

merchant who had given this information, knew the road by personal experience, and that he did not mean that to reach Kashgar one had to travel *viâ* Lhasa or any other place in Great Tibet. But when the same merchant told Xavier that from Kashgar the distance to the first Cathayan city inhabited by Christians would be only a few miles, he proves that he did not know by personal experience anything about the road from Kashgar eastwards. When in Kashmir, Xavier had been told that there were many Christians and churches with priests and bishops in the kingdom of Rebat, exactly the same story as was afterwards told by Diego d'Almeida.

The king of Rebat mentioned by Xavier as a great friend of Akbar, is SENGGE NAMGYAL, about 1590—1620 A. D. who had inherited the warlike spirit of his grandfather Ali Mir, and who had a Mohammedan mother. He made war, but only against the east, different parts of Guge, and proceeded on his campaigns even to the northern slopes of the Kailas and to Namring.¹ With his neighbour to the S. W., Emperor Akbar, he kept peace. His kingdom was much bigger than the present Ladak, embracing the whole western part of Tibet proper. The name Rebat or Tibet was only used by the Mohammedans who always, as nowadays, meant Ladak, particularly Leh. Sengge Namgyal is the builder of the famous Leh castle and of the Maitreya monastery at Basgo. The latter place was then of much greater importance than now. At the time of d'Almeida's visit, the king resided at Basgo, or Babgo, as he writes the name.² D'Almeida also told the Fathers at Goa that beyond Tibet or Ladak there was another kingdom, Little Tibet, Baltistan, which was under the power of the Shah (Abbas the Great) of Persia.

In Father HAY'S book we find another letter from XAVIER, also dated 1598, in which there is a very interesting piece of physical geography and a passage containing a rather unusual piece of observation on natural history,³ which, however, as far as the wild-geese are concerned, is wrong:

Hic res nostrae missionis persequare, quae in Cascimirano Regno frater noster Benedictus Gois, mecum Regem comitatus, effecerit, breuiter comprehendâ. Regio haec perfrigida est, eamque algidam magis reddunt altissimi, quibus cingitur, montes: sed cum Regno Tebat (quod illi ab Oriente adjacet versus Scetaium vel Cataium vbi est ille insolens & nominatissimus trecentorum millium murus, qui Tartariam à Sina diuidit & separat) collata, temperatior, ita vt à gelidis montibus Regni Tebat mense Maio gregatim & per acies infinita prope anserum syluestrium agmina aduolent, & in flumina, quae iuxta urbem Cascimirum tanquam calidam magis menant & fluunt, se immittant.

The region of Kashmir, as compared with India, and especially during the winter, may indeed be said to be cold. And it may also be said that this cold is

¹ Rev. A. H. FRANCKE, *A History of Western Tibet*, London 1907, p. 96 *et seq.*

² The Tibetans write the name Babs-*sgo*, though it is pronounced Basgo. Cf. G. Schulemann: *Die Geschichte der Dalailamas*, Heidelberg 1911, p. 128.

³ *Op. cit.* *Transcripta ex literis P. Hieronymi Xauier Societatis Iesv, Anno 1598, & P. Emmanuelis Pigneiro, Anno 1598.* P. 863.