

and so he left them at liberty to maintain their naughty custom. And they always have kept it up, and do so still.

Now let us quit Camul, and I will tell you of another province which lies between north-west and north, and belongs to the Great Kaan.

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NOTE 1.—Kamul (or Komul) does not fall into the great line of travel towards Cathay which Marco is following. His notice of it, and of the next province, forms a digression like that which he has already made to Samarkand. It appears very doubtful if Marco himself had visited it; his father and uncle may have done so on their first journey, as one of the chief routes to Northern China from Western Asia lies through this city, and has done so for many centuries. This was the route described by Pegolotti as that of the Italian traders in the century following Polo; it was that followed by Marignolli, by the envoys of Shah Rukh at a later date, and at a much later by Benedict Goës. The people were in Polo's time apparently Buddhist, as the Uighúrs inhabiting this region had been from an old date: in Shah Rukh's time (1420) we find a mosque and a great Buddhist Temple cheek by jowl; whilst Ramusio's friend Hajji Mahomed (*circa* 1550) speaks of Kamul as the first Mahomedan city met with in travelling from China.

Kamul stands on an oasis carefully cultivated by aid of reservoirs for irrigation, and is noted in China for its rice and for some of its fruits, especially melons and grapes. It is still a place of some consequence, standing near the bifurcation of two great roads from China, one passing north and the other south of the Thian Shan, and it was the site of the Chinese Commissariat depôts for the garrisons to the westward. It was lost to the Chinese in 1867.

Kamul appears to have been the see of a Nestorian bishop. A Bishop of Kamul is mentioned as present at the inauguration of the Catholicos Denha in 1266. (*Russians in Cent. Asia*, 129; *Ritter*, II. 357 *seqq.*; *Cathay, passim*; *Assemani*, II. 455-456.)

[*Kamul* is the Turkish name of the province called by the Mongols *Khamil*, by the Chinese *Hami*; the latter name is found for the first time in the *Yuen Shi*, but it is first mentioned in Chinese history in the 1st century of our Era under the name of *I-wu-lu* or *I-wu* (*Bretschneider, Med. Res.* II. p. 20); after the death of Chinghiz, it belonged to his son Chagataï. From the Great Wall, at the Pass of Kia Yü, to Hami there is a distance of 1470 *li*. (*C. Imbault-Huart. Le Pays de Hami ou Khamil . . . d'après les auteurs chinois, Bul. de Géog. hist. et desc.*, Paris, 1892, pp. 121-195.) The Chinese general Chang Yao was in 1877 at Hami, which had submitted in 1867 to the Athalik Ghazi, and made it the basis of his operations against the small towns of Chightam and Pidjam, and Yakúb Khan himself stationed at Turfan. The Imperial Chinese Agent in this region bears the title of *K'u lun Pan She Ta Ch'en* and resides at K'urun (Urga); of lesser rank are the agents (*Pan She Ta Ch'en*) of Kashgar, Kharashar, Kuché, Aksu, Khotan, and Hami. (See a description of Hami by Colonel M. S. Bell, *Proc. R. G. S.* XII. 1890, p. 213.)—H. C.]

NOTE 2.—Expressed almost in the same words is the character attributed by a Chinese writer to the people of Kuché in the same region. (*Chin. Repos.* IX. 126.) In fact, the character seems to be generally applicable to the people of East Turkestan, but sorely kept down by the rigid Islam that is now enforced. (See *Shaw, passim*, and especially the Mahrambáshi's lamentations over the jolly days that were no more, pp. 319, 376.)