

even to the borders of the Moal. And at this time there was a certain Chingis a blacksmith among the tribe of Moal, and he took to lifting the cattle of Unc Cham whenever he had a chance, so that great complaints were made by the herdsmen of Unc Cham to their lord. So Unc got together an army and made a raid into the land of the Moal denouncing Chingis, and the latter fled into the land of the Tartars and hid himself there," etc.

In this passage we have the two sources of the story of Prester John, to which we have alluded, mixed up together, as will be seen by a short statement of the histories referred to.

The empire of Kara Khitai was founded by a prince of the Khitan dynasty of Leao, who escaped with a body of followers from Northern China, on the overthrow of that dynasty by the Kin in the beginning of the twelfth century. This chief, called by the Chinese Yeliu Tashi, and by Rashideddin, Fushi Taifu, was well received by the Uigurs, and some others of the tribes west of the desert who had been subject to the Khitan empire. Gathering an army, he commenced a course of conquests which eventually extended over the whole of Eastern and Western Turkestan, including Khwarizm. In 1125 he took the title of Gur-Khan, or Universal Khan, fixing his residence at Bela-Sagun, and establishing the Buddhist faith, to which he adhered, as dominant in this new empire, which was known as Kara Khitai. A son and grandson successively occupied the throne after him; and the latter was still reigning in 1208, when the son of the last Khan of the Christian tribe of Naimans sought and found shelter at the court of Kara Khitai, and received the daughter of the Gur-Khan in marriage. But he formed a plot to displace his benefactor, and was eventually successful in capturing him, and in mastering a large part of his dominions: he abandoned Christianity for Buddhism at the persuasion of his wife, and eventually was attacked by the Mongols under Chinghiz in 1218, and slain in the mountains of Badakshan.<sup>1</sup>

Here we see not only the source of a part of the story of Rubruquis, the domination of Coir Cham (the Gur-Khan) over Kara Khitai, and the usurpation of the chief of the Naiman

<sup>1</sup> *D'Ohsson*, i, 163, *seq.*; 441, *seq.*