

well as in Manchuria and the countries bordering on Corea. Polo's contemporary Hayton also testifies to the number of great and noble Tartars in the Uigur country who held firm to the faith of Christ.¹ As regards the spread of Nestorian Christianity in China Proper at this period we do not find in Polo so many definite statements, though various general allusions which he makes to Christians in the country testify to their existence. He also speaks of them specifically in the remote province of Yunan, and at Chinkiangfu, where they had two churches, built in the traveller's own day by Mar Sergius, a Christian officer who was governor there. Their number and influence in China at the end of the thirteenth century may also be gathered from the letter of John of Monte Corvino (p. 198 *seqq.*) in this volume; and in the first part of the following century from the report of the Archbishop of Soltania, who describes them as more than thirty thousand in number, and passing rich people. Probably there was a considerable increase in their numbers about this time, for Odoric, about 1324, found three Nestorian churches in the city of Yangcheu, where Marco would probably have mentioned them had they existed in his time. That Christians continued to rise in influence during the short remainder of the Mongol reign appears probable from the position which we find the Christian Alans to occupy in the empire at the time of the visit of John Marignolli.

74. That the Nestorians continued to exist in China or on its frontiers during the fifteenth century we shall see hereafter from the brief records of a mission which they appear to have sent to Rome in the time of Pope Eugenius IV. Even till near the end of that century a metropolitan of China continued to be constituted, though we know not if he resided in the country. In the case of John, who was nominated Metropolitan of *Masin* (Mahachin) in 1490, the charge seems to have been united with that of India, and therefore as regards China we may conjecture that the title had ceased to have more of practical meaning than the *Sodor* of the English bishop of Sodor and Man.²

¹ V. 2nd chapter of Hayton's Hist. "*De Regno Tarsiae*."

² See *Assem.*, pp. 439, 523.