

And a case occurred in my own experience at KAMUL,<sup>1</sup> when many Tartars and people of other nations, on their first conversion, refused to be baptized unless we would swear that after their baptism we should exact no temporalities from them; nay, on the contrary, that we should provide for their poor out of our own means. This we did, and a multitude of both sexes in that city did then most gladly receive baptism. 'Tis a doubtful question, but with submission to the Church's better judgment I would use no compulsion.

After sundry chapters about the *Foundation of Rome* and the like, we come at last to the *Prologue or Preface* (!) viz., to the actual Bohemian history. 'Tis a wonderful specimen of rigmarole, addressed to the emperor, in which the author shows the reluctance of a man entering a shower-bath in January to commit himself to the essential part of his task. The history affords none of the reminiscences which we seek for extract: a few notices of interest remain however to be gathered from his third book, which he calls *Ierarchicus*.

Thus, in speaking of circumcision, he says:

Talking on this matter with some of the more intelligent Jews who were friends of mine (at least as far as Jews can be friends with a Christian), they observed to me that the general law in question could never be fulfilled except with a very sharp razor, either of steel or of some nobler metal, such as bronze or gold. And they agreed with the dictum of Aristotle in his book of Problems, when he expressly asserts that cuts made with a knife of bronze or gold are healed more quickly than such as are made with a steel instrument. And this accords with the practice of the surgeons of Cathay, as I have seen.

<sup>1</sup> Kamul, Komul, or Kamil, the Hami of the Chinese, and the station at which the routes eastward from the north and the south sides of the Thian Shan converge, and from which travellers generally start to cross the desert before entering China (see *Polo*, ii, 36; and Benedict Goës, *infra*). The people of Kamil were all Buddhists in Marco Polo's time. In 1419 Shah Rukh's envoys found there the mosque and Buddhist temple side by side.