

turns back ; and thus they accomplish the whole journey across that region, always drawn by dogs.³

The people who dwell in the valleys and mountains adjoining that tract of 13 days' journey are great hunters, and catch great numbers of precious little beasts which are sources of great profit to them. Such are the Sable, the Ermine, the Vair, the *Erculin*, the Black Fox, and many other creatures from the skins of which the most costly furs are prepared. They use traps to take them, from which they can't escape.⁴ But in that region the cold is so great that all the dwellings of the people are underground, and underground they always live.⁵

There is no more to say on this subject, so I shall proceed to tell you of a region in that quarter, in which there is perpetual darkness.

NOTE 1.—There are two KUWINJIS, or KAUNCHIS, as the name, from Polo's representation of it, probably ought to be written, mentioned in connection with the Northern Steppes, if indeed there has not been confusion about them ; both are descendants of Juji, the eldest son of Chinghiz. One was the twelfth son of Shaibani, the 5th son of Juji. Shaibani's Yurt was in Siberia, and his family seem to have become predominant in that quarter. Arghún, on his defeat by Ahmad (*supra* p. 470), was besought to seek shelter with Kaunchi. The other Kaunchi was the son of Sirtaktai, the son of Orda, the eldest son of Juji, and was, as well as his father and grandfather, chief of the White Horde, whose territory lay north-east of the Caspian. An embassy from this Kaunchi is mentioned as having come to the court of Kaikhatu at Siah-Kuh (north of Tabriz) with congratulations, in the summer of 1293. Polo may very possibly have seen the members of this embassy, and got some of his information from them. (See *Gold. Horde*, 149, 249 ; *Ilkhans*, I. 354, 403 ; II. 193, where Hammer writes the name of *Kandschi*.)

It is perhaps a trace of the lineage of the old rulers of Siberia that the old town of Tyuman in Western Siberia is still known to the Tartars as *Chinghiz Tora*, or the Fort of Chinghiz. (*Erman*, I. 310.)

NOTE 2.—We see that Polo's information in this chapter extends over the whole latitude of Siberia ; for the great White Bears and the Black Foxes belong to the shores of the Frozen Ocean ; the Wild Asses only to the southern parts of Siberia. As to the Pharaoh's Rat, see vol. i. p. 254.

NOTE 3.—No dog-sledges are now known, I believe, on this side of the course of the Obi, and there not south of about 61° 30'. But in the 11th century they were in general use between the Dwina and Petchora. And Ibn Batuta's account seems to imply that in the 14th they were in use far to the south of the present limit : " It had been my wish to visit the Land of Darkness, which can only be done from Bolghar. There is a distance of 40 days' journey between these two places. I had to give up the intention however on account of the great difficulty attending the journey and the little fruit that it promised. In that country they travel only with small vehicles