

CHAPTER XX.

CONCERNING KING CONCHI WHO RULES THE FAR NORTH.

You must know that in the far north there is a King called CONCHI. He is a Tartar, and all his people are Tartars, and they keep up the regular Tartar religion. A very brutish one it is, but they keep it up just the same as Chinghis Kaan and the proper Tartars did, so I will tell you something of it.

You must know then that they make them a god of felt, and call him NATIGAI; and they also make him a wife; and then they say that these two divinities are the gods of the Earth who protect their cattle and their corn and all their earthly goods. They pray to these figures, and when they are eating a good dinner they rub the mouths of their gods with the meat, and do many other stupid things.

The King is subject to no one, although he is of the Imperial lineage of Chinghis Kaan, and a near kinsman of the Great Kaan.¹ This King has neither city nor castle; he and his people live always either in the wide plains or among great mountains and valleys. They subsist on the milk and flesh of their cattle, and have no corn. The King has a vast number of people, but he carries on no war with anybody, and his people live in great tranquillity. They have enormous numbers of cattle, camels, horses, oxen, sheep, and so forth.

You find in their country immense bears entirely white, and more than 20 palms in length. There are also large black foxes, wild asses, and abundance of sables; those creatures I mean from the skins of which they make those precious robes that cost 1000 bezants each. There are also vairs in abundance; and vast