

If the French had not killed him, he ought to have killed himself, and, as he had not done so, he was ordered into exile for life to the Mongolian border, and told to think himself fortunate that he had not been executed. And here the poor little gentleman was—very sore against his own government, but lively and cheery withal, and certainly most useful to me. He used to accompany me for hours through the bazaars, trying to get things which I wanted, or to obtain information about the road.

On April 12 we passed through the Great Wall, and entered what Marco Polo calls the land of Gog and Magog. The gateway was not imposing, consisting as it did merely of a rough framework of wood, near which was a low hut, in which dwelt a mandarin with a small guard, and in front of which were two small cannons fastened on to a piece of timber. On either side were large gaps in the wall—here only of mud—which carts or anything else might pass through.

On the 14th, we emerged from the desolate wind-swept valleys of the Yang-ho and entered the broad, open plain of Mongolia proper.