

to China the ancient Persian system, founded on the period of 10,000 years. The compilers of the *Yuen-shi* seem not to have had access to documents relating to this system, for they give no details about it. Finally by order of Kubilai the astronomers *Hui-Heng* and *Ko Show-King* composed a new calculation under the name of *Shou-shi-li*, which came into use from the year 1280. It is thoroughly explained in the *Yuen-shi*. Notwithstanding the fame this system generally enjoyed, its blemishes came soon to light. In the sixth month of 1302 an eclipse of the sun happened, and the calculation of the astronomer proved to be erroneous (it seems the calculation had anticipated the real time). The astronomers of the Ming Dynasty explained the errors in the *Shou-shi-li* by the circumstance, that in that calculation the period for one degree of precession of the equinox was taken too long (eighty-one years). But they were themselves hardly able to overcome these difficulties." (*Palladius*, pp. 51-53.)—H. C.]

CHAPTER XXXIV.

[CONCERNING THE RELIGION OF THE CATHAYANS;¹ THEIR VIEWS
AS TO THE SOUL; AND THEIR CUSTOMS.

As we have said before, these people are Idolaters, and as regards their gods, each has a tablet fixed high up on the wall of his chamber, on which is inscribed a name which represents the Most High and Heavenly God; and before this they pay daily worship, offering incense from a thurible, raising their hands aloft, and gnashing their teeth² three times, praying Him to grant them health of mind and body; but of Him they ask nought else. And below on the ground there is a figure which they call *Natigai*, which is the god of things terrestrial. To him they give a wife and children, and they worship him in the same manner, with incense, and gnashing of teeth,² and lifting up of hands; and of him they ask seasonable weather, and the fruits of the earth, children, and so forth.³

Their view of the immortality of the soul is after this fashion. They believe that as soon as a man dies, his soul enters into another body, going from a good to a