

XXV. *An Account of the Kingdom of Thibet. In a Letter from John Stewart, Esquire, F. R. S. to Sir John Pringle, Bart. P. R. S.*

S I R,

London,
March 20, 1777.

Read April 17,
1777.

DURING my late residence in India, a transaction took place in Bengal, which, in its consequence, led to a new and more intimate knowledge of a vast country, hitherto unexplored by Europeans, and hardly known to them but by name. As every discovery of this sort tends to the advancement of natural knowledge, I have thought a short notice on the subject might prove no disagreeable communication to the Society; and therefore take the liberty, with your approbation, to submit it, in this manner, to them.

The kingdom of Thibet, although known by name ever since the days of MARCO PAOLO and other travellers of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, had never been properly explored by any European till the period of

which I am now to speak. It is true, some straggling missionaries of the begging orders had, at different times, penetrated into different parts of the country; but their observations, directed by ignorance and superstition, placed in a narrow sphere, could give no ideas but what were false and imperfect. Since them, the Jesuits have given the world, in DUHALDE'S History of China, a short account of this country, collected, with their usual pains and judgement, from Tartar relations, which, as far as it goes, seems to be pretty just.

This country commonly passes in Bengal under the name of Boutan. It lies to the northward of Hindostan, and is all along separated from it by a range of high and steep mountains, properly a continuation of the great Caucasus, which stretches from the ancient Media and the shores of the Caspian sea, round the north-east frontiers of Persia, to Candahar and Caffamire, and thence, continuing its course more easterly, forms the great northern barrier to the various provinces of the Mogol empire, and ends, as we have reason to believe, in Affam or China. This stupendous Tartar bulwark had ever been held impassable by the Mogols, and all other Mussulman conquerors of India: and although in the vallies lying between the lower mountains, which run out perpendicular to the main ridge, there reside various Indian people, whom

whom they had occasionally made tributary to their power, they never had attempted a solid or permanent dominion over them. It was on occasion of a disputed succession between the heirs of one of the Rajah's or petty sovereigns of those people, that the Boutaners were called down from their mountains to the assistance of one of the parties; and our government engaged on the opposite side. The party assisted by us did not fail in the end to prevail; and in the course of this little war two people became acquainted who, although near neighbours, were equally strangers to each other. At the attack of a town called Cooch Behar, our troops and the Boutaners first met; and nothing could exceed their mutual surprize in the rencounter. The Boutaners, who had never met in the plains any other than the timid Hindoos flying naked before them, saw, for the first time, a body of men, uniformly cloathed and accoutred, moving in regular order, and led on by men of complexion, dress, and features, such as they had never beheld before: and then the management of the artillery, and incessant fire of the musquetry, was beyond any idea which they could have conceived of it. On the other hand, our people found themselves on a sudden engaged with a race of men unlike all their former opponents in India, uncouth in their appearance, and fierce in their assault, wrapped up in furs,

and armed with bows and arrows and other weapons peculiar to them.

The place was carried by our troops, and a great many things taken in the spoil, such as arms, cloathing, and utensils of various sorts. Images in clay, in gold, in silver, and in enamel, were sent down to Calcutta; all which appeared perfectly Tartar, as we have them represented in the relations and drawings of travellers; and there were besides several pieces of Chinese paintings and manufactures. Whilst those things continued to be the subject of much conversation and curiosity to us in Bengal, the fame of our exploits in the war had reached the court of Thibet, and awakened the attention of the Tayshoo Lama, who (the Delai Lama being a minor) was then at the head of the state. The Dah Terriah, or Deb Rajah as he is called in Bengal (who rules immediately over the Boutaners, and had engaged them in the war) being a feudatory of Thibet, the Lama thought it proper to interpose his good offices, and in consequence sent a person of rank to Bengal, with a letter and presents to the governor, to solicit a peace for the Dah, as his vassal and dependant.

