

province which is called KANSAN,¹ and that is the second best province in the world, and the best populated. For where it is most narrow it hath a width of fifty days' journey, and its length is more than sixty. And everywhere it has such a population that when you go forth from the gate of one city you already see the gate of another. And it hath also great store of victuals, but above all of chestnuts. Rhubarb likewise grows in this province, and that in such abundance that you may load an ass with it for less than six groats. And this province is one of the twelve divisions of the empire of the Great Khan.

45. Concerning the realm of Tibet, where dwelleth the Pope of the Idolaters.

Quitting this province, I came to a certain great kingdom called TIBET, which is on the confines of India Proper, and is subject to the Great Khan. They have in it great plenty of bread and wine as anywhere in the world. The folk of that country dwell in tents made of black felt. But the chief and royal city is all built with walls of black and white, and all its streets are very well paved.² In this city no one shall

¹ This great and populous province, one of the twelve, abounding in chesnuts and in rhubarb, is undoubtedly the Quengianfu of Polo, governed in his time by Mangala, the son of Kublai (i, 39). The Kansan of Odoric and Quengian of Marco represent the name Kenchán or Kenján, which was applied by the Mahomedans, as we gather from Rashideddin, to the city of Singanfu, and to the province under its government. Previously to 1285 this province embraced not only Shensi and a large part of Kansu but the whole of Szechuen. And I suspect it was of this greater province that Odoric had heard those great dimensions which he states. Szechuen is noted for its chesnuts (*Martini*, p. 87), and Shensi for rhubarb. (See *Klaproth in Jour. As.*, ser. 2, i, 102-3.)

Odoric's expressions as to the populousness of this territory resemble those of Martini as to the empire in general:—"I have often thought that if the great wall surrounded the whole of China, this great country would be like one great city, full of houses and inhabitants; for you no sooner quit one place closely cultivated and densely peopled, than you find yourself entering another which is equally so" (p. 17).

² This no doubt was Lhasa. The only account of that city that I know