

with white horses. And a voice is heard calling, "Such an one of such a family to present so many hundreds of white horses to the lord"; and then some of them come forward saying that they bring two hundred horses (say) to offer to the lord, which are ready before the palace. And 'tis something incredible the number of white horses which are presented to the lord on such an occasion.¹ And then come barons to offer presents of different kinds on behalf of the other barons of the empire; and all the superiors of the monasteries likewise come with presents to the Khan, and are in duty bound to give him their benison. And this also do we Minor Friars. And when all this ceremony has been gone through, then come certain singing men before him, and also certain singing women who sing so sweetly that it is quite delightful to listen to them [and this pleased me most of all].² Then come mummers leading lions whom they cause to salute the lord with a reverence.³ And jugglers cause cups of gold full of good wine to fly through the air and offer themselves to the lips of all who list to drink of it.⁴ Such

¹ Polo says 100,000 white horses were presented to the Khan on new years' day. The Tartar chiefs continued, at least to the time of Kanghi to present a tribute of white horses to the emperor. (*Huc and Gabet*, Eng. Tr. 239).

² HAK.

³ The same is mentioned by Polo, i, 18.

⁴ Says Marco, "When the monarch sits at table in his hall of state, and the cups are ten paces distant, full of wine, milk, and other beverages, they cause them by their magical spells to rise from the pavement, and place themselves before the prince, without anyone touching them; this is done in the presence of 10,000 men: and the fact is real and true, without any lie" (i, 24; see also i, 7). This must have been a very ancient Eastern juggle. At the collation given by the Brachmans to the king of their country in presence of Apollonius of Tyana, the company were served by tripods which handed round the wines and dishes spontaneously. (*Philostratus*, Fr. tr. iii, c, 27).

So Homer also tells of Vulcan's art: *Iliad*, xviii, 373 in Pope's version:

"That day no common task his labour claimed;
Full twenty tripods for his hall he framed,
That placed on living wheels of massy gold
(Wondrous to tell) instinct with spirit rolled
From place to place around the blest abodes,
Self-moved, obedient to the beck of gods."