

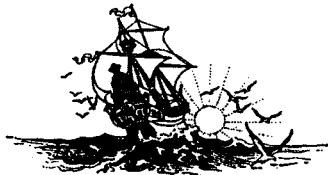
The Broadway Travellers

TRAVELS IN TARTARY, THIBET AND CHINA

VOLUME ONE



TRAVELS IN TARTARY,
THIBET AND CHINA



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TRAVELS IN TARTARY,
THIBET AND CHINA

1844-1846

Volume One

HUC AND GABET

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A detailed historical map of the Great Desert of Shamo or Kobi, showing geographical features, rivers, and place names. The map includes a coordinate grid with latitude (20 to 40) and longitude (90 to 105) markings. Key regions labeled include ELUTH'S, BOOTAN, ASSAM, and SIAM. Rivers such as the R. Salween, R. Irrawaddy, and R. Chindwin are depicted. Place names like L. Kara-nor, L. Dabson-nor, and L. Koro-nor are marked. The map also shows the Great Desert of Shamo or Kobi at the top and the Bay of Bengal at the bottom left.

THE DARK LINE INDICATES THE ROUTE

THIBET, AND CHINA



OF THE TRAVELLERS, MM. HUC AND GABET.

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THE BROADWAY TRAVELLERS

EDITED BY SIR E. DENISON ROSS
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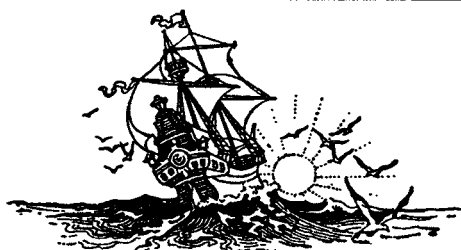


HUC AND GABET
TRAVELS IN TARTARY
THIBET AND CHINA

1844—1846

*Translated by William Hazlitt
Now edited with an Introduction
by Professor Paul Pelliot*

VOLUME ONE



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INTRODUCTION

BY

PAUL PELLIOT

IN the literature of travel the *Souvenirs*, in which the Abbé Huc described the journey which led him and his fellow-worker Gabet across Mongolia to Lhasa, won an instant success and continue after the lapse of three quarters of a century to hold a place in the front rank. The attraction of almost unknown lands and the very real dangers run by the two missionaries are not enough to explain this singular good fortune; other explorers have made equally difficult journeys and their accounts have quickly fallen into oblivion. The lasting success of the *Souvenirs* is due above all to the literary gifts of their author. Huc had eyes to see and the power to recall what he had seen to life; but these very gifts have their counterpart in a somewhat ardent imagination, which led him on occasion to invent what he supposed himself to be merely reporting; he had the artist's instinct, which with a few lively touches heightens the colours of reality, at times too drab. Some writers used to make this a pretext for denying the actuality of the journey itself; but there is no question that Huc and Gabet really did spend some time in Lhasa. It must, however, be admitted that Huc went rather far in arranging his facts, and I shall show later that he cannot be trusted in details, even in those which

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concern him personally and which he was in a better position to know than anyone else.¹

Of the two travellers Gabet was the elder. Joseph Gabet, born at Névy-sur-Seille (Jura) on December 4th, 1808, was ordained priest on October 27th, 1833, and entered Saint Lazare on February 22nd, 1834. On March 21st, 1835, he embarked for China on the *Edmond* at Havre and on June 26th he reached Batavia and transhipped to the *Royal George*, which left the roads of Soerabaya on August 7th for Macao, where he landed on the 29th of the same month. There he took the vows of religion on March 6th, 1836, and on August 15th set out for the Mongolian mission, which he reached at the beginning of March, 1837. He passed several years at "Black Waters" (Hei-Shui) and at Jehol he converted two lamas, one of whom, a man of twenty-five, was baptised under the name of Paul, and the other, who was barely twenty, under that of Peter; the latter was sent to Macao and became the Lazarist M. Fong; here too Gabet converted a bonze, John-Baptist, who is the famous "Samdad-chiemba" spoken of by Huc. In the summer of 1844 Gabet set out with his colleague, M. Huc, and reached Lhasa. When the travellers arrived at Macao early in October, 1846, M. Guillet, Procurator of the Lazarists, informed Gabet that he had been nominated

¹ The details which I am about to sketch are mainly borrowed from an article entitled *Le Voyage de MM. Gabet et Huc* which I published in the *Young Pao* for 1925-1926, pp. 133-178; but I have also taken into consideration fresh information hitherto unpublished. Certain details and a number of dates are here corrected from documents contained in the archives of the Lazarist Fathers of the Rue de Sévres. Data supplied by English writers for the Biographies of Huc and Gabet are far from satisfactory, particularly those of Graham Sandberg in his *The Exploration of Tibet* (Calcutta, 1906); all his dates are false.

