowed them out of the face of the rock, others have stuck a little wooden cell, like a swallow's nest, to its side, and some pieces of wood fastened to the rock serve for a ladder, by which they ascend to their singular habitations.

One of these Buddhist hermits has entirely renounced the world, and voluntarily deprived himself of all means of communication with his fellow creatures; and a sack, suspended to a long cord, serves to convey to him the alms of the Lamas and shepherds of the country.

We have often held intercourse with *contemplative* Lamas, but we have never been able to ascertain what it was that they contemplated up there in their niches. They could not themselves give a very good account of it; they had, they said, embraced that kind of life, because they had read in their books that Lamas of great sanctity had lived in that way. They were not at all morose, but simple peaceable men, who passed most of their time in prayer, and when they were tired of it, sought a harmless recreation in sleep.

Besides five contemplatives, there were at this time a

few Lamas residing below, to whom the care of the deserted houses of the Lamaserai had been confided. They did not, like their brethren, take up life by its refined and mystic side, but were, on the contrary, completely plunged in the positive realities of the world. They were herdsmen. In the large house in which we were installed there were two Lamas, who passed their lives in taking care of twenty oxen, milking cows, making butter and cheese, and looking after the young calves. Prayer and contemplation they seemed to trouble themselves but little about. Now and then they would utter an exclamation, in which the name of Tsong-Kaba was heard, but it was always something about the beasts, when the cows would not be milked, or the young calves were troublesome in gambolling over the valley. Our arrival afforded a sort of interruption to the monotony of their pastoral life; and they used to come and visit us in our chamber, and pass in review our little travelling library, with the timid and respectful curiosity often manifested by simple and illiterate people for the works of intelligence. If they happened to find us writing—their flocks, their dairy, all was forgotten; they would stand for hours motionless, with their eyes fixed upon our pens running along the paper, and forming characters, the strangeness and smallness of which always threw them into extacies.

The little Lamaserai of Tchogortan pleased us beyond our hopes, and we never cast one regret towards Kounboum; indeed we felt ourselves free and emancipated, for we were no longer under the ferule of Sandara the Bearded—that hard and pitiless master, who, besides giving us lessons in the Thibet language,

seemed to have imposed on himself the duty of teaching us patience and humility. Our departure from Kounboum had offered a favourable opportunity for getting rid of him, and we thought we had now made progress enough to be able to do without official aid, and walk alone. Our hours of study we devoted to the revision and analysis of our dialogues, and the translation of a little Thibetan work, called "The forty-two points of Instruction offered by Buddha," of which we possessed a magnificent edition, in four languages—namely, Thibetan, Chinese, Mongol, and Mantchoo. When the Thibetan presented any difficulty we had only to consult the three other languages with which we were familiar. We had not been long at Tchogortan, however, before we found that it would not do for us to devote all our leisure to study; we must give a part of it to the cares of a pastoral life. We had remarked that our cattle every evening came home hungry,—and that, instead of getting fat, they grew leaner from day to day. The truth was that Samdadchiemba gave himself no trouble to conduct them where they might find something to browse. After having driven them for a few minutes before him, he left them upon some barren hill, and then went to sleep in the sun, or loiter about the black tents, gossipping and drinking tea. It was of no use to remonstrate with him, and we saw no other way to remedy the evil than to become shepherds ourselves.

It was impossible, too, to remain exclusively men of letters, when every thing around invited us to conform to the habits of pastoral nations. The Si-Fan, or Oriental Thibetans, are nomadic, like the Mongol-Tar-

tars, and pass their lives wholly in the care of their flocks. They do not lodge, like other Mongols, in *Yourtas*, covered with felt, but in large tents of black linen, of an hexagonal form, without any woodwork inside to support them. The side angles of the base are attached to the ground by nails, and the top supported by cords, which, at a certain distance from the tent, rest first on horizontal poles, and then, descending, are fastened to rings fixed in the earth. With this whimsical arrangement of poles and cords, the whole affair resembles a monstrous black spider, lying quite still on its high, thin legs, with its swelled abdomen resting on the ground. These black tents are by no means as good as the Mongol yourtas, nor so warm or solid as even the travelling tents, and a violent wind easily blows them down.

In some respects, the Si-Fan appear more advanced than the other Mongols, and they seem to manifest some slight indications of an approach to the manners of sedentary nations. When they have chosen a spot for an encampment, they raise round it a wall four or five feet high. Inside their tents they build stoves, which are both solid and tasteful, but they do not on that account attach themselves any more to the soil; the slightest whim is sufficient to induce them to decamp and destroy all their masonry. They carry with them, however, the principal stones, which may be considered as part of their furniture. Their flocks and herds consist of sheep, goats, and long-haired oxen; they do not keep so many horses as most of the Mongol-Tartars, but what they have are stronger as well as more elegantly made.

This long-haired ox is called Yak by the Thibetans, and *bos grunniens* by European naturalists, from its cry, which is, in fact, very much like the grunt of a pig, but louder and more prolonged. It is short and thick set, and not so large as a common ox; its hair is long, fine, and shining, and that on the belly hanging down quite to the ground; its feet are thin, and much like those of goats, and it likes to climb mountains and hang over precipices. The flesh is excellent, the milk of the cow delicious, and the butter made from it above all praise. Malte-Brun gives a different opinion; but as we have had rather better opportunites of becoming acquainted with its flavour than the learned geographer, we consider that ours is most to be relied on. The cows are so petulant and difficult to milk, that it is impossible to keep them still; and not a drop is to be had from them without giving them their calves to lick during the operation.

The nomadic Si-Fan are easily distinguished from the Mongols by their more expressive physiognomy, and their greater energy of character; their faces are not so flat, and their manners have an easy vivacity which contrasts strongly with the heaviness of the Tartars. Their encampments resound with noisy songs, merry games, and shouts of laughter; but with these dispositions to gaiety and pleasure, they are of a warlike character and indomitable courage; and though their names are on the list of tributary nations, they obstinately refuse both tribute and obedience to the Emperor of China; indeed, they manifest the most profound contempt for Chinese authority. Some of them carry their predatory incursions to the very frontiers of the

empire, and the Mandarins do not dare to interfere with them. They are good horsemen, though, in this respect, they do not equal the Tartars. But, besides attending to their flocks, they practise some kinds of industrial occupations, and turn to account the wool of the sheep and the long hair of their oxen, weaving from them a coarse kind of cloth, which they use for tents and clothing. When they assemble round their great cauldron full of milk-tea, they give themselves up freely to their gossipping humour, and their taste for stories about Lamas and robbers; one need only set them going, and one is sure of seeing them display an apparently exhaustless repertory of anecdotes, local traditions, and legends.

One day, while our camels were tranquilly browsing on some thorny shrubs at the bottom of the valley, we went to seek a shelter from the north wind in a small tent, whence issued a thick smoke. We found inside it an old man lying on his hands and knees, blowing a pile of argols, which he had just placed on the hearth. We seated ourselves on a yak's skin, and the old man crossed his legs, and stretched out his hand to us. We gave him our bowls, which he filled with milk-tea, saying, "Drink in peace." Then he looked at us, one after another, with an expression of anxiety.

"Aha! brother," said we, "it is the first time that we have come to seat ourselves in your tent."

"I am old," he replied; "my legs cannot support me, otherwise I should have been to Tchogortan, to offer you my khata. From what I have heard the shepherds of the black tents say, you are from the sky of the west."

"Yes; our country is far from here."

"Are you from the kingdom of Samba, or that of Poba?"

"Neither one nor the other; we are from the kingdom of the French."

"Ah! you are of the Framba; I have never heard of that. It is so large, that West; the kingdoms there are so numerous. But at bottom it makes no difference; we are all of the same family, are we not?"

"Yes, certainly; all men are brothers, whatever their kingdom is."

"What you say is founded on reason; but nevertheless there are on the earth three great families, and we are all of the great Thibetan family."

"Aha!—do you know whence came these three families?"

"This is what I have heard the Lamas say, who have studied the things of antiquity. At the beginning, there was on the earth only a single man; he had neither house nor tent, for at that time the winter was not cold, and the summer not hot; the wind did not blow so violently, and there fell neither snow nor rain; the tea grew of itself on the mountains, and the flocks had nothing to fear from the beasts of prey. This man had three children, who lived a long time with him, nourishing themselves on milk and fruits. After having attained to a great age, this man died. The three children deliberated what they should do with the body of their father, and they could not agree about it; one wished to put him in a coffin, the other wanted to burn him, the third thought it would be best to expose the body on the summit of a mountain. They resolved then to divide it into three parts; the eldest had the body and arms,—

he was the ancestor of the great Chinese family,—and that is why his descendants have become celebrated in arts and industry, and are remarkable for their tricks and stratagems. The second son had the breast; he was the father of the Thibetan family,—and they are full of heart and courage, and do not fear death. From the third, who had the inferior parts of the body, are descended the Tartars, who are simple and timid, without head or heart, and who know nothing but how to keep themselves firm in their saddles."

By way of return for this interesting chronicle, we related to the old man the story of the first man, the deluge, and of Noah and his three sons. He was at first very much pleased with the coincidence of the three families; but when he heard us say that the Chinese, the Tartars, and the Thibetans were all the children of Shem, he listened with his mouth open, and from time to time shook his head.

The time had passed quickly away during this archæological discussion, and we now, after saluting the old man, returned to our camels, drove them home, tied them up to the door, and then went into our little kitchen to prepare our supper.

Our culinary department was now incomparably better supplied than it had been at Kounboum. Milk, curds, butter, cheese, we had at discretion, and we had also made the grand discovery of a hunter in the neighbourhood. A few days after our arrival he had entered our chamber, and drawing from a sack which he carried a magnificent hare, he enquired, whether we had any objection to eat it, as the Buddhist Lamas were forbidden to do so; and, on our replying that we were at

perfect liberty to eat hare if we pleased, he offered to bring us one every day, saying, that the hills were swarming with them. We would not, however, receive it gratuitously, as he had intended, but it was settled that we should pay him for each hare forty sapecks, that is about two-pence, which he regarded as a generous remuneration. At this rate it was cheaper for us to live on hare than on our insipid oatmeal. One day he brought us a kid; our chimney smoked from it for days together, and Samdadchiemba was the whole time in a delightful humour. In order, however, not to become too carnivorous in our diet, we sought for some kind of esculent vegetables, and found, in great quantity, a root resembling the dandelion. We also boiled the young stalks of fern, which are very much like asparagus, and the nettle, which is a good substitute for spinach. In summer, when these plants were no longer fit for culinary purposes, we used to find strawberries on the mountains, and white champignons in the valleys.

In the beginning of July there fell very heavy rains, and when these were over, the country clothed itself, as if by magic, with flowers and verdure. For our camels, too, this was a moment of Palingenesia. Their hair had all fallen off in bunches like old rags, and, for a few days, they were quite naked, and perfectly hideous. But now the hair began to appear again, and in another fortnight they were clothed in their new attire, and really handsome.

The old hair furnished us with a new and useful occupation. An old Lama, who was a skilful rope maker, had suggested to us that we might make with it a store of cords for our baggage; and after some

lessons from him we set to work. In a short time we could manage it very well, and every morning, when we went to visit our cattle at their pasture, we used to take a bundle of camels' hair, and work as we went along.

Samdadchiemba was rather scandalised at our proceedings: "My spiritual fathers," said he, "how can men of your quality degrade themselves so far as to make ropes! Would it not be more suitable to buy them?" This was a good opportunity to give him a gentle reprimand that he had not offered to help us; and after having pointed out to him that we were by no means in a position to play the *Grand Seigneur*, but must be as economical as we possibly could, we cited to him the example of St. Paul, who had not thought he derogated from his dignity in labouring with his own hands, in order that he might not be a burden on the faithful. As soon as ever he heard the Apostle Paul had been at the same time a currier, he got over his laziness, and began to work at the ropes with great zeal. What was then our surprise to find that he understood the business extremely well, and was very skilful at it. Of course he was immediately placed in the position to which his talents entitled him, and appointed to be superintendant general of our rope-making establishment.

The fine season now brought to Tchogortan a great number of people from Kounboum, who came to enjoy the country air, and rest from their studies; and our apartment became a favourite resort, to which some visitors were drawn by curiosity, and others from the wish to hear us speak of the holy doctrine of Jehovah. How joyful were we when we heard them utter with

respect, the holy names of Jesus and Mary, and repeat, with devotions, the prayers we had taught them. May God send to these poor wandering sheep pastors, who may be able to lead them definitively to the fold.

Among the Lamas there were a great number of Mongol-Tartars, who came and pitched tents in the valley, along the brooks, and on the most picturesque hills, and remained for some days, revelling in the delights of the wandering life, and forgetting for the moment the constraint of the Lamaserai. They ran and frolicked about the meadows like children, and exercised themselves in wrestling, and in the various games which reminded them of their native country. Even the tent they seemed to regard as too settled a habitation, unless they changed its place three or four times a day; and they would often take their kitchen utensils and some pails of water, and go up and boil their tea on the top of a mountain, only coming down again at nightfall.

But though the inhabitants of Tchogortan appeared to be in the enjoyment of such peace, they were perpetually tormented by the fear of robbers, who, from time to time, they said, made incursions into the country, carried away cattle, and caused devastation wherever they went.

In 1842 there had been a terrible invasion of these wild brigands, and they had burned the images of Buddha, and broken through the dams which enabled the Lamas to turn their prayer mills. The Lamas of Kounboum had rushed to the assistance of their brethren; but they came too late, and found in the valley only smoking ruins.

Since that event the shepherds of Tchogortan had

organised a patrol armed with lances and guns; and though this precaution would certainly not intimidate the robbers, it had the advantage of inspiring some feeling of security among the inhabitants. In the autumn of this year there were some alarming rumours of the kind, which induced the shepherds to drive away all their flocks from the pastures, so that we were left with a few Lamas who had to keep watch over the Lama-serai; and our cattle at all events profited by what seemed to be a false alarm, for they could graze wherever they liked without fear of rivals. It was not long, however, before the scene once more became animated, for the Lamas of the faculty of medicine arrived from Kounboum, and not only filled all the disposable habitations, but even required tents to be pitched under the great trees. Every morning they used to disperse over the mountain, and they returned in the evening loaded with roots, branches, and plants of every kind for the general pharmacy of Kounboum. These plants are afterwards dried, pulverised, and enveloped in small pieces of red paper, inscribed with Thibetan characters, and they are purchased by pilgrims at an enormous price.

At length, towards the end of the month of September, we heard news that the Thibetan embassy had arrived at Tang-Keou-Eul, and was to stop there but a few days. It was necessary, therefore, that without loss of time we should set about our preparations for this long-looked-for journey to the capital of Thibet. Among other stores we bought a good quantity of garlic, which we were recommended to take as a remedy to the pernicious and even poisonous exhalations proceeding from a certain mountain that we should have to pass.

We also got another camel; for, though ours were in magnificent order, three were not sufficient for such an enterprise as this; and we hired a young Lama, whom we had known at Kounboum, in the quality of assistant camel-driver,—a nomination by which Samdadchiemba's fatigues were lessened as well as his social position rendered more dignified.

After exchanging a great number of khatas with our friends and acquaintances, we set out on our march towards the Blue Sea, where we were to wait the passing of the Thibetan embassy,—the new subaltern camel-driver walking on foot, and leading the four camels, tied one to the tail of the other; Samdadchiemba the superior officer, mounted on his mule, following; and we two missionaries bringing up the rear.

CHAPTER V.

Aspect of the Kou-kou-Noor.—Description and March of the Grand Caravan.—Passage of the Pouhain-Gol.—Adventures of the Altère Lama.—Our sub-Camel-driver.—Mongols of Tsaidam.—Pestilential Vapours of Bourhan-Bota.—Ascent of Mount Chuga.—Men and Animals killed by the Frost.—Meeting with Robbers.—Fire in the Desert.—Young Chaberon of the Kingdom of Khartchin.—Cultivated Plains of Pampou.—Mountain of the Remission of Sins.—Arrival.

THE Blue Lake or sea, called by the Mongols the Kou-kou-Noor*, is an immense reservoir of water more than four hundred miles in circumference. The name of sea is applicable to it, not only on account of its extent, but because its waters are bitter and salt like those of the ocean, and it is subject to the periodical ebb and flow of tide. The marine odour which it exhales is perceptible far off in the desert. Towards the western part there is a little rocky island inhabited by twenty contemplative Lamas, who have built there a Buddhist temple, and some habitations where they pass their days in the most profound retirement, far from the anxieties of the world. It is impossible to pay them a visit, for there is not a boat on the whole expanse of waters—at

* According to popular tradition in Thibet, this vast body of water once occupied what is now the site of the city of Lha-Ssa, and found its way by a subterranean course to its present bed.

least we never saw one, and the Mongols assured us that no one among their tribes occupied himself with navigation. During the severest cold of winter, however, when the waters are covered by a solid crust of ice, the shepherds of the neighbourhood go on pilgrimages to the island, and carry to the contemplative Lamas their modest offerings of tea, and butter, and Tsamba, receiving in exchange blessings on their flocks and pastures. The tribes in the neighbourhood of the Kou-kou-Noor are divided into twenty-nine banners, commanded by princes tributary to the Emperor of China; and every alternate year they make a journey to Pekin to carry thither skins and the gold dust which they get from the sands of their rivers. The vast plains bordering on the Blue Lake are extremely fertile, though entirely without trees. The grass grows in them to a prodigious height, and the ground is watered by numerous rivulets which afford cattle ample means of quenching their thirst. The Mongols, therefore, like to pitch their tents amidst these magnificent pastures; and though they are constantly harassed in them by robbers, they content themselves with frequently shifting their place, and, when they cannot escape from their enemies, accept the combat with great readiness. The necessity in which they are continually placed, of defending their goods and their lives, has rendered them bold and intrepid; they are always ready for battle at any hour of the day or night; and they keep watch over their flocks on horseback, with their guns slung to their shoulders, their lances in rest, and their long swords in their belts. What a difference between these vigorous, armed, mustachioed shepherds, and the languishing swains o.

Virgil, always playing the flute or adorning their hats with ribbons!

The robbers who keep them thus perpetually on the alert, are hordes of Si-Fan, or oriental Thibetans, who inhabit the sides of the mountains of Bayen-Kharat, towards the sources of the Yellow River. They are known in the country under the generic name of Kolos; and they have their retreat in gorges of the mountains defended by roaring torrents and frightful precipices, to which it is impossible to penetrate without a guide, and they never issue from these fastnesses but for purposes of pillage and devastation. Their religion is Buddhist; but they have a special divinity whom they call the deity of robbery, and their Lamas are occupied in prayer and sacrifice for the success of their expedition. It is said that they have the revolting custom of eating the hearts of their prisoners, with a view of maintaining their courage; but there is no monstrous practice which the other Mongols do not attribute to them. They are divided into various tribes, and it is only among these that we have ever heard the name of Kalmuck, which figures so conspicuously in our geography books. Possibly the Kalmucks were at one time more important; but the notions of the travellers of the thirteenth century, who say so much of them, were extremely vague and uncertain.

We had sojourned by the Kou-kou-Noor nearly a month, and had been compelled, five or six times, to decamp and follow the Tartar tribes, who, at the least alarm of robbers, changed their place,—though they never went far,—when, towards the end of October, the Thibetan embassy arrived. We joined this im-

mense troop, which was now further increased by the addition of several Mongol caravans, wishing like ourselves to profit by this excellent opportunity of making the journey to Lha-Ssa. We stopped on the road the following day, that we might see this vast multitude of travellers defile before us; and we made the following estimate of their numbers:—There were fifteen thousand long-haired oxen, twelve hundred horses, about the same number of camels, and two thousand men—Thibetans and Tartars—some going on foot, and directing the disorderly march of the cattle; others mounted on horses, camels, and oxen, and fully armed. The ambassador travelled in a litter borne by two mules, and escorted by three hundred Chinese soldiers furnished by the province of Kan-Sou, and two hundred brave Tartars, charged by the princes of the Kou-kou-Noor to protect the holy embassy of the Talé Lama as far as the frontiers of Thibet.

The Kan-Sou soldiers acquitted themselves of their duty like true Chinese. For fear of any disagreeable rencounter, they kept themselves prudently at the rear of the caravan, and there sung, smoked, and amused themselves, quite at their ease, without disturbing their minds at all about the brigands. They had also another motive for never putting themselves in motion till the rest of the caravan had passed:—they could pick up many stray articles which had been unintentionally left behind at the different encampments; and, with this view, they never failed to examine them carefully. Very different was the behaviour of the Tartars. They might be seen continually galloping in advance, and at the flanks of the caravan,—up the hills, and down into

the deepest ravines, to see if there were any robbers lying in ambuscade.

The movements of the caravan were usually made—at least at the beginning of the journey—with tolerable precision. We set off two or three hours before sunrise, that we might be able to rest at noon, and let the cattle feed during the rest of the day. The signal for the *reveil* was the firing of a cannon; and, as soon as it was heard, every one got up, fires were made in all the tents, and while some loaded the beasts of burden, others made the water boil and prepared the buttered tea, some bowls full of which were hastily swallowed, some handfuls of Tsamba devoured, and then every one struck his tent, and a second cannon-shot gave the signal for departure. Some experienced horsemen placed themselves at the head of the caravan, to direct its march. They were followed by long files of camels, and these by the oxen, in herds of two or three hundred, under the guidance of particular drivers; and the plaintive cries of the camels, the neighing of the horses, the grunting of the oxen, the sharp whistle of the numerous drivers, and the innumerable bells suspended to the necks of the yaks and camels—all this produced a strange confused concert, which, far from fatiguing, seemed to give us all courage and energy. The caravan, stopping every day in plains, in valleys, on the sides of mountains, appeared, with its multitude of tents, to raise by enchantment towns and villages, all to vanish on the morrow. The solemn and silent desert was, in a moment, alive with a vast and noisy population; and these countless flocks and herds—these men, by turns shepherds and warriors—reminded us of

the march of the Israelites in search of the promised land.

On leaving the shores of the Blue Sea our course was directed towards the west, with a slight inclination to the south; and the first days were all poetry. The weather was glorious—the road beautiful and easy—the water limpid—the pastures fat and abundant. During the nights, indeed, we felt the cold a little; but we had but to put on some more skins, and we began to ask ourselves what there was terrible in the famous journey through Thibet. It seemed that it was impossible to travel in a more convenient or more agreeable manner. Alas! the enchantment was not of long duration.

Six days after our departure we had to cross the Pouhain-Gol, a river which rises at the foot of the Nan-Chan mountains, and falls into the Blue Sea. It is not very deep, but it is divided into twelve branches, very near one another, and we had the misfortune to arrive at the first long before daylight;—the water was frozen, but not deeply enough to serve as a bridge. The horses reached the water first, and they were frightened and would not go on; and, by stopping on the banks, they gave the oxen time to come up. Soon the whole caravan was assembled on a single spot; and it would be impossible to describe the confusion which reigned in this prodigious crowd, still enveloped in the darkness of night. At length some of the riders urged on their horses, who broke the ice in several places, and then the whole caravan entered, pell-mell, into the river. The animals ran violently against each other, and dashed up the water on all sides; the ice cracked—the men vociferated—it was a frightful tumult. After crossing the

first arm of the river, it was necessary to go through the same scene at the second, then at the third, and so on. When day dawned the holy embassy was still splashing in the water, and it was not till after excessive physical and moral fatigue that we at last left the twelve branches of the Pouhain-Gol behind us, and found ourselves once more on dry ground.