Mr. HASTINGS, the governor, did not hesitate a moment to grant a peace at the mediation of the Lama, on the most moderate and equitable terms; and, eager to
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seize every opportunity which could promote the interest and glory of this nation, and tend to the advancement of natural knowledge, proposed in council to send a person in a public character to the court of the Tayshoo Lama, to negotiate a treaty of commerce between the two nations, and to explore a country and people hitherto so little known to Europeans. Mr. BOGLE, an approved servant of the company, whose abilities and temper rendered him every way qualified for so hazardous and uncommon a mission, was pitched on for it. It would be foreign to my purpose to enter into a detail of his progress and success in this business: it will be sufficient to say, that he penetrated, across many difficulties, to the center of Thibet; resided several months at the court of the Tayshoo Lama; and returned to Calcutta, after an absence of fifteen months on the whole, having executed his commission to the entire satisfaction of the administration. I have reason to believe that Mr. BOGLE will one day give to the world a relation of his journey thither, accompanied with observations on the natural and political state of the country. I only, in the mean time, beg leave to mention a few particulars, such as my recollection of his letters and papers enable me to give.

Mr. BOGLE divides the territories of the Delai Lama into two different parts. That which lies immediately contiguous

contiguous to Bengal, and which is called by the inhabitants Docpo, he distinguishes by the name of Boutan; and the other, which extends to the northward as far as the frontiers of Tartary, called by the natives Pû, he styles Thibet. Boutan is ruled by the Dah Terriah or Deb Rajah, as I have already remarked. It is a country of steep and inaccessible mountains, whose summits are crowned with eternal snow; they are intersected with deep vallies, through which pour numberless torrents that increase in their course, and at last, gaining the plains, lose themselves in the great rivers of Bengal. These mountains are covered down their sides with forests of stately trees of various sorts; some (such as pines, &c) which are known in Europe; others, such as are peculiar to the country and climate. The vallies and sides of the hills which admit of cultivation are not unfruitful, but produce crops of wheat, barley, and rice. The inhabitants are a stout and warlike people, of a copper complexion, in size rather above the middle European stature, hasty and quarrelsome in their temper, and addicted to the use of spirituous liquors; but honest in their dealings, robbery by violence being almost unknown among them. The chief city is Taffey Seddein situated on the Patchoo. Thibet begins properly from the top of the great ridge of the Caucasus, and extends from thence

in breadth to the confines of Great Tartary, and perhaps to some of the dominions of the Russian empire. Mr. BOGLE says, that having once attained the summit of the Boutan mountains, you do not descend in an equal proportion on the side of Thibet; but, continuing still on a very elevated base, you traverse vallies which are wider and not so deep as the former, and mountains that are neither so steep, nor apparently so high. On the other hand, he represents it as the most bare and desolate country he ever saw. The woods, which every where cover the mountains in Boutan, are here totally unknown; and, except a few straggling trees near the villages, nothing of the sort to be seen. The climate is extremely severe and rude. At Chamnanning, where he wintered, although it be in latitude $31^{\circ} 39'$, only 8° to the northward of Calcutta, he often found the thermometer in his room at 29° under the freezing point by FAHRENHEIT'S scale; and in the middle of April the standing waters were all frozen, and heavy showers of snow perpetually fell. This, no doubt, must be owing to the great elevation of the country, and to the vast frozen space over which the north wind blows uninterruptedly from the pole, through the vast deserts of Siberia and Tartary, till it is stopped by this formidable wall.

The Thibetians are of a smaller size than their fouthern neighbours, and of a less robust make. Their complexions are also fairer, and many of them have even a ruddiness in their countenances unknown in the other climates of the east. Those whom I saw at Calcutta appeared to have quite the Tartar face. They are of a mild and chearrful temper; and Mr. BOGLE says, that the higher ranks are polite and entertaining in conversation, in which they never mix either strained compliments or flattery. The common people, both in Boutan and Thibet, are cloathed in coarse woollen stuffs of their own manufacture, lined with such skins as they can procure; but the better orders of men are dressed in European cloth, or China silk, lined with the finest Siberian furs. The ambassador from the Deb Rajah, in his summer-dress at Calcutta, appeared exactly like the figures we see in the Chinese paintings, with the conical hat, the tunick of brocaded silk, and light boots. The Thebetian who brought the first letter from the Lama was wrapped up from head to foot in furs. The use of linen is totally unknown among them. The chief food of the inhabitants is the milk of their cattle, prepared into cheese, butter, or mixed with the flour of a coarse barley or of peas, the only grain which their soil produces; and even these articles are in a scanty proportion: but they are furnished
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with rice and wheat from Bengal and other countries in their neighbourhood. They also are supplied with fish from the rivers in their own and the neighbouring provinces, salted and sent into the interior parts. They have no want of animal food from the cattle, sheep, and hogs, which are raised on their hills; and are not destitute of game, though I believe it is not abundant. They have a singular method of preparing their mutton, by exposing the carcase entire, after the bowels are taken out, to the Sun and bleak northern winds which blow in the months of August and September, without frost, and so dry up the juices and parch the skin, that the meat will keep uncorrupted for the year round. This they generally eat raw, without any other preparation. Mr. BOGLE was often regaled with this dish, which, however unpalatable at first, he says, he afterwards preferred to their dressed mutton just killed, which was generally lean, tough, and rank. It was also very common for the head men, in the villages through which he passed, to make him presents of sheep so prepared, set before him on their legs as if they had been alive, which at first had a very odd appearance.

