

portment there is nothing but benevolence and courtesy: but the Asiatic expression is always there, even in the kind and distinguished physiognomies of the upper classes. There is an impassable abyss between this antique Asia, which still lives in spite of all, and us, who, born yesterday, have changed everything.

A cloud of dust: children scampering about and uttering cries as piercing as a steam whistle; dirty looking men beating gongs; people out of breath, carrying lanterns, in broad daylight, at the end of long staves with red pendants; halberdies; lictors dressed in black puffed-out doublets and breeches, and lofty hats bedecked with plumes, shaking, with frantic gesticulation, whips, weighted cat-o'-nine-tails, chains, and instruments of torture; and then, advancing in the same headlong manner, people carrying green dragons, red screens, chimeras and monsters stuck on the end of long poles.

The Famous Viceroy.

Finally the great personage thus escorted appears on a splendidly caparisoned horse. He is Li-Hung-Chang, the Viceroy of Petchili, who is going in state to visit Kong, the Prince-Regent. He is tall and thin. His bony face, with goatee and long mustache, has a sanctimonious expression. The peacock feather of China's great men floats behind the rose-colored ball which surmounts his high official coiffure.

All this flies past very quickly; the people afoot run; the riders trot, a jogtrot which makes all their bells jingle, shakes the long, disheveled manes of the horses and makes the men's pigtailed dance. The gold badge of the Order of the Pheasant bobs up and down on the breast of the powerful seignior; the cloaks of the mandarins flap in the wind like wings. They have passed. The

suite comes along at full speed, like the advance guard; secretaries and scribes on horseback, all in official caps, with comical importance, their rolls of papers and documents slung over their shoulders. Then the valets, a sinister-looking rabble, dressed in queer rags, running with all their might. And that is all. We can continue our journey.

We arrive at a triumphal arch with three arcades, painted blood red, and surmounted by the inevitable roofing turned up with monsters' heads: it is the gate of the Red Town. Here everything changes; one would imagine it to be the entrance to one of those huge cities of by-gone ages. The boulevard continues through this Red Town and loses itself in the distance.

Beasts of Burden.

We advance slowly and painfully through the maze of wagons and riders, while trying not to lose sight of our Mafoo, who is clearing the way for us. Now and then at crossings formed by other large boulevards, which cut ours at right angles, we are forced to stop to allow interminable files of camels to pass, enormous beasts with dusky muzzles and long rough hair, which amble along on their comically jointed legs like machines out of gear.

The fellows leading them are Mongols from the Northern desert. Their large, flat faces have something jovial and hardy about them, which contrasts agreeably with the perpetual Chinese grimace. They are dressed in long blood-colored robes, with waist belts bristling with poignards, and are coiffed with a kind of curtained capelin of fur, surmounted by a red cone, ornamented with a tuft.

We trot along on a sort of high embankment, reserved for horses and vehicles,