

aloud, saying "Behold! the man is a saint! For the angels of God come and carry him to Paradise." And in this way the son deems himself to be honoured in no small degree, seeing that his father is borne off in this creditable manner by the angels. And so he takes his father's head, and straightway cooks it and eats it; and of the skull he maketh a goblet, from which he and all of the family always drink devoutly to the memory of the deceased father. And they say that by acting in this way they show their great respect for their father. And many other preposterous and abominable customs have they.

46. Of a rich man in Manzi, and how he was fed by fifty maidens.

When I was still in the province of Manzi, I passed by the foot of the palace wall of a certain burgess whose manner of life is thus. He hath fifty damsels, virgins, who wait on him continually; and when he goeth to dinner and taketh his seat at table the dishes are brought to him by fives and fives, those virgins carrying them in with singing of songs and the music of many kinds of instruments. And they also feed him as if he were a pet sparrow, putting the food into his mouth, singing before him continually until those dishes be disposed of. Then other five dishes are brought by other five maidens, with other songs and kinds of music, whilst the first maidens retire. And thus he leadeth his life daily until he shall have lived it out.¹ Now this man hath a revenue of xxx *tuman* of *tagars* of rice. And each *tuman* is ten thousand, and each *tagar* is the amount of a heavy ass-load.² The court of the palace in which he dwells hath an

¹ There are some things in this quaint story which Odoric heard in Mangi, resembling what Marco tells of the splendid effeminacy of the dethroned king of that country. The idea of being served only by a company of musical maidens was set forth not long ago in a novel by Mr. Peacock as realized in an English country house. The description of the demesne, and reference to hills of gold, etc., reminds us of the accounts of the island called *Kinshan* or Golden Hill in the Yangtse Kiang.

² *Taghár* (*Turk.* and *Pers.*), "a large sack, of which horsemen carry a