TRAVELS IN TARTARY THIBET AND CHINA

By M. Huc

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TARTAR AND CHINESE COSTUMES.

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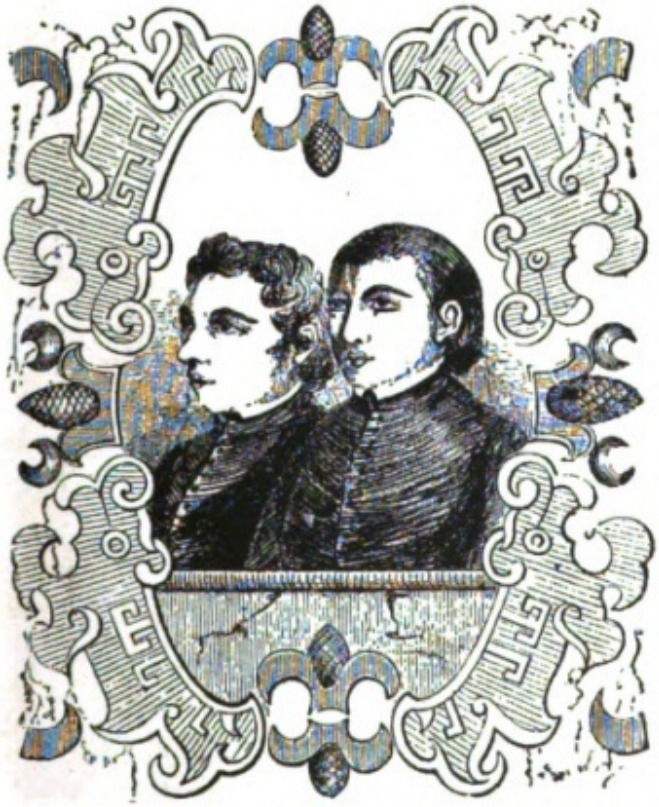
TRAVELS

IN

TARTARY, THIBET, AND CHINA

ILLUSTRATED



MM. GABET AND HUC

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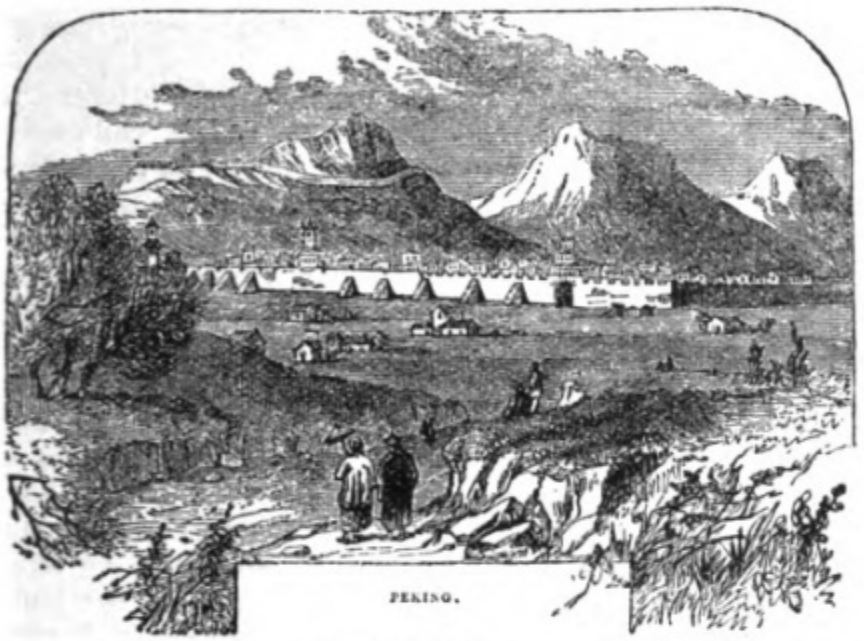

PEKING.

CHAPTER I.

French Mission of Peking—Glance at the Kingdom of *Ouniot* — Preparations for Departure—Tartar-Chinese Inn—Change of Costume—Portrait and Character of Samdadchiemba—*Sain-Oula* (the Good Mountain)—The Frosts on Sain-Oula, and its Robbers—First Encampment in the Desert—Great Imperial Forest—Buddhist monuments on the summit of the mountains—Topography of the Kingdom of *Gechekten*—Character of its Inhabitants—Tragical working of a Mine—Two Mongols desire to have their horoscope taken—Adventure of Samdadchiemba—Environs of the town of *Tolon-Noor*.

THE French mission of Peking, once so flourishing under the early emperors of the Tartar-Mantchou dynasty, was almost extirpated by the constant persecutions of Kai-King, the fifth monarch of that dynasty, who ascended the throne in 1799. The missionaries were dispersed or put to death, and at that time Europe was herself too deeply agitated to enable her to send succor to this distant Christendom, which remained for a time abandoned. Accordingly, when the French Lazarists reappeared at Peking, they found there scarce a

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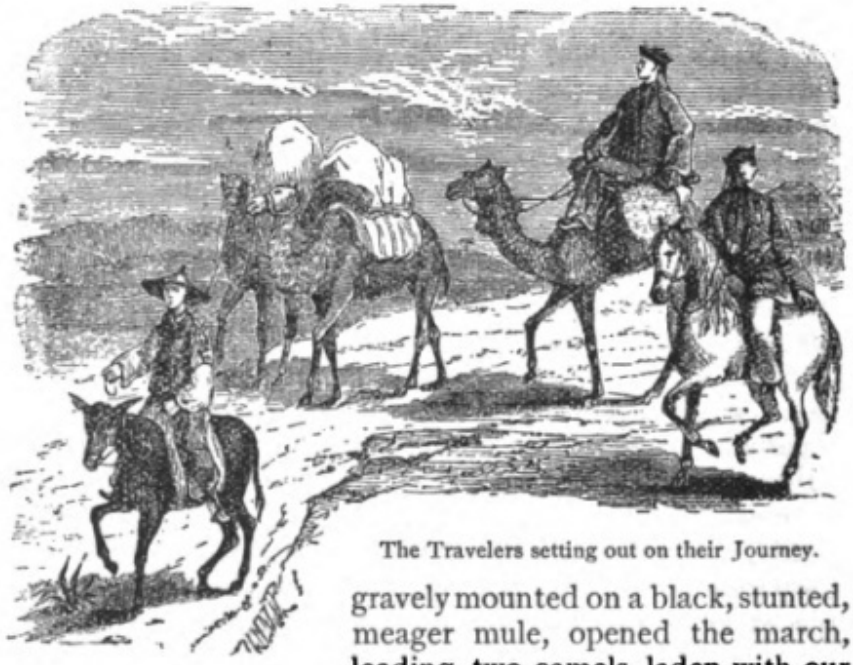
could make the animal obey him, and kneel at his pleasure. Then, again, it was an interesting thing for the Chinese to watch our Lama packing on the camels' backs the baggage of the two missionary travelers. When the arrangements were completed, we drank a cup of tea, and proceeded to the chapel; the Christians recited prayers for our safe journey; we received their farewell, interrupted with tears, and proceeded on our way. Samdadchiemba, our Lama cameleer,



The Travelers setting out on their Journey.

gravely mounted on a black, stunted, meager mule, opened the march, leading two camels laden with our baggage; then came the two missionaries, MM. Gabet and Huc, the former mounted on a tall camel, the latter on a white horse.