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bishop of Troad *in partibus*, but that his bulls had been sent to Hsi-wan-tzü, which was then the seat of the Mongolian mission, ten leagues north of Hsüan-hua-fu in Chih-li. Such, at all events, is the account given in Gindre's *Biographie de Mgr. Gabet* (Poligny, 1867, 8vo), but the publications of the Lazarists are silent on the subject. Undoubtedly Gabet was at one time thought of for the bishopric. At a meeting of the Council of Lazarists at Paris on April 4th, 1844, it was announced that a papal brief to Mgr. Mouly, Vicar Apostolic of Mongolia, had authorized Mgr. Mouly to "nominate a coadjutor with the title of Bishop of Troad"; the Superior General proposed to name M. Gabet and the Council agreed. On the other hand in *La Hiérarchie catholique en Chine, en Corée et au Japon* (Shanghai, 1914, 8vo, p. 118), Father de Moidrey S.J., relying on a *Catalogue* published by the Lazarists of Peking in 1911, says that Florent Daguin was made bishop of Troad and coadjutor to Mgr. Mouly on March 22nd, 1844. and consecrated in 1847; Gabet could not have received the same title about the same time. It is not unlikely that Gindre, who mistakes the name of the See ("Troan" for "Troad") improved upon the talk of Gabet's elder brother, the curé of Besain (Jura), who was wont to say that, thanks to his younger brother, the family had had the honour of entering the ranks of the episcopate. On the other hand the decision taken by the Council on April 4th, 1844, which names Gabet, makes it impossible that Mgr. Mouly should have nominated Daguin on March 2nd, 1844, as Father de Moidrey says. The date, March 2nd, 1844, is perhaps that of the papal authorization in question at the meeting of April 4th,

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and Daguin was not then thought of. Moreover, letters written by Daguin on April 22nd, 1845, and May 15th, 1846 (the latter unpublished) show that at these dates he was in charge of the mission of the "Three Towers" and was not residing at Hsi-wan-tzü near Mgr. Mouly. Finally, whatever alteration they may have undergone before being reproduced by Gindre, the terms in which M. Guillet, the procurator of the Lazarists, spoke to Gabet in October, 1846, on the subject of his nomination to the bishopric of Troad cannot be explained if Daguin had already received the nomination to this episcopal title in 1844. The truth probably is that in conformity with the Council's resolution, Mgr. Mouly "nominated" Gabet to the bishopric of Troad when he received papal authorization and the Council's resolution, that is to say at the end of 1844, after the departure of Gabet and Huc on their great journey. It is even possible that the new bishop's bulls were afterwards sent to Hsi-wan-tzü; but on Gabet's arrival in Europe at the beginning of 1847, there was no longer any idea of consecrating him. The bulls, if any had been sent, were annulled and Daguin replaced Gabet as Bishop of Troad; if Daguin was really consecrated in 1847, even his nomination cannot have been earlier than the beginning of the same year. In any case, instead of resting at Macao on the conclusion of his ordeal and then setting out once more for the Mongolian mission, Gabet in November, 1846, sailed for Europe; he chose the Red Sea route and disembarked at Marseilles in January, 1847. From there he went to Paris, where he remained until April 6th, then to his native province of Jura, and at last arrived in Rome on August 14th,

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accompanied by his elder brother, the curé of Besain. His attempts at interference were not regarded with favour there. On his return to Paris he begged his superiors in vain to send him back to Mongolia. Not without hesitation he was appointed in October, 1848, to Brazil, where complaints were made of him. The Council of Lazarists decided on April 26th, 1852, to "notify his dismissal" to him, but matters were still in this position when Gabet died on the Isle of Gésu, half a league from Rio-de-Janeiro, on March 3rd, 1853.

Régis-Evariste Huc was born on June 1st, 1813, at Caylus (Tarn-et-Garonne) of a family originally settled in Martinique. He entered the Lazarist order on October 5th, 1836, took his vows on October 15th, 1838, was ordained priest on January 28th, 1839 (?), left Havre on the *Adhémar* on March 6th, was still in the roads of Batavia on June 24th, disembarked at Macao towards the middle of July, left there again on Saturday, February 20th, 1841, and arrived at Hsi-wan-tzū on June 17th. He remained for about two years at Hsi-wan-tzū or in that district, to accustom himself to mission life there and to learn Chinese; then, according to M. Planchet, "a little before Ascension Day, 1843" (i.e., before May 26th) he left for the mission of "Black Waters" and Pieh-lieh-kou, where he applied himself to the study of the Manchu and Mongol languages under the direction of the head of his district, M. Gabet. After his return from Lhasa to Macao on October 4th, 1846, Huc remained at Macao until the end of 1848 or the beginning of 1849 and then went again up into Northern China, but his health, enfeebled by the hardships which he had suffered on