We began, now, to consider the journey detestable; but every one else seemed to be quite exulting. They said that the passage of the Pouhain-Gol had been made admirably. A single man had had his legs broken, and two oxen had been drowned. As to things lost or stolen in the confusion, no account was taken of them. When the caravan resumed its march, it presented a truly risible aspect. Men and animals were all encumbered, more or less, with ice; the horses were greatly troubled with their tails, which struck out stiff, heavy, and motionless, like pieces of lead. The camels had the long hair of their legs loaded with splendid icicles, which rattled against each other with a harmonious sound; yet it was evident these pretty ornaments were little to their taste, for they endeavoured from time to time to rid themselves of them, by striking their feet violently against the ground. The long-haired oxen were real caricatures,—walking with their legs widely apart, and bearing an enormous load of stalactites, which hung down beneath their bellies quite to the ground. The monstrous beasts looked exactly as if they were preserved in sugar candy.

During the first days of our march we had found ourselves somewhat isolated in the midst of this vast multitude; we were without friends or acquaintances,

but we soon made some, for there is nothing like travelling together for making men intimate. Our chief companions were four Lamas, whose story excited in us a strong interest. They had become disciples of a Grand Lama, named Altère, who had proposed to himself to build in the environs of Lha-Ssa a Buddhist temple that should exceed in magnificence all that had hitherto been seen. With a view to this object, they had been with him on a grand begging tour through the whole of central Asia, and up quite to the confines of Russia. They had collected immense sums in pious offerings, but as a great part of these consisted in flocks and herds, they had afterwards gone to Pekin to get them changed into gold and silver; and in order to carry these treasures safely through the dangerous country of the Kolos, they had gladly availed themselves of the opportunity of the Thibetan embassy. But while they were at Si-Ning-Fou, there arrived one day a courier extraordinary from the emperor, bearing despatches, in which the great mandarin of the town was enjoined to seize on the Altère Lama, on a charge of having committed sundry swindling tricks, and forged letters of recommendation from the Talé Lama, who had given orders to the ambassador to take possession of the treasures which had been collected in some measure under the influence of his name. The four unfortunate disciples were now taking to Lha-Ssa fifty-eight magnificent camels which had belonged to their master, but of which the Thibetan government would now dispose. They were constantly occupied in talking of their fallen master, but their sentiments towards him seemed to suffer extraordinary variations. Sometimes they seemed

to regard him as a saint, and sometimes as a thief. One day they would pronounce his name with veneration, carrying their joined hands to their forehead; and sometimes they would curse him, and spit in the air, by way of showing their contempt. They were very good fellows, however, and their stories of the various adventures they had met with on this long tour lightened for us many a weary part of the road. One chief cause of annoyance to us was the character of our sub-camel-driver, Charadchambeul. At first he had appeared to us quite a saint; but we had too soon occasion to discover that he was in reality a little devil. The following adventure opened our eyes to his true character. The day after the passage of the Pouhain-Gol, having continued our march during a great part of the night, we remarked on one of our camels two large bundles, carefully wrapped up, which we had not before noticed. We thought that perhaps some traveller, not having been able to stow them himself, had begged him to take charge of them; and so we went peaceably on, without thinking more of the matter. But when we had encamped, there still were the packages; and we noticed that our Lama again wrapped them up mysteriously in a piece of felt, and hid them at the back of the tent. Thereupon we demanded an explanation; and he then came up to us, and said in a low voice, as if he feared being heard, that Buddha had done him a favour, and made him find a good thing on the road. Then he added, smiling maliciously, that this good thing would sell at Lha-Ssa for full ten ounces of silver. These words made us knit our brows, and demand to see it; and Charadchambeul, after carefully closing

the door of the tent, displayed, rather reluctantly, what he pretended he had found. It was two great copper jars, containing a kind of brandy which is made in the province of Kan-Sou, and is here sold at a great price. On both jars there were Thibetan characters, which indicated the name of the proprietor. We tried to suppose that Charadchambeul had really picked them up, and had not absolutely stolen them during the night; but he himself seemed quite satisfied with declaring that Buddha had made him a present of them, and that all he had to do was to hide them carefully, that the owner might not find them out. To reason concerning morality and justice with a fellow of this sort, was evidently to lose time and pains; we therefore contented ourselves with declaring that as the jars neither belonged to him nor to us, we would not receive them in our tent, nor suffer them to be placed among our baggage during the journey, since we had not any wish to make our first appearance at Lha-Ssa in the character of thieves; adding, that if he did not himself inform the proprietor, we should do so for him. This seemed to make some impression; and in order to determine him, we advised him to carry his *treasure trove* to the ambassador, who would probably notice his probity, and either reward him immediately, or do something for him when he got to Lha-Ssa. After long and violent disputing, he agreed to do this. But he came back furious. The ambassador had said to him, —"You are a good Lama: a Lama who has justice in his heart is agreeable to the mind:" and there the matter had ended. From this time, he seemed to have conceived an implacable hatred against us. He neg-

lected his work, he wasted our provisions, he overwhelmed us with abuse and maledictions, and, what was worse, he vented his rage on our poor animals, and beat them most cruelly. But here, in the midst of the desert, it was impossible to send him away; and all we could do was to arm ourselves with patience, and endeavour not to irritate any further his fierce and ungovernable character.

On the 15th of November we quitted the magnificent plains of the Kou-kou-Noor, and entered the country of the Tsaidam Mongols, after crossing the river of the same name. Here the landscape underwent a great change, and became wild and gloomy, and the dry and stony soil bore nothing but brambles impregnated with saltpetre. The people, too, have a morose manner, as if they had been affected by the physical character of their country: they speak very little, and that in so low and guttural a tone that other Mongols have difficulty in comprehending them. In this arid soil salt and borax abound; there is nothing more to be done than to dig a hole two or three feet deep, and the salt collects in it, and crystallises and purifies of itself. The borax is also collected in little reservoirs, which are soon entirely filled.

We rested two days in this country in order to collect all the strength possible for the ascent of the dreaded Bourhan-Bota—our long-haired oxen and camels enjoying themselves on the nitre and salt, and we feasting on Tsamba and some goats which we got from the herdsmen in exchange for brick tea; and then setting out about three o'clock in the morning, we arrived at nine at the foot of the mountain. The caravan stopped for

a moment, and we gazed with anxiety upward at the steep and rough paths, on which we perceived with anxiety a light vapour resting, which was said to be the noxious gas before mentioned. We adopted the precautionary measure, recommended by tradition, of chewing some cloves of garlic, and then commenced the ascent.

In a short time the horses appeared to be incapable of bearing their riders;—every one slackened his pace, all faces turned pale, the heart beat faintly, the limbs refused their office;—many lay down, then got up again, made a few steps, then lay down again, and in this deplorable manner toiled up the side of the famous Bourhan-Bota.

Heavens, what misery it was! With exhausted strength, brain reeling, limbs feeling as if they were ready to fall off, and a deadly sickness at the stomach, still, to exert oneself so far, as not only to drag on one's own frame, but also, by repeated blows, to force on the reluctant animals, who were every moment trying to lie down. A part of our troop stopped in a deep hollow of the mountain, where it was said the pestilential vapour was less thick; the rest exerted their utmost energies to reach the top, where, at last, the lungs could play freely, relieved from the murderous carbonic acid gas that had so long oppressed them. To descend on the other side was mere play, for there the air was pure and easily respirable. The people told us that when there was a strong wind, the pernicious effect was little felt; but that it was very dangerous in calm weather, for then, being heavier than the atmospheric air, it remains near the surface of the ground, instead of being in some measure dispersed. We had noticed indeed, in our

ascent, that, on horseback, our breathing was rather less difficult than on foot. The presence of this gas of course made it scarcely possible to light a fire; the argols gave out much smoke, but would not burn with any flame. We can give no adequate account of the origin of this exhalation; but for those who seek for explanations in names, we may say, that Bourhan is a synonyme for Bhudda, and that Bourhan-Bota signifies Bhudda's Kitchen.

During the night there fell a great quantity of snow; and those who had stopped midway informed us that they had finished the ascent much more easily, as the snow had dispersed the vapour.

The passage of the Bourhan-Bota, however, had been only a kind of apprenticeship, for some days afterwards another mountain, the Chuga, put our strength and courage to the proof. As the march was expected to be long and toilsome, the signal gun was fired a little after midnight; and we then made some tea with melted snow, took a good meal of Tsamba seasoned with chopped garlic, and set out.

The sky was clear, and a resplendent moon shone on the carpet of snow by which the face of the country was entirely hidden. The mountain was not very steep on the side we were ascending, so that we hoped to reach the top by morning dawn; but the sky soon became overcast, and the wind began to blow with constantly increasing violence, while the snow was so deep on the sides of the mountain that it was up to the bellies of the cattle, and many of them fell into holes from which it was found impossible to withdraw them, so that they were left to perish. The gale was so icy and cutting

that it almost took away our breath; and, wrapped up as we were in furs, we feared being frozen to death. In order to avoid the whirlwinds of snow that the wind lashed in our faces, we followed the example of some other travellers, and mounted our horses backwards, leaving them to go as they would; but when we had crossed the mountain, and could open our eyes, we saw many a frozen face, and found that M. Gabet had to deplore the temporary death of his nose and ears.

The caravan stopped at the foot of Mount Chuga, and every one then endeavoured to find a shelter somewhere in the labyrinth of gorges. Fainting with hunger, numbed with cold, as we were, we had not, like the Alpine traveller, a hospitable convent wherein to find shelter and warmth, but we had to pitch our tent in the snow, and to go on a long search for a few fragments of argols, which just made fire enough to melt some large lumps of ice that we cut with a hatchet from a frozen pond. There was no possibility of boiling a kettle; we could only knead a little Tsamba in lukewarm water, and swallow it hastily, lest it should freeze in our fingers; and then rolling ourselves in skins, we crouched down in the corner of the tent, and awaited the signal gun that was to bid us resume the course of our "impressions du voyage."

In this picturesque encampment we left the Tartar soldiers who had escorted us since our departure from the Kou-kou-Noor; and now, both Chinese and Tartars being fairly gone, the embassy had only their own valour to rely upon. Although the two thousand men composing the caravan were completely armed, it must be confessed that the warlike appearance of the troop

was singularly modified since the passage of the Bourhan-Bota. There was no more singing, no more laughing; the moustaches that had curled so fiercely at the moment of departure were now humbly hidden in the sheep-skins in which every one was muffled up to the eyes; the warriors had packed their arms together, and laid them on the beasts of burden; in fact, the danger of having our throats cut by robbers was little thought of, we were so much afraid of dying of cold.

It was at Mount Chuga that our miseries began in good earnest. The fury of the wind, the cold, and the snow, augmented every day. The deserts of Thibet are, beyond all contradiction, the most frightful that can be imagined; vegetation diminished at every step, and the cold was intense. Death hovered from that moment over our poor caravan. The want of pasture and water was fatal to our cattle. Day after day we were obliged to abandon some which were unable to drag themselves farther. The aspect of the road presaged a dismal future, and for some days we had been apparently travelling in a vast cemetery. The quantity of human bones and the carcases of animals met with at every step, seemed to tell us that, in the midst of this savage nature, the caravans that had preceded ours had not met a better fate.

To crown our misfortunes M. Gabet fell sick. He ought to have had rest, strengthening drinks, and nourishing food; and we had nothing to give him but barley meal and tea made of snow water. Weak as he was, he was obliged to mount his horse every day, and struggle with that climate of iron. And we had still

two months' journey before us, and that in the depth of winter!

Early in December we reached the Bayen-Kharat, a famous chain of mountains, extending from south-east to north-west between the rivers Hoang-Ho and Kin-Cha-Kiang. The mountain we had to ascend was covered from the base to the summit by a thick layer of snow; and before beginning the ascent, the principal members of the caravan held a council to determine whether it should be attempted immediately or put off till the morrow. After the custom of all the councils in the world, ours was split into two parties; and to settle the matter, recourse was had to the Lamas, who had a reputation in the art of divining. This expedient, however, failed signally, for some of the diviners asserted that this day would be calm, but that on the morrow there would be a furious wind; and others assured us of precisely the contrary. The caravan became forthwith divided between the party of movement and that of resistance,—the progressives and the stationaries. In our quality of French citizens we ranged ourselves on the side of the former; that is to say, we were for marching directly, and finishing as soon as possible with this unlucky mountain;—the weather was calm now, but there was no saying what the morrow would be,—and we began therefore the ascent, sometimes on horseback and sometimes on foot. In the latter case we had to cling to the tails of our animals as they preceded us. M. Gabet suffered horribly; but God in his infinite goodness gave us strength to accomplish our task.

The next day the stationary party began their march, and also crossed the mountain without accident. We

had had the civility to wait for them, and together we entered a valley where the temperature was not excessively severe, and the goodness of the pasturage induced the caravan to rest for a day. A deep lake furnished us with abundance of water by cutting holes in the ice. Fuel was not wanting; for the embassies and pilgrims, after passing the Bayen-Kharat, usually halt in this place, and there, consequently, a great quantity of argols is to be found. Large fires were constantly kept up, and we burnt all we found without scruple, and without fear of injuring our successors. Our fifteen thousand long-haired oxen were charged to supply the deficiency.

Leaving the great valley of *Bayen-Kharat*, we pitched our tents on the borders of the *Mouroui-Oussou* (winding water); lower down it is called Kin-Cha-Kiang (river of gold sand); when it reaches the province of Sse-Tchonan, it is the famous Yang-Dze-Kiang, or Blue River. At the moment of crossing the Mouroui-Oussou, a singular spectacle presented itself. While yet in our encampment, we had observed at a distance some black shapeless objects ranged in file across the great river. No change either in form or distinctness was apparent as we advanced, nor was it till we were quite close that we recognised in them a troop of wild oxen. There were more than fifty of them encrusted in the ice. No doubt they had tried to swim across at the moment of congelation, and had been unable to disengage themselves. Their beautiful heads, surmounted by huge horns, were still above the surface; but their bodies were held fast in the ice, which was so transparent that the position of the imprudent beasts was easily dis-

tinguishable; they looked as if still swimming, but the eagles and ravens had pecked out their eyes.

Wild oxen are frequently met with in the deserts of anterior Thibet. They go in herds, and during the summer descend into the valleys in search of water; but in winter they remain on the heights, and content themselves with eating the snow, and some herbs of excessive hardiness. These animals are enormously large, their hair is long and black, and they are especially remarkable for the size and superb form of their horns. They are said to be extremely fierce. If any are discovered at a distance from the herd, the chase may be ventured; but the hunters should be numerous, that the shots may be sure to take effect; otherwise, if the creature be not killed, there is great danger of his turning upon his pursuers, and tearing them to pieces. One day we saw one of them amusing himself by licking some saltpetre in a little enclosure surrounded by rocks. Eight men, armed with matchlocks, detached themselves from the caravan, and posted themselves in ambuscade. Eight shots were fired at once; the brute raised his head, looked with flaming eyes towards the spot whence the shots proceeded, and then set off at full speed, bellowing frightfully. It was asserted that he was wounded, but that, terrified at the sight of the caravan, he did not venture to attack the hunters.

By the time we were approaching the most elevated point of central Asia, a terrible wind had set in from the north, which lasted fifteen days, and increased the rigour of the cold to a degree that threatened us with great misfortunes. The sky was still clear, but the cold was so terrible that even at mid-day the influence of

the sun was scarcely perceptible. Even during the day, and of course still more during the night, we were under the continual apprehension of being frozen to death. I may mention one circumstance that will give an idea of the extremity of the cold. Every morning before setting off, the caravan used to take a meal, and then not again till they encamped; but as the Tsamba was a kind of food so little agreeable, that it was difficult to take enough of it at once to support us during the day, we used to soak in tea two or three balls of it to keep in reserve for the day's journey. We wrapped up this boiling paste in very warm linen, and placed it on our breasts; and over this we had our clothing, namely a garment of sheep-skin, then a waistcoat of lamb's-skin, then a short garment of fox's skin, and over all a great woollen coat. Now during this fortnight we constantly found the balls of Tsamba frozen, and when we drew them from our bosoms, they were so hard that we almost broke our teeth in attempting to eat them. The cattle suffered terribly, especially the mules and horses, which are not so strong as the oxen. We had to dress them in felt carpets, and tie camels' skin round their heads; and in any other circumstances their appearance would certainly have excited our hilarity, but now we were in no humour for laughing, for, notwithstanding all precautions, the cattle of the caravan were decimated by death. The numerous frozen rivers that we had to pass occasioned us much trouble, especially with the camels, which are so awkward that we were obliged to trace a path for them by strewing sand on the ice, and breaking the top of it with our hatchets; even then we had to lead them very carefully, one after

the other; and if one of them chanced to make a false step, and fall, it was scarcely possible to get it up again. First we had to relieve them of their baggage, and then to drag them on their sides to the river bank, or spread carpets for them, and tug at them with all our might, but very often to no purpose; they would not make the slightest effort to rise, and they had at last to be abandoned; for it was impossible, in this frightful country, to stay waiting on the whims of a camel. All these hardships threw many of the travellers into deep dejection. To the mortality of the animals, was now added that of men, on whom the cold seized, and who were left to perish on the road. One day, when the exhaustion of our beasts of burden had compelled us to slacken our march, we perceived a traveller seated by the wayside, on a large stone. His head was bent down, his arms pressed against his sides, and he remained motionless as a statue. We called him several times, but he made no answer, and we thought he had not heard us. What madness, we said, to stop on the road in this way in such weather. This unfortunate man will certainly die of cold. We called him again; but as he still did not answer, we alighted and went towards him. His face had the appearance of wax, his eyes were half open and glassy, and he had icicles suspended to his nostrils and the corners of his mouth. He just turned his eyes towards us with a terrible vacant expression; but he was quite frozen, and had been forsaken by his companions. It appeared so cruel to leave him thus, without an effort to save him, that we determined to take him with us; and we lifted him from the ground, and, after wrapping him up, we placed him on Sandal

chiemba's mule. As soon as we had pitched the tent, we went to seek out the companions of the unfortunate man; and they prostrated themselves before us, saying we had excellent hearts, but that we had given ourselves trouble in vain; their comrade, they said, was lost, for the cold had reached his heart. We returned to our tent to see what we could do for him, but he was already dead. More than forty men perished thus in the desert. When they could no longer eat or speak, or support themselves on their horses, they were left on the road, though still alive, a small bag of oatmeal and a little wooden bowl being placed beside them as a last mark of interest in their fate. When every one else had passed by, the crows and vultures were seen to wheel round them in the air, and probably they began to tear the unfortunate men before they were fairly dead.

The state of M. Gabet's health became every day more alarming. His extreme weakness made it impossible for him to walk, so that he could not procure himself a little warmth by exercise: his hands, his feet, and his face were frozen, and he could no longer keep himself on his horse; and the only thing we could do was to wrap him well up, tie him, at his whole length, on a camel, and then put all our trust in Providence.

One day, when we were thus sadly journeying through the windings of a valley, oppressed with many sad thoughts, we suddenly perceived two horsemen on the top of a neighbouring hill. We were just then in company with a party of Thibetan merchants, who, like ourselves, had allowed the great body of the caravan to pass them, for fear of fatiguing their cattle

by a too hasty march. "Tsong-kaba!" cried they; "there are men on horseback." And they had scarcely pronounced the words, when we saw a great number of others appearing at various points, and advancing precipitately towards us. We could not but be startled. "Who were these men?—what could they be doing in this uninhabited country?—what did they want?" We could not but suppose that they were robbers; and their appearance, on a nearer view, did not contradict the supposition. They had guns slung to their shoulders, two swords in their belts, black hair falling in masses on their necks, flaming eyes, and wolf-skins for caps on their heads. Their number was twenty-seven, probably all practised warriors, and we were but eighteen. Both parties alighted, and a bold Thibetan of our band advanced to speak to the chief of the robbers, whom we knew by two small red flags which floated behind his saddle.

"Who is that man?" he asked, pointing to M. Gabet, who, being tied to the camel, had kept his place.

"It is a Grand Lama of the West," replied the Thibetan; "the power of his prayers is infinite."

The Kolo carried his hands joined to his forehead, and looked attentively at M. Gabet, who, with his frozen face and whimsical wrappages, did not look unlike one of the terrible idols sometimes seen in Pagan temples. After gazing a moment at the famous Lama of the West, the Kolo addressed some words in a low voice to the Thibet merchant, and then, making a sign to his companions, they leaped on their horses, galloped off, and soon disappeared behind the mountains.

"Let us go no farther," said the Thibetan; "let us

pitch our tents here. The Kolos are robbers, but they have noble and generous hearts: when they see that we remain fearlessly in their hands, they will not attack us. Besides," he added, "they dread greatly the power of the Lamas of the West." And, at his advice, we encamped accordingly.

Scarcely were the tents pitched, when the Kolos reappeared on the crest of the hill, and galloped towards us with their accustomed rapidity. Their chief alone entered the camp, however; the rest remained waiting at a little distance. The Kolo addressed himself to the Thibetan with whom he had spoken before.

"I come," he said, "to ask you the explanation of a thing which I do not comprehend. You know that we encamp behind that mountain, and you dare to pitch your tents here quite near to us. How many men are you in your band?"

"We are only eighteen, and you, if I do not mistake, are seven-and-twenty: but brave men never take flight."

"You mean to fight, then?"

"If we had not several sick men in our camp, I should say yes, for I have already tried my strength with the Kolo."

"You! when did you fight with the Kolo? At what time? What is your name?"

"Five years ago, in the affair of the *Chanak-Kampo* (ambassador): here is a memorial of it."

And uncovering his right arm, he showed the mark of a deep sabre-cut. The brigand began to laugh, and again asked the name of the merchant.

"My name is Rala-Chembé," replied the Thibetan; "you ought to know that name."

"Yes! all the Kolos know it, it is the name of a brave man;" and, as he spoke, he leaped from his horse, drew a sword from his girdle, and presented it to the Thibetan, adding, "Take this sword, it is the best I have; we have often fought together, but in future, when we meet, let us treat each other as brothers."

The Thibetan received the offering of the robber chief, and presented him, in return, with a superb bow and quiver, which he had bought at Pekin. The Kolos, who had been looking on, seeing their master thus fraternising with the chief of the caravan, dismounted, tied their horses two and two, and came to drink a social bowl of tea with the poor travellers, who now first began to breathe freely. They were all extremely amiable, and, in the course of conversation, made enquiries of us after the Khalkas-Tartars, who, they said, had killed three of their men the year before,—an injury not yet avenged. They told us also that they were great friends of the Talé Lama, and irreconcilable enemies of the Emperor of China, and that for these reasons they never failed to pillage the embassy to Pekin, for the emperor was unworthy to receive presents from the Talé Lama; but that they *mostly* respected the return embassy, because it was fitting that the Talé Lama should receive presents from the emperor. After having done due honour to our tea and tsamba, our guests retired, wishing us a good journey; but all these fraternal manifestations did not prevent our sleeping with one eye open. Nevertheless we were not disturbed, and the next day we went on our way in peace. Among all the pilgrims who have made the journey, there are few perhaps who

have seen these redoubtable robbers so nearly without receiving the slightest injury from them.