Upon our departure we were resolved to lay aside our accustomed usages, and to become regular Tartars. Yet we did not at the outset, and all at once, become exempt from the Chinese system. Besides that, for the first mile or two of our journey, we were escorted by our Chinese Christians, some on foot, and some on horseback, our first stage was to be an inn kept by the Grand Catechist of the Contiguous Defiles.

The progress of our little caravan was not at first wholly successful. We were quite novices in the art of saddling and girthing camels, so that every five minutes we had to

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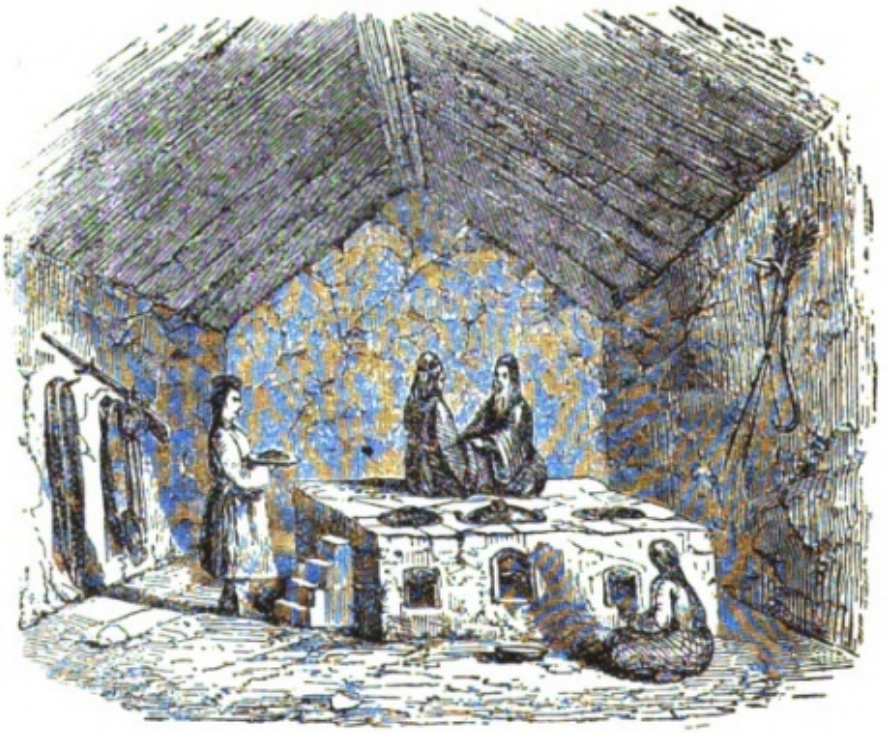

Kang of a Tartar-Chinese Inn.

these monster boilers are heated communicate with the interior of the *Kang*, so that its temperature is constantly maintained at a high elevation, even in the terrible cold of winter. Upon the arrival of guests, the Comptroller of the Chest invites them to ascend the *Kang*, where they seat themselves, their legs crossed tailor-fashion, round a large table, not more than six inches high. The lower part of the room is reserved for the people of the inn, who there busy themselves in keeping up the fire under the caldrons, boiling tea, and pounding oats and buckwheat into flour for the repast of the travelers. The *Kang* of these Tartar-Chinese inns is, till evening, a stage full of animation, where the guests eat, drink, smoke, gamble, dispute, and fight: with nightfall, the refectory, tavern, and gambling-house of the day is suddenly converted into a dormitory. The travelers who have any bed-clothes unroll and arrange them; those who have none, settle themselves as best they may in their personal attire, and lie down, side by side, round the table.

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in his written instructions, being conformable with our wish, we did not hesitate. We resolved to adopt the secular dress of the Thibetian Lamas; that is to say, the dress which they wear when not actually performing their idolatrous ministry in the Pagodas. The costume of the Thibetian Lamas suggested itself to our preference as being in unison with that worn by our young neophyte, Samdadchiemba.

We announced to the Christians of the inn that we were resolved no longer to look like Chinese merchants; that we were about to cut off our long tails, and to shave our heads. This intimation created great agitation: some of our disciples even wept; all sought by their eloquence to divert us from a resolution which seemed to them fraught with danger; but their pathetic remonstrances were of no avail; one touch of a razor, in the hands of Samdadchiemba, sufficed to sever the long tail of hair, which, to accommodate Chinese fashions, we had so carefully cultivated ever since our departure from France. We put on a long yellow robe, fastened at the right side with five gilt buttons, and round the waist by a long red sash; over this was a red jacket, with a collar of purple velvet; a yellow cap, surmounted by a red tuft, completed our new costume. Breakfast followed this decisive operation, but it was silent and sad. When the Comptroller of the Chest brought in some glasses and an urn, wherein smoked the hot wine drunk by the Chinese, we told him

The Missionaries in their Lamanesque Costume.

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decisive character : it exhibited neither the mischievous knavery of the Chinese, nor the frank good-nature of the Tartar, nor the courageous energy of the Thibetian; but was made up of a mixture of all three. Samdadchiemba was a *Dchiahour*. We shall hereafter have occasion to speak more in detail of the native country of our young cameleer.

Samdadchiemba.

At the age of eleven, Samdadchiemba had escaped from his Lamasery, in order to avoid the too frequent and too severe corrections of the master under whom he was more immediately placed. He afterwards passed the greater portion of his vagabond youth, sometimes in the Chinese towns, sometimes in the deserts of Tartary. It is easy to comprehend that this independent course of life had not tended to modify the natural asperity of his character ; his intellect was entirely uncultivated ; but, on the other hand, his muscular power was enormous, and he was not a little vain of this quality, which he took great pleasure in parading. After having been instructed and baptized by M.-Gabet, he had attached himself to the service of the missionaries. The journey we were now undertaking was perfectly in harmony with his erratic and adventurous taste. He was, however, of no mortal service to us as a guide across the deserts of Tartary, for he knew no more of the country than we knew ourselves. Our only informants were a compass, and the excellent map of the Chinese empire by Andriveau-Goujon.

The first portion of our journey, after leaving Yan-Pa-Eul, was accomplished without interruption, sundry anathemas excepted, which were hurled against us as we ascended a mountain, by a party of Chinese merchants, whose mules, upon sight of our camels and our own yellow attire, became frightened, and took to their heels at full speed, dragging

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after them, and in one or two instances, overturning the wagons to which they were harnessed.

The mountain in question is called *Sain-Oula* (Good-Mountain), doubtless *ut lucus a non lucendo*, since it is notorious for the dismal accidents and tragical adventures of which it is the theater. The ascent is by a rough, steep path, half-choked up with fallen rocks. Midway up is a small temple, dedicated to the divinity of the mountain,

Mountain of Sain-Oula.