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his journey to Tibet, obliged him to come down to Ning-po and eventually to return to France. He disembarked at Suez and visited Syria and the Holy Places, finally reaching his native land in June, 1852. The Superior General of the Lazarists, M. Etienne, immediately dispatched him as director of the great seminary of Montpellier. Huc was not at all contented there and on May 31st, 1853, when the session was coming to an end, he requested to be allowed to visit his mother and then to take the waters at Dax. In reality he had already decided to leave the congregation; "community life is incompatible with my temperament" he wrote to M. Etienne on December 25th, 1853. The next day, December 26th, the Council of the Lazarists accepted his resignation. The disagreement was of long standing and Huc had mistaken his vocation. In the very beginning, at the end of his two years' probation in 1838, Huc had been the only seminarian whose profession had been postponed by the Council on the ground that he "left something to be desired in certain directions". His journey, as we shall see, had deviated strangely from the programme drawn up by the Apostolic Vicar of Mongolia and the question had been still further complicated by Gabet's ill-timed proceedings at Rome. On his return to France Huc had not been insensible to the welcome given him by persons of importance. He was received by Drouyn de Lhuys, to whom he later allowed it to be known that he wished to borrow for his own books certain ideas on the invasions and revolutions in Asia, which the minister had explained to him in conversation; and in a letter to a fellow-worker in Paris, Huc, with a touch of vanity, repeated

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Drouyn de Lhuys's answer that he would be extremely honoured. These adroit flatteries were no doubt not unconnected with the cross of the Légion d'honneur which Huc received at the end of 1852 or at the very beginning of 1853. M. Etienne was not at all pleased. On January 16th, 1853, Huc wrote to him from Montpellier affecting surprise and, even while protesting that "a son of St Vincent ought not to wear the red ribbon in the button-hole of his soutane" added that "such a nomination is one of those things which it is impossible to refuse"; in his heart of hearts he was enchanted. The real reason, however, which led him to leave the congregation is of a more delicate nature. Huc, like Gabet, had in the course of his journeys taken certain liberties with his priestly vows, nor had he acted otherwise afterwards. After he had once more become a secular priest the Ministers of Public Worship, Fortoul in 1856 and Rouland in 1857, wanted to propose him for a bishopric, but on both occasions the ecclesiastical authorities opposed this, for reasons of personal conduct, reasons unconnected with dogma. Meanwhile the ex-missionary, whose *Souvenirs* had made him famous, was living by his pen. The two volumes of *L'empire chinois* appeared in 1854, then, in 1857-8, the four of *Christianisme en Chine, en Tartarie et au Thibet*. In 1857 Huc urged Napoleon III to seize the port of Tourane in Annam. He died on March 25th, 1860.

In 1840, Mongolia, where Gabet and afterwards Huc exercised their apostolate, and Tibet, whither circumstances were to lead them, were not *terra incognita*, but there was no longer to be had such direct and

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valuable knowledge of these lands as a whole as had been acquired a century earlier. Mongolia and Tibet had been brought under the immediate suzerainty of China by the Manchu emperors of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries; Jesuit missionaries had then accompanied K'ang-hi on his campaigns in Mongolia and other Jesuits had assisted him to map the country. The Jesuit accounts, which appeared to the *Lettres édifiantes*, or as independent works, were further supplemented by information derived from Russian travellers or diplomats or from Swedish prisoners banished to Siberia after Charles XII's campaigns. Tibet had remained more mysterious. It is true that in 1661 the Jesuits Grueber and d'Orville had travelled from Peking to India by Lhasa, but they had merely passed through the country, and the Dutchman Van de Putte, who made the same journey in the opposite direction three quarters of a century later, was known only as a name. Moreover, the accounts of the Jesuits and Capuchins who had penetrated into Tibet from India and lived there, were still buried in the archives of their orders and in those of the Propaganda, or remained unknown in public or private libraries. Although the Jesuit cartographers of Peking had not been authorized to map Tibet themselves, maps made by them from the observations of disciples whom they had trained were, and long remained, the best source of information on the physical configuration of the country. As to its political and religious condition, the journals of Bogle's mission to the Teshu Lama in 1774 and that of Manning, who saw the Dalai Lama in 1811-12, were not published till 1879 by Markham. Thus it

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was to Samuel Turner, who was sent as envoy to the Teshu Lama in 1783 and whose *Account of an Embassy to the Court of the Teshu Lama* appeared in 1800, that the West owed such detailed ideas on the great theocratic state of Upper Asia as it then possessed.

Although the beginning of the nineteenth century did not bring with it much that was new concerning these distant lands,¹ and even a good deal of what had been known in the eighteenth century had been forgotten, the great impulse towards the "propagation of the faith", which was then much in evidence in the catholic world and particularly in France, could not pass by lands which offered a field at once so vast and so new for conversion. Some hoped to find there compensation for the wretched condition of the Chinese missions which, hard hit by the suppression of the Jesuits in 1773, were managing to maintain only a precarious existence in the face of a more and more rigorous official proscription. The Lazarists, who had succeeded the Jesuits at Peking, had been obliged practically to abandon the capital, and their headquarters in Chih-li was the mission-station of Hsi-wan-tzü, founded in 1834 by a Chinese priest, which we have already met with in our sketch of the biographies of Gabet and Huc. Now the Christian mission of Hsi-wan-tzü was at the gates of Mongolia; Mgr. Mouly, who was its superior, at least from 1836, very naturally had been led to send Gabet to the north, to visit the Chinese colonies established at the edge of

¹ Timkovskir's *Voyage en Chine à travers la Mongolie en 1820-1821* appeared in Russian in 1824. Between 1825 and 1827 it was translated into German, Dutch, French, and English. He had acquired much information about Mongolia, but we are unaware of a single copy of the book's reaching the Catholic missions of Northern China before 1844. Neither was their knowledge of Csoma de Kőrös's work on Tibet any more considerable.

