

P'uchau-fu (or *vice versa*). The question as to Caichu may still be settled, as it must be possible to ascertain where the Kin resided."\*

[Mr. Rockhill writes (*Land of the Lamas*, p. 17): "One hundred and twenty *li* south-south-west of the city is Kiai Chou, with the largest salt works in China." Richthofen has estimated that about 150,000 tons of salt are produced annually from the marshes around it.—H. C.]

NOTE 3.—The eight days' journey through richly cultivated plains run up the basin of the Wei River, the most important agricultural region of North-West China, and the core of early Chinese History. The *löss* is here more than ever predominant, its yellow tinge affecting the whole landscape, and even the atmosphere. Here, according to Baron v. Richthofen, originated the use of the word *hwang* "yellow," as the symbol of the Earth, whence the primeval emperors were styled *Hwang-ti*, "Lord of the Earth," but properly "Lord of the *Löss*."

[The Rev. C. Holcombe (*l.c.* p. 66) writes: "From T'ung-kwan to Si-ngan fu, the road runs in a direction nearly due west, through a most lovely section of country, having a range of high hills upon the south, and the Wei River on the north. The road lies through one long orchard, and the walled towns and cities lie thickly along, for the most part at a little distance from the highway." Mr. Rockhill says (*Land of the Lamas*, pp. 19-20): "The road between T'ung-kwan and Si-ngan fu, a distance of 110 miles, is a fine highway—for China—with a ditch on either side, rows of willow-trees here and there, and substantial stone bridges and culverts over the little streams which cross it. The basin of the Wei ho, in which this part of the province lies, has been for thousands of years one of the granaries of China. It was the colour of its loess-covered soil, called 'yellow earth' by the Chinese, that suggested the use of yellow as the colour sacred to imperial majesty. Wheat and sorghum are the principal crops, but we saw also numerous paddy fields where flocks of flamingoes were wading, and fruit-trees grew everywhere."—H. C.]

Kenjanfu, or, as Ramusio gives it, Quenzanfu, is SI-NGAN FU, or as it was called in the days of its greatest fame, Chang-ngan, probably the most celebrated city in Chinese history, and the capital of several of the most potent dynasties. It was the metropolis of Shi Hwang-ti of the T'sin Dynasty, properly the first emperor and whose conquests almost intersected those of his contemporary Ptolemy Euergetes. It was, perhaps, the *Thinae* of Claudius Ptolemy, as it was certainly the Khumdán† of the early Mahomedans, and the site of flourishing Christian Churches in the 7th century, as well as of the remarkable monument, the discovery of which a thousand years later disclosed their forgotten existence.‡ *Kingchao-fu* was the name which

\* See the small map attached to "Marco Polo's Itinerary Map, No. IV.," at end of Vol. I.

† [It is supposed to come from *kang* (king) *dang*.—H. C.]

‡ In the first edition I was able to present a reduced facsimile of a *rubbing* in my possession from this famous inscription, which I owed to the generosity of Dr. Lockhart. To the Baron von Richthofen I am no less indebted for the more complete rubbing which has afforded the plate now published. A tolerably full account of this inscription is given in *Cathay*, p. xcii. *seqq.*, and p. clxxx. *seqq.*, but the subject is so interesting that it seems well to introduce here the most important particulars:—

The stone slab, about 7½ feet high by 3 feet wide, and some 10 inches in thickness,<sup>1</sup> which bears this inscription, was accidentally found in 1625 by some workmen who were digging in the Chang-ngan suburb of the city of Singanfu. The cross, which is engraved at p. 30, is incised at the top of the slab, and beneath this are 9 large characters in 3 columns, constituting the heading, which runs: "Monument commemorating the introduction and propagation of the noble Law of 'a T'sin in the Middle Kingdom;" *Ta T'sin* being the term applied in Chinese literature to the Roman Empire, of which the ancient Chinese had much such a shadowy conception as the Romans had, conversely, of the Chinese as *Sinae* and *Seres*. Then follows the body of the inscription, of great length and beautiful execution, consisting of 1780 characters. Its chief contents are as follows:—1st. An abstract of Christian doctrine, of a vague and figurative kind; 2nd. An account of the arrival of the missionary OLOPÂN (probably a Chinese form of *Rabban*=Monk),<sup>2</sup> from Ta T'sin in the year equivalent to

<sup>1</sup> [M. Grenard, who reproduces (III. p. 152) a good facsimile of the inscription, gives to the slab the following dimensions: high 2m. 36, wide om. 86, thick om. 25.—H. C.]

<sup>2</sup> [Dr. F. Hirth (*China and the Roman Orient*, p. 323) writes: "O-LO-PÊN=Ruben, Rupen?" He adds (*Jour. China Br. R. As. Soc.* XXI. 1886, pp. 214-215): "Initial *r* is also quite commonly represented by initial *l*. I am in doubt whether the two characters *o-lo* in the Chinese name for Russia (*O-lo-ssü*) stand for foreign *ru* or *ro* alone. This word would bear comparison with a Chinese