The religion and political constitution of this country, which are intimately blended together, would make a considerable chapter in its history. It suffices for me to

say, that at present, and ever since the expulsion of the Eluth Tartars, the kingdom of Thibet is regarded as depending on the empire of China, which they call Cathay; and there actually reside two mandarines, with a garrison of a thousand Chinese, at Lahassa the capital, to support the government; but their power does not extend far: and in fact the Lama, whose empire is founded on the surest grounds, personal affection and religious reverence, governs every thing internally with unbounded authority. Every body knows that the Delai Lama is the great object of adoration for the various tribes of heathen Tartars, who roam through the vast tract of continent which stretches from the banks of the Volga to Corea on the sea of Japan, the most extensive religious dominion, perhaps, on the face of the globe. He is not only the sovereign Pontiff, the vicegerent of the Deity on earth; but, as superstition is ever the strongest where it is most removed from its object, the more remote Tartars absolutely regard him as the Deity himself. They believe him immortal, and endowed with all knowledge and virtue. Every year they come up from different parts, to worship and make rich offerings at his shrine; even the emperor of China, who is a Mantchou Tartar, does not fail in acknowledgements to him in his religious capacity, and actually entertains at a great expence,

expencc, in the palace of Pekin, an inferior Lama, deputed as his Nuncio from Thibet. It is even reported, that many of the Tartar chiefs receive certain presents, consisting of small portions of that, from him, which is ever regarded in all other persons as the most humiliating proof of human nature, and of being subject to its laws, and treasure it up with great reverence in gold boxes, to be mixed occasionally in their ragouts. It is, however, but justice to declare, that Mr. BOGLE strenuously insists, that the Lama never makes such presents; but that he often distributes little balls of consecrated flour, like the *pain benit* of the Roman catholics, which the superstition and blind credulity of his Tartar votaries may afterwards convert into what they please. The orthodox opinion is, that when the grand Lama seems to die, either of old age or of infirmity, his soul in fact only quits an actual crazy habitation to look for another younger or better, and it is discovered again in the body of some child, by certain tokens known only to the Lamas or Priests, in which order he always appears. The present Delai Lama is an infant, and was discovered only a few years ago by the Tayshoo Lama, who in authority and sanctity of character is next to him, and consequently, during the other's minority, acts as chief. The Lamas, who form the most numerous as well as the most

powerful body in the state, have the priesthood entirely in their hands; and, besides, fill up many monastic orders which are held in great veneration among them. Celibacy, I believe, is not positively enjoined to the Lamas; but it is held indispensable for both men and women, who embrace a religious life: and indeed their celibacy, their living in communities, their cloysters, their service in the choirs, their strings of beads, their fasts, and their penances, give them so much the air of Christian monks, that it is not surprizing an illiterate capuchin should be ready to hail them brothers, and think he can trace the features of St. Francis in every thing about them. It is an old notion, that the religion of Thibet is a corrupted Christianity; and even Father DISEDERII, a Jesuit (but not of the Chinese mission) who visited the country about the beginning of this century, thinks he can resolve all their mysteries into ours; and asserts, with a true mystical penetration, that they have certainly a good notion of the Trinity, since, in their address to the Deity, they say as often *Konciok-oik* in the plural as *Konciok* in the singular, and with their rosaries pronounce these words, *Om, ha, hum*. The truth is, that the religion of Thibet, from whence-ever it sprung, is pure and simple in its source, conveying very exalted notions of the Deity, with no contemptible system of morality; but in its progress