We had escaped a great danger, but another, still more formidable, was preparing for us in the ascent of the vast chain of the Tant-La mountains. According to our companions' accounts, all the sick people were sure to die on that plateau, and even the healthy would go through a severe trial. On M. Gabet, sentence of certain death was passed; and when, after six painful and toilsome days, we reached this magnificent table-land, the highest on the globe, so far was he from dying, that his health and strength had evidently begun to return. We had seen nothing comparable for grandeur to the gigantic spectacle of mountain scenery stretched out before us here; and enormous eagles hovered above the caravan, which every day, alas! left them a tribute of the bodies of some of its number; but the only victim death demanded of our party was our little black mule, which we abandoned with regret, indeed, but with resignation; for the unexpected blessing which Providence has bestowed on us, in the restoration of M. Gabet, made us soon forget our past sufferings.

It was only a day or two after that, while we were taking our tea in the morning, a cry was suddenly raised of "the Kolos! the Kolos!" but soon to our great relief, the advancing party proved to be not robbers, but herdsmen of the country, who were coming to sell us butter and fresh meat. Their saddles and horses were perfect butchers' shops, being hung round with as many quarters of mutton and kid as could possibly find room on them. As these were frozen, they could easily be kept, and we bought eight legs of mutton, the very

sight of which seemed to restore strength to our stomachs and vigour to our limbs. We passed the whole remainder of the day in cooking, for we were now in an inhabited country, and could find abundance of argols, and Samdadchiemba had just drawn from the kettle a leg of mutton for this inappreciable supper, trying it with his thumb-nail, to see whether it were done, when we heard on all sides the cry of "fire! fire!" With one bound we were out of the tent, and saw that fire had indeed caught the dry grass in the middle of our encampment, and was threatening destruction to our canvass dwellings. All the travellers came running with their felt carpets to smother the flames, or, at least, to prevent their gaining the tents. This they happily effected, but the fire, driven in on all sides, at length forced itself an outlet, and escaped into the desert, spreading into the vast pastures, and devouring them with terrible rapidity. We thought there was now little more to fear, but the cry of "Save the camels!" awakened us to a sense of our inexperience of fires in the desert. We flew to the succour of our own animals, which appeared far enough off; but the fire was there almost as soon as we were. We were almost immediately surrounded by flames, and in vain did we push and strike the stupid camels to force them to fly; they remained motionless, merely turning their heads, and looking at us phlegmatically, as if to ask us what right we had to disturb their feeding. But the fire now caught their long, thick hair, and we had to throw ourselves upon them, with the felt carpets, to extinguish it; we saved three, though they were singed, but the fourth was reduced to a deplorable state. The extent of pas-

ture consumed by the flames was about half a league in length by a quarter in breadth, and the Thibetans kept continually expressing their joy that we had been able to prevent its spreading further,—a joy that we fully partook when we understood the extent of the danger with which we had been menaced. We were told, that if the fire had continued much longer, it would have reached the black tents, and that the herdsmen would certainly have pursued and murdered us all, if, by our imprudence, the pastures that form their only resource had been destroyed.

The first considerable Thibetan station which you meet with in going to Lha-Ssa is called Na-Ptchu, a sort of village, composed partly of clay houses, but also, in a great measure, of black tents. The inhabitants, though they remain at the place, do not cultivate the ground, but, like the nomadic tribes, are occupied solely with the care of their flocks.

The caravans going to Lha-Ssa are obliged to make a stay of some days at this village, in order to organise a new system of transport, for the difficulties of the terribly rugged, rocky way do not permit camels to proceed further. Our first care was, therefore, to endeavour to sell ours, but their appearance was so deplorable, that we had great difficulty in finding a purchaser. At length, however, we met with a sort of veterinary doctor, who probably knew of some remedy for their condition, to whom we sold the three for fifteen ounces of silver, throwing the poor burnt one into the bargain. Our next business was to dismiss our sub-camel-driver, though not without paying him liberally for his services, and then, after laying in a stock of

butter, tsamba, and mutton, we started for Lha-Ssa, from which we were only distant fifteen days' journey. We had for travelling companions some Mongols of the kingdom of Khartchin, who were going on a pilgrimage to the "Eternal Sanctuary," and who had with them their grand Chaberon, a living Buddha, who was the superior of their convent. He was a young man of eighteen, of agreeable and distinguished manners, with a countenance all openness and candour, which contrasted strangely with the part he was made to play.

At the age of five he had been declared Buddha, and Grand Lama of the Buddhists of Khartchin. He was going to pass some years in one of the convents of Lha-Ssa, in order to acquire the knowledge suitable to his dignity, and a brother of the King of Khartchin, and several Lamas of rank, were charged to accompany him and serve him on the road. This title of living Buddha appeared to be a real burden to the poor young man; it was evident that he would willingly laugh and play tricks like any other lad of his age; on the road he would have liked to set his horse prancing, better than to jog on gravely between his two cavaliers of honour, who never left his side, and when we encamped, instead of remaining always seated upon cushions at the back of his tent, aping one of the idols of the Lamaserais, he would gladly have set off for a run into the desert, or taken part in the various labours of the nomadic life; but no amusement of that kind was permitted him. His business was to play Buddha, without troubling himself with any of the cares of ordinary mortals.

He used to like to come and gossip sometimes in our tent, for there, at least, he was free to lay aside his

dignity, and confess himself belonging to the human species; and he was very curious to hear what we had to tell him concerning men and things in Europe. He questioned us with great simplicity concerning our religion, which he seemed to consider very beautiful, but when we asked him whether it was not better to be a worshipper of Jehovah than a Chaberon, he said he knew nothing about it. He did not like us to ask him about his former life, and his continual incarnations; he used to blush at such questions, and at last told us that we gave him pain by speaking of these things. The poor young fellow was evidently entangled in a religious labyrinth of which he comprehended nothing.

As we advanced towards Lha-Ssa we perceived that we were getting into a more and more inhabited country; the numerous pilgrims, the caravans, the frequent inscriptions on stones by the road side, contributed much to lighten the weariness of the road. The Thibetans we met were now no longer exclusively nomadic, cultivated fields appeared, and houses took the place of black tents. On the fifteenth day after our departure, we arrived at Pampou (erroneously set down in maps as Panctou), which, on account of its proximity to Lha-Ssa, is regarded by pilgrims as the vestibule of the holy city. It is a beautiful plain, watered by a large river, the waters of which, distributed into many canals, spread fertility through the country. There is no village in it, properly so called, but extensive farms are seen in all directions, the houses with terraced tops, and surmounted by little turrets, whence float streamers of various colours, covered with Thibetan inscriptions. After three months' travelling through those terrible

deserts, where no living thing was to be met with, but robbers and wild beasts, the plains of Pampou appeared to us the most beautiful country in the world. This long and painful journey had brought us so near the savage state, that we were in extacy with every thing that belonged to civilisation. The houses, the agricultural implements, even a simple furrow attracted our attention. But what struck us most was the prodigious elevation of temperature which we noticed in the cultivated country. Although we were still in the month of January, the river and the canals were merely bordered by a light covering of ice, and we met no one clothed in furs.

At Pampou our caravan was obliged again to exchange its cattle, substituting asses for the long-haired oxen, which seldom go further; and the difficulty of finding a sufficient number detained us two days. We tried to make use of this time for putting our toilettes into a little order. Our hair and beards were so ragged, our faces so blackened by the smoke of our tent, so thin and so cracked by the cold, that we really quite pitied ourselves when we looked in the glass. As for our costume, it was in perfect harmony with our personal appearance.

The inhabitants of Pampou appear to live quite at their ease, and to be very gay and free from care. Every evening you see men, women, and children assembled before the farms, dancing and enjoying themselves; and when the rural dance is over, the master of the farm regales the whole party with a kind of acid drink, made from fermented barley. After two days' search, the required number of asses was found, and we

set off. We were now only separated from Lha-Ssa by a mountain; but it was one extremely steep and difficult of assent. The Thibetans and Mongols, however, climb it with great devotion; as they believe that those who have the happiness to arrive at its summit, receive a complete remission of their sins; and, certainly, if the mountain have not the power to remit sins, it has that of imposing a pretty severe penance. We had set off an hour after midnight, and we did not arrive till ten o'clock in the morning; having been compelled, on account of the steep and rocky character of the paths, which makes it nearly impossible for a horse to keep his footing, to walk almost the whole way.

The sun was just about to set, when, issuing from a defile at the foot of the mountain, we saw lying before us the renowned Lha-Ssa, the metropolis of the Buddhist world, encircled by a multitude of grand old trees, which form with their foliage a girdle of verdure around it; its white houses, with their terraces and turrets; its numerous temples, with their gilded roofs; and high above all, the majestic palace of the Talé Lama.

At the entrance of the town, some Mongols with whom we had made acquaintance on the roads had come to meet us, and invite us to alight at a lodging which they had prepared for us. It was the 13th of January, 1846; just eighteen months after we had quitted the valley of the Black Waters.

CHAPTER VI.

Lodging in a Thibetan House.—Aspect of Lha-Ssa.—Palace of the Talé Lama.—Portrait of the Thibetans.—Monstrous Dress of the Women.—Industrial Agricultural productions of Thibet.—Gold and Silver Mines.—Strangers resident in Lha-Ssa.—The Pebouns.—The Katchis.—The Chinese.—Relations between Thibet and China.—Form of Government.—Grand Lama of Djachi.—Loumbo.—Brotherhood of the Khelaus.—Tragic death of three Talé Lamas.—Revolt of the Lamaserai of Sera.

After an eighteen months' struggle with sufferings and contradictions without number, we had at last reached the end of our journey, but not of our miseries; for, after physical suffering from cold and hunger, we had to undergo those arising from moral causes; but, we trusted that he who had protected us from the intemperance of the seasons in the desert, would also bestow his divine assistance against the malice of men in the capital of Buddhism.

The day following that of our arrival at Lha-Ssa, we took a guide, and traversed the different quarters of the town, in quest of a lodging. The houses of Lha-Ssa are generally large, several stories high, and terminated by a terrace, slightly inclined, to facilitate the running off of the water; they are white-washed all over, with the exception of some borders, and the door and window-frames, which are painted red or yellow. The reformed Buddhists are particularly fond of these two colours; they are in some sort sacred in their eyes, and are called Lamanesque

colours. The houses of Lha-Ssa are painted every year, and have, consequently, an admirable appearance of freshness; but the inside is far from being in harmony with the out. The rooms are smoky, dirty, and foul-smelling, and generally encumbered with all sorts of utensils, in most disgusting disorder. Thibetan houses are so many whited sepulchres, true images of all false religions, which veil corruption and falsehood by a certain number of dogmatic truths, and some principles of morality.

After a long search we found a small lodging in a large house containing already fifty lodgers. Our humble abode was in the upper story, ascended by twenty-six stairs, unfurnished with any kind of balustrade, and so steep and narrow, that to avoid the risk of breaking our necks, every time we mounted them, it was necessary to make use of both hands and feet. Our apartment was composed of one large square room and a small corridor; the former lighted by a narrow window, garnished with three thick wooden bars, and a round skylight. The latter hole served a variety of purposes; it admitted the light, the wind, the rain, and the snow; and also afforded egress to the smoke from our hearth. In order to protect themselves in some measure from the winter's cold, the Thibetans place in the middle of their chambers a basin of baked clay, in which argol may be burnt. As this kind of fuel gives more smoke than heat, the advantage of a hole in the roof is obvious; and this inestimable aperture in our chamber enabled us to make a little fire without being quite stifled. It is true this good had its attendant evil in admitting at times, the rain and snow upon our backs, but when we

have led a nomadic life for some time we cease to be disturbed by trifles.

The furniture consisted of two goat skins, stretched on either side of our fire basin, two saddles, our travelling tent, some pairs of old boots, a couple of battered trunks, three torn robes, suspended from nails, our night wraps rolled up together, and a large stock of argols piled up in a corner. We were thus at once quite on the level of Thibetan civilization. The corridor, which contained a magnificent stove of brick-work, was our kitchen and pantry; here we installed Samdadchiemba, who, resigning his office of camel driver, took on himself the functions of cook, maître d'hotel, and groom. Our two white horses were lodged in a nook in the courtyard, reposing from the fatigues of their hard and glorious campaign; the poor beasts were in so deplorable a state of extenuation that we could not think of offering them for sale, till they had recovered some appearance of flesh between the skin and bone.

As soon as we had organised our household, we began to make acquaintance with Lha-Ssa and its inhabitants. Lha-Ssa is not more than two leagues in circumference, and is not shut within ramparts like the Chinese towns. In the suburbs the number of gardens planted with large trees afford a magnificent girdle of verdure to the town. The principal streets are very wide, straight, and tolerably clean; the suburbs most disgustingly filthy. In the latter there is a quarter where the houses are entirely built of ox and rams' horns; these bizarre edifices have not an unpleasant aspect, and are of great solidity. The ox horns being smooth and white, and those of the sheep, black and rough, form a multitude

of singular combinations; the interstices are filled up with mortar; these houses are never whitened,—the Thibetans have the good taste to leave them in their savage and fantastic beauty, without attempting to improve them.

The palace of the Talé Lama well deserves the celebrity it enjoys. Towards the northern part of the town, at a small distance from it, there rises a rocky mountain of no great elevation, and conical in form; bearing the name of Buddha-La, that is, the Divine Mountain, and on this grand site the adorers of the Talé Buddha have reared a palace to their living and incarnate divinity. This palace consists of a cluster of temples, varying in size and beauty; the centre temple has an elevation of four stories; the dome is entirely covered with plates of gold, and is surrounded by a peristyle of which the columns are likewise gilded. Here the Talé Lama has fixed his residence, and from the height of his sanctuary can contemplate, on days of high solemnities, his countless worshippers, thronging the plain and prostrating themselves at the base of the Sacred Mountain. The secondary palaces grouped around, accommodate a crowd of Lamas whose continued occupation is to serve and wait on the living Buddha. Two fine avenues, bordered with magnificent trees, lead from Lha-Ssa to this temple, and there may be seen a multitude of pilgrims unrolling between their fingers the long Buddhist rosaries, and the Lamas of the court splendidly dressed, and mounted on horses richly caparisoned. There is continual motion in the vicinity of the Buddha-La, but the multitude is generally silent and serious.

In the town, the aspect of the population is very

different; they throng, they shout, and every individual engages with ardour in the pursuits of commerce. Trade and devotion together render Lha-Ssa a kind of general rendezvous for the Eastern Asiatics; the variety of physiognomies, costumes, and idioms in its streets is astonishing. The fixed population is composed of Thibetans, Pebouns, Katchis, and Chinese.

The features of the Thibetans are Mongol, their stature middling, and to the agility and suppleness of the Chinese, they add the strength and vigour of the Tartars. In character they are frank and generous; brave in war, and as religious, although less credulous, than the Tartars. Cleanliness is not held in much honour among them; but they are, nevertheless, very fond of finery.

The Thibetans do not shave the head, the hair is usually left to float over the shoulders; but within the last few years, some of the Lha-Ssa *élégants* have adopted the Chinese mode of braiding the hair, and adorning the braid with jewels of gold set with precious stones and coral beads. The ordinary head-dress is a blue toque, with a wide rim of black velvet, surmounted with a red knot; on fête days they wear a large red hat, something like the Basque cap, but larger and ornamented with long fringes and tufts. A wide robe, fastened at the side by four hooks, and girt round the middle by a red sash, completes the simple but not unbecoming costume of the Thibetan. They generally suspend to the girdle a bag of yellow taffety to hold the indispensable wooden bowl, and two small purses richly embroidered, which contain nothing at all, and are only carried as a decoration.

The dress of the women closely resembles that of the men; over the robe they wear a short tunic striped in various colours; and the hair is worn in two braids at full length. The women of the lower class wear a small yellow cap, in form like the French cap of liberty; but the great ladies, an elegant coronet of fine pearls.

The Thibetan women adopt a custom, or rather submit to a regulation certainly unique in the world. Before going out of their houses, they rub their faces with a sort of black sticky varnish, a good deal like conserve of grapes. As the object is to render themselves hideous, they daub their faces with this disgusting cosmetic, till they scarcely resemble human creatures. The following was, we are told, the origin of this monstrous practice.

About 200 years ago, the Nomekhan or Lama king of Anterior Thibet, was a man of the austerest character. At that period, the Thibetan women were not more in the habit of trying to make themselves look ugly than the women of other countries; on the contrary, they were extravagantly addicted to dress and luxury. By degrees, the contagion spread even to the holy family of the Lamas; and the Buddhist convents relaxed their discipline, in a manner that threatened a complete dissolution. In order to arrest the progress of this alarming libertinism, the Nomekhan published an edict, forbidding women to appear in public unless disfigured in the fashion above mentioned; the severest punishments and the heaviest displeasure of Buddha were threatened to the refractory. It must have required no ordinary courage to publish such an edict; but that the women obeyed it was still more extraordi-

nary. Tradition makes no mention of the slightest revolt on their part. The fair Thibetans vie with each other in making themselves frightful, and she who is most offensively besmeared passes for the most pious; the custom appears to be considered as a dogma to be accepted. In the country the law is most rigorously observed; but at Lha-Ssa, women are to be met with who venture to appear with their faces as nature made them; but those who permit themselves this license are considered as women of bad reputation, and they never fail to hide themselves when they catch sight of an agent of the police.

One circumstance which favours the belief that there is less corruption in Thibet than in most Pagan countries is, that the women enjoy much more liberty. Instead of vegetating imprisoned in their houses, they lead an active and industrious life, and besides their household cares, a great deal of the lesser trade is in their hands. They hawk about various kinds of merchandise, and keep nearly all the retail shops, and in the country they take a large share in agricultural labours.

The men, although less active and industrious than the women, are not idle. Their especial occupation is spinning and weaving wool; the stuffs which they fabricate bear the name of *Pou-Lou;* they are narrow, but very solid, and vary in texture from great coarseness to the softness of velvet; their merinos are the finest that can be imagined. According to a rule of reformed Buddhism all the Lamas must be clothed in red Pou-Lou; and, in addition to the home consumption, large quantities are exported to China and Tartary The coarser kind is sold at a very low price; but the

superior qualities are enormously dear. The perfumed sticks so celebrated in China under the name of Tsan-Ihang, perfume of Thibet, form an important article of commerce to the inhabitants of Lha-Ssa. They are composed of the powder of various aromatic plants, mingled with musk and gold-dust, made into a violet-coloured paste, and afterwards rolled into sticks of four or five feet long. They are burnt in the convents, and before idols in the interior of the houses. When once kindled, these sticks consume slowly without ever going out, and they diffuse a most delicious odour. The Thibetan merchants who attend the yearly embassy to Pekin carry with them large quantities, which they sell at exorbitant prices.

The Thibetans have no porcelain, but their potteries are nevertheless of great excellence. The wooden bowls which every one carries, are made of the root of certain trees which grow on the mountains of Thibet. They are of a simple but elegant form, and have no other decoration than a slight coating of varnish, which does not hide either the natural colour or the veins of the wood. Some of these bowls may be purchased for a few pence, and some are valued at a hundred ounces of silver, nearly 1000 francs; but, if we are asked in what consists this vast difference of value, we must frankly confess we were never able to find out; to us they all seemed as nearly as possible alike. The Thibetans say, that the bowls of the first quality have the virtue of neutralising poisons.

Some days after our arrival at Lha-Ssa, we had occasion to purchase a couple of these bowls. A Thibetan woman, with her face richly daubed, was in the shop;

and judging from our exotic appearance that we might be foreigners of distinction, she took out of a drawer two little boxes, each of which contained a bowl, in two or three envelopes of silky paper. We asked the price: fifty ounces of silver each! At these tremendous words our ears began to sing, and every object in the shop appeared to be spinning round. Our whole fortune then would barely suffice to purchase four wooden bowls. When we had a little recovered from the shock we replaced the precious articles with respect, and looked about for their humbler brethren. We purchased a couple for an ounce of silver, which appeared to us absolutely the same as the specimens valued at 500 francs each; and when we showed our bargain to our landlord on our return home, we had the satisfaction of hearing that we had paid just double their worth.

Thibet, almost covered as it is with mountains, and furrowed with impetuous torrents, offers but little cultivable land. It is only in the valleys that there is any hope of harvest. The Thibetans grow but little wheat and still less rice. The principal grain is *Tsing-Kou* or black barley, from which the *tsamba*, the principal aliment of the whole population, rich or poor, is made.

Lha-Ssa is abundantly provided with sheep, horses, and oxen; there is plenty of excellent fish, and the pork is particularly fine; it is dear, however, and out of the reach of the lower classes. In general the Thibetans are very poorly fed. The usual repast is composed of buttered tea and *tsamba*, coarsely kneaded with the fingers. The rich often fare no better, and it is really pitiable to see them preparing such miserable food in a bowl that has sometimes cost 100 ounces of

silver. Meat, when they have any, is taken at irregular times, as people elsewhere may eat fruit or some slight articles of pastry, out of mere *gormandise*. Cooked or raw it is eaten with equal appetite, and without any kind of seasoning. They have, however, the good taste not to eat without drinking; and the bowl is filled from time to time with a slightly acid liquor made from fermented barley, which is not disagreeable.

Thibet, so poor in agricultural and manufactured productions, is rich in metals; and gold and silver are so easily obtained that the humblest shepherds are acquainted with the art of purifying the precious metals. They may be sometimes seen at the bottom of the ravines, or in the fissures of the mountains, crouching over a fire of goat's dung, purifying in crucibles the gold dust gathered while leading their flocks to pasture. The result of this abundance of metals is that specie is of little value, and in consequence all commodities remain at a high price. The currency of the Thibetans consists of silver only: the pieces are a little larger but not so thick as a franc piece. On one side they bear an inscription in Thibetan, Parsee, or other Indian characters; on the reverse a crown of eight small round flowers. For the convenience of commerce, these pieces of silver are broken, and the number of flowers remaining on the fragment determines the value.

The whole piece is called *Tchan-Ka*. The *Tché-Ptché* is one half, and consequently has only four flowers; the *Cho-Kan* has five, and the *Kogan* three.

In great commercial transactions ingots of silver are made use of, weighed in a Roman scale, graduated on the decimal system.

The Thibetans on ordinary occasions count on their chaplets; shopkeepers often make use of the Chinese Souan-pan (reckoning board), but the learned employ the Arabic ciphers, which appear very ancient in Thibet. We have seen Lamanesque manuscripts containing tables and astronomical calculations in these ciphers. There is a slight difference with those in use amongst us; the most notable is the 5 which is reversed, thus ϛ.

From the details given on the productions of Thibet, it will be seen that it is at once the poorest and the richest country in the world; rich in gold and silver, poor in all that makes the well-being of the masses. The gold and silver collected by the people is absorbed by the great, and, especially, by the Lama colleges, immense reservoirs, into which flow by a thousand channels all the riches of these vast countries. The Lamas, already in possession of a large portion of the wealth by the voluntary gifts of the faithful, sometimes augment their fortune by usurious proceedings at which even Chinese roguery is scandalised. The result of this accumulation of money in the coffers of the privileged classes, and the high price of the necessaries of life, is, that a large part of the population is continually plunged in frightful poverty.

We ought to add, to the credit of the Thibetans, that they are generally compassionate and charitable, and rarely dismiss a supplicant—of whom there are but too many—unrelieved.

Among the foreigners who constitute part of the fixed population of Lha-Ssa, the Pebouns are the most numerous. They are Indians from Boutan, small in stature, but vigorous and full of life and spirit; their colour is

deep olive brown, their eyes small, black, and keen; and on their foreheads they wear a deep red mark, which is renewed every morning.