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the nomad country, and Gabet, no less naturally, tried to convert the lamas. At the same time the "Missions Etrangères" were entrusted with an apostolic vicariate in Corea (1831); Mgr. Bruguière tried in vain to enter his vicariate by way of Eastern Mongolia and Manchuria; he died in 1835 at Pieh-lieh-kou, that is to say at those "Contiguous Defiles" whence Gabet and Huc set out nine years later for their journey into Upper Asia. Gabet soon found himself in danger of being separated from the mission-stations which he had founded; a decision of the Holy See, dated November 8th, 1838, assigned the whole of Mongolia and Manchuria to the Foreign Missions. However, the titular holder of this new vicariate, Mgr. Verrolles, made his way there at the end of 1840, via Hsi-wan-tzü, where he arranged with Mgr. Mouly to leave the whole of Mongolia east of the meridian of Peking to the Lazarists. Indeed, Rome had anticipated the provisional agreement of the two prelates; a papal brief of August 23rd, 1840, which was still unknown at Hsi-wan-tzü, had just separated Mongolia from Manchuria and assigned it to the Lazarists. The fate of the mission-stations founded by Gabet in the Jehol region remained, however, uncertain; even when the brief of 1840 had been received in the Far East, the business of fixing the boundaries between the two vicariates gave rise to somewhat lengthy disputes and twice obliged Mgr. Verrolles to undertake the journey to Rome.

Tibet likewise attracted the missionaries and here again we meet the name of Mgr. Verrolles. Before his nomination as Vicar Apostolic in Manchuria, he belonged to the Ssü-ch'uan mission, where he had

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arrived at the end of 1832 and he had never ceased requesting his superiors, Mgr. Fontana and then Mgr. Pérocheau, for permission to go and evangelize Tibet. Mgr. Fontana had been almost won over ; he wrote in 1836 to the directors of the Paris Seminary : " Two months' journey from here, in Tibet, the capital of which is Lhasa, the residence of the Grand Lama, there is an immense region still sunk in idolatry, the inhabitants of which are simple people, very poor, without luxury and without ambition. . . . Oh, my dear brothers, what a fair field for the Gospel ! " And Mgr. Verrolles unbosomed himself to one of his sisters in 1838 : " Just now there is a question of carrying the gospel to Tibet, the great Tibet. Look at the map ; it's 500 leagues long and 400 broad ! It is a new country which has never yet received the torch of Faith, and in spite of my sins, I am the happy mortal destined to carry the good news there ; pray yourself and get others to pray for this enterprise . . . " Mgr. Pérocheau, who had just succeeded Mgr. Fontana, gave his consent in principle, but not even that before he had received from Rome jurisdiction over Tibet, which till then he still believed to be in dependence on the Bishop of Agra, in India. It was not until August, 1844, that the Bishop of Agra granted Mgr. Pérocheau the right to send priests to Tibet, and two years later, on March 27th, 1846, a papal brief created an apostolic vicariate of Lhasa and gave it into the charge of the Foreign Missions ; but by this time Mgr. Verrolles had been nominated to Manchuria these six years past, almost.¹ Gabet and

¹ Cf. A. Launay, *Monseigneur Verrolles et la mission de Mandchourie*, Paris, Téqui, 1895, 8vo, pp. 89-94 ; *Histoire de la Mission du Tibet*, Lille and Paris, no date (1902 ?) I, 65-66.

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Huc could as yet have known nothing of these choppings and changings when they set out on their journey in the middle of 1844.

Huc has sometimes been unjustly attacked, for Prževal'skiĭ went as far as to deny the reality of the journey to Lhasa ; nor do I share the fiery indignation of one author who, speaking of the "plagiarisms of Father Evariste Huc", finds fault with all Huc's works and puts them all in the same category. Whatever the inaccuracies of his narrative and its weakness from a scientific point of view, the fact remains that he made a very remarkable journey and consequently everything that relates to it directly in Huc's account is important. As for the rest of his material, especially in the books which appeared in 1854 and in 1857-8, the Abbé was pot-boiling and borrowed at length from other writers and occasionally from himself. On Chinese history, in particular, no orientalist would ever dream of looking to the works of Huc for authoritative information.