progreſs it has been greatly altered and corrupted by the inventions of worldly men, a fate we can hardly regret in a ſyſtem of error, ſince we know that that of truth has been ſubjeſt to the ſame. Polygamy, at leaſt in the ſenſe we commonly receive the word, is not in practice among them; but it exiſts in a manner ſtill more repugnant to European ideas; I mean in the plurality of huſbands, which is firmly eſtabliſhed and highly reſpected there. In a country where the means of ſubſiſting a family are not eaſily found, it ſeems not impolitic to allow a ſet of brothers to agree in raiſing one, which is to be maintained by their joint efforts. In ſhort, it is uſual in Thibet for the brothers in the family to have a wife in common, and they generally live in great harmony and comfort with her; not but ſometimes little diſſenſions will ariſe (as may happen in families conſtituted upon different principles) an inſtance of which Mr. BOGLE mentions in the caſe of a modeſt and virtuous lady, the wife of half a dozen of the Tayſhoo Lama's nephews, who complained to the uncle, that the two youngeſt of her huſbands did not furniſh that ſhare of love and benevolence to the common ſtock which duty and religion required of them. In ſhort, however ſtrange this cuſtom may appear to us, it is an undoubted fact that it prevails in Thibet in the manner I have deſcribed.

The manner of bestowing their dead is also singular: they neither put them in the ground like the Europeans, nor burn them like the Hindoos; but expose them on the bleak pinnacle of some neighbouring mountain, to be devoured by wild beasts and birds of prey, or waisted away by time and the vicissitudes of weather in which they lie. The mangled carcases and bleached bones lie scattered about; and, amidst this scene of horror, some miserable old wretch, man or woman, lost to all feelings but those of superstition, generally sets up an abode, to perform the dismal office of receiving the bodies, assigning each a place, and gathering up the remains when too widely dispersed.

The religion of Thibet, although it be in many of its principal *dogmata* totally repugnant to that of the Bra- mins or of India, yet in others it has a great affinity to it. They have, for instance, a great veneration for the cow; but they transfer it wholly from the common species to that which bears the tails, of which I shall speak hereafter. They also highly respect the waters of the Ganges, the source of which they believe to be in Heaven; and one of the first effects which the treaty with the Lama produced, was an application to the governor-general, for leave to build a place of worship on its banks. This it may be imagined was not refused; and,

when I left Bengal, a spot of ground was actually assigned for that purpose, about two or three miles from Calcutta. On the other hand, the Sunniaffes, or Indian pilgrims, often visit Thibet as a holy place, and the Lama always entertains a body of two or three hundred in his pay. The residence of the Delai Lama is at Pateli, a vast palace on a mountain near the banks of the Barampooter, about seven miles from Lahassa. The Tayshoo Lama has several palaces or castles, in one of which Mr. BOGLE lived with him five months. He represents the Lama as one of the most amiable as well as intelligent men he ever knew; maintaining his rank with the utmost mildness of authority, and living in the greatest purity of manners, without starchness or affectation. Every thing within the gates breathed peace, order, and dignified elegance. The castle is of stone or brick, with many courts, lofty halls, terraces, and porticos; and the apartments are in general roomy, and highly finished in the Chinese stile, with gilding, painting, and varnish. There are two conveniencies to which they are utter strangers, stair-cases and windows. There is no access to the upper rooms but by a sort of ladders of wood or iron; and for windows they have only holes in the ceilings, with pent-house covers, contrived so as to shut up on the weather-side. Firing is so scarce, that little is used but for culinary purposes;

