

Wutsung published an edict, still extant, denouncing the increase of Buddhist monks, nuns, and convents, and ordering the destruction of 4600 great monasteries, the 260,000 inmates of which were to return to civil life. 40,000 minor monasteries scattered about the country were also to be demolished, the lands attaching to them to be resumed by the state, and 150,000 slaves belonging to the bonzes to be admitted to civil privilege and duties. The edict also directs that foreign bonzes who had come to China to make known the law prevailing in their countries, whether that of TATHSIN or of MUHUPA, amounting to some 3000, should also return to secular life, and cease to corrupt the institutions of the Central Flowery Kingdom.¹

71. A century later, Christianity in China seems to have fallen to a very low ebb, though probably not quite to zero as the next information on the subject would imply. This is derived from a circumstance noted by an Arabian author, Mahomed, the son of Isaac, surnamed Abulfaraj, who says:—"In the year 377 (A.D. 987), behind the church in the Christian quarter (of Baghdad), I fell in with a certain monk of Najran, who seven years before had been sent to China by the Catholicos, with five other ecclesiastics, to bring the affairs of Christianity in that country into order. He was a man still young, and of a pleasant countenance, but of few words, opening his mouth only to answer questions. I asked him about his travels, and he told me that Christianity had become quite extinct in China. The Christians had perished in various ways; their Church had been destroyed; and but one Christian remained in the land. The monk, finding nobody whom he could aid with his ministry, had come back faster than he went."²

¹ Pauthier (*de l'Auth.*, pp. 69-71) takes *Muhupa* for the Ma'bar of Southern India, and thinks that offshoots of the St. Thomas Christians are meant. But it may be questioned whether the name *Ma'bar* as applied to a country of Southern India occurs so early by some centuries. The opinion of Gaubil, quoted by Pauthier, that the *Mubids* or Guebers of Persia were meant, seems more probable. It will be recollected that Abu Zaid mentions among the foreigners slaughtered at Khanfu in 878 *Magians* as well as Mahomedans, Christians, and Jews (*supra*, p. lxxx).

² *Reinaud's Abulfeda*, i, cccii; also *N. Annales des Voyages* for 1846, iv, 90; and *Pauth. Auth.*, p. 95; also *Mosheim*, p. 13. The passage had pre-