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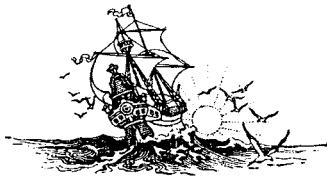
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# TRAVELS IN TARTARY, THIBET AND CHINA

VOLUME TWO



TRAVELS IN TARTARY,  
THIBET AND CHINA



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THE BROADWAY TRAVELLERS

## THE BROADWAY TRAVELLERS

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TRAVELS IN TARTARY,  
THIBET AND CHINA

1844-1846

Volume Two

HUC AND GABET

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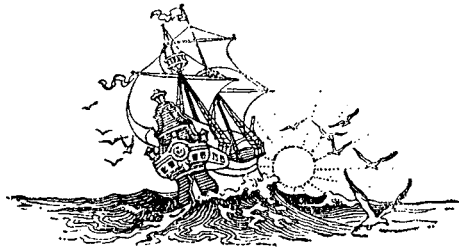


HUC AND GABET  
TRAVELS IN TARTARY  
THIBET AND CHINA

1844—1846

*Translated by William Hazlitt  
Now edited with an Introduction  
by Professor Paul Pelliot*

VOLUME TWO



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# Travels in Tartary, Thibet, and China

## VOLUME II

### CHAPTER I

THE Houses of Repose are very numerous in the small town of Tang-Keou-Eul, by reason of the great number of strangers, who are drawn thither from all quarters by commerce. It was in one of these establishments, kept by a family of Mussulmen, that we went to lodge. As we had nothing to do with trade, we felt called upon candidly to communicate the fact to the host, and to arrange the terms of our living in his house ; it was agreed that we should be there as in a common hotel. All this was very well ; but the question was, what were we to do afterwards ; what was to become of us ? This question incessantly engrossed our minds, and tormented us not a little.

As far as Tang-Keou-Eul we had followed, with sufficient continuity, the route we had traced out for ourselves ; we might even say that this portion of our journey had been successful beyond all expectations. Now the business was to carry out our plan, and to penetrate to Lha-Ssa, the capital of Thibet ; an undertaking which appeared bristling with almost insuperable difficulties. Tang-Keou-Eul was our columns of Hercules, with their depressing *ne plus ultra* "No farther shalt thou go." However, we had already

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vanquished too many obstacles, to be easily overcome by discouragement. We heard that almost every year caravans proceeded from Tang-Keou-Eul, and penetrated into the very heart of Thibet. We wanted nothing more to confirm our determination. Whatever other people had undertaken and executed, we assumed also to undertake and to execute, as not being, probably, beyond our power. It was therefore settled that the journey should be carried out to the end, and that no one should say that Catholic missionaries had less courage for the interest of the faith than merchants for a little profit. The possibility of departure being thus determined we had nothing to seek but the opportunity.

Our great business, therefore, was to collect all possible information respecting this famous route into Thibet. We heard terrible things about it; we should have to travel for four months through a country absolutely without inhabitants, and should have, accordingly, to lay in before our departure, all the necessary provisions. In the season of winter, the cold was so horrible that it often happened that travellers were frozen to death or buried beneath the avalanches of snow; while, in summer, a great number were drowned, for they had to cross large streams, without bridge or boat, without other aid than that of animals, which themselves often could not swim. Moreover, there were hordes of brigands, who at certain periods of the year prowled about the desert and stripped travellers and abandoned them, without clothes or food, amidst these frightful plains; in short, there was no end of stories, enough to make our hair stand on end; and these stories, fabulous as they seemed, or, at least much exaggerated, were the same on every tongue—were all of a frightful uniformity. Besides, there were to be seen and questioned in the streets of Tang-Keou-Eul some

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Tartar-Mongols, who were standing evidence of the truth of these long narratives, being the remnants of a large caravan, which had been attacked in the preceding year by a troop of brigands. These had contrived to escape, but their companions had been left to the mercy of the Kolo [Kolo (mGo-log, Ngo-log)] "brigands." This information, while ineffectual to shake our resolution, induced us to remain where we were until a favourable opportunity for departure should present itself.

We had been six days at Tang-Keou-Eul, when a small caravan of Tartar-Khalkhas arrived at our House of Repose. It came from the frontiers of Russia, and was on its way to Lha-Ssa to offer up its adorations to a young child, which, the people were informed, was the famous Guison-Tamba newly transmigrated. When the Tartars learned that we were awaiting a favourable opportunity for proceeding towards Thibet, they were delighted, fully appreciating the fact that their troop, in this unexpected accession of three pilgrims, received an accession, also, of three combatants in the event of a fight with the Kolo. Our beards and mustachios inspired them with an exalted idea of our valour, and we were forthwith decorated by them with the title of *Batourou* "braves." This was all exceedingly honourable and seductive; but still, before we finally decided upon joining the cavalcade, we thought it expedient to consider the various aspects of the matter gravely and maturely.

The caravan, which occupied the great court-yard of the House of Repose, counted only eight men; the rest was camels, horses, tents, baggage, and kitchen utensils; but then the eight men, according to their own account, were perfect war dragons. At all events, they were armed up to the teeth, and made a grand display before us of their matchlocks, lances, bows and arrows, and above all, a piece of artillery, in

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the shape of a small cannon, of the size of one's arm ; it had no carriage but mounted between the two humps of a camel it produced a very formidable effect. All this warlike apparatus failed to inspire us with confidence, and, on the other hand, we placed but slight reliance upon the moral effect of our long beards. It was necessary, however, to adopt a decided course ; the Tartar-Khalkhas urged us pressingly, assuring us of complete success. Of the lookers-on, disinterested in the matter one way or the other, some told us that the opportunity was altogether eligible, and that we ought by all means to avail ourselves of it ; while others assured us that it would be the extreme of imprudence to proceed, for that so small a party would be inevitably eaten up by the Kolo ; and that it would be far better, as we were in no immediate hurry, to wait for the great Thibetian embassy.