The Pebouns are the only workers in metal in Thibet; and in their quarter must be sought the smiths, braziers, tinmen, plumbers, goldsmiths, as well as the physicians and chemists. Their shops and laboratories are half under ground; and over the doors of their houses they place a painting, representing a red globe, with a white crescent beneath, evidently the sun and moon, but why so placed we forgot to inquire.

The Pebouns fabricate vases of gold and silver, and ornaments of all kinds for the use of the Lama convents, which would not disgrace European artists. It is they also who furnish the beautiful gilt plates for the temple, which resist so well the inclemency of the seasons, preserving unimpaired their first freshness and brilliancy. The Pebouns are also the dyers of Lha-Ssa; their colours are durable as well as vivid; the stuffs wear out but never discolour. They are only permitted to dye the *pou-lou*; stuffs from foreign countries must be used as they are brought to the country. These people are extremely jovial and child-like in temper, like children laughing and frolicking in their hours of relaxation, and singing continually over their work. Their religion is Indian Buddhism; but they show great respect nevertheless for the reform of Tsong-Kaba, and never fail on days of grand solemnity to prostrate themselves at the feet of the Buddha-La and offer their adorations to the Talé Lama.

After the Pebouns, the Katchi, or Mussulmans of Cashmere, are the most important part of the foreign element

in Lha-Ssa. Their turbans, their stately deportment, their physiognomy full of intelligence and majesty, the cleanliness and richness of their clothes, are all in striking contrast with the inferior races among whom they are mingled. They have at Lha-Ssa a governor, on whom they immediately depend, and whose authority is recognised by the Thibetan government; he is at the same time chief of the Mussulman religion, and is respected by his compatriots as their Pasha and Mufti. Many centuries ago, these Katchi abandoned their native Cashmere, to escape the exactions of a certain pasha, whose despotism had become intolerable; they still keep up some relations with the country of their fathers, but have apparently little desire to renounce that of their adoption. The governor told us that the Pelins of Calcutta (the English) were now masters of Cashmere.

"The Pelins," said he, "are the most artful people in the world. By degrees, they obtain possession of every country in India, but rather by deceit than open force. Instead of overturning the native authorities, they insinuate themselves into their favour, and try to make common cause with them. So at Cashmere, this is what they say: 'The world is Allah's, this land is the Pasha's, and the Company govern it.'"

The Katchi are the richest merchants of Lha-Ssa; they are, besides, brokers, and dealers in gold and silver, and are the only persons permitted to pass the frontiers to visit the English possessions. They bring from Calcutta ribbons, lace, knives, scissors, and other articles of cutlery, and some cotton goods; the silks and cloths found in their warehouses come from Pekin: the cloths are Russian, and are consequently much

cheaper than those they could procure at Calcutta. The first Katchi who came to Lha-Ssa, took Thibetan wives, but they now intermarry only among themselves. As they do not prostrate themselves before the Talé Lama, nor pray in the Lama temples, the people of Lha-Ssa call the Katchi impious, but as they are rich and powerful, the same people give way to them in the streets, and put out their tongues as they pass *in token of respect.* A respectful salutation in Thibet consists in uncovering the head, lolling out the tongue, and scratching the right ear at the same time.

The Chinese to be met with at Lha-Ssa, are, for the most part, soldiers, or employed in the courts of justice; and the Chinese military force in Thibet is very inconsiderable. From Sse-Tchouen to Lha-Ssa they have a few stations destined to protect the Emperor's couriers; and in the city of Lha-Ssa, a garrison of a few hundred men, whose presence adds some dignity to the position of the Chinese ambassadors, and contributes to their safety. On the frontiers they guard, conjointly with the troops of Thibet, the mountains which divide Thibet from the English out-posts. There are no Chinese in any other part of Thibet, for their entrance even is strictly prohibited.

The Thibetans fear the Chinese, the Katchi despise them, and the Pebouns laugh at them. Among the numerous classes of strangers who dwell in, or only pass through Lha-Ssa, there were none whom we resembled, or to whom we seemed to belong; and from the first day of our arrival, we became objects of the most lively curiosity. Sometimes we were taken for two Muftis, just arrived from Cashmere, sometimes for

Bramhins; some said we were Lamas from the north of Tartary, others, that we were Pekin merchants in disguise. When it was discovered that we belonged to none of these categories, the name of White Azaras was bestowed upon us. The denomination was picturesque enough, but before accepting it we desired to know something about the people called *Azaras*. We learned, that the Azaras were a great tribe of India, who were among the most fervent adorers of Buddha known, and that they came frequently on pilgrimage to Lha-Ssa. Now, as we were neither Thibetans, Katchi, Pebouns, Tartars, nor Chinese, it followed we must be Azaras. There was only one little difficulty in the way of this conclusion; the Azaras who had preceded us in Lha-Ssa, had black faces, but that was got over by settling that we were a white variety.

All these doubts about our origin were amusing enough at first, but they became subsequently very embarrassing. Some evil-disposed persons took upon them to say, that we must be Russians or English; and finished by coming pretty generally to the conclusion that we were English. It was said that we were Pelins of Calcutta: that we had come to examine the strength of Thibet, to draw charts, and ascertain the best means of seizing upon the country. National prejudice apart, it was very annoying to be mistaken for subjects of her Britannic majesty; for such a *quid pro quo* was calculated to render us very unpopular, if not to endanger our lives, as the Thibetans have taken it into their heads, we know not very well why, that the English are an aggressive people, and are to be mistrusted accordingly.

To cut short all idle talk at our expense, we took the

resolution of conforming, forthwith, to the regulation which requires all foreigners desirous of dwelling at Lha-Ssa to present themselves to the authorities. We repaired then to the chief of police, and made the declaration that we were from the West, from a great kingdom called France, and that we had come to Thibet to preach the Christian religion, of which we were ministers.

The personage to whom we made this declaration was dry and impassible as a true bureaucrat. He took, phlegmatically, his bamboo pen from behind his ear, and began to write what we had said, without making any remark whatever, only repeating, from time to time, between his teeth, "France," "Christian religion," like a man who did not know very well what we had been talking about. When he had finished, he dried the bamboo pen on his hair, and replaced it behind his ear, saying, "*Yak pozé*—That is well." "*Témou chu*—Rest in peace," we replied; and, after politely putting out our tongues, withdrew, well satisfied at having set ourselves right with the police. After this occurrence, we walked the streets of Lha-Ssa with a more assured step, and without paying any attention to the remarks we heard continually buzzing round us. The legal position we had just acquired gave us dignity in our own eyes, and raised our courage. What happiness, to find ourselves, at last, on a hospitable soil, and breathing a free air, after having lived so long in China, always under constraint, always without the pale of the law, always pre-occupied with the thought how best to trick the government of his Celestial Majesty!

The indifference with which our declaration was re-

ceived by the authorities of Thibet, did not in the least surprise us. The Thibetans do not profess the Chinese principle of exclusion with regard to foreign nations. Every one is at liberty to come and go at his pleasure in Lha-Ssa; if he chooses to apply himself to commerce, no one thinks of putting any obstacle in the way. If the Chinese are prohibited from selling in Thibet, the objection, most likely, originated with the government of Pekin, who, to be consistent in its narrow and suspicious policy, interdicts its subjects from penetrating into neighbouring countries. It is probable that the English would be no more unwelcome than others on the frontiers of Thibet, if their invading march in Hindostan had not inspired a legitimate terror in the Talé Lama.*

After the Talé Lama, whom the Thibetans call sometimes also by the name *Kian-Ngan-Remboutchi* (sovereign treasure), the Nomekhan occupies the first rank. The Chinese give this personage the name of *Tsan-Wang* (King of Thibet). He is appointed by the Talé Lama, and must be selected from the class of *Lama-Chaberons*. He holds this rank for life, and can only be deposed by a *coup d'état*. All the affairs of government are transacted by the Nomekhan and four ministers, called *Kalons*. These Kalons are named by the Talé Lama, from a list furnished by the Nomekhan; they do not belong to the priestly class, and are at liberty to marry; their term of power is unlimited. If the Nomekhan finds them unworthy of their office, he addresses a memorial to the Talé Lama, who supersedes

* Talé Lama, not Dalai Lama. The Mongol word Talé signifies *sea*, and is given to the Grand Lama of Thibet, because that personage is supposed to be a sea of wisdom and power.

them if he thinks proper. The subaltern functionaries are appointed by the *Kalons*, generally from the class of Lamas.

The provinces are divided into principalities, which are governed by Lamas (Houtouktou). These little ecclesiastical sovereigns receive investiture from the Talé Lama. In general, their humour is somewhat martial; and war to the knife, accompanied by pillage and incendiarism, is of not unfrequent occurrence between neighbouring principalities.

The most powerful of these minor sovereigns is the *Bandchan Remboutchi:* he resides at Djachi-Loumbo, the capital of Further Thibet, eight days' march from Lha-Sea. His partisans assert that his spiritual power is as great as that of the Talé Lama; the temporal power of the latter, however, is admitted to be greater.

The present Bandchan Remboutchi is about sixty years of age; his person is said to be noble and majestic, and astonishingly vigorous for his age. The Lamas, who occupy themselves with genealogical studies, assert that the Bandchan, after numberless incarnations in Hindostan, made his last in Further Thibet. Whatever his origin, this able Lama has contrived to acquire astonishing celebrity and influence. The Thibetans and Tartars call him the great holy one, and never pronounce his name but with clasped hands, and eyes raised to heaven. They assert that his knowledge is universal, and that he speaks all the languages in the world, without ever having studied them. It is impossible to form a conjecture of the enormous sums that flow into the coffers of this holy personage from the offerings of the pilgrims visiting *Djachi-Loumbo*. In return for their

ingots of gold and silver, the Bandchan distributes to his adorers rags of his old clothes, morsels of paper on which are printed sentences in Mongol or Thibetan, statuettes of baked earth, and red pills of unfailing efficacy against all manner of diseases.

All persons, without exception of rank or sex, who make the pilgrimage to Djachi-Loumbo, enrol themselves in the brotherhood of the *Kelans*, an institution of the Bandchan Remboutchi, and which may one day become the instrument of some grave event. The following are some of the prophecies in circulation on this subject:—

That the next incarnation of the Bandchan Remboutchi will take place in the country lying between the Celestial Mountains and the Altai chains. That during the time he remains unrevealed the religion of Buddha will fall to decay, and survive only in the breasts of the *Kelans*. That the Chinese will, for a time, overrun Thibet; and a general rising of the Thibetans will result in the slaughter, in a single day, of every Chinese in the country; that a year after this massacre, the Emperor of China will send a prodigious army into Thibet; a fearful re-action will take place, the rivers will run blood, and the Chinese will again become masters of Thibet, but their triumph will not be of long duration. It is then that the Bandshan will manifest his power; he will appeal to the holy brotherhood of the Kelans; those already dead will be restored to life, and will join their brethren in the vast plain of *Thien-Chan-Pé-Lou*. There the Bandshan will distribute arrows and guns, and transform this multitude into a formidable army, of which he himself will take

the command. Thibet will be reconquered, then China, then Tartary, then the vast empire of the Oros. These events are spoken of generally as certain and indubitable, and the Chinese residents in Lha-Ssa seem to put as much faith in the prophecy as the Thibetans, although they have the good sense to evince little disturbance, as it is not likely to be fulfilled in their lifetime. As for the Bandchan, it is said he is preparing with ardour, notwithstanding his advanced age, for the revolution of which he is to be the soul; every instant of the day not absorbed by his high functions as living Buddha, he makes use of to familiarise himself with his future office of generalissimo of the Kelans. He keeps large troops of horses for his future cavalry, and packs of enormous dogs which unite superior intelligence to prodigious strength, and which are destined to play an important part in the grand army of the Kelans.

These wild and extravagant ideas have so penetrated the mass of the people, especially those who are enrolled in the brotherhood of the Kelans, that they may very well some day occasion a revolution in Thibet. It is never in vain that a people thus busy themselves with the future. After the death of the Grand Lama of Djachi-Loumbo, an audacious adventurer has only to betake himself to the country indicated as the scene of the new incarnation, boldly proclaim himself Bandchan Remboutchi, and make an appeal to the Kelans, and in all probability that would be quite sufficient to stir up the fanatic population.

One actual and immediate result of this Kelan brotherhood is to give an importance to the *Bandchan Remboutchi*, which seems almost to threaten the supre-

macy of the Talé Lama,—a result the easier to attain that the sovereign of Lha-Ssa is a child of nine years old, and that his three predecessors died by violent deaths before they reached their majority, fixed by the law at twenty years.

The unheard-of phenomena of three Talé Lamas successively perishing in the flower of their age, plunged the population of Lha-Ssa into a gloomy consternation. Sinister reports began to circulate, and the words crime and assassination were uttered. It was said that the first Talé Lama had been strangled, the second crushed to death by the ceiling of his bed-chamber, the third poisoned, together with his numerous kindred established at Lha-Ssa. The chief Lama of Kaldan, who was devoted to the Talé Lama, met with the same fate, and the public voice designated the Nomekhan as the author of all these crimes.

The Nomekhan of Yang-Tou-Sse, in whose family that dignity was hereditary, had been invested with an authority second only to that of the Talé Lama, when very young. It is said that he had very soon manifested an immoderate love of domination, and made use of his own wealth and the influence of his relations to surround himself with a body of clients entirely devoted to him. More especially he sought to make partisans among the Lamas, and took under his immediate protection the famous convent of Sera, situated about half a league from Lha-Ssa, and containing more than fifteen thousand Lamas. He granted them immense privileges, and the Lamas, in return, cried him up as a saint of the first order. Supported by so powerful a party, the Nomekhan no longer set any bounds

to his ambitious projects, and it was then that he caused the three young Talé Lamas to be murdered; at least, so it was said when we were at Lha-Ssa.

It was no easy task to overthrow a personage whose power was so firmly supported. The Kalons could not engage openly in a struggle with the Nomekhan with any chance of success; they therefore dissimulated, and laboured in secret for the ruin of this detestable ruler. The assembly of Houtouktou elected a new Talé Lama, or rather designated the infant into whose body the soul of the living Buddha had transmigrated. He was enthroned on the summit of Buddha-La; and the Nomekhan, with all the other dignitaries, went to prostrate themselves at his feet, and adore him devoutly, but no doubt promising himself *in petto* to make him "transmigrate" a fourth time if he found it expedient.

The Kalons took measures secretly in concert with the Bandchan Remboutchi of Djachi-Loumbo; and it was agreed between them that, to put a stop to the infamous machinations of the Nomekhan, they must oppose to him the irresistible power of the Emperor of China. A memorial was therefore drawn up and signed by the Bandchan and the four Kalons, and secretly despatched to Pekin by the embassy of 1844.

This memorial was received with all possible favour at Pekin, and it was there determined to send forthwith to Lha-Ssa an ambassador of energy and prudence, capable of opposing the authority of the Nomekhan. The emperor cast his eyes on the Mandarin Ki-Chan, and to him was committed the conduct of this difficult affair.

It will not perhaps be superfluous here to give some

details concerning this Ki-Chan, a very celebrated personage in China, and one who played very a important part in the affair of the English at Canton. Ki-Chan is a Mantchoo-Tartar by birth, and began his career as a clerk in one of the six grand tribunals of Pekin. His rare capacity soon manifested itself, and while still very young he passed rapidly through the different degrees of the magistracy. At the age of twenty-two he was governor of the province of Ho-nan; at twenty-five he was viceroy; but he was degraded from this dignity for not having foreseen and put a stop to an inundation of the Yellow River, which had caused great devastation in the province entrusted to him. His disgrace, however, did not last long; he was soon reinstated, and sent as viceroy successively into the provinces of *Chan-Tong*, of *Sse-Tchouen*, and *Pé-Tche-Ly*. He was decorated with the red ball, the peacock-plume, and the yellow tunic, with the title of *Heou-Yé* (prince imperial.) At last he was named *Tchoung-Tang*, the highest dignity to which a Mandarin can ever attain. There are only eight *Tchoung-Tangs* in the empire,—four Mantchoos, and four Chinese,—who together compose the privy council of the emperor, and have the right of corresponding directly with him.

Towards the end of the year 1839 Ki-Chan was sent to Canton as viceroy of the province and imperial commissioner, with full power to treat with the English, and re-establish the peace which had been disturbed by the unwise and violent measures of Lin, his predecessor. A decisive proof of the superiority of Ki-Chan's capacity was, his recognition of the immense superiority of the Europeans over the Chinese on his arrival at Canton,

and his immediate conviction that war between them was impossible. He directly entered into negotiations with Mr. Elliot the English plenipotentiary, and peace was concluded with the cession of the little island of Hong-Kong. To cement the good understanding between the Chinese Emperor and Queen Victoria, Ki-Chan gave a splendid fête to the English authorities, at which M. de Rosamel, commander of the corvette the Danaïde, then just arrived in the roads of Macao, had the honour to be present. Every one was charmed with the graceful manner and amiability of the imperial commissioner. But before many days had passed after the conclusion of the peace, the intrigues of Lin, the former imperial commissioner at Pekin, succeeded so far as to procure the cassation of the treaty by the emperor. Ki-Chan was accused of having allowed himself to be bribed by English gold, and of having sold to the "Sea Devils" the territory of the Celestial empire. The emperor sent him a thundering letter, declaring him worthy of death, and ordering him to repair forthwith to Pekin. The poor commissioner did not lose his head as every one expected; the emperor in his paternal goodness granted him his life, and contented himself with degrading Ki-Chan from all his dignities, taking away his decorations, confiscating his property, razing his house, selling his wives by auction, and exiling him to the extremity of Tartary.

However, the numerous and influential friends whom Ki-Chan had at court did not abandon him in his misfortunes. They laboured with courage and perseverance to restore him to the good graces of the emperor. In 1844 he was re-called from exile, and sent to Lha-Ssa

to manage the business of the Nomekhan. He set off decorated with the blue ball instead of the red, which he had borne before his fall; his peacock's feather was restored, but the privilege of wearing the yellow tunic was still denied him. His friends raised a contribution among themselves, and built him a magnificent house at Pekin. The post of Kin-Tchai in the midst of the mountains of Thibet was still considered as a place of exile; but it was a step towards a complete and glorious rehabilitation.

Immediately on his arrival at Lha-Ssa, Ki-Chan concerted with the Bandchan and the four Kalons, and caused the Nomekhan to be arrested. All the persons attached to the service of the accused were interrogated; and, in order to induce them to declare the truth, long needles of bamboo were forced under their nails.

"*By this means truth was separated from error*," as the Chinese say, "and the conduct of the Nomekhan *manifested to the light of day*."

The Nomekhan confessed, without being put to the torture, that he had deprived the Talé Lama of three lives, and caused him to transmigrate by violence. All this took place with closed doors, and in the profoundest secresy. Three months afterwards, the capital of Thibet was plunged in terrible consternation. On the great gates of the Nomekhan's palace, and in the principal streets of the town, an imperial edict, written in the Chinese, Tartar, and Thibetan languages, on yellow paper bordered with winged dragons, was placarded. After some lofty reflections on the duties of sovereigns, great and small,—after exhorting all monarchs, princes, magistrates and peoples, within the four seas, to walk in

the paths of justice and virtue, under pain of incurring the wrath of Heaven and the indignation of the Great Khan,—the emperor enumerated the crimes of the Nomekhan, and condemned him to perpetual exile on the shores of the Sakhalien-Oula, at the extremity of Mantchouria. At the end was the customary formula, "Let every one tremble and obey!!!"

The inhabitants of Lha-Ssa, unaccustomed to see such placards on the walls of their town, crowded eagerly round. The news of the condemnation of the Nomekhan spread with rapidity; numerous groups were formed, by whom the matter was discussed with great animation, but in a low voice; but the agitation among the Thibetans was not so much caused by the fall of the Nomekhan as by the intervention of the Chinese, which they looked upon as an insult.

As soon as the affair became known at the convent of Sera, the insurrection was spontaneous and general. Fifteen thousand Lamas, all devoted to the cause of the Nomekhan, armed themselves in haste with lances, guns, and sticks, or any thing they could lay hands on, and marched upon Lha-Ssa. The thick clouds of dust they raised in their disorderly advance announced their approach to the inhabitants.

"The Lamas of Sera! Here come the Lamas of Sera!" resounded at once throughout the town, and carried terror to every bosom. The Lamas fell like an avalanche upon the house of the Chinese ambassador, and the doors flew in splinters, amidst cries of "Death to Ki-Chan!—Death to the Chinese!" But they found no one on whom to wreak their vengeance. The ambassador, warned in time, had concealed himself in

the house of one of the Kalons, and his suite had dispersed in various directions. The multitude of Lamas then divided; one body betook itself to the palace of the Nomekhan, the other to the house of the Kalon, and demanded, with loud outcries, the Chinese ambassador. A long and furious struggle ensued in which one of the four ministers was torn to pieces, and the other three received wounds more or less dangerous.

Whilst they were fighting for the possession of Ki-Chan, the most numerous troop of Lamas had dashed in the doors of the Nomekhan's prison, and would have carried him in triumph to their convent at Sera; but he warmly opposed this project, and used all his influence to calm the exultation of the Lamas. He told them that their revolt would aggravate instead of ameliorating his position.

"I am the victim of a conspiracy," said he; "I will go to Pekin; I will enlighten the emperor, and return triumphant. At present we have only to obey the imperial decree. I go as I am commanded, and do you retire in peace to your convent."

These words did not change the resolution of the Lamas; but, as night was approaching, they returned tumultuously to Sera, promising themselves to organise their plans better on the morrow.

When the day broke, the Lamas began to stir throughout their immense convent, and prepared to invade Lha-Ssa anew; but, to their consternation, they perceived in the plain around the convent numerous tents, and a multitude of soldiers, Thibetan and Chinese, armed to the teeth, barring their passage. At this sight their courage forsook them; the conch shells sounded,

and these extempore soldiers threw down their arms, re-entered their cells, took their books under their arms, and repaired tranquilly to the choir to recite the morning prayers.

Some days after, the Nomekhan, strongly escorted, took the road to See-Tchouen, and went like a lamb to the place of exile appointed him. They could never comprehend at Lha-Ssa, that one who had not shrunk from the murder of three Talé Lamas should have been unwilling to profit by the insurrection of the Lamas of Sera. It is certain that at a word from him all the Chinese in Lha-Ssa would have been massacred; but the Nomekhan was not made for the part he played; he had the vile energy of an assassin, but not the audacity of a rebel.

Ki-Chan, intoxicated with his triumph, wished to have exerted his authority over the Thibetans, the accomplices of the Nomekhan. This pretension was not at all agreeable to the Kalons, who declared that to them alone belonged the right of judging men who were in no way dependent on China, and against whom they had not invoked the protection of the emperor. Ki-Chan did not insist on the point; but, that he might not appear to defer to the Thibetan authorities, he replied officially, that he abandoned to them these assassins of low degree, because it was beneath the dignity of the representative of the Great Emperor to mix himself up with their chastisement.

A new Nomekhan was put in the place of the exiled one. The Chaberon of Ran-Tchan, a young man of eighteen, has been chosen for this important charge; but the Talé Lama and the Nomekhan being both

minors at the time of our arrival at Lha-Ssa, the regency was confided to the first Kalon, whose chief anxiety it is to raise defences against the encroachment of the Chinese ambassador, and who is equally active in seeking to profit by the weakness of the Thibetan government.

CHAPTER VII.