Sain-Nai, (the Good Old Woman;) the occupant is a priest, whose business it is, from time to time, to fill up the cavities in the road, occasioned by the previous rains, in consideration of which service he receives from each passenger a small gratuity, constituting his revenue. After a toilsome journey of nearly three hours we found ourselves at the summit of the mountain, upon an immense plateau, extending from east to west a long day's journey, and from north to south still more widely. From this summit you discern, afar off in the plains of Tartary, the tents of the Mongols,

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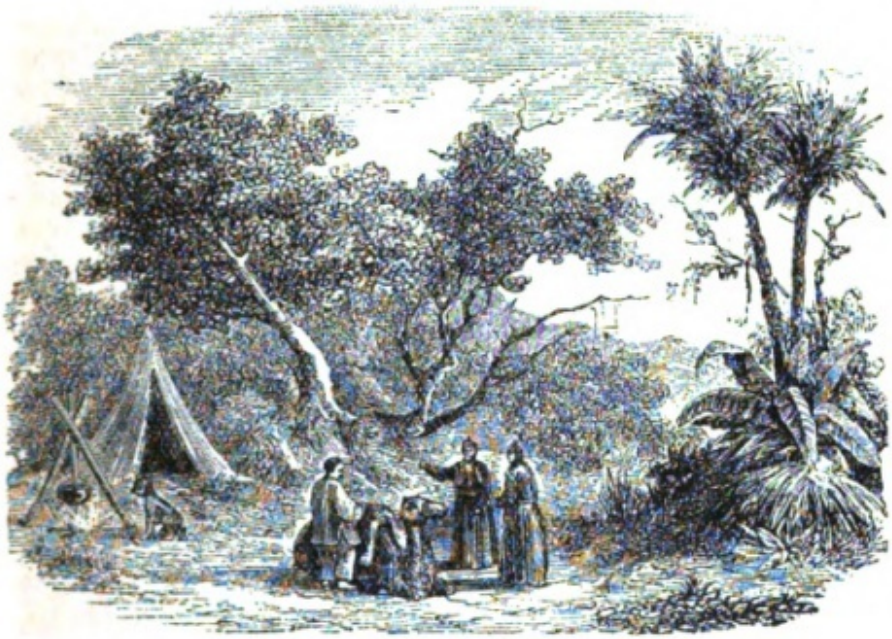

First Encampment.

against whom we must be on our guard. A grassy nook, surrounded by tall trees, appertaining to the Imperial Forest, fulfilled our requisites. Unlading our dromedaries, we raised, with no slight labor, our tent beneath the foliage, and at its entrance installed our faithful porter, Arsalan, a dog whose size, strength, and courage well entitled him to his appellation, which, in the Tartar-Mongol dialect, means, "Lion." Collecting some *argols*[1] and dry branches of trees, our kettle was soon in agitation, and we threw into the boiling water some Kouamien, prepared paste, something like Vermicelli, which, seasoned with some parings of bacon, given us by our friends at Yan-Pa-Eul, we hoped would furnish satisfaction for the hunger that began to gnaw us. No sooner was the repast ready, than each of us, drawing forth from his girdle his wooden cup, filled it with Kouamien, and raised it to his lips. The preparation was detestable—uneatable. The manufacturers of Kouamien always salt it for its longer preservation; but this paste of ours had been salted beyond all endurance. Even Arsalan would not eat the composition. Soaking it for a while in

[1] Dried dung, which constitutes the chief, and indeed in many places the sole fuel in Tartary.

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sometimes sells for as much as a hundred and fifty ounces of silver.

Deer of all kinds abound in the forest; and tigers, bears, wild boars, panthers, and wolves are scarcely less numerous. Woe to the hunters and wood-cutters who venture otherwise than in large parties into the recesses of the forest; they disappear, leaving no vestige behind.

The fear of encountering one of these wild beasts kept us from prolonging our walk. Besides, night was setting in, and we hastened back to our tent. Our first slumber in the desert was peaceful, and next morning early, after a breakfast of oatmeal steeped in tea, we resumed our march along the great *Plateau*. We soon reached the great *Obo*, whither the Tartars resort to worship the Spirit of the Mountain.

Buddhist Monuments.

The monument is simply an enormous pile of stones, heaped up without any order, and surmounted with dried branches of trees, from which hang bones and strips of cloth, on which are inscribed verses in the Thibet and Mongol languages. At its base is a large granite urn in which the devotees burn incense. They offer, besides, pieces of money, which the next Chinese passenger, after sundry ceremonious genuflex-

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and it was only upon the sacrifice of her jewels that she was permitted to proceed. Upon her return home, she reproached the King bitterly for his cowardice. At length,

Military Mandarin.

stung by her words, he assembled the troops of his two banners, and marched against the miners. The engagement which ensued was for a while doubtful; but at length the miners were driven in by the Tartar cavalry, who massacred them without mercy. The bulk of the survivors took refuge in the mine. The Mongols blocked up the apertures with huge stones. The cries of the despairing wretches within were heard for a few days, and then ceased forever. Those of the miners who were taken alive had their eyes put out, and were then dismissed.

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The increasing number of travelers, Tartars and Chinese, whom we now met, indicated the approach to the great town of Tolon-Noor. We already saw in the distance, glittering under the sun's rays, the gilt roofs of two magnificent Lamaseries that stand in the northern suburbs of the town. We journeyed for some time through a succession of cemeteries; for here, as elsewhere, the present generation is surrounded by the ornamental sepulchers of past generations. As we observed the numerous population of that large town, environed as it were by a vast circle of bones and monumental stones, it seemed as though death was continuously engaged in the blockade of life. Here and there, in the vast cemetery which completely encircles the city, we remarked little gardens, where, by dint of extreme labor, a few miserable vegetables were extracted from the earth: leeks, spinach, hard bitter lettuces, and cabbages, which, introduced some years since from Russia, have adapted themselves exceedingly well to the climate of Northern China.

With the exception of these few esculents, the environs of Tolon-Noor produced absolutely nothing whatever. The soil is dry and sandy, and water terribly scarce. It is only here and there that a few limited springs are found, and these are dried up in the hot season.

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City of Tolon-Noor.

CHAPTER II.

Inn at Tolon-Noor—Aspect of the City—Great Foundries of Bells and Idols—Conversation with the Lamas of *Tolon-Noor*—Encampment—Tea-Bricks—Meeting with Queen *Mourguevan*—Taste of the Mongols for Pilgrimages—Violent Storm—Account from a Mongol Chief of the War of the English against China—Topography of the Eight Banners of the *Tchakar*—The Imperial herds—Form and Interior of the Tents—Tartar Manners and Customs—Encampment at the Three Lakes—Nocturnal Apparitions—Samdadchiemba relates the Adventures of his Youth—Gray Squirrels of Tartary—Arrival at *Chabortê*.

Our entrance into the city of Tolon-Noor was fatiguing and full of perplexity; for we knew not where to take up our abode. We wandered about for a long time in a labyrinth of narrow, tortuous streets, encumbered with men and animals and goods. At last we found an inn. We unloaded our dromedaries, deposited the baggage in a small room, foddered the animals, and then, having affixed to the door of our room the padlock which, as is the custom, our landlord gave us for that purpose, we sallied forth in quest of dinner. A triangular flag floating before a house in the next street indicated to our joyful hearts an eating-house.