The *Souvenirs* were drawn up by Huc at Macao between the end of 1846 and the end of 1848, and appeared in 1850, when he was still on mission work in the Far East ; the first edition corrected by him was consequently the *ne varietur* edition of 1853. The book stops at the point where the two travellers have been brought back from Tibet to the frontiers of China, or, more properly speaking, into Ssü-Ch'uan. The conclusion of the journey, from Ssü-Ch'uan to Canton, forms the frame-work of *L'Empire chinois*, but it appears there in scraps, swamped by interminable digressions. Finally, Huc's journeys in Mongolia and

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Tibet are once more described in *Le Christianisme* (IV, 359-420).

These, however, are not our only sources of information. To them must be added the letters, both published and unpublished, of the two missionaries and of certain of their co-workers, consular reports and above all, the accounts of Gabet and Huc, which, before the publication of the *Souvenirs*, had already been issued in the *Annales de la Congregation de la Mission* and in the *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*. A document, mentioned in Hazlitt's preface but hitherto unprinted, is published for the first time at the end of this Introduction.¹ Sir E. Denison Ross has kindly had it searched for and copied at the Public Record Office, London. It is a letter written by A. R. Johnston to Sir John Francis Davis on February 16th, 1847; Johnston had then just been travelling with Gabet from Hong-Kong to Ceylon. Even so other documents are still missing; in particular a long letter concerning the Tibetan mission, which Gabet sent from Paris to the Propaganda in 1847; and, what is still more serious from the point of view of our enquiry, the first part also of the *Rapport* presented by Gabet to Pope Pius IX in the second half of 1847 in which he described the journey from the "Contiguous Defiles" to Lhasa.

As to the materials utilized in the drawing-up of the *Souvenirs*, it seems clear that they are of three kinds: notes made on the journey, the traveller's memories, and researches in books made at Macao. In this last category must obviously be included the long citations from Jacquet, Rémusat, and Klaproth. As for the

¹ Below, p. xxxvii.

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others, one would much like to know what remains in the *Souvenirs* of the notes made day by day. It is to be feared that Huc's note-books—containing a few notes gathered as he journeyed along, he says in his Preface of 1852—were not very carefully kept. In any case, though, Huc had by him everything he had written. Some papers, chosen, moreover, by the missionaries themselves and contained in a “wooden box”, had been taken from them and confiscated at Lhasa, but were restored to them at Canton.¹ The travellers even appeared to have saved the whole of their meagre effects, since Gabet brought from Lhasa to Europe several stones bearing the formula *Om mani padme hūm*, one of which he presented to the Bibliothèque Nationale. Further, he had begun at Lhasa and finished in Hu-Pei a translation of the *Sūtra in Forty-two Articles*, done from the Mongol text; the *Journal Asiatique* published it in its issue for June, 1848 (pp. 535-557).² I know nothing further of the papers of Gabet and Huc and am unaware of what has become of them.

The first question which arises in dealing with this famous journey to Lhasa is what induced the two Lazarists to undertake it. It is sometimes said that they were “appointed by their ecclesiastical superiors to make their way to the city of the Dalai Lama” (Markham, *Tibet*, XCIV). Sir Thomas Holdich likewise says that Mgr. Mouly “deputed Huc (with one companion, Gabet) to visit Tibet” (*Tibet the*

¹ *L'Empire chinois*, I, 58-59, 65, 84-85; Cordier, *L'Expulsion de MM. Huc et Gabet*, in *Mélanges d'histoire*, I, 291, 292, 294.

² To the references which I gave for the study of this topic in my article in the *Young Pao* I should like to add L. Feer, *Le Sūtra en 42 articles*, Paris, 1878, 12mo, pp. XV-XVI and LV-LVI.

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Mysterious, 128). Yule, who has defended Huc against Prževal'skiĭ, stated definitely nevertheless that Huc, as a traveller, had no "geographical sense", to which M. Planchet answered, in his recent Peking edition (I, 68 ; 1924), that this was not his business and that the object of his journey was the spreading of the Gospel. In this connection M. Planchet cites Mgr. Mouly's letter of March, 1845, which says: "These expedients in the end allowed us to send two European missionaries, holding the apostolic license, to the northern part of Mongolia last year. They set out from the Mongol-Chinese Mission—that is to say, that usually occupied by the Chinese—on September 10th, 1844. They were MM. Gabet and Huc, both fairly well acquainted with the Manchu and Mongol languages, and knowing enough Tibetan to enable them to carry on their ministry usefully among the nomadic Mongols and to attempt to found a mission in their midst". M. Planchet further invokes Mgr. Mouly's letter of February 8th, 1846: "We have had no news of MM. Gabet and Huc, who left almost two years ago to evangelize the nomadic Mongols of the north".

In spite of Mgr. Mouly's remark it was believed for a while at the Mongol mission that they had almost certain news of the arrival of Gabet and Huc in Northern Mongolia, among the Khalkhas. This is shown by a letter of Daguin's written from the Three Towers Mission, August 22nd, 1845: "First of all let me mention the arrival of MM. Gabet and Huc in Halha, which contains more than eighty Mongol Kingdoms. I learnt of their arrival without their knowing it, in the way I am about to tell you . . ."