Visit of five Police Spies.—Interview with the Regent.—Ki-Chan forces us to submit to an Interrogation.—Supper at the expense of the Government.—A Night's Imprisonment in the House of the Regent.—Confidences of the Governor of Katchi.—Domiciliary Visit.—Our Effects sealed up.—Sinico-Thibetan Tribunal.—Questions respecting our Maps.—Homage rendered to Christianity and the French Name.—The Regent lets one of his Houses to us.—Erection of a Chapel.—Preaching the Gospel.—Conversion of a Chinese Physician.—Conferences on Religion with the Regent.—Recreation with a Microscope.—Conversation with Ki-Chan.—Religious Character of the Thibetans.—Celebrated Formula of the Buddhists.—Buddhist Pantheism.—Election of the Talé Lama.—Small-Pox at Lha Ssa.—Sepultures in use in Thibet.

As soon as we had presented ourselves to the Thibetan authorities to declare our object in visiting Lha-Ssa, we profited by the semi-official position thus obtained to enter upon our work as missionaries. We were seated one day by our humble hearth, conversing on religious subjects with a Lama well versed in Buddhist science, when a handsomely-dressed Chinese unexpectedly presented himself to us. He said he was a merchant, and expressed an eager desire to purchase some of our goods. We answered that we had nothing to sell.

"How nothing to sell?"

"Nothing, unless it be two old saddles, of which we have no longer any need."

"Good, good; that is precisely what I want:" and while examining our poor merchandise, he put a thousand questions to us about our country and the places

we had visited before arriving at Lha-Ssa. Soon after, a second Chinese made his appearance, then a third, and finally two Lamas, wrapped in magnificent silk shawls. All these visitors wanted to buy something; they overloaded us with questions, at the same time scrutinising every corner of the room. It was in vain we asserted that we were no merchants,—they persisted. In default of silks, draperies, or hardware, they would put up with our saddles; they turned them over and over, sometimes finding them superb, and sometimes mere rubbish: at last, after long hesitation, they went away, promising to return.

The visit of these five individuals was calculated to give us some uneasiness: there had been nothing natural in their manner of speaking and acting; although they came separately, it was evident there was an understanding between them; their wish to purchase was visibly a pretext, and the probability was that they were either sharpers or police spies.

Our dinner-hour being come meantime, we sat down to table; that is to say, we remained crouched round the fire, and took off the lid of the pot, in which a magnificent slice of beef had been stewing for some hours. Samdadchiemba, our major-domo, fished it out of the broth with a large wooden spatula, then, seizing it in his nails, pitched it on a board, and divided it into three portions: each took his own, and, with the aid of some rolls baked in the ashes, we took our meal quietly, without troubling ourselves about either sharpers or *mouchards*. We were just rinsing out our bowls with buttered tea, when the two Lamas made their appearance.

"The Regent," said they, "desires to see you at his palace."

"Very good; does he too want to buy our old saddles?"

"There is no question of saddles or merchandise. Rise directly, and follow us."

Accordingly we put on our best robes, decked our heads with our majestic fox-skin caps, and announced ourselves ready.

"And that young man?" pointing to Samdadchiemba, who looked at them with any thing but an agreeable expression.

"That is our servant; he will take care of the house during our absence."

"No; he must come too: the Regent wishes to see all three."

Samdadchiemba made his toilette by shaking his sheep-skin robe, and sticking a little black toque, in a saucy fashion, over his ear; and we set off all together, after padlocking our door. In five or six minutes we reached the palace of the first Kalon, Regent of Thibet; and after crossing a large court, in which were assembled a number of Lamas and Chinese, who began to whisper together when we appeared, we were made to halt before a gilded door, the folding leaves of which stood half open; our guide passed through a little corridor to the left, and a minute after the door was thrown open. At the further end of a simply-furnished apartment, we perceived a personage seated cross-legged on a large cushion covered with a tiger-skin. This was the Regent. He signed to us to approach. We advanced and saluted him, by putting our caps under our arms;

and a bench, covered with a red carpet, was placed for us, on which we seated ourselves. During this time the gilded door was shut, and there remained in the hall only seven individuals, who placed themselves behind the Regent,—four Lamas, of grave and modest demeanour; two Chinese, whose looks were full of cunning and malice; and a person whose large beard, turban, and grave aspect announced a Mussulman. The Regent was a man about fifty; his large, open countenance, the whiteness of which was remarkable, had a majestic, truly royal expression; and his black eyes, shaded by very long eyelashes, were full of gentleness and intelligence. He was dressed in a yellow robe, lined with marten-fur; a diamond ear-ring was suspended to his left ear; and his long hair, black as ebony, was gathered at the top of his head by three little gold combs. His large red cap, encircled with pearls, and surmounted by a red coral ball, lay on a green cushion by his side.

When we had taken our seats, the Regent looked at us for a long time with close attention, inclining his head first on one side and then on the other, and smiling in a manner half derisive, half goodnatured. This species of pantomime seemed so comical to us, that, at last, we could not help laughing.

"Good," said we to each other, in a low voice, in French; "this gentleman looks a good fellow enough; we shall do very well."

"Ah!" said the Regent, in an affable tone; "what language is that? I do not understand you."

"We speak the language of our country."

"Repeat aloud what you said just now."

"We said this gentleman is a good fellow."

"Do any of you understand this language?" said the Regent, turning to his suite.

All bowed their heads together, and answered that they did not.

"You see no one understands your language: translate your words into Thibetan."

"We said that there was much goodness in the countenance of the first Kalon."

"Ah! you think I am good; on the contrary, I am very bad,—am I not very bad?" said he to his courtiers. They smiled, and made no answer.

"You are right," continued the Regent; "I am good; for it is the duty of a Kalon to be so: I ought to be good to my people and to strangers."

He then made a long speech, of which we understood very little. When he had finished, we told him that we were not sufficiently familiar with the Thibetan language to comprehend his entire meaning; and the Regent made a sign to one of the Chinese, who translated his harangue, of which this is the substance: "We had been summoned without the slightest intention of molesting us. The contradictory reports that had been circulated concerning us since our arrival at Lha-Ssa, had determined the Regent to interrogate us himself. Did we come from Calcutta?"

"No; from a country called France."

"You are no doubt Pelings (English)?"

"No; we are French."

"Do you know how to write?"

"Better than to speak."

The Regent said something to a Lama, who disappeared, and came back, a minute after, with paper, ink, and a bamboo pen.

"Here is paper," said the Regent, "write something."

"In what language?—Thibetan?"

"No; in the character of your country."

One of us took the paper on his knee, and wrote, "What will it profit a man to gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul?"

"Ah! those are the characters of your country: I never saw any like them; and what is the meaning?"

We wrote the translation in Thibetan, Tartar, and Chinese, and passed the paper to him.

"I have not been deceived; you are men of great knowledge; you can write in all languages, and you express thoughts as profound as those in the book of prayers." Then he repeated slowly, shaking his head, "What will it profit a man to gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul?"

Whilst the Regent and his suite were going into ecstacies about our wonderful learning, we heard on a sudden the cries of the multitude, and the sonorous sound of the Chinese tamtam in the court-yard.

"Here is the ambassador from Pekin," said the Regent; "he is coming to examine you himself. Speak to him frankly, and reckon upon my protection; it is I who govern the country." So saying, he left the room by a private door, followed by his suite, and left us alone in the midst of this species of judgment-hall.

The idea of falling into the hands of the Chinese made at first a very disagreeable impression; especially when we recalled to mind the horrible persecutions to

which, at various epochs, the Christian missions in China had been subjected; but we soon recovered ourselves in reflecting that alone as were in the midst of Thibet, we could not compromise any one else.

"Samdadchiemba," said we to our young neophyte, "it is now we must show that we are brave men and Christians. We know not how this affair may end. If we are well-treated, let us thank the good God; if ill, let us thank him still, for we shall suffer for the faith. If they put us to death, martyrdom will be a noble crown to our fatigues. After only eighteen months' course to reach heaven, is to make a profitable journey. What do you say, Samdadchiemba?"

"I? I have never been afraid of death; and, if I am asked if I am a Christian, you shall see if I tremble!"

These excellent dispositions of Samdadchiemba filled our hearts with joy, and completely dissipated the unpleasant impression that our adventure had made on us. We thought first of arranging our answers to the questions that would probably be addressed to us; but we rejected these suggestions of human prudence, and resolved to hold strictly to the words of our Lord to his disciples;—"When men bring you into the synagogues, and before the magistrates and the powers, be not troubled in what manner ye shall answer," &c. &c. It was only agreed that we should salute the mandarin in the French manner, and should not kneel in his presence. We thought that having the honour to be missionaries, Christians, and Frenchmen, we were entitled to stand upright before any Chinese whatever.

After we had waited a short time, a young Chinese very elegantly dressed, and of very gracious manners,

came to announce that we were expected by Ki-Chan, the grand ambassador of the great Emperor of China. We followed this pleasing messenger, and were ushered into a hall adorned in the Chinese fashion, where Ki-Chan was seated on a dais about three feet high, covered with red cloth. Below him stood a small table of black japan, on which was placed an inkstand, some sheets of paper, and a silver vase filled with snuff. Below the dais were four secretaries, two to the right, and two to the left; the rest of the hall was occupied by a considerable number of Chinese and Thibetans, who had assumed their handsomest attire to be present at the scene.

Ki-Chan, although he must be full sixty years of age, appeared to us full of strength and vigour. His countenance is undeniably the most noble, gracious, and spiritual we ever met with among the Chinese. As soon as we had uncovered, and made our salutations in the best manner we could—"Enough, enough," said he; "follow your own customs. I have been told you speak correctly the language of Pekin: I wish to have some talk with you."

"We shall commit many faults in speaking, but your great wisdom will supply the defects of our words."

"Ah! that is pure Pekinese! You French have a great capacity for all the sciences—you are French, are you not?"

"Yes, we are French."

"Oh, I know the French; there were many formerly at Pekin; I have seen some of them."

"You must also have seen some at Canton, when you were imperial commissioner."

This recollection made our judge knit his brows;—he took a large pinch from his vase, and snuffed it up rather savagely.—"True, I saw many Europeans at Canton. You are of the religion of the Lord of Heaven?"

"Yes, we are preachers of that religion."

"I know, I know; and you came here to preach it, no doubt?"

"We have no other object."

"Have you passed through many countries?"

"We have traversed China, the whole of Tartary, and we are now in the capital of Thibet."

"In whose house did you lodge when you were in China?"

"We do not answer questions of that kind."

"And if I command you?"

"We cannot obey you."

Here the judge struck the table sharply with his fist.

"You know," said we, "that Christians know not fear; why then seek to frighten us?"

"Where did you learn Chinese?"

"In China."

"In what part?"

"A little everywhere."

"And Tartar,—can you speak that?—Where did you learn it?"

"In Mongolia, in the Land of Grass."

After some other insignificant questions, Ki-Chan observed we must be fatigued, and desired us to be seated. Changing tone and manner abruptly, he then addressed Samdadchiemba, who, with his hand on his hip, stood behind us.

"And thou," said he, in a dry, stern voice; "whence art thou?"

"I am from Ki-Tou-Sse."

"Where is that? Who knows where Ki-Tou-Sse is?"

"It is in San Tchonen."

"Ah! thou art of San-Tchonen in the province of Kan-Sou! Child of the Central Nation, on thy knees!"

Samdadchiemba turned pale, and his arms slipped modestly down by his side.

"On thy knees!" repeated the mandarin, in a loud tone.

Samdadchiemba fell on his knees, saying, "On my knees, standing or sitting, it is all alike to me; a man of trouble and fatigue like me is not accustomed to take his ease."

"Ah! thou art from Kan-Sou," said the judge, taking a number of pinches of snuff; "thou art a child of the Central Nation. In that case thou wilt have to do with me. Child of the Central Nation, answer to thy father and mother, and take heed how thou scatterest lies. Where didst thou meet these foreigners? How camest thou attached to their service?"

With a good deal of self-possession, Samdadchiemba gave him the history of his life at length, which appeared to interest his audience; then he related how he had met us in Tartary, and what had been the motives that induced him to follow us. Our young neophyte spoke with dignity, and, above all, with a prudence we had hardly expected from him.

"Why hast thou embraced the religion of the Lord of Heaven? Knowest thou not that the Great Emperor has forbidden it?"

"The *most little one** has embraced that religion because it is the only true one. How could I believe that the Great Emperor proscribes a religion which commands me to do well, and to avoid doing evil?"

"The religion of the Lord of Heaven is holy; I know it. But why hast thou entered the service of these foreigners? Knowest thou not that it is forbidden by the laws?"

"Can an ignorant man know who is a foreigner, and who is not? These men have done me nothing but good;—they have always exhorted me to the practice of virtue;—why should I not follow them?"

"What salary do they give you?"

"If I follow them it is to save my soul, and not to gain money. My masters never let me want for rice or clothes;—that is enough for me."

"Art thou married?"

"Having been a Lama before embracing the religion of the Lord of Heaven, I have never been married."

The judge then addressed, laughing, an indecorous question to Samdadchiemba, who cast down his eyes, and made no reply. One of us then rose, and said to Ki-Chan, "Our religion not only forbids impure actions, but even to speak or to think of them; it is not even permitted to listen to immodest words."

These words, calmly and gravely pronounced, brought a slight tinge of red to the cheek of his Excellency the ambassador of China.

"I know; I know the religion of the Lord of Heaven

*Sicia-ti, an expression made use of by the Chinese when they speak of themselves in the presence of their superiors.

is holy. I have read His books of doctrine. He who faithfully observes their teaching would be an irreproachable man." He then made a sign to Samdadchiemba to rise, and, turning to us, said, "It is already night—you must be fatigued; it is time to take the evening repast. Go; to-morrow, if I have need of you, I will send to you."

The ambassador was perfectly in the right; and the various emotions we had undergone in the course of the evening by no means stood in the place of supper.

On leaving the Sinico-Thibetan pretorian hall we were accosted by a venerable Lama, who gave us to understand that the first Kalon expected us. We crossed the court, lighted up by some red lanterns;—to the right was a perilous kind of staircase, which we ascended, clinging, as we did so, to the robe of our conductor; then crossing a long terrace, illuminated only by the stars of heaven, we were introduced into the apartment of the Regent. It was lofty, of vast dimensions, and splendidly lit up with butter. The walls, the ceiling, and even the floor, were covered with gilding and dazzling colours. The Regent was alone; he made us sit down by him on a rich carpet, and tried to express by his words, and yet more by his gestures, how much he was interested in us. We comprehended moreover very clearly that he had no intention of starving us. Our pantomime was interrupted by the arrival of a personage who left his slippers at the door; this was the governor of the Cashmerian Mussulmans. After saluting the company by carrying his hand to his head, and pronouncing the formula "*Salamalek*," he took his place leaning against a column in the midst of the hall.

He spoke the Chinese language very well, and the Regent had sent for him to serve as interpreter.

Immediately after his arrival, a servant placed a table before us, and supper was served up. We shall say nothing here of the *cuisine* of the Regent; in the first place, because we were too hungry to pay much attention to the quality of the dishes; and in the second, because our thoughts were more occupied by politics than gastronomy. We perceived, however, that Samdadchiemba was not present, and enquired what had become of him. "He is with my servants," said the Regent; "be under no uneasiness on his account; he shall want for nothing."

During and after the repast, there was much said about France, and the various countries we had traversed; and the Regent made us admire the pictures that decorated his apartment, and asked if we could produce such.

"We do not know how to paint: study and preaching the doctrine of Jehovah are the only subjects that occupy us."

"Oh! do not say you cannot paint; I know the men of your country are very skilful in that art."

"Those who make it their business; but the ministers of religion do not meddle with it."

"Although you do not apply yourselves to that art especially, you are certainly not ignorant of it;—you can make maps no doubt?"

"No, we have never made any."

"What! in all your travels you have never drawn a single map?"

"Never."

"Oh, that is impossible."

The persistance of the Regent on this point made us thoughtful. We expressed some astonishment at his questions.

"I see," said he, "that you are upright men; I will speak frankly to you. You know that the Chinese are suspicious; since you have lived so long in China you must know that as well as I do; they are persuaded that you are travelling through these kingdoms in order to draw maps, and explore the country. If you have made any geographical charts, you may confess it to me without fear; reckon on my protection."

The Regent was evidently afraid of an invasion; he thought perhaps that we were preparing the way for a formidable army, ready to make a swoop upon Thibet; but we tried to dissipate his fears and to assure him of the pacific disposition of the French government. We acknowledged, however, that among our effects there were certainly a good many maps, and moreover one of Thibet. At these words, the Regent's countenance suddenly darkened: we hastened to add, that all our maps were printed, and that we were certainly not the authors of them. We took occasion to speak of the geographical knowledge of Europeans; and they were much astonished to hear that amongst us, children of ten and twelve had an exact and complete idea of all the kingdoms of the earth.

The conversation was carried on far into the night. At last the Regent rose, and asked us whether we did not need repose; and we answered that we only waited his permission to return to our dwelling.

"I have given orders to prepare a chamber for you in my palace," said he; "you will return home to-morrow."

We would have excused ourselves, thanking the Regent for his kindness, but quickly perceived that we were not at liberty to decline what we had been simple enough to take for politeness on his part,—in fact, that we were prisoners. We saluted the Regent somewhat coldly, and followed a servant to what we might well call our prison, since we were not permitted to go any where else.

Two couches had been prepared for us incomparably superior to our own; nevertheless we regretted the poor pallets on which we had so long enjoyed a free and independent slumber. Lamas and servants soon came in crowds to look at us. Those who had gone to bed got up again, and in a short time doors were heard to open and shut, and the hasty footsteps of a curious multitude resounded through the vast palace, lately so calm and silent. Our visitors pressed round, and examined us with insupportable avidity. There was neither sympathy nor ill-will in the host of eyes that were turned on us, but simply a stupid wonder. It is evident that we were nothing more, for them, than a zoological curiosity.

When we judged that our troublesome friends had stared and whispered a reasonable time, we gave them to understand that we were going to bed, and would be much obliged to them to retire. Everybody made an inclination of the head, and some put out their tongues, but no one stirred. It was evident they wanted to see us prepare for bed. This desire seemed somewhat out of place; nevertheless, we were desirous of tolerating their curiosity to a certain extent. We therefore knelt down, made the sign of the cross, and began to recite aloud the prayer for the evening. The whispering ceased immediately, and the company maintained a religious

silence. When the prayer was over we again invited our visitors to depart; and, by way of giving efficacy to our words, blew out the lights. The public, plunged all of a sudden into profound darkness, took it in good part, laughed, and stumbled out; and we immediately shut the door and lay down.

The strangeness of our position—alone in the states of the Talé Lama, in the capital of Thibet, in the very palace of the Regent—prevented us from enjoying a very profound sleep. As soon as the first rays of light appeared, the door of our cell was softly opened, and the governor of the Katchi appeared. He sat down between our two couches, asked us in a kindly tone how we had passed the night, and offered us a little basket of cakes made in his family, and dried fruits from Ladak. This attention touched us profoundly—it was as if we had met with a sincere and devoted friend. The governor of the Katchi was about thirty-two years of age; his countenance was noble and majestic, and wore an expression of goodness and candour calculated to inspire confidence. He had come to inform us of the course of proceeding that would be taken with us on the coming day.

"In the morning your house will be visited, your effects sealed up and brought to the tribunal, where they will be examined in the presence of the Regent, the Chinese ambassador, and yourselves. If you have no autograph maps in your possession, you will not be molested; if you have, you had better tell me at once, and we will try to arrange the affair. I am very intimate with the Regent" (a fact we had remarked the evening before, during the supper), "and it was he

himself who sent me to tell you this." He added, lowering his voice, that all this disturbance was caused by the Chinese, against the will of the Thibetan government.

We assured the governor that we had no autograph maps, and gave him an exact account of the contents of our trunks. The countenance of the Mussulman cleared up.

"Among the things you have mentioned there is nothing to compromise you. Maps are looked on with great suspicion in this country, especially since the affair of an Englishman named Moorcroft, who introduced himself at Lha-Ssa, where he passed for a Cashmerian. After living there twelve years, he went away; but he was assassinated on the route to Ladak. Among his effects were found a numerous collection of maps and drawings, that he had made during his abode at Lha-Ssa. If you do not make maps, it is well. I will report what you have said to the Regent."

We had remained in bed during the governor's long visit; but as soon as he was gone, we rose and attacked the breakfast sent us by the Regent. It consisted of rolls stuffed with brown sugar and hashed meat, and a pot of tea richly buttered. We preferred the cakes and dried fruits brought us by the governor.

Three Lama officers of the court now came to signify that they were about to examine our effects; and we accordingly took our way homewards, attended by a numerous escort. On the road between the Regent's palace and our domicile, we remarked a considerable agitation. People were sweeping the streets, carrying away the heaps of filth, and decorating the fronts of the

houses with long streamers of *pou-lou*, yellow and red. We were considering for whom all these demonstrations of honour and respect were intended, when we heard loud acclamations behind us. We turned, and recognised the Regent, mounted on a magnificent white horse, and surrounded by a numerous suite. We reached our lodging almost at the same moment; and, removing the padlock from the door, we requested that he would do the French missionaries the honour to enter their abode.

The Regent sat down in the middle of the room, upon a gilded seat that had been brought from the palace, and asked whether he saw all our possessions. "All; neither more nor less. Here are all our resources for seizing upon Thibet."

"There is some malice in your words," said the Regent; "I never took you for such a formidable people. What is that?"—pointing to a crucifix suspended against the wall.

"Ah! if you knew that object well, you would not say we were little formidable. It is with that that we purpose to render ourselves masters of China, Thibet, and Tartary." The Regent laughed. He saw nothing but a pleasantry in these words, so true and so serious.

A scribe sitting at the feet of the Regent took an inventory of our trunks, our rags, and our kitchen utensils. A lighted lamp was brought, and the Regent, taking a seal from a small bag suspended from his neck, affixed it to all our baggage. Nothing was spared—not even our tent-pins or old boots; all were smeared with red wax, and solemnly marked with the seal of Thibet.

When this ceremony was over, the Regent warned us that we must appear before the tribunal. Porters were sent for,—that is, a Lama of the police went into the street and summoned, in the name of the law, the passers by—men, women, and children—to enter the house and take part in a governmental labour. At Lha-Ssa the system of *corvée* is flourishing in full perfection; but the Thibetans submit to it readily and with the best grace in the world.

Our apartment being completely emptied, the procession set forth. First came a Thibetan on horseback, sabre in hand, and with a matchlock by his side; then the porters between two files of Lama satellites; the Regent on his white horse, and surrounded by his guard of honour, followed our baggage; and lastly, marched the two poor French missionaries, to whom a multitude of curious spectators formed an escort more numerous than agreeable.

When we arrived at the tribunal, the Chinese ambassador, surrounded by his staff, was already at his post. The Regent said to him, "You wish to examine the effects of these foreigners: here they are. These men are neither so rich nor so powerful as you assert." There was evident vexation in the Regent's tone; and at bottom he might well be annoyed at being thus compelled to play the part of gendarme.

"Have you only those two trunks?" asked Ki-Chan: "what is there in them?"

"Here are the keys; open them, and examine for yourself."

Ki-Chan coloured, and drew back: his Chinese delicacy seemed offended. "Are the trunks mine? Have

I any right to open them? If afterwards you should miss anything, what would you say?"

"Fear nothing; our religion forbids us to judge rashly of our neighbour."

"Open your trunks yourself; I wish to know what is in them; it is my duty. But you alone have the right of touching what belongs to you."