Now this embassy having only just quitted Peking, would not reach Tang-Keou-Eul for fully eight months, a delay which it seemed absolutely ruinous for us to undergo. How, with our modest means, were we to maintain ourselves and our five animals for so long a time in an inn ? After maturely calculating and weighing everything : let us confide in the protection of God, said we, and go forth. We announced our resolution to the Tartars, who were highly delighted. We immediately requested the host of the House of Repose to purchase for us four months' provision of meal. "What do you want with four months' meal ?" asked the Tartars. "They say the journey is of at least three months' duration, and it is expedient, therefore, to provide for four months to meet the chance of accidents." "Ay, the Thibetian embassy occupies a long time on the journey, but we Tartars travel in quite a different manner ; we do the distance in a moon and a-half at the very outside ; we gallop the whole way, so that we get over nearly

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zoo lis (twenty leagues) a day." This intimation at once caused us to change our resolution. It was manifestly quite impossible for us to keep up with this caravan. In the first place, as to ourselves, never having been accustomed, like the Tartars, to forced marches, we should have been dead in three days ; and as to our animals, weary and worn with four months' incessant toil, they could not have for any length of time borne up against the pace of our proposed companions. The Tartars having forty camels could afford to knock up one half of them. Indeed, they themselves admitted that with our three camels, it was impossible for us to undertake the journey with them, and they accordingly advised us to buy a dozen others. The advice, excellent in itself, was, with reference to the state of our exchequer, absolutely absurd. Twelve good camels would have cost us three hundred ounces of silver ; now the total amount of our funds was under two hundred ounces.

The eight Tartar-Khalkhas were all of princely blood, and, accordingly, on the evening preceding their departure, they received a visit from the son of the King of Koukou-Noor, who was then at Tang-Keou-Eul. As the room we occupied was the handsomest in the establishment, it was arranged that the interview should take place there. The young Prince of Koukou-Noor surprised us by his noble mien and the elegance of his manners ; it was obvious that he spent considerably more of his time at Tang-Keou-Eul than in the Mongol tent. He was attired in a handsome robe of light blue cloth, over which was a sort of jacket of violet cloth, with a broad border of black velvet. His left ear was decorated, in Thibetian fashion, with a gold earring from which hung several trinkets ; his complexion was almost as fair as our own, and his countenance admirably gentle in its expression : in utter contradistinction from ordinary

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Tartars, his garments were exquisitely clean. As the visit of a Prince of Koukou-Noor was quite an event, we determined to be wholly regardless of expense in celebrating it; and Samdadchiemba received, accordingly, orders to prepare a banquet for his royal highness, that is to say, a great pitcher of good, hot tea, with milk. His royal highness deigned to accept a cup of this beverage, and the remainder was distributed among his staff, who were in waiting outside. The conversation turned upon the journey into Thibet. The prince promised the Tartar Khalkhas an escort throughout his estates. "Beyond that point," said he, "I can answer for nothing; you must take your chance, good or bad, as shall happen." Then addressing us, he advised us by all means to wait for the Thibetian embassy, in whose company we should be able to travel with greater ease and security. On taking leave, the royal visitor drew from a purse elegantly embroidered, a small agate snuff-box, and graciously offered to each of us a pinch.

Next morning the Tartar-Khalkhas proceeded on their journey. When we saw them depart, a feeling of sorrow came over us, for we would gladly have accompanied them had it been at all practicable; but the sentiment soon subsided, and we applied our thoughts to the best use we should make of our time while we remained at Tang-Keou-Eul. It was at last determined that we should procure a master, and devote ourselves entirely to the study of the Thibetian language and of the Buddhist books.

At eleven leagues from Tang-Keou-Eul there is, in the land of the Si-Fan, or Eastern Thibetians, a Lamasery, whose fame extends not merely throughout Tartary, but even to the remotest parts of Thibet. Thither pilgrims flock from all quarters, venerating; for there was born Tsong-Kaba-Remboutchi [Tsongkha-pa Rim-po-ch'ê], the famous reformer of Buddhism.

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The Lamasery bears the name of Kounboum [Kumbum], and its Lama population numbers no fewer than 4,000 persons, Si-Fan, Tartars, Thibetians, and Dchiahours. It was determined that one of us should visit this place, and endeavour to engage a Lama to come and teach us for a few months the Thibetian language. M. Gabet, accordingly, departed on this mission, accompanied by Samdadchiemba, while M. Huc remained at Tang-Keou-Eul, to take care of the animals and of the baggage.

After an absence of five days, M. Gabet returned to the House of Repose, eminently successful, having secured at the Lamasery of Kounboum a perfect treasure in the person of a Lama who had passed ten of the thirty-two years of his life in a grand Lamasery at Lha-Ssa itself. He spoke pure Thibetian perfectly, wrote it with facility, and was very learned in the Buddhist books; moreover, he was quite familiar with several other idioms, Si-Fan, Mongol, Chinese, and Dchiahour; in a word, he was a philologist of the first water. This young Lama was a Dchiahour by birth, and a cousin-german of Samdadchiemba; his name was Sandara, and in the Lamasery he was called Sandara the Bearded, by reason of the remarkable length of that appendage in which he luxuriated.

The devotion which Samdadchiemba's cousin forthwith manifested in our favour made us rejoice that we had not adventured with the Tartar-Khalkhas caravan, for here we were placed in the precise position for procuring every requisite information about Thibet, and of making ourselves acquainted at the same time with the language and religion of that celebrated region.

We applied ourselves to study with perfect enthusiasm. First, we composed in Mongol two dialogues, comprehending the most familiar conversational phrases. These Sandara translated into Thibetian

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with scrupulous attention. Every morning he wrote out a page in our presence, giving us a grammatical commentary upon each expression as he proceeded ; this was our lesson for the day, which we first transcribed several times, in order to break our hand into the Thibetian writing, and then chanted, in the manner of the Lamaseries, until the whole page was thoroughly impressed upon the memory. In the evening our master heard us recite the portion of dialogue he had written for us in the morning, and rectified our defects of pronunciation. Sandara acquitted himself of his task with talent and amiability. From time to time in the course of the day, he would, by way of recreation, give us details full of interest respecting Thibet and the Lamaseries he had visited. It was impossible to listen to the descriptions given by this young Lama without admiration ; nowhere had we heard a person express himself with greater facility or a more winning manner ; the simplest, commonest things became in his mouth picturesque and full of charm ; he was especially remarkable when he sought to induce upon others any particular view of his own upon some subject in which he really felt an interest. His eloquence was then really powerful.

