

word *Keshik*, meaning a guard by turns; a corps on tour of duty. *Keshik* is one of the archaisms of the Mongol language, for now this word has another meaning in Mongol. Colonel Yule has brought together several explanations of the term. It seems to me that among his suppositions the following is the most consistent with the ancient meaning of the word:—

“We find *Kishik* still used at the court of Hindustan, under the great kings of Timur's House, for the corps on tour of duty at the palace. . . . The royal guards in Persia, who watch the King's person at night, are termed *Keshikchi*.”

“The Keshikten was divided into a day-watch called *Turgaut* and a night-watch *Kebteul*. The *Kebte-ul* consisted of pure Mongols, whilst the *Turgaut* was composed of the sons of the vassal princes and governors of the provinces, and of hostages. The watch of the Khan was changed every three days, and contained 400 men. In 1330 it was reduced to 100 men.” (*Palladius*, 42-43.) Mr. E. H. Parker writes in the *China Review*, XVIII. p. 262, that they “are evidently the ‘body guards’ of the modern viceroys, now pronounced *Kashiha*, but, evidently, originally *Keshigha*.”
—H. C.]

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FASHION OF THE GREAT KAAAN'S TABLE AT HIS HIGH FEASTS.

AND when the Great Kaan sits at table on any great court occasion, it is in this fashion. His table is elevated a good deal above the others, and he sits at the north end of the hall, looking towards the south, with his chief wife beside him on the left. On his right sit his sons and his nephews, and other kinsmen of the Blood Imperial, but lower, so that their heads are on a level with the Emperor's feet. And then the other Barons sit at other tables lower still. So also with the women; for all the wives of the Lord's sons, and of his nephews and other kinsmen, sit at the lower table to his right; and below them again the ladies of the other Barons and Knights, each in the place assigned by the Lord's orders. The tables are so disposed that the Emperor can see the whole of them from end to end, many as they are.¹ [Further, you are not to suppose that everybody sits at table; on the contrary, the greater part of the soldiers and their officers sit at their meal in the hall