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and the Tartars invariably are ruined. Tolon-Noor, in fact, is a sort of great pneumatic pump, constantly at work in emptying the pockets of the unlucky Mongols.

The magnificent statues, in bronze and brass, which issue from the great foundries of Tolon-Noor, are celebrated not only throughout Tartary, but in the remotest districts of Thibet. Its immense workshops supply all the countries subject to the worship of Buddha with idols, bells, and vases employed in that idolatry. While we were in the town, a monster statue of Buddha, a present from a friend of Oudchou-Mourdchin to the Talè-Lama, was packed for Thibet, on the backs of six camels. The larger statues are cast in detail, the component parts being afterward soldered together.

Bell and Idol Foundry.

We availed ourselves of our stay at Tolon-Noor to have a figure of Christ constructed on the model of a bronze original which we had brought with us from France. The workmen so marvelously excelled, that it was difficult to distinguish the copy from the original. The Chinese work

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the course of this abrupt and hurried conversation. We were on the banks of a small stream, bordered with brushwood. The chief of the caravan ordered a halt, and the camels formed, as each came up, a circle, in the center of which was drawn up a close carriage upon four wheels. "Sok! sok!" cried the camel drivers, and at the word, and as with one motion, the entire circle of intelligent animals knelt. While numerous tents, taken from their backs, were set up, as it were, by enchantment, two mandarins, decorated with the blue button, approached the carriage, opened the door, and handed out a Tartar lady, covered with a long silk robe. She was the Queen of the Khalkhas repairing in pilgrimage to the famous Lamasery of the Five Towers, in the province of *Chan-Si*. When she saw us, she saluted us with the ordinary form of raising both her hands: "Sirs Lamas," she said, "is this place auspicious for an encampment?" "Royal Pilgrim of Mourguevan," we replied, "you may light your fires here in all security. For ourselves, we must proceed on our way, for the sun was already high when we folded our tent." And so saying, we took our leave of the Tartars of Mourguevan.

Queen of Mourguevan.

Our minds were deeply excited upon beholding this queen

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customed to a life of peace, one would imagine that you would never be reconciled to the terrible trade of a soldier which consists in killing others or being killed yourselves." "Yes, yes, we are shepherds, it is true; but we never forget that we are soldiers also, and that the Eight Banners compose the army of reserve of the Grand Master (the Emperor). You know the rule of the Empire; when the enemy appears, they send against them, first—the *Kitat* soldiers; next, the banners of the *Solon* country are set in motion. If the war is not finished then, all they have to do is to give the signal to the banners of the *Tchakar*, the mere sound of whose march always suffices to reduce the rebels to subjection."

The Emperor Tao-Kouang.

"Were all the banners of Tchakar called together for this southern war?" "Yes, all; at first it was thought a small matter, and every one said that it would never affect the Tchakar. The troops of Kitat went first, but they did nothing; the banners of Solon also marched; but they could not bear the heat of the South;—then the Emperor

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after the calves, make tea in the open air, or prepare milk in various ways ; the men, mounted on fiery horses, and armed with a long pole, gallop about, guiding to the best pastures the great herds of cattle which undulate, in the distance all around, like waves of the sea.

All of a sudden these pictures, so full of animation, disappear, and you see nothing of that which of late was so full of life. Men, tents, herds, all have vanished in the twinkling of an eye. You merely see in the desert heaps of embers, half-extinguished fires, and a few bones, of which birds of prey are disputing the possession. Such are the sole vestiges which announce that a Mongol tribe has just passed that way. If you ask the reason of these abrupt migrations, it is simply this :—the animals having devoured all the grass that grew in the vicinity, the chief had given the signal for departure ; and all the shepherds, folding their tents, had driven their herds before them, and proceded, no matter whither, in search of fresh fields and pastures new.

Tartar Encampment.

After having journeyed the entire day through the delicious prairies of the Red Banner, we halted to encamp for the night in a valley that seemed full of people. We had scarcely alighted, when a number of Tartars approached, and offered their services. After having assisted us to un-

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Interior of a Tartar Tent.

furniture; but strange to say, during our long journey we never saw one of them which seemed to have been recently made. We had occasion to visit Mongol families, where everything bore the mark of easy circumstances, even of affluence, but everywhere alike this singular couch was shabby, and of ancient fabric. But yet it seems made to last forever, and is regularly transmitted from generation to generation.

In the towns where Tartar commerce is carried on, you may hunt through every furniture shop, every broker's, every pawnbroker's, but you meet with not one of these pieces of furniture, new or old.

At the side of the couch, towards the men's quarter, there is ordinarily a small square press, which contains the various odds and ends that serve to set off the custom of this simple people. This chest serves likewise as an altar for a small image of Buddha. The divinity, in wood or copper, is usually in a sitting posture, the legs crossed, and enveloped up to the neck in a scarf of old yellow silk. Nine copper vases, of the size and form of our liquor glasses, are symmetrically arranged before Buddha. It is in these small

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Russian Convent at Peking.

CHAPTER III.

Festival of the Loaves of the Moon—Entertainment in a Mongol tent—*Toolholos*, or Rhapsodists of Tartary—Invocation to Timour—Tartar Education—Industry of the Women.—Mongols in quest of missing animals—Remains of an abandoned City—Road from Peking to Kiaktha—Commerce between China and Russia—Russian Convent at Peking—A Tartar solicits us to cure his mother from a dangerous Illness—Tartar Physicians—The intermittent Fever Devil—Various forms of Sepulture in use among the Mongols—Lamasery of the Five Towers—Obsequies of the Tartar Kings—Origin of the kingdom of Efe—Gymnastic Exercises of the Tartars—Encounter with three Wolves—Mongol Carts.

We arrived at Chaborté on the fifteenth day of the eighth moon, the anniversary of great rejoicings among the Chinese. This festival, known as the *Yué Ping* (Loaves of the Moon), dates from the remotest antiquity. Its original purpose was to honor the moon with superstitious rites. On this solemn day, all labor is suspended; the workmen receive from their employers a present of money; every person puts on his best clothes; and there is merrymaking in every family. Relations and friends interchange cakes of varous sizes, on which is stamped the image of the moon; that is to say, a hare crouching amid a small group of trees.

Since the fourteenth century, this festival has borne a

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Lamasery of the Five Towers.

monastery," he told us, "there is a very lofty mountain, which you must climb by creeping on your hands and feet. Just towards the summit you come to a portico cut in the rock: you lie down on the earth, and look through a small aperture not larger than the bowl of a pipe. It is some time before you can distinguish anything, but by degrees your eye gets used to the place, and you have the happiness of beholding, at length, in the depths of the mountain, the face of the ancient Buddha. He is seated cross-legged, doing nothing. There are around him Lamas of all countries, who are continually paying homage to him."