After having surmounted the first difficulties of the Thibetian language, and familiarized ourselves with the expressions in ordinary use, we proceeded to give our studies an altogether religious direction. We got Sandara to translate for us into the sacred style of his language some of the leading Catholic forms, such as the Lord's Prayer, the Salutation, the Apostles' Creed, the Commandments ; and thereupon we took occasion to explain to him the general truths of the Christian religion. He seemed all at once struck with this new doctrine, so different from the vague, incoherent propositions of Buddhism. Before long he attached so much importance to the study of the Christian

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religion that he entirely laid aside the Lama books he had brought with him, and applied himself to the acquisition of our prayers with an ardour that made us truly joyful. From time to time in the course of the day he would interrupt what he was about in order to make the sign of the cross, and he practised this religious act in a manner so grave and respectful that we thoroughly believed him to have become a Christian at heart. The excellent tendencies he manifested filled us with the most lively hopes, and we gratefully viewed in Sandara an incipient apostle, destined one day to labour with success in converting the sectaries of Buddha.

While we three, master and pupils, were thus absorbed in studies so important, Samdadchiemba, who had no sort of vocation for things intellectual, passed his time lounging about the streets of Tang-Keou-Eul and drinking tea. Not at all pleased with this occupation of his time, we devised to withdraw him from his idleness, and to utilize him in his special character of cameleer. It was accordingly arranged that he should take the three camels and pasture them in a valley of Koukou-Noor, noted for the excellence and the abundance of its pasturage. A Tarter of the locality promised to receive him into his tent, and we rejoiced in the arrangement, as effecting the double advantage of supplying Samdadchiemba with an occupation in conformity with his tastes, and of giving our camels better and less costly fodder.

By degrees, all the fine things we had imagined in Sandara vanished like a dream. This young man, apparently of devotion so pure and disinterested, was in reality a dissipated knave, whose only aim was to ease us of our sapeks. When he thought he had rendered himself essential to us, he threw aside the mask, and placed himself undisguisedly before us in all the detestability of his character ; he became insolent,

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haughty, overbearing. In his Thibetian lessons, he substituted for the mild, gentle, insinuating tone of his former instruction, manners the most insufferably harsh and brutal, such as the worst tempered pedagogue would not betray towards the poorest of his pupils. If we asked him for an explanation which perhaps he had previously given, he would assail us with such amenities as these: "What! you learned fellows want to have the same thing told you three times over! Why, if I were to tell a donkey the same thing three times over, he'd remember it." We might easily, no doubt, have cut short these impertinences by sending the man back to his Lamasery; and, more than once, we were strongly inclined to adopt this course, but, upon the whole, we thought it better to undergo a little humiliation than to deprive ourselves of the services of a Lama whose talents were indisputable, and who, therefore, might be of the greatest utility to us. His very rudeness, we considered, would aid our progress in acquiring the Thibetian language, for we were sure that he would not pass over the most trivial fault in grammar or pronunciation, but, on the contrary, would rate us for any such defects, in a style eminently calculated to produce an abiding impression. This system, though somewhat tedious, and decidedly displeasing to one's self-love, was incomparably superior to the method practised by the Chinese Christians towards the European missionaries in giving them Chinese lessons. Partly from politeness, partly from religious respect, they affect to be in ecstasies with whatever their spiritual father-pupil says; and, instead of frankly correcting the faults which naturally occur in his expressions, they are rather disposed to imitate his defective language, so that he may, with the less trouble to himself, understand them, the result of which excessive complaisance is that the missionaries are put to grave inconvenience

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when they seek to converse with pagans who, not having the same devotion towards them, do not admit in them a fine pronunciation, or a masterly knowledge of words. Upon such occasions, how one regrets that one had not for a teacher some Sandara the Bearded! Upon such considerations, we resolved to keep our master with all his defects, to endure his abuse, and to make the best and most we could of him. As we found that our sapeks were his object, it was agreed that we should pay him handsomely for his lessons; and moreover, we made up our minds to wink at his little knaveries, and to affect to have no idea that he had an understanding with the people who sold us our daily provisions.

Samdadchiemba had not been gone many days before he suddenly re-appeared amongst us. He had been robbed by brigands who had taken from him his entire provision of meal, butter and tea. For the last day and a half he had eaten nothing whatever, and of consequence, his voice was hollow, and his face pale and haggard. Only seeing one camel in the court-yard, we imagined that the two others had become the prey of the brigands, but Samdadchiemba relieved us by the assurance that he had confided them to the Tartar family who had granted him their hospitality. Upon hearing this statement, Sandara knitted his brows. "Samdadchiemba," said he, "you are my younger brother, as it were; I have therefore a right to ask you a few questions." And thereupon he submitted the cameleer to an interrogatory characterized by all the depth and subtlety of an able advocate cross-examining some cunning offender. He demanded the minutest details, and applied himself with infinite ingenuity to work up the contradictions into which he involved the questioned party, and to put forward in prominent relief the apparent improbability of the story. How was it, he asked, that the robbers had stolen the

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butter, yet left the bag in which the butter was carried? How was it they had respected the little snuff-bottle, yet carried off the embroidered purse which served it as a cover? When he had finished his inquiries, he added, with a malicious smile, "I have put these few questions to my brother out of pure curiosity; I attach no importance to them. It is not I who have to disburse the wherewithal to buy him fresh provisions."