purposes; and they trust altogether for warmth in their houses to their furs and other cloathing. The Lama, who is compleatly conversant in what regards Tartary, China, and all the kingdoms in the East, was exceedingly inquisitive about Europe, its politics, laws, arts and sciences, government, commerce, and military strength; on all which heads Mr. BOGLE endeavoured to satisfy him, and actually compiled for his service a brief state of Europe in the Hindostan language, which he ordered to be translated into that of Thibet. The Lama being born at Latak, a frontier province next Cassamire, is fully master of the Hindostan language, and always conversed with Mr. BOGLE in it; but the people, who are persuaded he understands all languages, believed he spoke to him in English, or, as they call it, the European tongue. The Russian Empire was the only one in Europe known to him: he has a high idea of its riches and strength, and had heard of its wars and success against the Empire of Rome (for so they call the Turkish state); but could not conceive it could be in any wise a match for Cathay. Many of the Tartar subjects of Russia come to Thibet; and the Czar has even, at various times, sent letters and presents to the Lama. Mr. BOGLE saw many European articles in his hands; pictures, looking-glasses, and trinkets of gold, silver, and steel, chiefly English, which
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he had received that way, particularly a GRAHAM'S repeating watch, which had been dead, as they said, for some time. While he was there, several Mongols and Calmucs arrived from Siberia, with whom he conversed.

The city of Lahaffa, which is the capital, is of no inconsiderable size, and is represented as populous and flourishing. It is the residence of the chief officers of government, and of the Chinese mandarins and their suite. It is also inhabited by Chinese and Caffemirian merchants and artificers, and is the daily resort of numberless traders from all quarters, who come in occasional parties, or in stated caravans. The waters of the Great River, as it is emphatically called in their language, wash its walls. Father DUHALDE, with great accuracy, traces this river, which he never suspects to be the Barampooter, from its origin in the Caffemirian mountains (probably from the same spring which gives rise to the Ganges) through the great valley of Thibet, till, turning suddenly to the southward, he loses it in the kingdom of Affam; but still, with great judgement and probability of conjecture, supposes it reaches the Indian sea somewhere in Pegu or Aracan. The truth is, however, that it turns suddenly again in the middle of Affam, and, traversing that country westerly, enters Bengal towards Rangamatty, under the above-mentioned name, and thence

bending its course more southerly, joins the Ganges, its sister and rival, with an equal, if not more copious stream; forming at the conflux a body of running fresh water, hardly to be paralleled in the known world, which difembogues itself into the Bay of Bengal. Two such rivers uniting in this happy country, with all the beauty, fertility, and convenience which they bring, well entitles it to the name of the Paradise of Nations, always bestowed upon it by the Moguls.

The chief trade from Lahaffa to Peking is carried on by caravans that employ full two years in the journey thither and back again; which is not surprizing, when we consider that the distance cannot be less than two thousand English miles; and yet it is to be observed, that an express from Lahaffa reaches Peking in three weeks, a circumstance much to the honour of the Chinese police, which knows to establish so speedy and effectual a communication through mountains and deserts for so long a way. The trade with Siberia is carried on by caravans to Seling, which is undoubtedly the Selinginsky of the Russian travellers on the borders of Baykal lake. And this accounts for an extraordinary fact mentioned by BELL; that, on the banks of the river of that name, he one day found a man busy in redeeming, from some boys who were angling, the fish they caught, and throwing them into
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the water again; and from this circumstance, and the mark on his forehead, knew him to be an Indian. On conversing with him, he found his conjecture to be right. The man told him, he came from Madrafs, had been two years on his journey, and mentioned by name some of the principal English gentlemen there. This Indian, no doubt, must have travelled as a Faquier or Sunniaffy through Bengal into Thibet, and from thence passed with the caravan to Selinginsky, where BELL found him. It is proper to remark, that the Indians have an admirable method of turning godliness into great gain; it being usual for the Faquiers to carry with them, in their pilgrimages from the sea-coasts to the interior parts, pearls, corals, spices, and other precious articles, of small bulk, which they exchange on their return for gold-dust, musk, and other things of a similar nature, concealing them easily in their hair and in the cloths round their middle, and carrying on, considering their numbers, no inconsiderable traffic by these means. The Goffeigns are also of a religious order, but in dignity above the Faquiers; and they drive a more extensive and a more open trade with that country.

