

greatest meekness and quiet, so that no noise of shrill voices or loud talk shall be heard. And every one of the chiefs and nobles carries always with him a handsome little vessel to spit in whilst he remain in the Hall of Audience—for no one dares spit on the floor of the hall,—and when he hath spitten he covers it up and puts it aside.<sup>6</sup> So also they all have certain handsome buskins of white leather, which they carry with them, and, when summoned by the sovereign, on arriving at the entrance to the hall, they put on these white buskins, and give their others in charge to the servants, in order that they may not foul the fine carpets of silk and gold and divers colours.]

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NOTE 1.—Ramusio's heading has *Tartars*, but it is manifestly of the Cathayans or Chinese that the author speaks throughout this chapter.

NOTE 2.—“*Sbattendo i denti.*” This is almost certainly, as Marsden has noticed, due to some error of transcription. Probably *Battono i fronti*, or something similar, was the true reading. [See following note, p. 461.—H. C.]

NOTE 3.—The latter part of this passage has, I doubt not, been more or less interpolated, seeing that it introduces again as a *Chinese* divinity the rude object of primitive Tartar worship, of which we have already heard in Bk. I. ch. liii. And regarding the former part of the passage, one cannot but have some doubt whether what was taken for the symbol of the Most High was not the ancestral tablet, which is usually placed in one of the inner rooms of the house, and before which worship is performed at fixed times, and according to certain established forms. Something, too, may have been known of the Emperor's worship of Heaven at the great circular temple at Peking, called *T'ien-t'an*, or Altar of Heaven (see p. 459), where incensed offerings are made before a tablet, on which is inscribed the name Yuh-Hwang Shang-ti, which some interpret as “The Supreme Ruler of the Imperial Heavens,” and regard as the nearest approach to pure Theism of which there is any indication in Chinese worship (See *Doolittle*, pp. 170, 625; and *Lockhart* in *J. R. G. S.*, xxxvi. 142). This worship is mentioned by the Mahomedan narrator of Shah Rukh's embassy (1421): “Every year there are some days on which the Emperor eats no animal food. . . . He spends his time in an apartment which contains no idol, and says that he is worshipping the God of Heaven.”\* (*Ind. Antiquary*, II. 81.)

The charge of irreligion against the Chinese is an old one, and is made by Hayton in nearly the same terms as it often is by modern missionaries: “And though these people have the acutest intelligence in all matters wherein material things are con-

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\* “In the worship carried on here the Emperor acts as a high priest. HE only worships; and no subject, however high in rank, can join in the adoration.” (*Lockhart.*) The actual temple dates from 1420-1430; but the *Institution* is very ancient, and I think there is evidence that such a structure existed under the Mongols, probably only *restored* by the Ming. [It was built during the 18th year of the reign of the third Ming Emperor Yung Loh (1403-1425); it was entirely restored during the 18th year of K'ien Lung; it was struck by lightning and burnt down in 1839; it is being re-built.—H. C.]