Samdadchiemba, meantime, was dying with hunger, so we gave him some sapeks, and he went to dinner in a neighbouring eating-house. As soon as he had quitted the room, Sandara proceeded: "Nobody shall ever persuade me that my brother has been robbed. The brigands in this part of the country don't do their work in the way he wants to make out. The fact is, that Samdadchiemba, when he got among the Tartars, wanted to show off, and distributed his provisions right and left in order to make friends. He had no reason to fear being lavish; what he gave away cost him nothing." The probity of Samdadchiemba was a fact so thoroughly impressed upon our convictions that we altogether repudiated this wicked insinuation, which we clearly saw proceeded at once from Sandara's jealous annoyance at the confidence we reposed in his cousin, and from a cunning desire, in giving us the idea that he was warmly attached to our interest, to divert our attention from his own petty peculations. We gave Samdadchiemba, who did not at all perceive his relative's treachery, some more provisions, and he returned to the pastures of Koukou-Noor.

Next day, the town of Tang-Keou-Eul was the scene of terrible disorder. The brigands had made their appearance in the vicinity, and had driven off 2,000 head of cattle belonging to the tribe called Houng-Mao-Eul "Long Hairs." These Eastern Thibetians quit once a year the slopes of the Bayen-Kharat [Bayen-khara]

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mountains, in large caravans, and come to Tang-Keou-Eul to sell furs, butter, and a kind of wild fruit that grows in their district. While they are engaged in these commercial operations, they leave their large herds in the vast prairies that abut upon the town, and which are under the jurisdiction of the Chinese authorities. There was no example, we heard, of the brigands having ventured to approach so close as this to the frontiers of the empire. This present audacity of theirs, and more especially the known violence of character of the Long Hairs, contributed to throw the whole town into utter dismay and confusion. Upon hearing of their loss, the Long Hairs had tumultuously rushed to the Chinese tribunal, and, their long sabres in their hands, lightning in their eyes, and thunder in their mouths, had demanded justice and vengeance. The terrified Mandarin instantly dispatched 200 soldiers in pursuit of the robbers. But the Long Hairs, seeing that these foot soldiers could never overtake the brigands, who were well mounted, threw themselves into their saddles, and dashed off in search of the thieves. They returned next day with no other result attained than that their fury was redoubled. Altogether destitute of foresight, these half-savages had gone off without any provisions whatever, never thinking that, in the desert, they would find nothing to eat. Accordingly, after a day's forced march, hunger had compelled them to return. Not so the Chinese soldiers. These worthies, knowing much better what they were about, had provided themselves for their warlike expedition with infinite asses and oxen laden with apparatus for the kitchen, and with ammunition for the mouth. As they felt no sort of desire to go and fight for 2,000 cattle that did not belong to them, after a very brief military progress they halted on the banks of a river, where they spent several days, eating, drinking and

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amusing themselves, and giving no more heed to the brigands than though there had never been such personages in the world. When they had consumed all their provisions they returned quietly to Tang-Keou-Eul, and declared to the Mandarin that they had scoured the desert without being able to come up with the robbers : that once, indeed, these had seemed within their grasp, but that, availing themselves of their magic powers, they had vanished. At Tang-Keou-Eul everybody is persuaded that the brigands are all more or less sorcerers, and that in order to render themselves invisible all they have to do is to exhale in a particular manner, or to throw some sheep's treddles behind them. It is probably the Chinese soldiers who have brought these fables into vogue ; at all events they certainly make excellent use of them in all their expeditions. The Mandarins, doubtless, are not their dupes ; but provided the victims of the robbers are content with these tales, that is all the Chinese authorities care about.

For several days the Houng-Mao-Eul were perfectly furious. They ran about the streets like madmen, flourishing their sabres and vociferating a thousand imprecations against the brigands. All the townspeople got carefully out of their way, respecting their anger with entire veneration. The appearance of these fellows, even at their very best, when they are perfectly calm and good humoured, is sufficiently alarming. They are clothed at all seasons of the year in a great sheepskin robe, rudely drawn up round the waist by a thick camel-hair rope. Left to itself this robe would drag along the ground, so that when raised by the cord above the knees it communicates to the chest a most rotund, stuffed and awkward appearance. They have great leather boots, which come up to just below the knees, so that, as they wear no trousers, their legs are

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always half bare. Their hair, black and greasy, hangs in long matted locks down their shoulders, and, in fact, falling over the brow, half conceals the face. The right arm is always bare, the sleeve being thrown quite back. A long broad sabre is passed through their girdle just below the chest, and the right hand scarcely ever quits its hilt. The manners and movements of these inhabitants of the desert are abrupt and jerking, their speech brief and energetic. The tones of their voice have something about them metallic and deafening. Many of them are wealthy, and with these display consists in decorating the sheath of the sword with precious stones, and their own robes with borders of tiger-skin. The horses which they bring to Tang-Keou-Eul are remarkably beautiful, vigorous and well-made, and of great grandeur in the step: in all respects far superior to those of Tartary, and fully justifying the Chinese phrase, *Sima* [*hsi-ma*], *toung-nieou* [*tung-niu*], "Western horses—eastern oxen."

The Houg-Mao-Eul, being famous for their bravery and for an independence which amounts to the ferocious, it is they who give the *ton* to the people of Tang-Keou-Eul, who all essay to catch their air and gait, and to acquire a reputation for valour and devil-may-careishness. The result is, that Tang-Keou-Eul bears a strong family resemblance to a great den of thieves. Everybody there makes it his business to have his hair and clothes in utter disorder, everybody bawls at everybody, everybody pushes against everybody, everybody fights everybody, so that everybody from time to time draws everybody's blood. In the depth of winter, though the winter here is desperately cold, people go about with their arms and half their legs bare. To wear clothing adapted to the icy season would be considered a mark of pusillanimity. A good, brave fellow, they say, should fear nothing, neither

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men nor elements. At Tang-Keou-Eul the Chinese themselves have lost much of their urbanity and of the polished forms of their language, having involuntarily undergone the influence of the Houng-Mao-Eul, who converse together in much the same style that we can imagine tigers in the woods to converse. On the day of our arrival at Tang-Keou-Eul, a few minutes before we entered the town, we met a Long Hair who had been giving his horse drink in the river Keou-Ho. Samdadchiemba, who was always attracted by anything having an eccentric air, cautiously approached the man, and saluted him in the Tartar fashion, saying, "Brother, art thou at peace?" The Houng-Mao-Eul turned fiercely towards him: "What business of thine is it, tortoise-egg," cried he, with the voice of a Stentor, "whether I am at peace or at war? And what right hast thou to address as thy brother a man who knows nothing about thee?" Poor Samdadchiemba was taken all aback at this reception, yet he could not help admiring, as something very fine, this haughty insolence of the Long Hair.