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Daguin then narrates the departure of the missionaries, his own movements, then his return to Pieh-Lieh-Kou, where a Mongol back from the Khalkha country "had told the catechists on the spot that Fathers Tseu (Gabet) and Kou (Huc) had become lamas". In the Khalkha country the Mongol had seen the pagoda out of which "all the objects connected with the superstitious cult of Fo had been ignominiously thrown; three great images had been placed in it. One, according to his tale, represented a woman carrying a child in her arms; the second a man carrying a sheep on his shoulders; I cannot recall the picture he made of the third. This Mongol of Pieh-Lieh-Kou also said that they had had a debate with a grand lama who had come from Tibet, who replied that he was going to Peking and wanted to consult the Emperor about this new doctrine; he also told them that Fathers Tseu and Kou had left and travelled on beyond Halha towards the North-West without his being able to see them. It is certain that this Mongol cannot have been lying in talking so, as he knew nothing of the objects of our cult and had no knowledge either of the departure, or even of the proposed departure, of our two colleagues".

The following year, in the absence of definite news of the two missionaries, the Mongol's story was still partly believed in at Hsi-wan-tzū, and the seminarists of the place in writing to the seminarists of Paris on April 30th, 1846, said, still speaking of Gabet and Huc: "If we are to believe certain rumours, they have converted many lamas and broken their idols, setting up in their place images of Our Lord carrying a lamb on his shoulders and of the Blessed Virgin Mary

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bearing the Infant Jesus in her arms. Expounding the Gospel and teaching prayers has doubtless been taking up much of their time."

In July, 1847, an article on *The Mongolian Missions* (*Ann. Prop. Foi*, XIX, 268), after speaking of the Christians of inner Mongolia, adds: "There is not a single Christian to be found among the nomad tribes in the north, which wander about with their movable tents as far even as the frontiers of Asiatic Russia. On this vast plateau, which is about 800 leagues in circumference, no Cross of Christ had yet been planted to point the way towards the Land of Salvation to these eternal pilgrims of the desert, when, in 1844, two Fathers of the Mission undertook to penetrate into the utmost depths of their unknown steppes . . ." Following this comes Huc's letter of December 20th, 1846, which is in no way contrary to what preceded; it begins as follows: "Reverend Father, undoubtedly you have long known that Mgr. Mouly, our Apostolic Vicar, had charged us, M. Gabet and me, to explore Mongol Tartary, and to study carefully the customs and character of these nomad peoples, whom it is our mission to evangelize. As we had been bidden to go as far as possible, we had to make certain preparations and to organize ourselves into a caravan . . ."

The text most to the point, however, is a letter written from Macao by Gabet (almost certainly, therefore, in October, 1846) to his successor, M. Daguin. This was, I believe, unpublished till its partial publication by M. Planchet (I, 2), and it is worth reproducing here: "When we left Pieh-Lieh-Kou to make for the Khalkha country, the certainty

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of being taken for Russians made us prefer to take the western route ; we crossed the Ch'akar, and then the Yellow River, we passed through the Kingdoms of Ordos and Alashan, and eventually arrived at the famous lamasery known as T'a-erh-ssü.¹ We hoped to found there the first Christian mission-station in Mongolia. We stayed there eight months, at the end of which, seeing no chance of the hopes we had conceived being realized, and not being able to continue living there, because we should have had to take the lama habit which they wished to force upon us, we were obliged to seek fresh fields. A war which broke out between the Chinese and the Tibetans made our return impossible.² As we were obliged to turn our steps westwards, we plunged into the great Kalmuck desert and, after travelling some months, we reached Lhasa, the capital of Tibet. There, from the moment of our very first effort, we were comforted by seeing success surpass all our hopes ; we built a small chapel and for the first time the prayers of the true faith were offered in this capital of Buddhism . . . ”

In the *Report on the Chinese Missions* made to Pius IX in the second half of the year 1847, Gabet also writes that in August, 1844, he received instructions about his journey from Mgr. Mouly : “ He made me head of the future Mission and M. Huc had the title of Procurator ”. One passage in the letter ran thus : “ You will go on from tent to tent, from tribe to tribe, from lamasery to lamasery, until God makes

¹ This is the great lamasery of Kumbum ; Gabet gives it its Chinese name, while Huc uses the Tibetan form.

² There is no mention of this “ war ” in the *Souvenirs*.

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known to you the spot where he wishes you to stop to make a definite beginning. So these instructions left us, and rightly, with full latitude to decide the direction of our journey". After saying how reasons of expediency made them prefer the route towards the West, Gabet merely adds that "we had further the benefit of going to the mysterious source whence these people insist so obstinately on drawing all their beliefs".

All these texts show clearly enough that the Lazarists' instructions sent them to the North-West into Outer Mongolia, to the Khalkha country, towards Urga, and that we must attribute to a combination of fortuitous circumstances the changes in the itinerary which, leading them to the South-West, eventually brought them to Lhasa. Even after his arrival at Macao towards the end of 1846, Gabet speaks of their *détour* to Lhasa as an accident. At Rome, in 1847, we find for the first time in his writings an allusion to the "mysterious source" which the western route caused them to approach; he still does not describe it more precisely.

