

TO THE GREAT REPRESENTATIVE OF GOD.

Most High, Most Holy, and worthy to be adored :

"We, the Emperor of China, Sovereign of all the sovereigns of the earth, in the person of this our most respected prime minister Cao Tsou with all reverence and humility prostrate ourselves beneath thy sacred feet, and implore for ourselves, our friends, and our empire, thy most powerful and gracious benediction.

"Having a strong desire to search into the records of antiquity, to learn and retrieve the wisdom of the ages that are past; and being well informed that, in the sacred repositories of thy most ancient and venerable hierarchy, there are some valuable books, which from their great antiquity are become to the generality, even of the learned, almost wholly unintelligible. In order, as far as in us lies, to prevent their being totally lost, we have thought proper to authorise and employ our most respected minister Cao-Tsou, in this our present embassy to thy sublime holiness. The business of which is to desire that he may be permitted to read and examine the said writings, we expecting from his great and uncommon skill in the ancient languages, that he will be able to interpret whatever may be found, though of the highest and most obscure antiquity. And we have commanded him to throw himself at thy feet with such testimonies of our respect as we trust will procure him the admittance we desire."

I will not detain your Lordship with any particulars of his journey, though he hath published a large account of it, abounding with many surprising relations, and which at my return to England, I may probably translate and publish entire. Let it suffice at present that when he arrived in these sacred territories, the magnificence of his appearance, and the richness of his presents, failed not to get him a ready admission. He had apartments appointed him in the sacred col-