Tang-Keou-Eul, in consequence of its dirt and its excessive population, is a very unwholesome place to live in. There is an universal odour of grease and butter about, that is enough to make you sick. In certain quarters, more particularly where the especial poor and the especial vagabonds congregate, the stench is insupportable. Those who have no house wherein to shelter themselves collect in the nooks of streets and squares, and there they lie, higgledy-piggledy, and half naked, upon filthy straw, or rather, dung-heaps. There are stretched together the sick young, and the infirm old, the dying man, sometimes the dead, whom no one takes the trouble to bury, until, at length, putrefaction manifesting itself, the bodies are dragged into the middle of the street, where the authorities remove them, and have them thrown into

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some general pit. From amid this hideous misery there pullulates into the bosom of the population a crowd of petty thieves and swindlers, who, in their address and audacity, leave far behind the Robert Macaires of the western world. The number of these wretched creatures is so great, that authority, weary of contending with them, has left them to take their own course, and the public to guard their own sapeks and goods. These worthies work, as a matter of preference, in the houses of repose and the inns. Their *modus operandi* is this:—Two of them, associated together for the purpose, hawk about various articles of merchandise, boots, skin-coats, bricks of tea, and what not. They offer these for sale to travellers. While one of them engages the attention of the destined victim, by displaying his goods and bargaining, the other ferrets about and pockets whatever he can lay his hands on. These rascals have inconceivable skill in counting your sapeks for you, in such a way as to finger fifty or a hundred or more of them without your having the slightest notion as to what is going on. One day, two of these little thieves came to offer for our purchase a pair of leathern boots. Excellent boots! said they; boots such as we could not find in any shop in the whole town; boots that would keep out the rain for days; and as to cheapness, perfectly unexampled. If we missed this opportunity, we should never have such another. Only just before they have been offered 1,200 sapeks for them! As we did not want boots, we replied that we would not have them at any price. Thereupon the acting merchant assumed a lofty tone of generosity. We were foreigners; we should have them for 1,000 sapeks, 900, 800, 700. “Well,” said we, “we certainly don’t want any boots just now, yet, doubtless, as you say, these are very cheap, and it will be worth while to buy them as a reserve.” The bargain was accordingly

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concluded; we took our purse, and counted out 700 sapeks to the merchant, who counted them over himself, under our very eyes, pronounced the amount correct, and once more laid the coin before us. He then called out to his companion who was poking about in the court-yard: "Here, I've sold those capital boots for 700 sapeks." "Nonsense," cried the other, "700 sapeks! I won't hear of such a thing." "Very well," said we; "come, take your boots and be off with you." He was off, and so quickly, that we thought it expedient to count our sapeks once more; there were a hundred and fifty of them gone, and that was not all; while one of the rascals had been pocketing our money under our very nose, the other had bagged two great iron pins that we had driven into the court-yard for the purpose of our camels. Therefore we took a resolution—better late than never—to admit, in future, no merchant whatever into our room.

The House of Repose, as we have already indicated, was kept by Mussulmen. One day, their Mufti who had recently arrived from Lan-Tcheou [Lanchou], the capital of Kan-Sou, attended at the house, in order to preside over some religious ceremony, the nature and object of which they would not explain to us. Sandara the Bearded, however, had an explanation of his own, which was, that the Grand Lama of the Hoi-Hoi attended on these occasions to teach his sectaries the latest improvements in the art of cheating in trade. For two days, the principal Mussulmen of the town assembled in a large apartment, contiguous to our own. There they remained for a long time, squatting on the ground, with their heads resting on their knees. When the Mufti appeared, all sent forth groans and sobs. After they had sufficiently lamented in this fashion, the Mufti recited, with a perfectly alarming volubility of tongue,

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several Arabic prayers ; then everybody had another turn at lamenting, after which the cheerful assembly separated. This doleful ceremony was performed thrice in each of the two first days. On the morning of the third day, all the Mussulmen ranged themselves in the court-yard round the Mufti, who was seated on a stool, covered with a fine red carpet. Then the host of the House of Repose brought in a fine sheep, adorned with flowers and ribbons. The sheep was laid on its side, the host held it by its head, and two other Mussulmen by the legs, while a fourth presented to the Mufti a knife on a silver dish. He took the knife with great gravity, and approaching the victim, thrust the weapon up to the hilt into its neck. Thereupon cries and groans once more resounded on all sides. These ceasing, the sheep was skinned, cut up, and taken into the kitchen to be cooked, and, by-and-by, a grand entertainment of boiled mutton, presided over by the Mufti, closed the ceremony.

The Mussulmen, or Hœi-Hœi, are very numerous in China. It is said that they penetrated thither under the dynasty of the Thang [T'ang], which began in 618, and terminated in 907. They were received by the Emperor, who at that period resided at Si-Ngan-Fou [Hsi-an-fu], the present capital of Chan-Si. They were kindly entertained, and the Emperor, struck with their fine features and forms, loaded them with favours, and entreated them to settle in his dominions. At first, it is stated, they were only 200 in number, but they have since so multiplied that they now constitute a large population, eminently formidable to the Chinese. Kan-Sou, Yun-Nan, Sse-Tchouan, Chan-Si, Chen-Si, Chan-Toung, Pe-Tche-Li, and Liao-Toung [Liao-tung] are the provinces in which they are most numerous. In some particular localities, indeed, they form the majority of the population, as compared with the

