

M. Sage exhibited incombustible paper made from this material, and had himself seen a small furnace of Chinese origin made from it. Madame Perpenté, an Italian lady, who experimented much with asbestos, found that from a crude mass of that substance threads could be elicited which were ten times the length of the mass itself, and were indeed sometimes several metres in length, the fibres seeming to be involved, like silk in a cocoon. Her process of preparation was much like that described by Marco. She succeeded in carding and reeling the material, made gloves and the like, as well as paper, from it, and sent to the Institute a work printed on such paper.

The Rev. A. Williamson mentions asbestos as found in Shantung. The natives use it for making stoves, crucibles, and so forth.

(*Sir T. Browne*, I. 293; *Bongars*, I. 1104; *Cahier et Martin*, III. 271; *Cardan, de Rer. Varietate*, VII. 33; *Alb. Mag. Opera*, 1551, II. 227, 233; *Fr. Michel, Recherches*, etc., II. 91; *Gerv. of Tilbury*, p. 13; *N. et E.* II. 493; *D. des Tissus*, II. 1-12; *J. N. China Branch R.A.S.*, December, 1867, p. 70.) [*Berger de Xivrey, Traditions tératologiques*, 457-458, 460-463.—H. C.]

---

## CHAPTER XLIII.

### OF THE PROVINCE OF SUKCHUR.

ON leaving the province of which I spoke before,<sup>1</sup> you ride ten days between north-east and east, and in all that way you find no human dwelling, or next to none, so that there is nothing for our book to speak of.

At the end of those ten days you come to another province called SUKCHUR, in which there are numerous towns and villages. The chief city is called SUKCHU.<sup>2</sup> The people are partly Christians and partly Idolaters, and all are subject to the Great Kaan.

The great General Province to which all these three provinces belong is called TANGUT.

Over all the mountains of this province rhubarb is found in great abundance, and thither merchants come to buy it, and carry it thence all over the world.<sup>3</sup> [Travellers, however, dare not visit those mountains with any cattle but those of the country, for a certain plant grows there which is so poisonous that cattle which eat it lose their hoofs. The cattle of the country