Whatever you may think of Tokura's narrative, it is certain that the Tartars and the Thibetians have given themselves up to an inconceivable degree of fanaticism, in reference to the Lamasery of the Five Towers. You frequently meet, in the deserts of Tartary, Mongols, carrying on their shoulders the bones of their parents, to the Five Towers, to purchase, almost at its weight in gold, a few feet of earth, whereupon they may raise a small mausoleum. Even the Mongols of Torgot perform journeys occupying a whole

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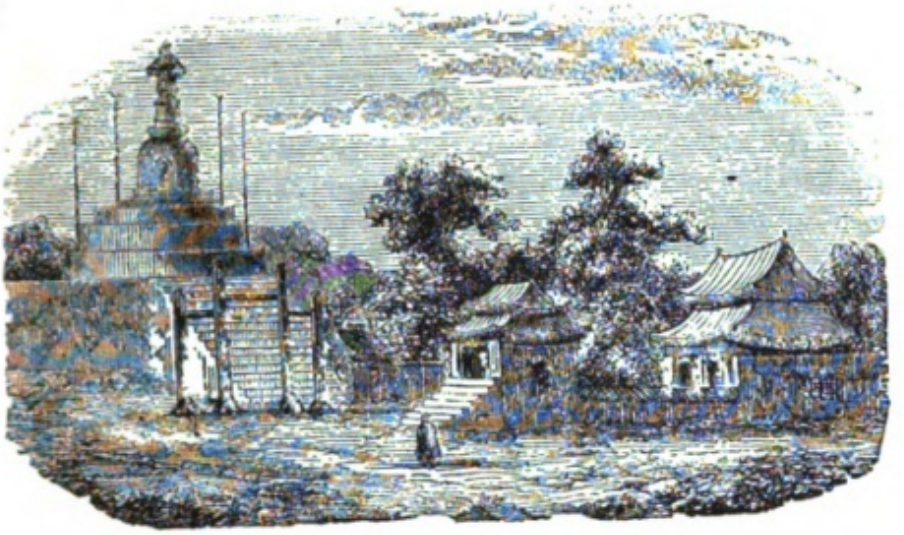

Lamasery of Tchortchi.

CHAPTER IV.

Young Lama converted to Christianity—Lamasery of Tchortchi—Alms for the Construction of Religious Houses—Aspect of the Buddhist Temples—Recitation of Lama Prayers—Decorations, Paintings, and Sculptures of the Buddhist Temples—Topography of the *Great Kouren* in the country of the *Khalkhas*—Journey of the *Guison-Tamba* to Peking—The *Kouren* of the Thousand Lamas—Suit between the Lama-King and his Ministers—Purchase of a Kid—Eagles of Tartary—Western Toumet—Agricultural Tartars—Arrival at the Blue Town—Glance at the Mantchou Nation—Mantchou Literature—State of Christianity in Mantchouria—Topography and productions of Eastern Tartary—Skill of the Mantchous with the Bow.

ALTHOUGH we had never visited the Lamasery of Tchortchi, we, nevertheless, knew a good deal about it from the information that had been given us. It was here that the young Lama was educated who came to teach M. Gabet the Mongol language, and whose conversion to Christianity gave such great hopes for the propagation of the gospel among the Tartar tribes. He was twenty-five years of age when he quitted his Lamasery, in 1837; there he had passed fourteen years in the study of Lama books, and had become well acquainted with Mongol and Mantchou literature. He had as yet but a very superficial knowledge of the Thibetian language. His tutor, an old Lama, well-educated and much respected, not merely in the Lamasery, but throughout the whole extent of the Yellowish Banner, had cherished great

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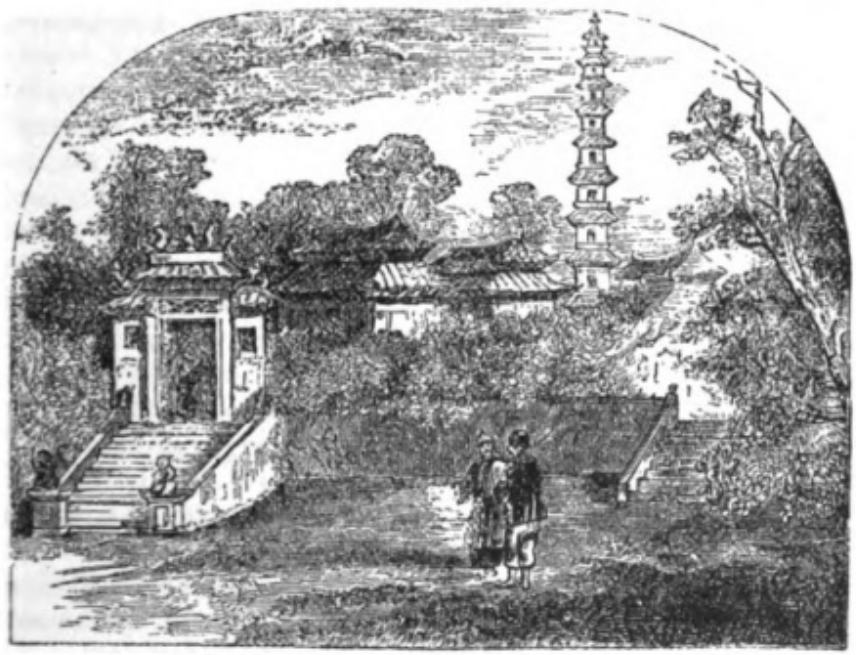
Those grand and sumptuous monuments, so often met with in the desert, are due to the free and spontaneous zeal of the Mongols. So simple and economical in their dress and manner of living, these people are generous, we might say, astonishingly prodigal in all that concerns religious worship and expenditure. When it is resolved to construct a Buddhist temple, surrounded by its Lamasery, Lama collectors go on their way forthwith, provided with passports, attesting the authenticity of their mission. They disperse themselves throughout the kingdom of Tartary, beg alms from tent to tent in the name of the Old Buddha. Upon entering a tent and explaining the object of their journey, by showing



Buddhist Temple.

the sacred basin in which the offerings are placed, they are received with joyful enthusiasm. There is no one but gives something. The rich place in the "badir" ingots of gold and silver; those who do not possess the precious metals, offer oxen, horses, or camels. The poorest contribute according to the extent of their means; they give lumps of butter, furs, ropes made of the hair of camels and horses. Thus, in a short time, are collected immense sums. Then

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Interior of Buddhist Temple.

predominate inside and out, both in carvings and statuary, and the personages represented, with the exception of Buddha, have generally a monstrous and satanic aspect. The clothes seem never to have been made for the persons upon whom they are placed. The idea given is that of broken limbs concealed beneath awkward garments.