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Chinese. They have, however, become so mingled, so fused with the native people, that it would be difficult now-a-days to recognize them, were it not for the small blue cap which they all constantly wear, to distinguish themselves from the Chinese. Their physiognomy has retained no vestige of its original type. Their nose has become flat, their eyes have sunk in, their cheek-bones started out. They do not know a single word of Arabic—a language which their priests alone are bound to learn, and this only so as to read it. Chinese has become their step-mother tongue; yet they have preserved a certain energy of character which you seldom find among the Chinese. Though few in number, as compared with the enormous general population of the empire, they have ensured for themselves the fear and respect of all about them. Closely united among themselves, the entire community always takes up any matter affecting one of its members. It is to this spirit of association that they owe the religious liberty which they enjoy through all the provinces of the empire. No person would venture, in their presence, to cavil at their religious creed, or their religious practices. They abstain from smoking, from drinking wine, from eating pork, from sitting at table with pagans; and no one presumes to find fault with these peculiarities. They do not even hesitate to contravene the laws of the empire, if these contravene their freedom of worship. In 1840, while we were on our mission to Tartary, the Hœi-Hœi of the town of Hada, built a mosque, or *Li-Pai-Sse* [*li-pai-ssü*], as the Chinese called it. When it was completed, the Mandarins of the place wanted to demolish it, because, contrary to the law, it rose higher than the Tribunal of Justice. Upon this intention becoming known, all the Mussulmen of the locality rose in arms, assembled, swore to prosecute in common a suit against the Mandarins, to impeach them

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at Peking, and never to lay down their arms until they had effected the removal of the offending dignitaries. As in China, money has the preponderant influence in all matters of this kind, the Mussulmen of Hada raised a subscription among all their co-religionists in the empire, and by its means defeated the Mandarins, who had desired to demolish their mosques, and effected their deposition and banishment. We have often asked each other how it was that the Christians in China live in a state of oppression, wholly at the arbitrary disposition of the tribunals, while the Mussulmens march about with heads erect, and constrain the Chinese to respect their religion. It certainly is not because the religion of Mahomet is, more than Christianity, in harmony with Chinese manners; quite the contrary, for the Chinese [Christians] may, without any compromise of their religious duties, live in intimacy with the pagans, eat and drink with them, interchange presents with them, and celebrate in common with them the Festival of the New Year, all which things are forbidden to the Hoi-Hoi by the despotic and exclusive spirit of their religion. No: that the Christians are everywhere oppressed in China is to be attributed to the great isolation in which they live. If one of them is taken before a tribunal, all his brethren in the locality get out of the way, instead of coming in a body to his aid and awing by their numbers the aggressive Mandarins. Now, more especially, that imperial decrees have been issued favourably to Christianity, if the Christians were to rise simultaneously in all parts of the empire, were energetically to assume possession of their rights, giving publicity to their worship, and exercising fearlessly, and in the face of day, their religious practices, we are satisfied that no one would venture to interfere with them. In China, as everywhere else, men are free who manifest the will to be so; and that

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will can only be effectively developed by the spirit of association.

We were now approaching the first day of the Chinese year, and in every direction people were preparing for its celebration. The sentences, written on red paper, which decorate the fronts of houses, were renewed; the shops were filled with purchasers; there was redoubled activity of operations in every quarter, while the children, ever eager to anticipate holidays and entertainments, were discharging, each evening, preliminary fireworks in the streets. Sandara informed us that he could not pass the Festival of the New Year at Tang-Keou-Eul, being obliged to return to the Lamasery, where he had duties to fulfil towards his masters and superiors. He added, that on the third day of the new moon, when he had satisfied all his obligations, he would come back and resume his services. He spoke in a tone of intense kindness, in order to make us forget the daily impertinences he had been guilty of towards us. We did not at all urge him to return. Though delighted at the prospect of renewing our studies with him, we were determined not to seem anxious about the matter, lest we should raise still higher the already preposterous estimate he had of his own importance. We told him that since propriety recalled him to the Lamasery for the first day of the year, he ought by all means to obey the call. We then offered him three rolls of sapeks, saying, according to the custom in such cases, that it was to enable him to drink with his friends a cup of high-coloured tea. For some minutes he feigned that he would not accept the coin, but at last we overcame his exquisite delicacy, and he consented to put the sapeks in his pocket. We then lent him Samdad-chiemba's mule, and he left us.

The last days of the year are ordinarily, with the Chinese, days of anger and of mutual annoyance; for

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having at this period made up their accounts, they are vehemently engaged in getting them in ; and every Chinese being at once creditor and debtor, every Chinese is just now hunting his debtors and hunted by his creditors. He who returns from his neighbour's house, which he has been throwing into utter confusion by his clamorous demands for what that neighbour owes him, finds his own house turned inside out by an uproarious creditor, and so the thing goes round. The whole town is a scene of vociferation, disputation, and fighting. On the last day of the year disorder attains its height ; people rush in all directions with anything they can scratch together, to raise money upon, at the broker's or pawnbroker's, the shops of which tradespeople are absolutely besieged throughout the day with profferers of clothes, bedding, furniture, cooking utensils, and moveables of every description. Those who have already cleared their houses in this way, and yet have not satisfied the demands upon them, post off to their relations and friends to borrow something or other which they vow shall be returned immediately, but which immediately takes its way to the *Tang-Pou*, or pawnbroker's. This species of anarchy continues till midnight ; then, calm resumes its sway. No one, after the twelfth hour has struck, can claim a debt, or even make the slightest allusion to it. You now only hear the words of peace and good-will ; everybody fraternizes with everybody. Those who were just before on the point of twisting their neighbour's neck, now twine their friendly arms about it.

The new year is celebrated in much the same way as in Europe. Everybody dresses as fine as he possibly can ; formal and informal visits are exchanged ; presents circulate ; dinners and parties are given ; people go to see the play, the jugglers and so on. Fireworks startle you at every turn ; there is nothing

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going on but merry-making. After a few days the shops are once more opened, and business imperceptibly resumes its course; at least with those who can carry it on; those who can't, declare themselves bankrupt, or, as the Chinese phrase it, leave the door open.