We took off the seal of the Talé Lama, and the two trunks that everybody had been long devouring with their eyes, were at last laid open. We took out the contents, one after another, and displayed them on a large table. First appeared some volumes in French and Latin; then some Tartar and Chinese books, church linen and ornaments, sacred vases, rosaries, crosses, medals, and a magnificent collection of lithographs. Everybody was lost in admiration at the sight of this little European museum. They stared, jogged each other with the elbow, and clucked with their tongues in sign of approbation. No one had ever seen anything so wonderful or so beautiful. Every shining white object was silver, every thing that shone yellow was gold. Every countenance expanded, and it seemed to be quite forgotten what dangerous people we were. The Thibetans put out their tongues and scratched their ears; the Chinese made us the most sentimental reverences. The bag of medals made all eyes turn in their sockets. They hoped, probably, that we should make a public distribution of these brilliant pieces of gold on leaving the hall of judgment.

The Regent and Ki-Chan, whose minds were more elevated than those of the vulgar, and who certainly did not covet our treasure, did not the less forget their

part of judges. The sight of our beautiful coloured plates quite transported them. The Regent, with his hands clasped, and his mouth half open, kept his eyes fixed on them; whilst Ki-Chan, playing the connoisseur, made a speech to demonstrate to the audience that the French were the most distinguished artists in the world.

"Formerly," said he, "I knew at Pekin a French missionary who drew portraits, the resemblance of which frightened one. He kept the paper hidden in the sleeve of his robe, caught the features by stealth, and in the smoking of a pipe it was done."

Ki-Chan then asked if we had no watches, telescopes, magic lanterns, &c. We opened a little box that no one had yet remarked, and which contained a microscope. We adjusted the various parts, and all eyes were fixed on this singular machine of *pure gold*, and which, without doubt, could show them some astonishing things. Ki-Chan was the only person present who knew what a microscope was. He gave an explanation of it to the public with an air of vast pretension and vanity, and then requested us to place some animalcule on the object glass. We looked slyly at his Excellency, and then quietly unscrewing the several pieces, replaced them in the box. "We understood," said we, "that we were brought hither to submit to a sentence, and not to play off a comedy."

"What sentence is there to be pronounced?" asked he, drawing himself up with vivacity. "We examined your effects, that we might know what you really were, that is all."

"And the maps,—you do not speak of them."

"Yes, yes, the maps; that is the important point: where are they?"

"Here they are;" and we opened our three maps,—a map of the world, another on Mercator's projection, and one of the Chinese empire. The apparition of these maps seemed like a thunderbolt for the Regent. The poor man changed colour three or four times in a minute, as if we had produced our death warrant.

"We are fortunate to have met you in this country," said we, addressing Ki-Chan. "If you had not been here, we should have found it impossible to convince the Thibetan authorities that we have not ourselves drawn these maps. But for a man of education like you, and one so well acquainted with European manners, it is easy to see that they are not our work."

Ki-Chan was extremely gratified by this compliment. "It is evident, at the first glance," said he, "that they are not; they were printed in the kingdom of France. You do not see that; but I have been accustomed to see objects from the West?"

These words produced a magic effect on the Regent; his features relaxed; he looked at us with eyes brilliant with pleasure, and made a gracious inclination of the head, as much as to say, "It is well you are honest men."

It was impossible now to avoid giving a lecture on geography; and to gratify the Regent and Ki-Chan, we pointed out on Mercator's map, China, Tartary, and all the other countries on the globe. The Regent seemed stupified when he saw the distance between our country and Lha-Ssa. He looked at us with surprise; then, raising the thumb of the right hand, said, "You

are men like that," which, in the figurative language of the Thibetans, signifies, "You are superlative men." After identifying the principal places in Thibet, the Regent asked us where was Calcutta. We pointed it out.

"And where is Lha-Ssa?"

"Here."

The eyes and fingers of the Regent travelled from Lha-Ssa to Calcutta, and from Calcutta to Lha-Ssa. "The Pelins of Calcutta are very near our frontiers," said he with a grimace, and shaking his head. "But it does not matter," added he, a few minutes after,— "the Himalaya mountains are between."

The geography lesson being over, the maps were restored to their cases, and we passed to the subject of religion. Ki-Chan was at home there. When Viceroy of Pe-Tche-Ly, he had persecuted the Christians sufficiently to be perfectly familiar with all that relates to the Catholic worship, and he did not fail to parade his knowledge. He explained the use of the images, the sacred vases, the ornaments, and assured the audience that the box of holy oil contained an excellent medicine for dying persons. During these explanations, the Regent was absent and thoughtful; his eyes were constantly turned towards a pair of pincers, terminated by two large lips, which seemed to affect his imagination strongly; his eyes interrogated ours, and seemed to ask if that was not some strange instrument of torture. He was not satisfied till we showed him some consecrated wafers we had in a box; then only he comprehended the proper use of this strange machine.

The good-natured Regent looked quite radiant and

triumphant when, after all, there appeared nothing among our effects to compromise us. "You see," said he to the ambassador, "these men are ministers of the Lord of Heaven, and honest men; what would you have of them? Let them go in peace!"

These flattering words were received in the hall with a murmur of approbation; and we responded, from the bottom of our hearts, "Deo gratias!"

Our baggage was again shouldered by the people pressed into the service, and we returned to our home with much greater briskness than when we had quitted it. The news of our acquittal quickly spread through the town; the people flocked from all sides to salute us, and the French name was in every mouth. From that moment the White Azaras were completely forgotten.

When we had rewarded and dismissed our porters, we had time to reflect on two very important circumstances; one that we had not dined, and the other that our two steeds were no longer in their stalls. While we were considering how to remedy this double inconvenience, our good friend, the governor of the Katchi, came once more to our assistance. The worthy man had foreseen that our visit to the court would not have permitted us to boil our pot, and now came, followed by two servants, carrying a basket filled with provisions.

"And our horses—can you give us any news of them; they are not in the court."

"I was going to speak of them; they have been since yesterday in the Regent's stables. They have not suffered either hunger or thirst during your absence. I have heard you wish to sell them; is it true?"

"Quite true, the animals ruin us: but they are so thin; who will buy them?"

"The Regent wishes to buy them."

"The Regent?"

"Yes; you need not laugh, it is not a jest. How much do you want for them?"

"Oh! whatever you please."

"Very well; your horses are bought."

At these words the governor unfolded a small parcel that he carried under his arm, and placed on the floor two ingots of silver, weighing ten ounces each: "There is the price of your two horses."

We thought our poor, lean, broken-down animals were not worth as much, and said so; but it was impossible to change his determination; everything had been agreed on and concluded beforehand. The Regent pretended that our horses, although meagre, were of an excellent breed, since they had not sunk under the fatigue of so long a journey. Besides, they had an especial value in his eyes, because they had traversed so many different countries, and because they had grazed in the pasturages of Kounboum, the country of Tsong-Kaba.

Twenty ounces of silver in our scanty purse was no small addition; we had wherewithal to be generous, and we laid one of the ingots on the knees of Samdad-chiemba: "That is for you; you may new clothe yourself from head to foot."

He thanked us coldly and awkwardly; but the muscles of his face relaxed, his nostrils dilated, his large mouth smiled involuntarily. At last he could contain his joy no longer; and he got up, and flung his ingot

two or three times up into the air, crying, "Oh, this is a famous day!"

And Samdadchiemba was right; the day that had begun so gloomily, had turned out fortunate beyond our hopes. We had now an honorable position at Lha-Ssa, and we were about to be permitted to propagate the Gospel.

The next morning we went to the Regent to express our gratitude for all the marks of interest he had shown us. He received us kindly and cordially; and told us, in confidence, that the Chinese were jealous of our abode in Lha-Ssa, but that we might reckon upon his protection, and should not be molested.

"You are very ill-lodged," said he; "your room seemed to me small, dirty, and inconvenient: strangers like you, who have come from such a distance, should be well treated in Lha-Ssa. In your country of France do they treat strangers well?"

"Admirably well! Oh, if you could come among us you would see how our emperor would receive you!"

"Strangers are guests; you must leave the dwelling you have chosen. I have given orders to prepare a suitable one, in a house belonging to me."

We accepted, with gratitude, so kind an offer. To be lodged gratis was not a thing to be disdained in our present position; and so distinguished a mark of favour from the Regent could not fail to give us great influence with the inhabitants of Lha-Ssa, and facilitate our apostolic labours.

On leaving the palace, we went immediately to look at the house assigned to us; it was superb,—enchanting! We commenced operations that very evening, and installed ourselves forthwith in our new abode.

Our first care was to erect a chapel in our house. We chose the largest and handsomest room, and decorated it to the best of our ability. What a consolation for us to display the sign of our redemption in the very capital of Buddhism, and to proclaim the word of life to a population that had dwelt for so many ages within the shadow of death! This little chapel was very poor, but for us it was the hundred-fold reward that God has promised to those who renounce all for his service.

All the world of Lha-Ssa came to visit the chapel of the French Lamas: many contented themselves with asking some explanation of the images they saw, and put off to another opportunity their instruction in the divine truths of the Gospel; but others appeared to attach more importance to what they heard, visited us assiduously, read with attention the abstract of the Christian doctrine we had composed in the Lama convent of Kounboum, and begged us to teach them some *true prayers.*

The secretaries of the Chinese ambassador, Ki-Chan, visited us frequently to discuss the "great doctrine of the West." One of them, to whom we lent several works on the subject written in Mantchoo-Tartar, owned that he was convinced of the truth of Christianity, though he had not the courage to embrace it so long as he was attached to the embassy; he would wait till he was at liberty to return to his own country. God grant that this disposition of mind may have lasted!

A physician, a native of the province of Yun-Nan, showed more generosity. This young man, since his arrival at Lha-Ssa, had led a life so strange, that every

one called him the Chinese hermit. He never went out but to see his patients, and rarely visited any but the poor. The rich he constantly refused to attend, unless when compelled by his necessities, for he never accepted a fee from the poor. The time not occupied in tending the sick he consecrated to study, passing the greater part of the night at his books. He never ate meat, took but one repast in the day, and that of oatmeal. That the life he led was one of hardship and privation no one could doubt who saw him; his face was pale and thin in the extreme, and, although not more than thirty years old at the utmost, his hair was almost entirely white.

One day he came to see us while we were reciting the Breviary in our chapel; he stopped for some time at the door, listening gravely and in silence. A large coloured image, representing the crucifixion, had excited his attention; and as soon as we had finished our prayer, he asked abruptly, and without observing any of the usual forms of polite salutation, for some explanation concerning it. When we had complied with his demand, he crossed his arms on his breast, and, without saying a single word, remained motionless, with his eyes fixed on the crucifix. He kept this position nearly half-an-hour; at last the tears came into his eyes, he stretched out his arms towards the Christ, fell on his knees, and, touching the ground with his forehead three times, exclaimed, "That is the only *Buddha* whom men should adore!" Then, turning to us, he made a profound bow, saying, "You are my masters; take me for your disciple."

This man's behaviour made a deep impression on us;

we could not help believing that a powerful movement of grace was operating on his heart. We made a brief exposition of the principal points of Christian doctrine: and to all we said, he simply replied, with a faith truly astonishing, "I believe." We offered him a little crucifix of gilt copper, which he received with profound reverence, and immediately suspended from his neck; and he then asked to be instructed in some prayer proper to be recited before the cross. We said that we would lend him some books in the Chinese language, in which he would find explanations of the doctrine, and numerous formularies of prayers.

"That is well, my masters; but I wish to know some short, easy prayer, that I can repeat often and everywhere." We taught him to say, "Jesus, Saviour of the world, have pity on me!" Lest he should forget these words, he wrote them immediately on a slip of paper, which he put into the purse that hung from his girdle, and went away, assuring us that this day would never be effaced from his memory.

This young physician was not only zealous in receiving the truths of the Christian religion, but he made no attempt whatever to conceal his faith. He wore his crucifix in the streets, and, when he met us, invariably saluted us with the formula, "Jesus, Saviour of the world, have pity on me!"

Whilst we were scattering the seed of the Gospel among the population of Lha-Ssa, we did not neglect to carry it into the palace of the Regent, with whom we had become, we might almost say, intimate. Nearly every evening, when his business for the day was over, he used to invite us to partake of his repast, to which

were always added some Chinese dishes for our especial benefit, and our conversation was frequently prolonged till the night was far advanced.

The Regent was a man of remarkable capacity. Born in a humble station, he had risen by his own merit to his present elevated position. His life had always been an active and laborious one; and he had traversed the whole of Thibet, either as holding the chief command in war, or negotiating peace with neighbouring states, or overlooking the conduct of the *Houtouktous* placed at the head of the different governments. A life so busy had, however, not prevented him from acquiring a profound knowledge of the Lamanesque books; and it was generally admitted that in this respect he surpassed the Lamas, most celebrated for their learning. The Regent was fond of conversing on religious subjects, and at the beginning of our intercourse he made use of these remarkable words;—

"Then all your long journeys have been undertaken solely for a religious purpose? You are right, for religion is the most important business of man; I see that the French and the Thibetans think alike on this subject. We are not like the Chinese, who care nothing about the affairs of the soul. But your religion is not the same as ours: it is important to know which is the true one. We will examine both with attention and sincerity; if yours is the best, we will adopt it,—how can we refuse? If, on the contrary, ours appears so, I think you will be reasonable enough to adopt it."

These dispositions appeared to us as good as we could desire for the moment. We began our studies by an investigation of Christianity; we reviewed, in succession,

all its truths, dogmatical and moral; and, to our great astonishment, the Regent did not appear surprised at any thing.

"Your religion is like our own," he observed repeatedly: "the truths are the same; we only differ in the explanation. Among all that you have seen and heard in Thibet and Tartary, no doubt there has been much to find fault with; but you must not forget that these errors and superstitions have been introduced by ignorant Lamas, and are rejected by well-informed Buddhists."

He would only admit the existence of two points of difference,—on the origin of the world, and the transmigration of souls. The belief of the Regent, however, although in appearance approaching Catholic truth, resolved itself finally into a vast Pantheism: but he asserted that we must arrive at last at the same conclusions, and laboured hard to convince us of that inevitable result.

The Thibetan language, essentially religious and mystical, expresses all ideas relative to the soul and the Divinity with much clearness and precision. Unfortunately we were not sufficiently familiar with this language, and were therefore obliged, in our discussions with the Regent, to have recourse to the Cashmerian governor to interpret for us; and as he was not very skilful in rendering metaphysical ideas into Chinese, we had often much difficulty to understand one another.

One day the Regent said to us, "Truth is clear in itself; but if it be wrapped up in obscure words, it is not understood. We shall not argue to any purpose till you can speak the Thibetan language well."

No one was more persuaded of the justice of this observation than ourselves; and we replied, that that knowledge was a main object with us, and that we studied Thibetan every day.

"If you like," said he, "I will render that study more easy to you."

At the same time he called a servant, and said something we did not understand; and, immediately after, a young man elegantly dressed entered the room, and saluted us with much grace.

"This is my nephew," said the Regent; "I give him to you both as pupil and master; he shall pass the whole day with you, to give you ample opportunity of exercising yourselves in speaking Thibetan; in return, you will give him some lessons in Mantchoo and Chinese."

We accepted this proposal with gratitude, and made by this means a rapid progress.

The Regent was fond of talking about France; and put a multitude of questions respecting our manners, our habits, and the productions of our country. He was transported with all we told him of our steam-boats, railroads, aeronauts, gas-lighting, telegraphs, daguerreotypes, and industrial productions; and conceived the highest idea of the greatness and power of France.

One day, when we had been speaking of astronomical instruments, the Regent asked if he might examine the strange machine that we kept in a box; he meant the microscope. As we were then in a much more amiable humour than on the day when our effects had been examined, we hastened to satisfy his curiosity. While adjusting the marvellous instrument, we endea-

voured to give our audience some notion of the science of optics; but perceiving that our theory excited very little enthusiasm, we came at once to experiment. The company were requested to furnish a certain insect, much more easily found here than a butterfly. A noble Lama, secretary to his excellency the Regent, had only to pass his hand under his silken robe to capture the animal alluded to, and instantly presented us with an exceedingly robust specimen. It was immediately seized by the flank; but the Lama promptly objected, under the pretext that our experiment would cause the death of a living creature.

"Be not alarmed," was the reply; "the animal is only held by the epidermis; besides, it appears vigorous enough to come off victorious in the conflict."

The Regent ordered the Lama to be silent, and allow us to go on with the experiment.

"Tsong-Kaba!" cried the Regent, when invited to apply his eye to the glass; "the creature is as big as a rat!"

After looking at it a few moments, he hid his face with his hands, saying it was too horrible to look at. He tried to dissuade the bystanders from inspecting the object; but herein his influence failed signally. Every one present approached the microscope in his turn, and every one started from it with cries of horror. The Lama secretary, perceiving that his interesting protegé did not move, made a protestation in its favour. We removed the pincers, and let it fall into the hand of its proprietor. Alas! the poor victim was motionless. The Regent said to his secretary, laughing, "I think your animal is indisposed; you had better give it some medicine, or it will not recover."

As the spectators objected to further experiments on living creatures, we now exhibited our little collection of microscopic objects. Our audience were delighted, and nothing was talked of but the prodigious capacity of the French. The Regent observed, "Your railroads and aerial ships no longer surprise me so much; men who could invent a machine like that, are capable of any thing."

The Regent was so prepossessed in favour of our country, that he expressed a wish to study the French language. One evening we brought him a French alphabet, of which every letter had the pronunciation written beneath in the Thibetan character. He cast his eyes over it; and as we were about to give some explanation, he said that it was unnecessary, as what we had written was very clear.

The next day, when we paid our visit, he asked the name of our emperor.

"Our emperor is called Louis Philippe."

"Louis Philippe? Good!"

He then took his style, and began to write. A moment after he presented us a piece of paper, on which was written, in very well-formed characters, Louy Filipe.

During the short period of our prosperity at Lha-Ssa, we were on pretty familiar terms with the Chinese ambassador Ki-Chan. He sent for us two or three times to talk politics; or, according to the Chinese expression, to *talk idle words;* and we were surprised to find him so well informed about the affairs of Europe. He spoke much of the English, and of Queen Victoria.

"She must be a woman of great capacity," said he;

"but her husband plays a very ridiculous part; he is not allowed to interfere in any thing. She has had a magnificent garden planted with fruit trees and flowers of all sorts, and there he is shut up, and passes his life in walking about. It is said that there are other countries in Europe where women govern—is that true? Are their husbands also shut up in gardens? Is that the custom in France also?"

"No; in France the women are in the gardens, and the men transact the business."

"That is all right; otherwise, nothing but disorder can result."

Ki-Chan next asked news of Lord Palmerston, and if he was still at the head of Foreign Affairs.

"And Ilu?* What is become of him—do you know?"

"He has been recalled; your fall occasioned his also."

"Ilu had an excellent heart, but he could not take a resolution. Was he banished or put to death?"

"Neither; in Europe these matters are not managed so summarily as at Pekin."

"That is true. Your mandarins are more fortunate than ours; your government is better than ours. Our emperor cannot know every thing; yet he is the judge of every thing, and no one dares find fault with any of his actions. Our emperor says, 'That is white;' and we prostrate ourselves, and say, 'Yes, it is white.' He shows us afterwards the same object, and says, 'That is black;' and we prostrate ourselves again, and answer, 'Yes, it is black.'"

* The Chinese name of Mr. Elliot, English plenipotentiary at Canton at the beginning of the Anglo-Chinese war.

"But supposing you were to say that an object cannot be black and white at the same time?"

"The emperor would perhaps say to one who had that courage, 'You are right;' but, at the same time, he would have him strangled or beheaded. Oh, we have not, like you, an *assembly of all the chiefs* (Tchoung-Teou-Y)"—it was thus that Ki-Chan designated our Chamber of Deputies. "If your emperor would act in a manner contrary to justice, your Tchoung-Teou-Y are there to stop him."

Ki-Chan then related to us the strange manner in which the great affair of the English in 1839 was transacted. The emperor had convoked the eight Tchoung-Tang who compose his privy-council, and spoken of the events that had taken place in the south. He said that the adventurers of the western seas had shown themselves rebellious and insolent; that they must be severely chastised as an example to others who might be tempted to imitate them. After having thus manifested his opinion, the emperor asked the opinion of his council. The four Mantchoo-Tchoung-Tang prostrated themselves, and said, "*Tché, tché, tché, Tchon-Dze-Ti, Fan Fou*"—"Yes, yes, yes; that is the command of the master." The four Chinese Tchoung-Tang prostrated themselves in their turn, and said likewise, "Ché, ché, ché, Hoang-Chang-Ti, Tien Ngen—Yes, yes, yes; it is the celestial beneficence of the emperor." After that, nothing more was to be said, and the council was dismissed.

This anecdote is perfectly authentic, for Ki-Chan is one of the eight Tchoung-Tang of the empire. He added, that he himself was convinced that the Chinese

were incapable of contending with the Europeans, unless they made a great change in their arms, and shook off their old habits; but that he would take care to say nothing of the sort to the emperor, as it would certainly be useless, and would probably cost him his life.

Our relations with the Chinese ambassador, the Regent, and the Cashmerian governor, contributed not a little to procure us the confidence and respect of the people of Lha-Ssa. In seeing the number of those who sought from us instruction in our holy religion daily increase, we felt our courage rise; but it was to us a never-failing subject of grief, that we could not offer the Thibetans the glorious spectacle of the gorgeous and touching festivals of the Catholic church. It seemed to us that the beauty of the Catholic ceremonies must act powerfully on a people so fond of all that relates to external worship. The Thibetans, as we have before said, are eminently religious. There exists at Lha-Ssa a touching custom, which we were in some sort jealous of finding among infidels. In the evening, as soon as the light declines, the Thibetan men, women, and children cease from all business, and assemble in the principal parts of the city, and in the public squares. As soon as the groups are formed, every one sits down on the ground, and begins slowly to chant his prayers in an under tone, and the religious concert produces an immense and solemn harmony throughout the city, powerfully affecting to the soul! The first time we heard it we could not help making a sorrowful comparison between this Pagan town, where all prayed in common, with the cities of Europe where people would blush to make the sign of the cross in public.

The prayer chanted in these evening meetings varies according to the season of the year: that which they recite to the rosary is always the same, and is only composed of six syllables—*Om mani, padmé houm.* This formula, called briefly the *mani*, is not only heard from every mouth, but is every where written in the streets, in the interior of the houses, on every flag and streamer floating over the buildings, printed in the Landza, Tartar, and Thibetan characters. Certain rich and zealous Buddhists even entertain, at their own expense, companies of Lamas for the propagation of the *mani;* and these strange missionaries, chisel and hammer in hand, traverse field, mountain, and desert, to engrave the sacred formula on the stones and rocks they encounter in their path.

According to the celebrated Orientalist Klaproth, *Om mani, padmé houm*, is nothing but a Thibetan transcription of a Sanscrit formula introduced into Thibet from India, and which has, in that language, a complete and indubitable sense not to be found in the idiom of Thibet. *Om* is with the Hindus the mystic name of the divinity, with which all prayers commence, His mystic particle is also equivalent to the interjection Oh, and expresses a profound religious conviction; it is, in some sort, the formula of an act of faith. *Mani* signifies jewel, precious thing; *padma*, the lotus (*padmé* is the vocative case of that word); *houm*, is equivalent to our Amen. The literal sense of this phrase is then:—

Om mani padmé houm!
O the jewel in the lotus! Amen!