Amongst these Lama paintings, however, you sometimes come across specimens by no means destitute of beauty. One day, during a visit in the kingdom of Gechekten to the great temple called *Alton-Somné* (Temple of Gold), we saw a picture which struck us with astonishment. It was a large piece representing, in the center, Buddha seated on a rich carpet. Around this figure, which was of life size, there was a sort of glory, composed of miniatures, allegorically expressing the Thousand Virtues of Buddha. We

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Tartar Agriculturist.

subject their prairies to the ploughshare; they say, how ridiculous is it for men to be always vagabondizing about, and to have merely wretched tents wherein to shelter their heads, when they might so easily build houses, and obtain wealth and comforts of all kinds from the land beneath their feet. And, indeed, the Western Toumetians are perfectly right in preferring the occupation of agriculturist to that of shepherd, for they have magnificent plains, well watered, fertile, and favorable to the production of all kinds of grain crops. When we passed through the country, harvest was over; but the great stacks of corn that we saw in all directions told us that the produce had been abundant and fine. Everything throughout Western Toumet bears the impress of affluence; nowhere, go in what direction you may, do you see the wretched tumble-down houses that disfigure the highways and by-ways of China; nowhere do you see the miserable, half-starved, half-clothed creatures that pain the hearts of travelers in every other country: all the peasants here are well fed, well lodged, and well clothed. All the villages and roads are beautified with groups and avenues of fine trees; whereas, in the other Tartar regions, cultivated

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Chinese Soldier.

established a kingdom. From that time this ferocious and barbarian people insensibly acquired an importance which gave great umbrage to the Court of Peking; and in 1618 its power was so well established, that its king did not fear to transmit to the Emperor of China the statement of seven grievances which, he said, he had to avenge. The daring manifesto finished with these words: "*And in order to avenge these seven injuries, I will reduce and subjugate the dynasty of the Ming.*" Shortly afterwards the empire was convulsed with revolts in all directions; the rebel chief besieged Peking, and took it. Thereupon the Emperor, despairing of his fortune, hanged himself from a tree in the Imperial garden, leaving near him these words, written in

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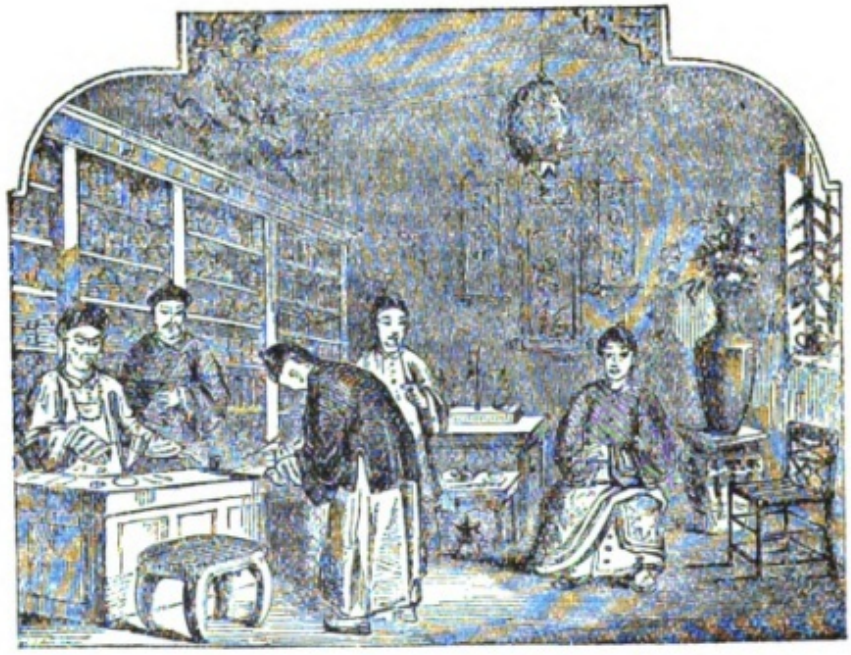

Chinese Money Changers.

CHAPTER V.

The Old Blue Town—Quarter of the Tanners—Knavery of the Chinese Traders—Hotel of the Three Perfections—Spoliation of the Tartars by the Chinese—Money Changer's Office—Tartar Coiner—Purchase of two Sheep-skin Robes—Camel Market—Customs of the Cameleers—Assassination of a Grand Lama of the Blue Town—Insurrection of the Lamaseries—Negotiation between the Court of Peking and that of Lha-Ssa—Domestic Lamas—Wandering Lamas—Lamas in Community—Policy of the Mantchou Dynasty with reference to the Lamaseries—Interview with a Thibetian Lama—Departure from the Blue Town.

FROM the Mantchou town to the Old Blue Town is not more than half an hour's walk, along a broad road, constructed through the large market, which narrowed the town. With the exception of the Lamaseries, which rise above the other buildings, you see before you merely an immense mass of houses and shops huddled confusedly together, without any order or arrangement whatever. The ramparts of the old town still exist in all their integrity; but the increase of the population has compelled the people by degrees to pass this barrier. Houses have risen outside the walls one after another until large suburbs have been formed, and now the extra-mural city is larger than the intra-mural.

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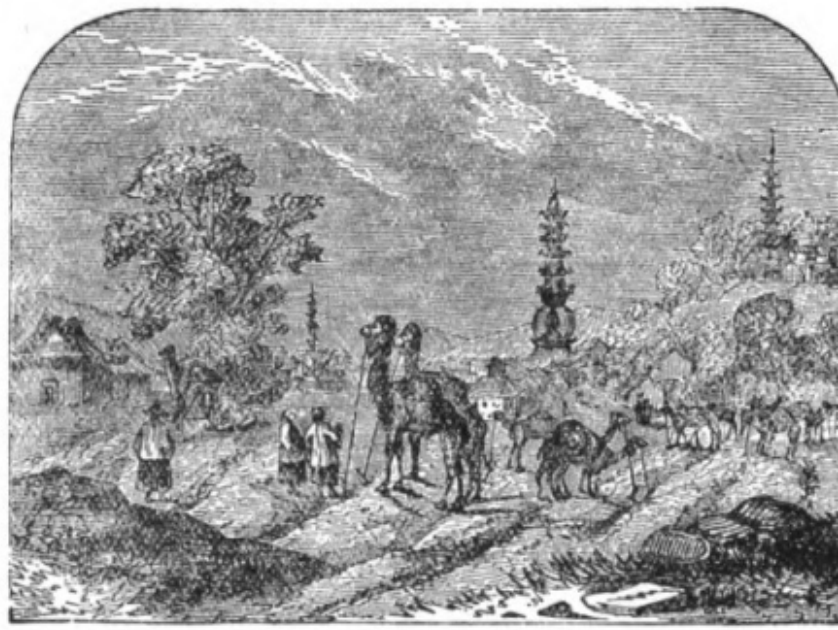

The Camel Market.

number of sapeks, according to the custom of different places.

In the Blue Town there exist five great Lamaseries, each inhabited by more than 2,000 Lamas; besides these, they reckon fifteen less considerable establishments—branches, as it were, of the former. The number of regular Lamas resident in this city may fairly be stated at 20,000. As to those who inhabit the different quarters of the town, engaged in commerce and horse-dealing, they are innumerable. The Lamasery of the Five Towers is the finest and the most famous: here it is that the Hobilgan lives—that is, a Grand Lama—who, after having been identified with the substance of Buddha, has already undergone several times the process of transmigration. He sits here upon the altar once occupied by the Guison-Tamba, having ascended it after a tragical event, which very nearly brought about a revolution in the empire.