The Hœi-Hœi do not keep the new year at the same time with the Chinese, for in their special calendar they observe the Hegira of Mahomet. Owing to this circumstance, we passed these days of disorder and tumult in the greatest tranquillity. The epoch assigned for the recovery of debts was, in the place where we lodged, indicated merely by a few disputes, followed immediately by profound quiet. The House of Repose was not even disturbed by fire-works. We availed ourselves of this tranquillity, and of the absence of Sandara, to go thoroughly over our Thibetian lessons. The two dialogues we possessed were analysed, decomposed [parsed], subjected to the intellectual alembic, in every way and in every detail. House-keeping cares occupied, indeed, a portion of our day-time: but we made up for this by borrowing a few hours from the night, an arrangement which did not at all suit our host, who, finding that it involved him in an extra outlay for light, not only cut off our supplies, by removing the oil bottle, but, like the regular Turk he was, put on a charge per diem for light. As we did not choose to be condemned to darkness in this way, we bought a packet of candles, and constructed, with a long nail and the half of a carrot, a candlestick, not remarkable, indeed, for elegance or costliness, but which perfectly fulfilled its office. When the Turk's dole of oil was consumed, we lighted our candle, and we were thus able to give free course to the ardour of our Thibetian studies. Sometimes we would interrupt our labours to indulge in the relaxation of talking about France; and, after this

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rambling for awhile, in spirit, over our dear native land, it was with a certain amount of difficulty only, that we could assume the realities of our position. It seemed strange, impossible almost, that we two should be seated there, amid the silent night, poring over Thibetian characters, in a country well nigh at the extremity of the world, and practically unknown to Europeans.

On the third day of the first moon, Sandara the Bearded reappeared. During his absence we had enjoyed such delightful calm, that his aspect occasioned within us a very painful sensation; we felt like schoolboys alarmed at the approach of a severe preceptor. Sandara, however, was charmingly amiable. After gracefully wishing us a happy new year, in the most paternal, the most sentimental of phraseology, he proceeded to discourse upon the little mule we had lent him. First, on their way out, the little mule had thrown him a dozen times, so that at last he had resolved to walk; but then the creature was so droll, so fantastic in its ways, had so amused him, that he had not had time to grow tired. After this and similar small talk, we proceeded to business. Sandara said, that since we were determined to wait for the Thibetian embassy, he invited us to go and reside meanwhile in the Lamasery, at Kounboum; and thereupon, with his accustomed eloquence, he descanted upon the advantages presented by a Lamasery to men of study and prayer. The proposition met the very wish of our hearts; but we took care not to manifest any enthusiasm in the matter, contenting ourselves with replying, coldly: "Well, we'll see how we like it."

The next day was devoted to the preparations for departure. Not having our camels with us, we hired a car, on which to transport our baggage. In announcing our departure to the host of the House of Repose,

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we claimed our tent, which we had lent him twelve days before, for a pic-nic party that he said he had formed with some friends into the Land of Grass ; he replied, that he would send for it immediately to the friend's house, where it was carefully stowed away. We waited, but in vain ; night came, the tent did not. At last, the host told us that his friend had left home for a day or two, and that the tent was locked up ; but that it should be sent after us as soon as his friend returned. Sandara had hitherto said nothing ; but when night came, and he found that we were not ready, he could no longer restrain his impatience. " It's quite obvious," said he to us, " that you are people altogether of another world ; why don't you understand that your tent is at the pawnbroker's ? " " At the pawnbroker's ? Impossible ! " " It is not at all impossible ; it is considerably more than probable ; the Hoei-Hoei wanted money wherewith to pay his debts at the end of the twelfth moon ; he was delighted to find you with him in the emergency ; he borrowed your tent, and he took it straight—not to the land of Grass, but to the House of Pledges ; and now he hasn't got the money to redeem it with. Just have him up : I'll put the matter to him, and you'll see." We requested the host to come to us. As soon as he entered the chamber, Sandara the Bearded commenced his interrogatory with imposing solemnity. " Listen to me," said he ; " this evening I have a few words to say to you. You are a Turk—I a Lama, yet the laws of reason are the same for both of us. You have taken our tent, and you have carried it to the pawnbroker's ; if you were in an embarrassed position, you did quite right ; we do not reproach you ; but we depart to-morrow, and our tent is not yet here. Which of us has reason on his side ? we in claiming our property, or you in not restoring it ? Do not tell us that the tent is at a friend's : I tell you that it is at the

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pawnbroker's. If, by the time we have drunk this jug of tea, our tent is not brought back, I will myself go to the magistrate to demand that it be given up to us, and we shall see whether a Lama-Dchiahour is to be oppressed by a Turk." By way of peroration to this harangue, Sandara gave such a thump with his fist upon the table that our three cups performed a caper in the air. The Turk had nothing to say, and it was manifest that our tent was really at the pawnbroker's. After a moment's pause, the host assured us that we should have our property immediately, and he entreated us earnestly not to mention the matter abroad, lest it should compromise his establishment. We had scarcely quitted our room, before there arose a grand confusion in the court-yard; the attendants were collecting everything they could lay their hands upon, saddles, bed-clothes, candlesticks, kitchen utensils, wherewith to redeem the tent, which, before we slept, we saw securely packed on the car which was to convey it to the Lamasery.

Next morning, at daybreak, we proceeded on our journey. The country through which we passed is occupied here by the Si-Fan, who lead a nomad life, and merely use the land as pasturage for their cattle,—whereas the Chinese, as in Eastern Tartary, are gradually encroaching upon the desert, building houses, and bringing into cultivation portions of the Land of Grass. Our brief voyage presented nothing remarkable, except, indeed, that in crossing a small river, upon the ice the car turned over and went to pieces. In France, in order to continue our journey, we should have needed a wheelwright and a smith to repair the damage; but fortunately our Phaeton was a Chinese, that is to say, a man who is never at a loss; and, accordingly, with a large stone, some bits of stick, and some ends of rope, he soon put everything to rights, and we merely lost a little time.

