

CHAPTER XIX

THE END

A-TUN-TZU is a town of four hundred families, half Chinese and half Tibetan, at an elevation of 10,310 feet. The country is nominally under Tibetan princes to whom the Chinese have granted the rank of t'u-ssu. But they have no power. The northern prince rules the country from Yakalo to Dong, the next stage north. According to Monsieur Perronne, a French musk merchant who had lived here for twenty years, the Tibetans of these parts prefer Chinese to Tibetan rule, as the Chinese at any rate pay something, whilst the Lamas pay nothing. Also the Lamas are constantly fighting among themselves, and there is a vendetta between the chiefs, whilst the Chinese do keep some sort of order. The southern prince rules some way south down the Mekong. A third t'u-ssu is a Mosu who resides at Yeh-chih.

Trade was very bad. The Chinese were gambling and letting things go. Chinese rupees were current here. Pereira found among the rupees one of the East India Company of William IV., 1835. There was a bad habit here of cutting the rupees in half, and often people would not take what they considered the smaller half.

Monsieur Perronne said that the Mekong and