When, however, the missionaries charged with founding a mission in Mongolia appeared suddenly, after lying rumours had aroused belief in the success of their mission in this region, and appeared from Tibet, which was allotted to another order, and when on this account they found that they had made a journey which was fruitless from the point of view of their own mission, it is practically certain that, had any mention been made of either Tibet or Lhasa, in Mgr. Mouly's instructions, Gabet would not have failed to quote the passage at full length. In these

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circumstances how, then, is it possible that thoughtful scholars like Markham can have believed that Gabet and Huc had orders to go to the capital of Tibet ? It seems to me that the fault lies with Huc himself. In the *Souvenirs* (I, 3) he says that "towards the beginning of 1844 . . ." Mgr. Mouly "sent us instructions for the great journey that we were on the point of undertaking with the purpose of studying the manners and customs of the Tartars and of exploring, if possible, the extent and boundaries of the vicariate". This is vague enough, especially if we recall that Mgr. Mouly, in his letters, speaks of the "North of Mongolia" and of the "nomadic Mongols of the North", and that Gabet says expressly that they had started off intending to go "into the Khalkha country". In his preface of August 7th, 1852, Huc is, to say the least of it, ambiguous. "It was in 1844 that we began to study Buddhist religion in the monasteries of the lamas more particularly, and that the wish to go to the source whence are derived the superstitions which dominate the peoples of Central Asia, caused us to undertake these long journeys that led us to the very capital of Tibet." Every reader, unaware of Mgr. Mouly's instructions but knowing that Huc went to Lhasa, naturally has the impression that it is Lhasa which is meant as "the source of the superstitions which dominate the peoples of Central Asia". And throughout the length of this preface there is never a word either of Mgr. Mouly or of Gabet, though Gabet was the head of Huc's district and all the while his chief on the mission. Lastly, in 1858, in his *Christianisme* (IV, 376-377) Huc relates the conversion of the lamas, Paul, Peter and Samdadchiemba

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and then continues thus : " The conversion of these three Buddhist monks was a great encouragement to the missionaries in Mongolia. From all they had learned in the various lamaseries, they became convinced that Lha-Ssa, the capital of Tibet and the seat of the Grand Lama, was in the eyes of all the peoples of Central Asia the very Rome of Buddhism ; that Lha-Ssa exercised a decisive influence over the beliefs of the Tartars and that Christian propaganda, directed from that city, could not fail to obtain considerable results in the future. Two missionaries then made up their minds to cross Tartary and Tibet and to reach Lhasa, without allowing themselves to be frightened by the pictures of fatigue and danger which had unfailingly been conjured up before their eyes. One of these missionaries was M. Gobet [i.e. Gabet] and the other the writer of these lines."

Here the text is perfectly clear. Huc asserts that from the start, and in spite of the objections raised by their colleagues, the initial objective of the journey undertaken in 1844 was Lhasa. We know, however, that it was nothing of the sort. If the idea of going there occurred to Huc, or even to Gabet either, it was entertained without the knowledge of Mgr. Mouly and was not considered in his instructions. Besides, Gabet's letter to Daguin, unless we are gratuitously to suspect its sincerity, gives the lie to such an hypothesis. Then what really happened ? What I imagine is this, and it is human enough. On their return to Canton, the welcome given to them made Gabet and Huc realize that they had performed a remarkable journey. The French Consul, M. Lefebvre de Bécour, living at Macao, had learned of the passage

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through Ch'eng-tu of the two missionaries and even before their arrival in Canton and Macao he had informed the Minister of Foreign Affairs that "since the mission of the Englishman, Turner (who had not actually got as far as Lhasa), they were the only Europeans, with the possible exception of the Transylvanian scholar (i.e. *Csoma de Kőrös*), to penetrate into one of the most extraordinary countries of Central Asia." In a new letter from Macao dated October 24th, 1846, Lefebvre de Bécour noted that "MM. Huc and Gabet" had been well treated throughout their journey. He added: "It is to be hoped that after they have rested and regained their self-possession sufficiently to undertake such work and when they have made themselves acquainted with what has already been published on Tibet, they will draw up an account of their journey and of their stay there, which cannot fail to be of great interest to the learned world." Gabet, to judge from his letter to M. Daguin, seems to have retained from the first the self-possession recommended by the consul, but Huc, with the impetuosity and loquacity of a true southerner, allowed his head to be turned a little. He did not wish it thought that he had become a great traveller by accident, as it were, and, after preserving a discreet silence about all the chance happenings which had caused the missionaries to turn aside from their path towards the South-West, he finished in 1858 by affirming that, if he had gone to Lhasa, it was because from the very beginning and as the result of mature deliberation he had had this town as his objective.