A particular account of the commerce would be foreign to the purport of this letter; but, as it would leave the information which I wish to convey very incom-

pleat, did I not mention the sources from which this country, so apparently poor and unfruitful, draws a supply of the foreign articles of convenience and luxury, which I have occasionally said they possess; I shall just observe, that, besides their less traffic with their neighbours in horses, hogs, rock-salt, coarse cloths, and other articles, they enjoy four staple articles, which are sufficient in themselves to procure every foreign commodity of which they stand in need; all of which are natural productions, and deserve to be particularly noticed. The first, though the least considerable, is that of the cow-tails, so famous all over India, Persia, and the other kingdoms of the East. It is produced by a species of cow or bullock different from what I believe is found in any other country. It is of a larger size than the common Thibet breed, has short horns, and no hump on its back. Its skin is covered with whitish hair of a silky appearance; but its chief singularity is in its tail, which spreads out broad and long, with flowing hairs, like that of a beautiful mare, but much finer and far more glossy. Mr. BOGLE sent down two of this breed to Mr. HASTINGS, but they died before they reached Calcutta. The tails sell very high, and are used, mounted on silver handles, for Chowras, or brushes, to chase away the flies; and no man of consequence in India ever goes out, or sits in
form

form at home, without two Chowrawbadars, or brushers, attending him, with such instruments in their hands.

The next article is the wool from which the Shaul, the most delicate woollen manufacture in the world, so much prized in the East, and now so well known in England, is made. Till Mr. BOGLE's journey our notions on that subject were very crude and imperfect. As the Shauls all come from Caffemire, we concluded the material from which they were fabricated to be also of that country's growth. It was said to be the hair of a particular goat, the fine under hair from a camel's breast, and a thousand other fancies; but we now know it for certain to be the produce of a Thibet sheep. Mr. HASTINGS had one or two of these in his paddock when I left Bengal. They are of a small breed, in figure nothing differing from our sheep, except in their tails, which are very broad; but their fleeces, for the fineness, length, and beauty of the wool, exceed all others in the world. The Caffemirians engross this article, and have factors established for its purchase in every part of Thibet, from whence it is sent to Caffemire, where it is worked up, and becomes a source of great wealth to that country, as well as it is originally to Thibet.

Musk is another of their staple articles, of which it will be needless to say much, as the nature, quality, and value,

value of this precious commodity are so well known in Europe. I shall only remark, that the deer which produces it is common in the mountains; but being excessively shy, and frequenting solely the places the most wild and difficult of access, it becomes a trade of great trouble and danger to hunt after. We have the musk sent down to Calcutta in the natural bag, not without great risk of its being adulterated; but still it is far superior to any thing of the kind that is to be met with in sale in Europe.

The last of the articles which I reckon staple is gold, of which great quantities are exported from Thibet. It is found in the sands of the Great River, as well as in most of the small brooks and torrents that pour from the mountains. The quantity gathered in this manner, though considerable with respect to national gain, pays the individual but very moderately for the labour bestowed on it. But, besides this, there are mines of that metal in the northern parts, which are the reserved property of the Lama, and rented out to those who work them. It is not found in ore, but always in a pure metallic state (as I believe it to be the case in all other mines of this metal) and only requires to be separated from the spar, stone, or flint, to which it adheres. MR. HASTINGS had a lump sent to him at Calcutta, of about the size of
a bullock's

a bullock's kidney, which was a hard flint veined with solid gold. He caused it to be sawed in two, and it was found throughout interlarded (if I may be allowed the expression) with the purest metal. Although they have this gold in great plenty in Thibet, they do not employ it in coin, of which their government never strikes any; but it is still used as a medium of commerce, and goods are rated there by the purse of gold-dust, as here by money. The Chinese draw it from them to a great amount every year, in return for the produce of their labour and arts.

I could wish to add to this account something respecting the plants and other botanical productions of this country; but I would not presume to offer any thing but what is authentic and exact, as far as my knowledge goes. Mr. BOGLE will no doubt be able to satisfy the learned in that branch, respecting many things of which I have at present no information. He sent down to Calcutta many seeds, grains, kernels, and fruits, part of which only arrived safe. Of the last I tasted several, they were chiefly of the European sorts, such as peaches, apples, pears, &c. and therefore more desirable for us in Bengal; but they were all to me insipid and bad.