The Emperor Khang-Hi, during the great military expedition which he made in the West against the Oelets, one day, in traversing the Blue Town, expressed a wish to pay a visit to the Guison-Tamba, at that time the Grand Lama of the

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Vagabond Lamas.

built around one or more Buddhic temples. These dwellings are more or less large and beautiful, according to the means of the proprietor. The Lamas who live thus in community, are generally more regular than the others; they pay more attention to prayer and study. They are allowed to keep a few animals; some cows to afford them milk and butter, the principal materials of their daily food; horses; and some sheep to be killed on festivals.

Generally speaking, the Lamaseries have endowments, either royal or imperial. At certain periods of the year, the revenues are distributed to the Lamas according to the station which they have obtained in the hierarchy. Those who have the reputation of being learned physicians, or able fortune-tellers, have often the opportunity of acquiring possession of the property of strangers; yet they seldom seem to become rich. A childish and heedless race, they cannot make a moderate use of the riches they acquire; their money goes as quickly as it comes. The same Lama whom you saw yesterday in dirty, torn rags, to-day rivals in the magnificence of his attire the grandeur of the highest dignitaries of the Lamasery. So soon as animals or money

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Tchagan-Kouren.

CHAPTER VI.

A Tartar-eater—Loss of Arsalan—Great Caravan of Camels—Night Arrival at Tchagan-Kouren—We are refused Admission into the Inns—We take up our abode with a Shepherd—Overflow of the Yellow River—Aspect of Tchagan-Kouren—Departure across the Marshes—Hiring a Bark—Arrival on the Banks of the Yellow River—Encampment under the Portico of a Pagoda—Embarkation of the Camels—Passage of the Yellow River—Laborious Journey across the Inundated Country—Encampment on the Banks of the River.

We quitted the Blue Town on the fourth day of the ninth moon. We had already been traveling more than a month. It was with the utmost difficulty that our little caravan could get out of the town. The streets were encumbered with men, cars, animals, stalls in which the traders displayed their goods; we could only advance step by step, and at times we were obliged to come to a halt, and wait for some minutes until the way became a little cleared. It was near noon before we reached the last houses of the town, outside the western gate. There, upon a level road, our camels were at length able to proceed at their ease in all the fulness of their long step. A chain of rugged rocks rising on our right sheltered us so completely from the north wind, that we did not at all feel the rigor of the weather. The country through which we were now traveling was still a

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camels of this immense caravan wore suspended from their necks Thibetian bells, the silvery sound of which produced a musical

harmony which contrasted very agreeably with the sullen taciturn aspect of the drivers. In our progress, however, we contrived to make them break silence from time to time; the roguish Dchiahour attracted their atten-

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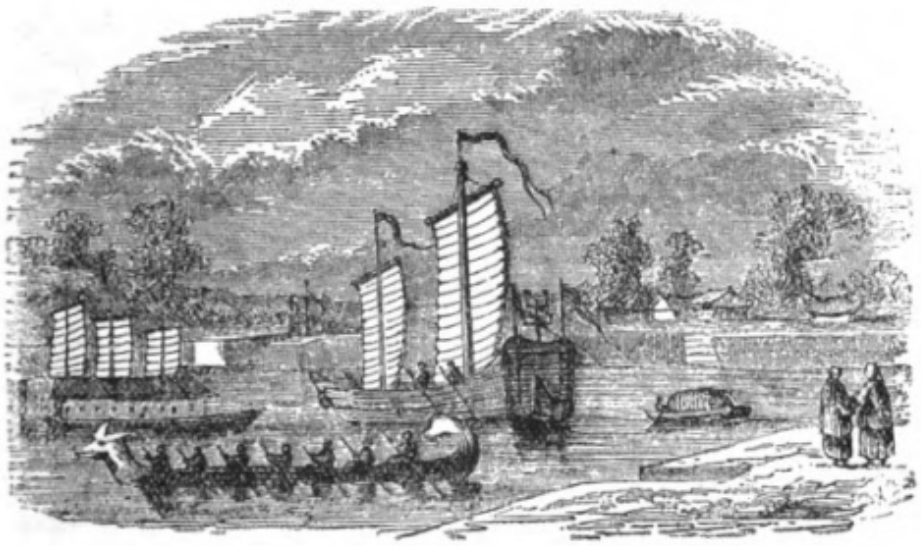
thing is impracticable—the sun is just setting." "You are right; we will cross to-morrow at daybreak: meanwhile, let us settle the price, so that to-morrow we may lose no time in deliberation." The watermen would have preferred waiting till the morrow to discuss this important point, expecting we should offer a much larger sum, when just about to embark. At first their demands were preposterous: happily, there were two boats which competed together, otherwise we should have been ruined. The price was ultimately fixed at 1,000 sapeks. The passage was not



Navigation of the Yellow River.

long, it is true, for the river had nearly resumed its bed; but the waters were very rapid, and, moreover, the camels had to ride. The amount enormous in itself, appeared, upon the whole, moderate, considering the difficulty and trouble of the passage. This business arranged, we considered how we should pass the night. We could not think of seeking an asylum in the fishermen's cabins; even if they had been sufficiently large, we should have had a considerable objection to place our effects in the hands of these folks. We were sufficiently acquainted with the Chinese not to trust to their honesty. We looked out for a place whereon to set up our tent; but we could find nowhere a spot sufficiently dry: mud or stagnant water covered the ground in all directions. About a hundred yards from the

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Waterfowl and Birds of Passage.

CHAPTER VII.

Mercurial Preparation for the Destruction of Lice—Dirtiness of the Mongols—Lama Notions about the Metempsychosis—Washing—Regulations of Nomadic Life—Aquatic and Passage Birds—The Yuen-Yang—The Dragon's Foot—Fishermen of the Paga-Gol—Fishing Party—Fisherman Bit by a Dog—Kou-Kouo, or, St. Ignatius's Bean—Preparations for Departure—Passage of the Paga-Gol—Dangers of the Voyage—Devotion of Samdadchiemba—The Prime Minister of the King of the Ortous—Encampment.

UPON taking possession of our post our first business was to excavate a ditch round the tent, in order that, should rain occur, the water might be carried into a pond below. The excavated earth served to make a mound round the tent; and, within, the pack-saddles and furniture of the camels formed very comfortable bedsteads for us. Having mode our new habitation as neat as possible, the next business was to make our persons neat also.

