

You see he causes selection to be made of a number of families in the city which are in a state of indigence, and of such families some may consist of six in the house, some of eight, some of ten, more or fewer in each as it may hap, but the whole number being very great. And each family he causes annually to be supplied with wheat and other corn sufficient for the whole year. And this he never fails to do every year. Moreover, all those who choose to go to the daily dole at the Court receive a great loaf apiece, hot from the baking, and nobody is denied; for so the Lord hath ordered. And so some 30,000 people go for it every day from year's end to year's end. Now this is a great goodness in the Emperor to take pity of his poor people thus! And they benefit so much by it that they worship him as he were God.

[He also provides the poor with clothes. For he lays a tithe upon all wool, silk, hemp, and the like, from which clothing can be made; and he has these woven and laid up in a building set apart for the purpose; and as all artizans are bound to give a day's labour weekly, in this way the Kaan has these stuffs made into clothing for those poor families, suitable for summer or winter, according to the time of year. He also provides the clothing for his troops, and has woollens woven for them in every city, the material for which is furnished by the tithe aforesaid. You should know that the Tartars, before they were converted to the religion of the Idolaters, never practised almsgiving. Indeed, when any poor man begged of them they would tell him, "Go with God's curse, for if He loved you as He loves me, He would have provided for you." But the sages of the Idolaters, and especially the *Bacsis* mentioned before, told the Great Kaan that it was a good work to provide for the poor, and that his idols would be