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At the distance of a li from the Lamasery we found four Lamas, friends of Sandara, who had come to meet us. Their religious costume, the red scarf that enveloped them, their mitre-shaped yellow caps, their modest mien, the low, grave tones of their voices, all this produced a marked impression upon us, and we felt as though a perfume of religious and cenobitic life was diffused around us. It was past nine in the evening when we reached the first dwellings of the Lamasery. To avoid disturbing the profound silence which reigned everywhere about, the Lamas made the carman stop, and filled with straw the interior of the bells which hung from the horses' necks. We then advanced slowly, and without saying a word, along the calm deserted streets of this great Lamanesque city. The moon was not present ; but the sky was so clear, so pure, and the stars were so brilliant, that we could perfectly distinguish the cottages of the Lamas spread over the sides of the mountain, and the grand, though fantastic outlines of the Buddhist temples, standing out in the air like gigantic phantoms. That which most struck us at the moment, was the majestic and solemn silence which prevailed throughout the Lamasery, and which was interrupted only by the short sleepy bark of some half-wakened dog, like the scream of the sea-eagle, or the melancholy sound of a marine shell marking, at intervals, the watches of the night. We at length reached Sandara's cottage. As it was too late for us to seek a suitable lodging, our teacher gave us up his own habitation, and himself sought the hospitality of a neighbour. The Lamas who had accompanied us did not withdraw until they had made for us some tea with milk, and set before us some mutton, some fresh butter, and some exquisite rolls. We supped with excellent appetite, for we were thoroughly hungry, and, moreover, we experienced in our inmost heart a feeling of

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peculiar contentment, for which it seemed difficult to account.

We attempted to sleep, but it was in vain ; slumber would not come near us ; our minds, indeed, were too full of the strange position in which we now found ourselves. The whole thing appeared quite inconceivable. There were we, in this land of Amdo, unknown to Europe ; in this great Lamasery of Kounboun, so famous, so venerated among Buddhists, in the cell of one of its ablest Lamas, amidst conventual manners although new to us ; all these and analogous considerations whirled through and about the brain, like the vague intangible forms of a dream. We passed the night framing all sorts of plans.

As soon as day began to dawn we were on foot. Around us all was still silent. We offered up our morning prayer, our hearts agitated with sentiments altogether new to us in their peculiar character ; with mingled joy and pride that it had been thus vouchsafed to us to invoke the true God in this famous Lamasery, consecrated to a lying and impious worship. It seemed to us as though we were about to grasp universal Buddhism within the paternal arms of the Christian faith.

Sandara soon made his appearance, and prepared for our breakfast some tea with milk, raisins, and cakes fried in butter. While we were occupied with our meal, he opened a small cupboard, and took out a wooden plate, highly polished, and decorated with gilding and flowers upon a red ground. After wiping it carefully with his scarf, he placed upon it a broad sheet of pink paper, then, upon the paper, he symmetrically arranged four fine pears, which he had directed us to buy at Tang-Keou-Eul, and then he covered the whole with a silk handkerchief, of oblong form, called in these countries *Khata* [*kha-btags*].

## TRAVELS IN TARTARY,

“With this,” said he, “we will go and borrow a lodging for you.”

The *Khata*, or Scarf of Blessings, is so prominent a feature in Thibetian manners that we may as well give an account of it. The *Khata*, then, is a piece of silk, nearly as fine as gauze, and of so very pale a blue as to be almost white. Its length about triples its breadth, and the two extremities are generally fringed. There are *Khatas* of all sizes and all prices, for a *Khata* is an object with which neither poor nor rich can dispense. No one ever moves unless provided with a supply. When you go to pay a visit, when you go to ask a favour, or to acknowledge one, you begin with displaying the *Khata*; you take it in both hands, and offer it to the person whom you desire to honour. When two friends who have not seen each other for a long time, meet, their first proceeding is to interchange a *Khata*; it is as much a matter of course as shaking hands in Europe. When you write, it is usual to enclose a *Khata* in the letter. We cannot exaggerate the importance which the Thibetians, the Si-Fan, the Houng-Mao-Eul, and all the people who dwell towards the western shores of the Blue Sea, attach to the ceremony of the *Khata*. With them, it is the purest and sincerest expression of all the noblest sentiments. The most gracious words, the most magnificent presents go for nothing, if unaccompanied with the *Khata*; whereas, with the *Khata*, the commonest objects become of infinite value. If any one comes, *Khata* in hand, to ask you a favour, to refuse the favour would be a great breach of propriety. This Thibetian custom is very general among the Tartars, and especially in their Lamaseries; and *Khatas* accordingly form a very leading feature of commerce with the Chinese at Tang-Keou-Eul. The Thibetian embassy never passes through the town without purchasing a prodigious number of these articles.

## THIBET, AND CHINA

When we had finished our modest breakfast, we issued forth in search of a lodging. Sandara the Bearded preceded us, bearing gravely on both hands the famous dish of four pears. This proceeding seemed to us so strange, that we were altogether confused, imagining that the entire population would have their eyes fixed upon us. Nothing of the sort: the Lamas, whom we met, passed silently on, without even turning their heads, or paying the slightest attention to us in any way. The little *chabis*, harum-scarum rogues in common with schoolboys all over the world, alone seemed to notice our presence. At last we entered a house. The master was in the court-yard, drying horse-droppings in the sun. Upon perceiving us, he immediately enveloped himself in his scarf, and entered his cell. We followed him thither, and Sandara presented to him the *Kbata* and the plate of pears, accompanying the present with an harangue in the East Thibetian tongue, of which we did not understand one single word. Meanwhile we stood humbly apart, like poor wretches incapable even of soliciting a favour for themselves. When the harangue was completed, the host invited us to seat ourselves on the carpet, presented to each a cup of tea with milk, and told us, in Mongol, that he was rejoiced that strangers, come from such a distance, that Lamas of the Western Heaven, should deign to cast their eyes upon his poor dwelling. Had he understood our European idioms, our answer would have been: Pray don't mention it; but as we had to speak in Mongol, we told him that we had, indeed, come from a great distance, but that, in great measure, we seemed once more at home when we had the good fortune to meet with hospitality such as his. After having sipped the tea, and conversed for a while about France, Rome, the Pope, and the cardinals, we got up, in order to visit the place destined for us, which, for