I am now, SIR, to close these remarks with craving your forgiveness for having thus started a new subject of

curiosity, without the means of giving more compleat light concerning it. Time and opportunity may put more in my power on my return to India. In the mean time, I hope the Society will accept as a rarity the translation of the original letter which the Tayshoo Lama wrote to Mr. HASTINGS, by the envoy whom he sent to solicit a peace for the Deb Rajah. It came into my hands in the course of my office, and by the permission of the Governor general I retained a copy.

The original is in Persian, a language which the Lama was obliged to employ, that of Thibet, although very elegant and expressive, as it is said, being totally unintelligible in Bengal. A letter under the sanction of a character so long talked of in the western world, but so little known, alone renders it an object of curiosity; but, when it is found to contain sentiments of justice, benevolence, and piety, couched in a simple style, not without dignity, and in general exempt from the high-flown compliments and strained metaphors so common among the other people of the East, I have no doubt of its being received with approbation; at any rate, it will serve as a specimen of the way of thinking and writing among a people whose country and manners I have made the subject of the foregoing sketch.

Translation

Translation of a Letter from the Tayshoo Lama to Mr. HASTINGS, Governor of Bengal, received the 29th of March, 1774.

THE affairs of this quarter in every respect flourish: I am night and day employed for the increase of your happiness and prosperity. Having been informed, by travellers from your quarter, of your exalted fame and reputation, my heart, like the blossom of spring, abounds with satisfaction, gladness, and joy. Praise God that the star of your fortune is in its ascension. Praise him, that happiness and ease are the surrounding attendants of myself and family. Neither to molest or persecute is my aim: it is even the characteristic of our sect to deprive ourselves of the necessary refreshment of sleep, should an injury be done to a single individual; but in justice and humanity, I am informed you far surpass us. May you ever adorn the seat of justice and power, that mankind may, in the shadow of your bosom, enjoy the blessings of peace and affluence! By your favour I am the Rajah and Lama of this country, and rule over a

number of subjects; a particular with which you have no doubt been acquainted by travellers from these parts. I have been repeatedly informed, that you have been engaged in hostilities against the Dah Terria, to which it is said the Dah's own criminal conduct, in committing ravages and other outrages on your frontiers, gave rise. As he is of a rude and ignorant race, past times are not destitute of the like misconduct which his avarice tempted him to commit. It is not unlikely but he has now renewed those instances, and the ravages and plunder which he may have committed on the skirts of the Bengal and Bahar provinces, have given you provocation to send your vindictive army against him. However, his party has been defeated, many of his people have been killed, three forts have been taken from him, and he has met with the punishment he deserved. It is as evident as the Sun that your army has been victorious; and that, if you had been desirous of it, you might in the space of two days have entirely extirpated him, for he had not power to resist your efforts. But I now take upon me to be his mediator; and to represent to you, that, as the said Dah Terria is dependant upon the Dalai Lama, who rules in this country with unlimited sway (but, on account of his being in his minority, the charge of the govern-
ment

ment and administration for the present is committed to me) should you persist in offering further molestation to the Dah's country, it will irritate both the Lama and all his subjects against you. Therefore, from a regard to our religion and customs, I request you will cease all hostilities against him; and in doing this you will confer the greatest favour and friendship upon me. I have reprimanded the Dah for his past conduct; and I have admonished him to desist from his evil practices in future, and to be submissive to you in all things. I am persuaded he will conform to the advice which I have given him; and it will be necessary that you treat him with compassion and clemency. As to my part, I am but a Faquier^(a); and it is the custom of my sect, with the rosary in our hands, to pray for the welfare of mankind, and for the peace and happiness of the inhabitants of this country; and I do now, with my head uncovered, intreat that you may cease all hostilities against the Dah in future. It would be needless to add to the length of this letter, as the bearer of it, who is a Goseign^(b), will represent to

(a) The original being in Persian, this word is used, which can only be applied with propriety to a person of the Mussulman faith: here it can only mean a religious person in general. Perhaps monk would have been the best translation.

(b) This means a religious person of the Hindoo sect.

you all particulars; and it is hoped you will comply therewith. In this country, worship of the Almighty is the profession of all. We poor creatures are in nothing equal to you; having, however, a few things in hand, I send them to you by way of remembrance, and hope for your acceptance of them.

