

come forward to view the game that has been killed and to recover the arrows that they had shot (which they can well do by the marks on them); and every one has what his arrow has struck. And such is the order of the Khan's hunting.¹

42. Concerning the four great feasts that the Khan keepeth.

Every year that emperor keepeth four great feasts, to wit, the day of his birth, that of his circumcision,² and so forth. To these festivals he summons all his barons and all his players, and all his kinsfolk; and all these have their established places at the festival. But it is especially at the days of his birth and circumcision that he expects all to attend. And when summoned to such a festival all the barons come with their coronets on, whilst the emperor is seated on his throne as has been described above, and all the barons are ranged in order in their appointed places. Now these barons are arrayed in divers colours; for some, who are the first in order, wear green silk; the second are clothed in crimson: the third in yellow. And all these have coronets on their heads, and each holds in his hand a white ivory tablet³ and wears a golden girdle of half a span in breadth;

¹ Father Ripa's account of the Emperor Kanghi's hunting in the last century closely resembles this; and so does the historian Mirkhond's of the great hunts maintained by the Mongol sovereigns in accordance with the Yasa or Ordinances of Chinghiz. (*Not. et Extraits*, v, 212).

² The statement of the four feasts from MIN. RAM. is probably more correct. "The first is for his birthday; the second for the day of his coronation; the third for the day of his marriage when he took the Queen to wife; the fourth for the birthday of his first-born son." No Mongol Khan of Cathay ever professed Islam, though the Khans of the three Western Empires all adopted it in succession. Buddhism was the state religion of Kublai and his house from about 1260, when he formally adopted it.

³ Rubruquis, speaking of certain envoys of a Corean nation whom he saw at the court of Karakorum, says: "The principal envoy had in his hand a tablet of polished ivory, about a cubit long by a palm broad, and whenever he addressed the Khan or any other great personage he kept his eyes fixed on this tablet, looking neither right nor left, as if he read there what he had to say" (p. 290). The use of this tablet, called *Kwei*, was a very ancient Chinese etiquette. It is mentioned in Demailla's ver-