The Lamas assert that the doctrine contained in these marvellous words is immense, and that the whole

life of man is insufficient to measure its depth and extent. We were curious to know what the Regent thought on this subject. This was his explanation: Animated beings are divided into six classes,—angels, demons, men, quadrupeds, flying creatures, and reptiles. These six classes correspond to the six syllables of the formula, Om mani padmé houm. All animated beings revolve by continual transmigration, and according to their merits or demerits, in these six classes, until they have attained the height of perfection, when they are absorbed and lost in the grand essence of Buddha,—that is to say, in the eternal and universal soul whence emanate all other souls, and to which all others, after their temporary evolutions, will reunite and become one. Animated beings have, according to the class they belong to, particular means of sanctification for ascending to a superior class, obtaining perfection, and of final absorption in the divine essence. Men who recite very often and very devoutly, Om mani, &c. avoid falling after death into any other of the six classes, and are immediately absorbed in the soul of Buddha. The jewel being the emblem of perfection, and the lotus that of Buddha, these words may perhaps be taken to express the desire of acquiring perfection, in order to be reunited to Buddha; and the symbolic formula, "*O the jewel in the lotus! Amen*," may be paraphrased, "O that I may attain perfection, and be absorbed in Buddha! Amen."

According to the explanation of the Regent, the *mani* may be, in some sort, the *résumé* of a vast Pantheism, the base of all Buddhist belief. The educated Lamas say that Buddha is the one necessary being,

independent, the principal and end of all things. The earth, the stars, man, all that exists, is a partial and temporary manifestation of Buddha. All has been created by Buddha, in the sense that all proceeds from him, as the light from the sun. All beings emanating from Buddha have had a beginning, and will have an end; but, as they proceeded *necessarily* from the universal essence, they will be re-absorbed also *necessarily*. Thus, as Buddha is eternal, his manifestations are also eternal; but in this sense,—that manifestations always have been and always will be, although taken separately,—all have had a beginning, and will have an end.

Without troubling themselves to reconcile this belief with what has just been stated, the Buddhists admit an unlimited number of divine incarnations. These living Buddhas compose the numerous class of the *Chaberons*, of whom we have before spoken. The most celebrated are the Talé Lama, at Lha-Ssa; the Bandchan Remboutchi, at Djachi-Loumbo; the Guison-Tamba, at Grand-Kouren; the Tchang-Kia-Fo, at Pekin; and the Sa-Dcha-Fo, in the county of the Ssamba, at the foot of the Himalaya mountains. The latter has, it is said, a somewhat singular mission. He is engaged, night and day, in prayer that snow may fall continually on the summit of these mountains; because, according to a Thibetan tradition, there exists behind that lofty chain a savage and cruel people, who are only awaiting the melting of the snows to come and massacre all the Thibetan tribes, and seize upon their country.

Although the Chaberons are alike living Buddhas,

there is, nevertheless, a hierarchy among them, of which the Talé Lama occupies the summit. When the Talé Lama is dead,—or, to speak Buddhically, when he has laid aside his mortal clothing,—a successor is elected in the following manner:—Prayers and fasts are ordained in all the Lama convents; pilgrims throng around Buddha-La, and the *City of Spirits;* rosaries are in every hand; the sacred formula of *mani* resounds day and night in every quarter of the town · and incense is burnt in profusion. Those who imagine they have the Talé Lama in their family, give notice to the authorities of Lha-Ssa; and, before electing one, three Chaberons, authentically recognized as such, must have been discovered. They are then brought to Lha-Ssa, and the Houtouktous of the Lama estate assemble in conclave, shut themselves up in the temple of Buddha-La, and pass six days in fasting and prayer. On the seventh day they take an urn of gold, containing three gold fish, on which are graven the names of the three little candidates for the functions of the divinity of Buddha-La. The urn is shaken, the chief of the Houtouktous draws out a fish, and the baby whose name is inscribed is immediately proclaimed Talé Lama. He is paraded in great pomp through the streets of the City of Spirits, while everybody falls prostrate before him, and he is then installed in his sanctuary. The two Chaberons in swaddling clothes who have drawn blanks are dismissed to their respective families, with a present of five hundred ounces of silver.

It is not very difficult for the devout or curious to obtain a sight of the Talé Lama; but we were prevented by a provoking circumstance. The Regent had

just promised to take us to Buddha-La, when the small-pox broke out at Lha-Ssa. It was said to have been brought from Pekin by the great caravan which had arrived a few days before. Now, we had made part of that caravan; and it was asked whether it would not be better to postpone our visit, than to expose the Talé Lama to the risk of catching the small-pox? The observation was too reasonable to object to.

The fear of the small-pox among the Thibetans is inconceivable. They speak of it with a terror amounting to stupefaction, as the greatest scourge of humanity; and, as soon as the disorder has appeared in the house, the inhabitants, willingly or unwillingly, must remove to the tops of the mountains, or to the desert. No one dares hold any communication with these unhappy victims, who soon perish miserably of hunger and exposure, or become the prey of wild beasts. We had spoken to the Regent of the precious discovery of vaccination; and the hope that we might one day introduce the practice into Thibet had had a considerable share in the sympathy and protection he had shown us. The missionary who shall have the happiness of conferrring this inestimable benefit on the Thibetans, will obtain an influence capable of disputing that of the Talé-Lama himself; and its introduction may be, perhaps, the signal for the fall of Lamanism. Cutaneous disorders are very numerous in Lha-Ssa; the cause of which is, no doubt, the excessive uncleanliness of the people—those of the lower class especially. Cases of hydrophobia are not seldom met with; and it is only a wonder that this horrible malady is not more frequent, when we think of the frightful number of famished

dogs roaming about the streets of Lha-Ssa. The Chinese say that the three great productions of the capital of Thibet are Lamas, women, and dogs.

The cause of this multitude is the use the Thibetans make of dogs in the disposal of their dead. Four different kinds of sepulture are in use;—combustion; immersion in the rivers and lakes; exposure on the summits of mountains; and the fourth, the most esteemed, is to cut the corpse in pieces, and give it to the dogs. The poor have the dogs of the suburbs for their mausoleum; but for persons of distinction a little more ceremony is used. There are convents where they keep, *ad hoc*, sacred dogs; and it is to them the bodies of the rich Thibetans are carried.

CHAPTER VIII.

Moorcroft, the English Traveller.—Means of Communication of Lha-Ssa with Europe.—Discussion with the Chinese Ambassador.—Dispute of the Regent with Ki-Chan.—Our Expulsion from Lha-Ssa.—Report of Ki-Chan to the Emperor of China.—New Year.—Fêtes and Rejoicings.—Buddhist Convents of Oui.—Khaldan.—Prebourg.—Sera.—Farewell to the Regent.—Separation from Samdadchiemba.—Ly, the Pacificator of Kingdoms.—Triple Allocution of the Chinese Ambassador.—Picturesque Farewell of Ly-Kono-Ngau and his Wife.—Departure for Canton.—Passage of the River in a leathern Boat.

We have already mentioned the Englishman, Moorcroft, in speaking of the excessive fear which the Thibetan government appeared to entertain of maps, and of those who made them. One day the governor of the Cashmerians brought to us a countryman of his, named Nisan, who had been long in the service of Moorcroft, during his abode in Lha-Ssa. From him we learned many particulars respecting his former master; and, as the adventures of this traveller appear to us too singular to be passed over in silence, we will here give a short notice of them.

Moorcroft arrived at Lha-Ssa, from Ladak, in the year 1826. He wore the Mussulman costume, and spoke their language with such facility that the Cashmerians of Lha-Ssa took him for a countryman. He hired a house in the city, where he lived for twelve years with his servant Nisan, whom he had brought with him from Ladak, and who also believed his

master to be a Cashmerian. Moorcroft bought goats, and a herd of yaks, the care of which he entrusted to some Thibetan shepherds who dwelt in the gorges of the mountains in the neighbourhood of Lha-Ssa. Under pretext of visiting his herds, he traversed the country freely, and profited by these excursions to make drawings and maps. It is said that, having no knowledge of the Thibetan language, he avoided direct relations with the people; and at last, after a twelve years' abode at Lha-Ssa, Moorcroft left it for Ladak. On his way thither, however, he was assailed by a band of robbers, and assassinated. The murderers were pursued and arrested by the Thibetan government, and some of the Englishman's effects were recovered; among which were a collection of drawings and maps. It was only at that time, and by the sight of these articles, that the fact of his being an Englishman was discovered.

Before parting with his servant, Moorcroft had given him a letter which he desired him to show to the inhabitants of Calcutta, if he ever went thither, saying it would make his fortune. But the seizure of Moorcroft's effects made so much noise in Thibet, that Nisan, fearing to be compromised, destroyed the paper, which was no doubt a letter of recommendation.

These facts were related to us by the Regent, the governor, and several inhabitants of Lha-Ssa; before coming to Lha-Ssa we had never heard the name of Moorcroft. According to the "Universal Geography" of Ritter, Moorcroft had made a previous journey of two months in 1812; and he was afterwards commissioned by the Indian Company to buy Turkestan horses to

improve the native breeds of India. For this object he undertook a second journey in the November of 1819; and got as far as Ladak, where he remained two years. In October 1822 he left that city for Cashmere, and on the 25th of August 1825 died at Andkou, on the road from Herat to Balk. The death of Moorcroft at the date and place given by Ritter, was announced by his travelling companion, Mr. Tribeck, in a letter dated from Balk the 6th of September 1825, and addressed to Captain Wade, resident at Loudiana.

We must confess that we know not how to reconcile accounts so opposite. If Moorcroft had never been in Lha-Ssa, how is it that he was so well known there, and his abode spoken of in a manner so precise? What interest could the Thibetans have in forging such an account? On the other hand, how reconcile that abode with Mr. Tribeck's letter announcing his death, at the very time when according to the other account he was on his way to Lha-Ssa?

Without pretending to reconcile these contradictions, we may here mention a fact that concerns us personally, and which may have perhaps some analogy with the affair of Moorcroft. Some time after our arrival at Macao we read an article in the "Bengal Catholic Herald," a journal printed at Calcutta, giving an account of the death of two Fathers of the Mission in Mongolian Tartary (namely, M. Gabet and myself); how we had been tied to tails of horses and dragged to death, &c.

Whilst our decease was announced in terms so positive, we were on the point of entering Canton in the enjoyment of excellent health and spirits. But if by chance we had perished in the mountains of Thibet, no

doubt the world would have remained convinced that we had been dragged to death at the tails of wild horses in Mongolia. Probably it would never have been believed that we had reached the capital of Thibet, and if subsequently our abode in that city had been spoken of to some European traveller, it would have been as difficult to reconcile these accounts as those relating to Moorcroft.

We had been now a month in Lha-Ssa, and already its numerous inhabitants were accustomed to speak with respect and admiration of the holy doctrine of Jehovah, and the great kingdom of France.

The tranquillity we enjoyed, the distinguished protection accorded by the government, the sympathy of the people,—all gave us the hope that, with the aid of God we might lay, in the very capital of Buddhism, the foundation of a mission whose influence would soon extend to the nomadic tribes of Mongolia. As soon as we imagined our position secure in Lha-Ssa, we began to think of re-establishing communications with Europe. The way of the desert was impracticable; and even supposing it infested neither by robbers nor wild beasts, the length of the passage made us shudder. The route by India seemed the only one possible. From Lha-Ssa to the first English station it was not more than a month's march; and by establishing a correspondent beyond the Himalayas, and another at Calcutta, communication with France became, if not prompt or easy, at least practicable. As this plan could not be executed without the concurrence of the government, we communicated it to the Regent, who entered into our views: and it was agreed that when the fine season commenced, M. Gabet should undertake the journey to Calcutta with a

Thibetan escort as far as Boutan. Such were our plans for the establishment of a mission at Lha-Ssa; but, at this very moment, the enemy of all good was at work to drive us from a country which he seems to have chosen for the seat of his empire.

We had heard sinister reports of the secret efforts made by the Chinese ambassador for our expulsion from Lha-Ssa, and we were not surprised, for from the beginning we had foreseen that any obstacles thrown in our path would be the work of the Chinese mandarins. Christianity and the French name excited too warm a sympathy among the people of Lha-Ssa not to awaken the jealousy of the Chinese. An agent of the court of Pekin could not think without chagrin of the popularity enjoyed by foreigners in Thibet, and of the influence they might one day acquire in a country which China is so much interested in keeping under her dominion. It was therefore resolved that the ministers of God should be driven from Lha-Ssa.

One day Ki-Chan sent for us, and, after much cajolery, finished by saying that Thibet was much too poor and too cold a country for us, and that we ought to think of returning to France; and he said this with a sort of assured off-hand manner, as if he thought there was not the least objection to be made. We asked him if, in speaking thus, he meant to give us a piece of advice or an order?

"Both," said he, coldly.

"In that case we must thank you for the interest you take in our welfare by informing us that the country is poor and miserable. But you must be aware that men like us do not seek the conveniences and pleasures of

life; if we did we should have remained in France; there is no country in the world to compare with ours; For the command implied in your words, this is our answer;—admitted into Thibet by the authorities of the country, we recognise no right in you or any one else to disturb us or drive us from it."

"What! You are foreigners, and you pretend to remain here at your own pleasure?"

"Yes, we are foreigners; but we know that the laws of Thibet do not resemble those of China. The Pebouns, the Katchi, the Mongols are foreigners also, yet they are allowed to remain here in peace. What is the meaning, then, of this pretension to exclude the French from a country open to all nations? If all foreigners must leave Lha-Ssa, why do you remain? Does not your very title of Kin-Tchai (ambassador) say clearly that you yourself are a foreigner?"

At these words Ki-Chan leaped from his crimson cushions. "I, I a foreigner? I who bear the authority of the Great Emperor, who only some months ago judged and sent into exile the Nomekhan himself?"

"We are acquainted with that affair. But there is this difference between the Nomekhan and us;—he is a native of Kan-Sou, a province of the Chinese empire; we are natives of France, a country with which your Grand Emperor has nothing to do; the Nomekhan had murdered three Talé Lamas, and we have done no wrong to any one. Have we any other end than that of making known the true God, and teaching men how to save their souls?"

"Yes; I know you are honest men; but, after all, the religion you preach has been declared bad, and is prohibited by our Great Emperor."

"To that we can only say that the religion of the Lord of Heaven does not need the sanction of your emperor to be a holy religion, nor do we need his commission to preach it in Thibet."

The ambassador did not think proper to continue the discussion, but dismissed us dryly, assuring us that he would find means to make us leave Thibet.

A struggle of several days' duration ensued between the Thibetan government and Ki-Chan. The Regent, adopting the Buddhist opinion which makes a cosmopolite of the man dedicated to religion, maintained that, as such, we could not be considered as foreigners. Ki-Chan, the better to maintain his pretensions, took up his position as defender of the interests of the Talé Lama. Sent to Lha-Ssa to protect the living Buddha, it was his duty to remove every person or thing that might be inimical to him. Our avowed object was to substitute our belief for Buddhism, and to convert, if possible, man, woman, and child in Thibet. What would become of the Talé Lama if he were forsaken by his adorers?

The Regent did not share the apprehensions with which the Chinese ambassador sought to inspire him, and maintained that our presence was in no way hurtful to the Thibetan government. "If our doctrine were false, the Thibetans would not embrace it; if true, what was there to fear? since the truth could not be prejudicial to man."

Ki-Chan reproached the Regent with neglecting the interests of the Talé Lama; and the Regent, on his side, accused the Chinese with profiting by the minority of the sovereign to tyrannise over the Thibetan govern-

ment. The quarrel grew more bitter every day, and matters came to such a pass, that prudence compelled us to resolve on yielding to circumstances, and no longer maintaining a resistance which might compromise the Regent our protector, and even become, perhaps, the cause of serious dissensions between China and Thibet. If, on our account, a rupture between the courts of Pekin and Lha-Ssa should unhappily ensue, we should become odious to the Thibetans, and the future introduction of Christianity into these countries would encounter the greatest difficulty in consequence. We decided, then, that it would be better to bow the head, and accept our persecution with resignation. Our conduct would at least prove to the Thibetans that we had come among them with pacific intentions, and had no intention of establishing ourselves in the country by violence.

Having adopted this resolution, we went to the palace of the Regent, who, hearing that we had decided upon quitting Lha-Ssa, looked sorry and embarrassed. He told us that it was his warmest wish to assure us of a free and tranquil abode in Thibet, but that alone, and deprived of the support of his sovereign, he was too feeble to repress the tyranny of the Chinese, who, profiting by the infancy of the Talé Lama, arrogated to themselves rights before unheard of in the country. We thanked the Regent for his kind intentions, and left him to go to the Chinese ambassador.

We told Ki-Chan, that, having no means of protecting ourselves, we had decided on leaving Lha-Ssa, protesting, however, against this violation of our rights.

"Yes," said Ki-Chan, "it is the best thing you can

do: you must set out directly; it will be well for you, for me, for the Thibetans, and every body."

He then informed us that the necessary preparations were already made, and the mandarins and escort to accompany us appointed. We were to set of in eight days, and take the route leading to the frontiers of China. The latter arrangement excited at once our indignation and surprise; we could not conceive how any one could have the cruelty to condemn us to an eight months' journey, when, by directing our course towards India, twenty-five days would take us to the first European post, whence we should easily find means to repair to Calcutta. But Ki-Chan was deaf to our representations on this subject; he refused even to grant us a delay of a few days, till the wounds caused by the cold of the desert should be healed; and to our threat of denouncing his arbitrary conduct to our own government, he replied, that he cared nothing about what the French government might think or do, and that he looked to nothing but the will of his own emperor. "If my master," said he, "knew that I had allowed two Europeans to preach Christianity freely in Thibet, I should be lost; this time it would be impossible for me to escape death."

The next day Ki-Chan sent for us to communicate the report he had drawn up on our affairs, and which was to be addressed to the emperor; and now, having obtained his object, he resumed his amiable and caressing manner towards us. His report was insignificant enough; he said neither good nor harm of us, and gave simply a dry nomenclature of the countries we had traversed since leaving Macao.

"Does this report please you?" asked he; "have you any fault to find?"

I replied, that I had an important observation to make—important not to ourselves, but to him; and requested him to dismiss his suite.

"These are my servants, they belong to my house; fear nothing."

"Oh, we have no fear for ourselves; the danger is for you."

"For me?—No matter, my people may hear all."

"If it is your pleasure, you may relate to them what I have to say; but I cannot speak in their presence."

"Mandarins cannot converse privately with foreigners; it is forbidden by law."

"In that case, I have no more to say. Send the report as it is; but if harm result, you have only yourself to blame."

The ambassador became thoughtful, took pinch after pinch of snuff, and at last desired his suite to leave us alone with him. When every body had left the room, I resumed—

"You will now learn why I would speak to you in secret, and may judge whether or no we are dangerous men; we who fear to injure even our persecutors."

Ki-Chan turned pale and looked disconcerted.

"Explain yourself," said he; "let your words be white and clear."

"In your report, you make me leave Macao with my brother Joseph Gabet; but I did not enter China till four years after."

"Oh, if that is all, it is easily corrected."

"Very easily. This report is for the emperor, you say."

"Certainly."

"In that case you must tell the emperor the truth, and the whole truth."

"Yes, yes, the whole truth; I will correct the report. At what period did you enter China?"

"In the twentieth year of Tao-Kouang" (1840).

Ki-Chan took his pen, and wrote the year in the margin. "What moon?"

"Second moon."

Ki-Chan laid down his pen, and looked at me fixedly.

"Yes, I entered the Chinese empire in the twentieth year of Tao-Kouang, in the second moon. I crossed the province of Canton, of which you were then viceroy. Why do you not write that, since you must tell the emperor the whole truth?"

The brow of Ki-Chan contracted.

"Yes, I know the Christians are not wicked. Does any one here know of this affair?"

"No one."

Ki-Chan took up his report, tore it, and composed a new one in a very different style from the first; the precise dates of our entry into China were not given, but a pompous eulogy was passed on our learning and sanctity. The poor man had the simplicity to believe that we attached great importance to the opinion the Emperor of China might have of us.

During our abode in Lha-Ssa we have had occasion to remark that the Thibetans are very bad chronologists, not only with respect to historical dates, but even in their manner of computing the day of the month. Their almanack is a desperate mass of confusion, resulting solely from the superstitious notions of the Buddhist

with regard to lucky and unlucky days; all those esteemed unlucky, that occur in the course of the month, they cut out, and do not reckon at all. Thus, for instance, if the fifteenth be a day of ill omen, they count the fourteenth twice over, and then pass to the sixteenth. Sometimes several ill-boding days will occur one after the other, and then they adopt the simple plan of retrenching the whole number till they come to a lucky day,—the Thibetans finding no sort of inconvenience in this practice!

The renewal of the year is for the Thibetans, as for all other people, an epoch of fêtes and rejoicing. The latter days of the twelfth moon are devoted to preparations for the new year; when they lay in stocks of tea, butter, tsamba, barley-wine, and some quarters of beef and mutton. Their best clothes are taken from the presses; for once, the dust is wiped off the furniture; they sweep, clean, and furbish up; and seek, in short, to introduce something like order and cleanliness into their houses. As this happens but once a year, every household assumes a new aspect; the domestic altars are especial objects of attention; the old idols are repainted; and pyramids, flowers, and various ornaments destined for the decoration of the little sanctuaries wherein are lodged the Buddhas of the family, are fabricated of fresh butter.

The first Louk-So, or rite of that festival, begins at midnight; and every one is on the watch for the mystic and solemn hour which is to close the old and open the new year. We were fast asleep, when we were suddenly awakened by cries of joy resounding in all parts of the town. Bells, cymbals, conch-shells, tambourines, and

all the instruments of Thibetan music, struck up at once, and saluted the new year with the most hideous charivari imaginable. We were for a moment tempted to rise, but the cold was so sharp that we came to the conclusion that it would be more advisable to remain under our thick woollen coverings, and only take part mentally in the public felicity. Some hearty thumps at our door, given with an energy that threatened to make it fly in splinters, told us, however, that we must renounce that pleasant project. After some hesitation, we were obliged to rise from our warm couch, dress and open the door. Some Thibetans of our acquaintance invaded our chamber, to invite us to the feast of the new year. They all carried in their hands a pot of baked earth, in which floated, in boiling water, dumplings made of honey and wheaten flour. One of our visitors presented a long silver needle terminating in a hook, and invited us to fish in his vase. We tried at first to excuse ourselves, alleging that we were not in the habit of eating during the night; but our visitors pressed us so much, and lolled out their tongues with so good a grace, that to resign ourselves to the Louk-So was unavoidable. Each of us, therefore, transfixed his dumpling, and tried its flavour between his teeth. We looked at each other with a grimace; but it was a question of politeness, and swallow we must. If we could only have got off by this first act of devotion! But the Louk-So was inexorable; the numerous friends we had in Lha-Ssa succeeded each other almost without interruption; and, like it or not, we were obliged to crunch Thibetan sweetmeats till day-break.

The second Louk-So consists also in making visits, but

with a new ceremonial. As soon as day breaks, the Thibetans traverse the streets, carrying in one hand a pot of buttered tea, and in the other a large gilt and varnished dish filled with tsamba flour, heaped up in a pyramid, and surmounted by three ears of barley. As soon as any one enters a house to wish its owner a happy new year, he first prostrates himself three times before the domestic altar, and after burning some leaves of the cedar, or some aromatic tree in a large copper perfuming-pan, he offers his friends tea, and presents his dish, from which every one takes a pinch of tsamba; and the people of the house then reciprocate the courtesy to their visitors.