We had now been traveling for nearly six weeks, and still wore the same clothing we had assumed on our departure. The incessant pricklings with which we were harassed, sufficiently indicated that our attire was peopled with the filthy vermin to which the Chinese and Tartars are famili-

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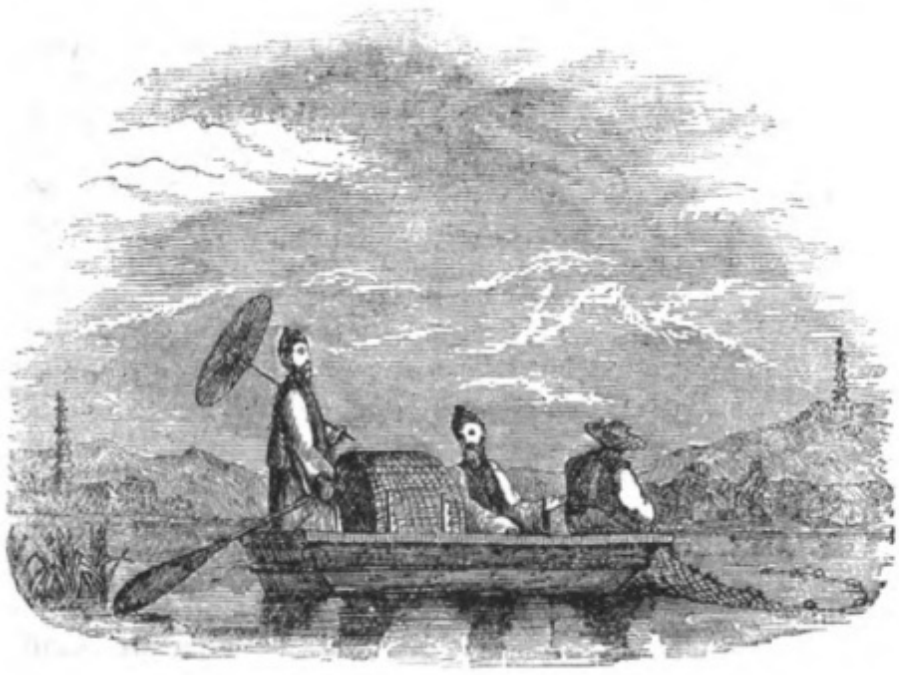
accept the benefit you propose." Hereupon we sat down in a corner of his rustic hearth to wait until he had taken his repast. The meal of the fisherman was as short as the preparations for it had been hasty. When the tea was sufficiently boiled, he poured out a basin full of it; threw into this a handful of oatmeal, which he partially kneaded with his forefinger; and then, after having pressed it a little, and rolled it into a sort of cake, he swallowed it without any other preparation. After having three or four times repeated the same operation, the dinner was at an



Fishing Party.

end. This manner of living had nothing in it to excite our curiosity; having adopted the nomad way of living, a sufficiently long experience had made it familiar to us.

We entered his small boat and proceeded to enjoy the pleasure of fishing. After having relished for some moments the delight of a quiet sail on the tranquil water, smooth and unbroken as glass, through troops of cormorants and wild geese, which were disporting on the surface of the expanse, and which, half running, half flying, made a free passage for us as we advanced, we reached the place where

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Election of a Living Buddha.

CHAPTER VIII.

Glance at the Country of the Ortous—Cultivated Lands—Sterile, sandy steppes of the Ortous—Form of the Tartar-Mongol Government—Nobility—Slavery—A small Lamasery—Election and Enthronization of a Living Buddha—Discipline of the Lamaseries—Lama Studies—Violent Storm—Shelter in some Artificial Grottoes—Tartar concealed in a Cavern—Tartaro-Chinese Anecdote—Ceremonies of Tartar Marriages—Polygamy—Divorce—Character and Costume of the Mongol Women.

THE sun was already very high when we rose. On leaving the tent we looked round us, in order to get acquainted with this new country, which the darkness of the preceding evening had not allowed us to examine. It appeared to us dismal and arid; but we were happy, on any terms, to lose sight of bogs and swamps. We had left behind us the Yellow River, with its overflowing waters, and entered the sandy steppes of Ortous.

The land of Ortous is divided into seven banners; it extends a hundred leagues from east to west, and seventy from south to north. It is surrounded by the Yellow River on the west, east, and north, and by the Great Wall on

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The Steppes of Ortous.

on their hind legs, pricked up their ears, and looked at us as we passed with the utmost indifference. The fact is, these animals feel perfectly secure, for, with the exception of a few Mongols who follow the chase, nobody ever molests them.

The herds of the Tartars of the Ortous are not very numerous, and are quite different from those which feed on the rich pastures of the Tchakar, or of Gechekten. The cattle and horses appeared very miserable; the goats, sheep, and camels, however, looked very well, which is undoubtedly the consequence of their predilection for plants impregnated with saltpeter, whereas cattle and horses prefer fresh pastures, and pure and abundant water.

The Mongols of Ortous are very much affected by the wretchedness of the soil upon which they live. In the course of our journey we saw no indication that they had become much richer than they were in the time of the Emperor Khang-Hi. Most of them live in tents made of some rags of felt, or of goat-skins framed on a wretched woodwork. Everything about these tents is so old and dirty, so tattered with time and storms, that you would with difficulty suppose they could serve as abodes for human beings. Whenever we happened to pitch our tent near these poor habitations, we were sure to be visited by a crowd of

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Caves of the Ortous,

energy, climbed up an eminence, which commanded a view of the contiguous defile, and discovered a footpath, leading by a thousand sinuosities into the depths of the immense ravine; he pursued its direction, and after a few steps in the hollow, perceived in the sides of the mountain large openings, like doors. At this sight recovering at once his courage and his strength, he ascended once more the eminence in order to communicate the good news to his companions. "We are saved," he cried; "there are caves in this defile; let us hasten to take refuge in them." These words immediately aroused the little caravan; we left our animals upon the hill, and speedily descended into the ravine. A footpath led to the opening; we advanced our heads, and discovered in the interior of the mountain, not simple caves formed by nature, but fine, spacious apartments excavated by the hand of man. Our first exclamation was an expression of thankfulness for the goodness of Providence. We selected the cleanest and largest of these caverns, and in an instant passed from the utmost misery

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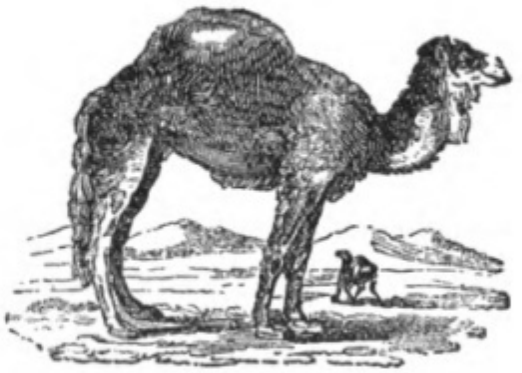
and silver, pearls, coral, and a thousand other toys, the form and quality of which it would be difficult for us to define, as we had neither opportunity, nor taste, nor patience to pay serious attention to these futilities.



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Barbarous Lamanesque Ceremony.

CHAPTER IX.

Departure of the Caravan—Encampment in a fertile Valley—Intensity of the Cold—Meeting with numerous Pilgrims—Barbarous and Diabolical Ceremonies of Lamaism—Project for the Lamasery of Rache-Tchurin—Dispersion and rallying of the little Caravan—Anger of Samdadchiemba—Aspect of the Lamasery of Rache-Tchurin—Different Kinds of Pilgrimages around the Lamaseries—Turning Prayers—Quarrel between two Lamas—Similarity of the Soil—Description of the Tabsoun-Noor or Salt Sea—Remarks on the Camels of Tartary.

THE Tartar who had just taken his leave had informed us, that at a short distance from the caverns we should find in a vale the finest pasturage in the whole country of the Ortous. We resolved to depart. It was near noon already when we started. The sky was clear, the sun brilliant; but the temperature, still affected by the storm of the preceding day, was cold and sharp. After having traveled for nearly two hours over a sandy soil, deeply furrowed by the streams

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