The Thibetans do not confine their new year rejoicings to feasting; dancing and music play a large part in them. Groups of children—their green robes hung with a multitude of little bells—roam about the streets, and go from house to house, giving concerts that are not unpleasing. The song, of a gentle and melancholy character, is varied at intervals by a burden full of fire and spirit. While they are singing the strophe, the little choristers mark the time by a slow and regular movement of the body, resembling the motion of a pendulum; but when it changes to the burden, they beat their feet, in cadence, vigorously on the ground. The noise of the bells and of their iron-bound shoes make a kind of savage accompaniment, rather agreeable to the ear, especially when heard from a certain distance. When these young dilettanti have finished their concert, it is customary for those to whom they have sung to distribute among them cakes fried in nut oil, and small balls of butter.

In the principal squares, and before the public buildings, troops of actors and jugglers are to be seen, amusing the people from morning till night. The Thibetans have not, like the Chinese, a stock of theatrical pieces; but their actors are all continually on the stage together, dancing, singing, or showing feats of strength and dexterity. The ballet is the department in which they most excel, and they waltz, bound, and pirouette with surprising agility. Their costume consists of a toque surmounted by long plumes of pheasants' feathers; of a black mask adorned with a prodigiously long white beard; white pantaloons, and a green tunic down to the knee, and girt round the loins by a yellow girdle. To this tunic are fastened, at certain distances, long strings, to the ends of which hang large tufts of white wool. When the actor balances himself, in time, to the music, these tufts accompany the movements of the body with much grace; and when he begins to twirl, they extend horizontally, like the spokes of a wheel, round his person, and seem to accelerate the rapidity of his pirouettes. They have at Lha-Ssa a kind of gymnastic exercise, called the *dance of spirits*. A long cord, made of leathern thongs firmly plaited together, is fastened to the summit of the Buddha-La, and descends to the foot of the mountain. The *spirit dancers* pass up and down this cord with an agility that can only be compared to that of cats and monkeys. Sometimes, when they have reached the summit, they extend their arms, as if going to swim, and fly down the cord with the rapidity of an arrow. The inhabitants of the province of Ssang are reputed the most skilful in this kind of exercise.

The strangest thing we saw at Lha-Ssa, during the

new year fêtes, was what the Thibetans call the *Lha-Ssa-Morou*,—that is to say, the invasion of the town and its environs by innumerable bands of Lamas. The Lha-Ssa-Morou begins the third day of the first moon. All the convents of the province of Oui throw open their gates, and by every road leading to the capital, the Lamas come in tumultuous throngs, on foot, on horseback, on asses, on yaks, laden with their books of prayer and their kitchen utensils. The city is soon choked up with these avalanches of Lamas from the surrounding mountains. Those who cannot find a lodging in private houses or public buildings, pitch their travelling tents and make encampments in the squares and streets. The Lha-Ssa-Morou lasts six whole days; during which time the tribunals are closed, and the ordinary course of justice is suspended; the ministers and public functionaries lose, in some sort, their authority; and the whole power of the government is abandoned to this formidable army of Buddhist ecclesiastics. The disorder and confusion that prevail in the town are indescribable. The Lamas roam in tumultuous bands through the streets, uttering frightful outcries, chanting prayers, jostling each other, quarrelling, and sometimes coming to regular and bloody battles.

Although the Lamas exhibit little reserve or modesty on these occasions, it is not, however, to be supposed that profane diversion is their object in thus coming to Lha-Ssa; on the contrary, the grand motive of the journey is devotion! They come to implore the benediction of the Talé Lama, and make a pilgrimage to the celebrated convent Morou, in the centre of the town: hence the name Lha-Ssa-Morou, given to these six days of fête.

The convent of Morou is remarkable for the luxury and wealth displayed in its temples; while the order and cleanliness that reign there, make it the model and the rule of the other convents in the province. To the west of the principal temples, lies a vast garden, surrounded by a peristyle. Here are the workshops of the typographers: and numerous workmen belonging to the convent are daily occupied in printing Buddhist books. The method of proceeding resembles the Chinese, which is too well known to make it necessary to repeat it here. The Lamas, who repair annually to the fête of *Lha-Ssa-Morou*, profit by the opportunity to make their purchases of books.

The evening before our departure, one of the secretaries of the Regent entered our abode, and presented us in his name with two large ingots of silver. This kindness of the first Kalon touched us extremely; but we did not think it right to accept the money. In the evening when we went to the palace to bid him farewell, we took the ingots with us, and deposited them on a little table before him, protesting at the same time that this proceeding was no sign of dissatisfaction on our part; that on the contrary, we should always remember with gratitude the kind treatment we had received from the Thibetan government, during our short stay in Lha-Ssa; that we were persuaded that if it had depended on him, we should always have enjoyed a tranquil and honourable abode in Thibet, but that as to the money we could not receive it without injury to our conscience as missionaries, and to the honour of our nation. The Regent was not at all offended with our proceeding. He said that he understood our repugnance, and would

not insist on our accepting the money, but that he should be glad to offer us something at parting. Then pointing to a dictionary in four languages which he had often seen us turn over with interest, he asked us if it would be agreeable to us to accept that. We thought ourselves at liberty to receive that present, without compromising in any way the dignity of our character, and then expressed to the Regent the pleasure it would give us, if he would condescend to accept as a souvenir of France, the microscope which had so greatly excited his curiosity. Our offer was graciously received.

At the moment of parting, the Regent rose, and addressed us in the words :—

"You are going, but who can know the things to come! You are men of astonishing courage, since you have come here. I know that you have in your hearts a great and holy resolution. I think that you will never forget it; I shall always remember it,—you understand me, circumstances do not permit me to say more."

"We comprehend all the import of your words," was our reply, "and supplicate our God to fulfil, one day, the hope they express."

We separated with swelling hearts from this man, who had shown us so much kindness, and on whom we had founded the hope of making known, by God's help, the truths of Christianity to the poor people of Thibet.

On returning to our habitations, we found the Cashmerian governor waiting for us; he had brought some provisions for our journey; excellent dried fruits from Ladak, and cakes of wheaten flour, butter and eggs. He passed the evening with us, and assisted in packing. As he had a journey to Calcutta in

contemplation, we gave him a letter for the French minister at Calcutta, in which we gave a succinct narrative of our proceedings in Thibet, and of the circumstances that had necessitated our departure thence. We thought that if it were the will of God that we should lose our lives in the midst of the mountains of Thibet that our friends in France should at least be informed of our fate.

On the same evening, Samdadchiemba came to bid us farewell. Since the day when the Chinese ambassador had decreed our departure from Thibet our dear neophyte had been taken from us. It is needless to say how hard a trial this had been to us, but as Samdadchiemba, as a native Kan-Sou, was a Chinese subject, neither we, nor the Regent, could enter any protest against this proceeding. Although our influence with the Ki-Chan was not very great, we obtained from him a promise that our convert should be permitted to return in peace to his family, and we have since heard that he kept his word. The Regent had shown him the utmost kindness; after his separation from us he had taken care that Samdadchiemba should want for nothing, and had even given him a considerable sum of money to enable him to return home; and, with what we were able to give him in addition, Samdadchiemba might be considered master of a little fortune. We advised him to fulfil the duties imposed by filial piety towards his old mother, to instruct her in the true faith, and impart to her, in her last moments, the benefits of baptismal regeneration, and when he had closed her eyes, to return, and end his days in some Christian community.

To say the truth, Samdadchiemba was not amiable;

his disposition harsh, rude, and sometimes insolent, rendered him, at times, no very agreeable travelling companion; but he had withal, a capacity of attachment and natural integrity, that compensated in our eyes for the perversity of his temper. The long and painful journey we had made together, the many hardships endured in common, had so to speak interfused his existence with ours, and rendered the parting more painful than we could have imagined.

On the day fixed for our departure, two Chinese soldiers came to us very early in the morning to say that Ta-Lao-Yé, Ly-Kono-Ngau, that is to say, His Excellency Ly, Pacificator of Kingdoms, expected us to breakfast. This personage was the Mandarin whom Ki-Chan had appointed to accompany us to China. We obeyed the summons, and, as the train was to be organised at his house, we sent our baggage there. Ly belonged to the hierarchy of military of Mandarins; he had attained the dignity of Tou-Sse, with the command of the troops which guard the frontiers bordering the English possessions; was decorated with the blue ball, and enjoyed the privilege of wearing seven tails of sable to his cap. Ly-Kono-Ngau was not more than forty-five years old, but he looked seventy, for he had scarcely any teeth, his few hairs were quite grey, his dim and glassy eyes could scarcely endure a bright light, his face was flabby and wrinkled, his hands withered looking, and his legs, on which he could scarcely support himself, were swollen; everything about him indicated a man worn out by excess. We thought, at first, that he owed his premature old age to an immoderate use of opium, but we learnt, from his

own mouth and in our very first interview, that it was brandy which had reduced him to this state. Having asked and obtained leave to retire from the public service, he was going to repair, if he could, his shattered health, by sound and severe regimen, in the bosom of his family.

For a military Mandarin, *Ly* was a well-informed man; his knowledge of Chinese literature, and his powers of observation, rendered his conversation piquant, and full of interest. His speech was slow, and even drawling, yet he knew well how to give a picturesque and dramatic air to his narrations. He was fond of philosophic and religious topics, and entertained magnificent projects of improvement, when free and tranquil in the bosom of his family. He would have nothing to do, he said, but play at chess with his friends, and go to the play. He believed neither in the Bonzes, nor in Lamas; as to the doctrine of the Lord of Heaven, he did not know very well what that was, and he must be well acquainted with it before embracing it. He affected aristocratic manners, and an exquisite politeness; but unhappily he forgot himself at times, and betrayed his very plebeian origin too plainly. It is almost unnecessary to add, that his excellency the Pacificator of Kingdoms was a passionate lover of ingots; but for that it would have been difficult to recognise in him the Chinese and the Mandarin. He gave us a breakfast, which appeared all the more luxurious to us from our having been accustomed of late to live pretty much like savages. We had been so long obliged to eat with our fingers that we had almost forgotten how to use Chinese chop sticks. Before setting off, Ly-

Kono-Ngau warned us that it would be his duty to go, attended by his soldiers, to the palace of the ambassador, to take leave, and asked us to accompany him.

On entering the apartment where Ki-Chan was seated, the fifteen soldiers who were to form our escort, ranged themselves in file, after prostrating themselves, and striking the ground three times with their foreheads. The Pacificator of Kingdoms did the like; but the poor man would have been quite unable to rise again without our assistance. We saluted him in the usual manner by putting our caps under our arm.

Addressing us first in a hypocritical and affected tone, Ki-Chan said, that if he had not permitted us to take the route of India, it was because the laws of the empire opposed it, otherwise, old as he was, he would have accompanied us thither himself; that the road we were going was by no means so bad as it had been represented; that we should have people to wait upon and prepare a lodging for us every night, &c. When we should reach the province of Sse-Tchouen, his, Ki-Chan's, responsibility would cease, and the viceroy Pao would take care of us. And he concluded, "May the star of felicity guide you on your journey from the beginning to the end." We replied in like strain, by wishing Ki-Chan a speedy restoration to the dignities he had lost, with the addition of new ones.

"Oh! my star is bad! my star is bad!" cried Ki-Chan, taking pinch after pinch of snuff from his silver vase. He then addressed the Pacificator of Kingdoms in a grave and solemn tone.

"Ly-Kono-Ngau, since the great Emperor permits you to return to your family—you ought to go. You will

have two travelling companions; that ought to be a subject of joy to you, for the road is long and tedious. Live with them in harmony, and take care not to make their hearts sad by word or action. I have another important thing to say, as you have served the empire during twelve years on the frontiers of Gorkha, I have given orders to the purveyor to send you five hundred ounces of silver: it is a present from the great Emperor." At these words Ly-Kono-Ngau, finding all at once an unaccustomed suppleness in his legs, threw himself on his knees.

"The celestial benefits of the great Emperor," said he, "have always surrounded me; but, wretched servant that I am—how can I, without blushing, receive a favour so signal? I warmly supplicate the ambassador to permit me to hide my face, and to withdraw myself from this unmerited grace!"

To which Ki-Chan replied: "Does not the great Emperor know and approve thy disinterestedness? What are a few ounces of silver? Thou wilt take it to drink a cup of tea with my friends; but take heed of the brandy! if thou wilt live some years longer. I say this because a father and mother ought to give good advice to their children."

Ly-Kono-Ngau knocked his head three times against the ground, and then rising, resumed his place by our side.

Lastly, Ki-Chan harangued the soldiers, and changed his manner for the third time. It was rough, abrupt, verging at times on irritation. "You soldiers——" at these words, the fifteen heroes, as if moved by a common spring, fell all together on their knees, and

remained in that posture all the time of the harangue —"let us see, how many are there of you? Fifteen, I think;" and he counted them with his finger. "You fifteen soldiers, you are going back to your province—your service is finished. You will escort, as far as Ssa-Tchouen, your Tou-Sse and these two strangers. Serve them faithfully, and be respectful and obedient. Do you understand these words clearly?"

"Yes; we understand."

"When you pass through the villages of the Poba (Thibetans), woe be to you if you oppress the people! In the relays, beware how you rob and pillage. Do you understand these words?"

"Yes; we understand."

"Do not injure the flocks; respect the fields that are sown; do not set fire to the forests. Let there be peace between you;—do not curse and abuse each other. Do you understand?"

"Yes; we understand."

"Whoever behaves ill, let him not hope to escape chastisement. His sin will be enquired into carefully, and punished with severity. Do you understand clearly?"

"Yes; we understand."

"Since you understand, obey, then, and tremble!" After this brief, but energetic peroration, the fifteen soldiers knocked their heads three times against the ground, and rose.

At the moment we were quitting the residence of the Ambassador, Ki-Chan took us aside. "In a short time," said, "I shall leave Thibet, and return to China.* Not to be too much encumbered with baggage at my

* Ki-Chan is now viceroy of the province of Sse-Tchouen.

departure, I have sent two great chests by this opportunity:—they are covered with long-haired ox-skins. I recommend these chests to your care. When you stop at the post-houses at night, let them be brought into the place where you are to pass the night. At Tching-Tou-Fou, the capital of Sse-Tchouen, you will deliver them to the viceroy, Pao-Tchoung-Tang. Watch carefully over your effects, for there are many thieves on the road you are going."

We assured Ki-Chan that we would remember his charge, and rejoined Ly-Kono-Ngau, who was waiting for us at the threshold. It was curious enough that the ambassador should confide his treasure to us, whilst he had at his service a mandarin who was called upon by his position to render him this service. But the jealousy with which Ki-Chan regarded foreigners did not go so far as to make him neglect his own interest; and he thought it, no doubt, safer to entrust his chests to a missionary than to a Chinese, even though he were a Mandarin. This mark of confidence gave us pleasure;—it was a homage rendered to the probity of Christians, at the same time that it was a bitter satire on the Chinese character.

Just before we mounted our horses to set off, a Thibetan woman, of robust proportions, and very well dressed, presented herself before us. It was the wife of Ly-Kono-Ngau. He had married her six years before, and was now going to leave her for ever. As the loving couple would probably never see each other again, it was natural that some words of farewell should be spoken on so heart-breaking an occasion. The parting took place in public, and in the following manner:

"We are going, now," said the husband. "As for thee, stop where thou art, and sit in peace in thy chamber."

"Go, then," said the wife; "go gently, and take care of thy swollen legs;" and then she passed her hand before her eyes, to impress the bystanders with the belief that she was crying.

"There now," said the Pacificator of Kingdoms, turning to us, "these Thibetan women are curious creatures! I leave her a house solidly built, and a quantity of furniture almost new, and she thinks proper to cry! Is she not satisfied with that?"

And after these adieux, so full of sentiment and tenderness, he mounted his horse, and the party filed off through the streets of Lha-Ssa, taking care to choose those least encumbered with Lamas.

Outside of the town, a number of the inhabitants, with whom we had been on terms of friendship, and many of whom appeared sincerely disposed to embrace our holy religion, had assembled to salute us once more. Amongst them was the young physician, still wearing on his breast the cross that we had given him. We alighted from our horses to give them some parting words of consolation, to exhort them to abandon courageously the superstitious worship of Buddha, and adore the God of the Christians, confiding always in his infinite goodness and mercy. It was cruel to part with our dear catechumens, to whom we had only indicated the path of salvation, without being able to direct their first steps. Alas! we could now do nothing more than pray for them.

As we were remounting, we perceived a horseman

approaching us full gallop: it was the Governor of the Cashmerians, who had resolved to accompany us as far as the river Bo-Tchou. We were extremely touched by this mark of attention; but it did not surprise us on the part of a friend so sincere and devoted, and who had given us so many marks of attachment during our stay in Lha-Ssa.

On the banks of the Bo-Tchou we found a Thibetan escort, organised by the Regent, to conduct us to the frontiers of China; it was composed of seven men and a Grand Lama, bearing the title of *Dhéba*, or governor of a canton. With the Chinese escort, we formed a caravan of twenty-six horsemen, without including the drivers of the cattle that carried our baggage.

Two large ferry-boats were waiting to receive the men and horses; the latter leaped in at once, and ranged themselves tranquilly side by side; it was evident that it was not the first time they had gone through the business. The men followed, with the exception of the Dhéba, Ly-Kono-Ngau, and ourselves. We comprehended that we were to pass the river in a more aristocratic fashion, but how, we did not see, as there was nothing like a boat in sight. "How are we to get over?" was our next question.

"There is the boat coming," was the reply; and on looking in the direction indicated, we saw a boat and a man advancing across the fields, but, contrary to the usual practice, it was the man who carried the boat, and not the boat the man. As soon as he reached the river-side, he quietly deposited his burden, and pushed it into the water with the greatest ease! Either the boat must be extraordinarily light, or the man excessively

strong. We looked at the man,—there was nothing unusual in him; we examined the boat, and the problem was solved,—it was composed simply of ox-hides, solidly sewn together, and kept in shape by some light triangles of bamboo.

After taking an affectionate leave of the Governor, we entered the boat, and very nearly capsized it in so doing. Our companions had forgotten to warn us that the foot was to be placed on the bamboo only. When we had all embarked, the boatman began to urge his vessel forward with a long pole, and, in the twinkling of an eye, we were on shore on the other side. The man then took his boat again on his back, and made off.

These leathern boats are unfortunately liable to rot if they remain long in the water; and, directly after they have been used, they must be turned bottom upwards to dry; but, perhaps a strong varnish would make them to bear a longer navigation.

When we had remounted our horses, we cast a long last look on the city of Lha-Ssa, still visible in the distance; and said in the depths of our hearts, "God's will be done!" It was the 15th of March 1846.

We arrived in safety at Ta-Tsien-Lou, on the frontiers of China, after a three months' journey, the principal incident of which was the death of Ly-Kono-Ngau. He was found nearly dead in his bed one morning, apparently of water on the chest; and yielded his last breath almost immediately. We regretted deeply not to have been with him during his last moments of consciousness; and we can only hope that he may have experienced the infinite mercy of God. This event left the caravan without a chief; and we passed at once

from a monarchy to a democratic republic; but, perceiving that our Thibetans and Chinese were by no means ripe for so perfect a form of government, and that anarchy was threatening us on all sides, we determined, for the sake of the public interest, and the safety of the caravan, to seize on the dictatorship; and, accordingly, we issued a decree that all should be ready to resume our journey on the following day. At the first station we reached, however, that of Lithang, where there was a Chinese garrison, we laid down our usurped authority, and demanded one more regularly constituted. We were told at first, that no one of the four Mandarins there present, could go with us, and that we should go on quietly as we were, as far as the frontier; but we frankly warned them, that if they persisted in our retaining the command, they need not be surprised if we returned to Lha-Ssa; and thereupon they took the case into consideration, and said we should have an answer in the evening. At supper time, one of the four Mandarins presented himself in the costume of ceremony; and, after the customary compliments, he announced to us that he had been appointed to command our escort as far as the frontiers of China; that never, in his most ambitious dreams, had he imagined he should attain to such an honour as that of conducting people like us; and that he was quite ashamed to have on the first day to ask a favour. This was, that we would be good enough to repose for two days at Lithang, in order to recruit our strength, which must be exhausted by so long and painful a journey. We understood very well, that the meaning of all this was, that he wanted two days to finish some business of his own; and we replied, that

we saw his heart was full of solicitude on our account, and that we would stay the two days, according to his request.

The town of Lithang is built on the side of a hill, which rises from a vast but sterile plain, and, though seen from afar, it has an imposing aspect, from the buildings of the two great Lama convents being richly gilt and painted; its streets are narrow, crooked, dirty, and so steep that it is often difficult to keep your feet in them. Here, and in other places, as we approached the frontiers of China, we noticed a considerable change in the character of the people; instead of the pride and rough simplicity of Thibet, they manifested much of the polite cunning and covetousness of the Chinese, and their language was much mixed with Chinese expressions. At the moment when we left the town, the Chinese garrison happened to be under arms, and they paid military honours to Ly-Kono-Ngau, exactly as if he had been alive, and when the coffin passed, the soldiers all bent the knee and cried out that the "poor garrison of Lithang wished him *health and prosperity!*"

As we crossed the last mountain, the climate of Thibet bade us a cold farewell, and almost buried us in a heavy storm of snow, which accompanied us to the Chinese town of Ta-Tsien-Lou, where it was exchanged for a pouring rain. We rested at this place a short time, during which we had to quarrel several times a day with the principal Mandarin, who would not consent to forward us on our route by palanquin; but at length, thanks to the perseverance and energy of our demands, they were granted. Our Thibetan escort left us at this place, taking with them a letter of thanks from us to

the Regent, for the good treatment we had received at Lha-Ssa, and on the journey. We could not part without emotion from these faithful companions, and at the moment of departure the Lama *Dchiamchang* (musician, a sort of confidant of the Regent) told us, that he had been charged to remind us of the promise we had made him to return some day to Lha-Ssa. We promised that we would, for we did not then foresee what obstacles would prevent our return to Thibet. The next day we entered the palanquin, and were borne, at the public expense, to the capital of the province of Sse-Tchouen, where, by order of the emperor, we were to undergo a solemn trial before the Mandarins of the Celestial Empire.

Ultimately, traversing China, we reached Macao in the beginning of October. Our long and toilsome journey was concluded, and we could at length, after so many hardships, enjoy a little peace and repose. During the two succeeding years, we employed our leisure moments in revising the notes we had made on the road; and hence these "Recollections," which we address to our brethren in Europe,—hoping that their charity will find interest in the trials and fatigues of the Missionaries. Our re-entrance into China, to return to our mission in Mongol-Tartary, compels us to leave unfinished the work we had begun. We should have to speak of our relations with the Mandarins and the Chinese tribunals, to cast a glance at the provinces of the empire we have traversed, and compare them with those we had occasion to visit during our former travels in the Celestial empire. We will endeavour to fill up this hiatus, in the hours of recreation which we may find in the

intervals of our labours for the holy ministry; and perhaps then we shall be in a position to furnish some exact information concerning a country, of which at no epoch more incorrect ideas have prevailed than at the present day.

There is, indeed, no want of books concerning "China and the Chinese,"—but the zeal of a writer is not of itself sufficient to make him acquainted with the countries where he has never set his foot; and to write travels in China, after a few walks about the factories of Canton and the environs of Macao, is to expose oneself to speak of many things with a very insufficient amount of knowledge.

THE END.

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