Unpublished documents, which were still not known

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to me when I composed my article in the *Young Pao*, prove moreover that the first reaction of Gabet's and Huc's colleagues, when they heard of the journey to Lhasa, was even more unfavourable than I had thought. The two travellers were making complaints against the Chinese commissioner for Lhasa, and Gabet will insist on this point again when he is travelling with A. R. Johnston from Hong-Kong to Galle Point ; but the real reason why Gabet returned to Europe so quickly was that he hoped to get the Tibet mission restored once more to the Lazarists and to become himself the first Apostolic Vicar of Lhasa. He thus put himself into complete opposition to his Bishop, Mgr. Mouly ; the latter, in sending one of his priests, J. F. Faivre, to Rome several months later, entrusted him with detailed instructions, dated May 10th, 1847, in which what follows is particularly to the point. " Letters lately brought by courier inform us that M. Gabet left last November for Europe, where he has gone to request for himself the Vicariate of Tibet . . . Seeing . . . that M. Gabet . . . went without orders, on no suggestion, real or inferred, from his superior, the bishop, who is both Apostolic Vicar and visitor [of the Lazarists], and whom he did not deign to consult . . . you alone are our representative, and you alone must be regarded as such . . . We feel that the little Company [of Lazarists] cannot and ought not to assume responsibility for Tibet. This vicariate, far away from our own, has already been given to other missionaries, who are stationed near Tibet ; its Vicar Apostolic has probably been consecrated and has probably begun his duties . . . This request [of M. Gabet] is at the present

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time and in the circumstances most unseemly." It is evident enough that Mgr. Mouly was not particularly pleased with the journey to Lhasa made by his two subordinates and, with this in mind, it is easier to understand why subsequently the Propaganda showed itself much prepossessed against Gabet.

The chronology of the journey also brings up difficulties; though they are not so vital as those raised by its purport, they are none the less both real and astonishing. In my article in the *Young Pao* I have shown that Huc gives false dates in his *Souvenirs* both for the start of the journey and for his stay in the region of Kuku-nor, as well as for his arrival in Lhasa which he fixes as January 29th, 1846, while it really took place at the end of December, 1845. Even the date of his sailing for Europe on the *Cassini* on December 28th, 1851, is wrong. From beginning to end Huc has been unlucky with his dates.¹

Finally, if Huc "manipulated" the purport of his journey after the event, and if he gives dates that are often suspicious, I am afraid that he was equally easy in his presentation of facts. I should like to illustrate this by a couple of examples.

A. (*Souvenirs*, I, 6).² "Hail is of frequent occurrence in these unhappy districts and the dimensions of the hailstones are generally enormous. We have ourselves seen some that weighed twelve pounds. One moment sometimes suffices to exterminate whole flocks. In 1843 during one of these storms there was heard in the air a sound as of a rushing wind and

¹ I have not spoken of the dates which Huc gives for historical incidents; they are on occasion no less astonishing.

² Below, Vol. I, p. 5.

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therewith fell in a field near a house, a mass of ice larger than an ordinary millstone. It was broken to pieces with hatchets, yet, though the sun burned fiercely, three days elapsed before these pieces entirely melted." M. Planchet (I, 73-74) gives an interesting note showing that these enormous hail-stones, however rare they may be, are not without parallel in Mongolia. I readily agree; I do not believe that Huc invented the story, but merely that he has declared himself an eye-witness of what someone else really had told him; for in an unpublished letter which Gabet wrote to his brother Ferdinand on August 20th, 1842, we read as follows: "In the first days of June—the month which has just gone by—such a terrible shower of hail fell that whole flocks of sheep were completely wiped out. Last year near the place where I was on mission work . . . a frightful hail-storm occurred, so bad that some of the hailstones, which were weighed, were as much as ten and twelve pounds each. Two years ago a piece of ice, larger than three mill-stones, fell during a perfect tempest of hail a day's journey away from the place where I was, at a spot inhabited by pagans which I often pass through; it was broken to pieces with picks and clubs and the bits took three or four days to melt, although it was the hottest part of July."

In August, 1842, and therefore still more certainly at an earlier date, Huc was not in the district where Gabet was ordinarily living. We saw above quite definitely that Huc arrived from Macao at Hsi-wan-tsü on June 17th, 1841, and stayed there till about May 26th, 1843; it was not till then that he started off for the missions at "Black Waters" and "The

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Contiguous Defiles". Besides, this is confirmed by a passage from Gabet's letter to his brother. "Peter and Paul [the two lamas whom Gabet had converted and baptized] are not with me; the first is teaching Mongol to M. Huc, a colleague who has come to join us¹; the other is at Macao, where he is studying. I am going to try to get hold of another of them." On the other hand, the likeness between Gabet's letter and Huc's text is so clear, that fresh storms at exactly a year's space, where every incident was repeated so closely, are hardly to be thought of. I am more inclined to think that Huc has narrated as if he had seen it himself what really he had only heard from Gabet.

B. The second example is even more to the point. In his *Souvenirs* (I, 134-137)² Huc speaks of the Living Buddha of Urga, or, as he calls him, the Living Buddha of "Great Küren", which is really the native name. He prefixes these words to his description of the lamasery: "As we had an opportunity of visiting this edifice in one of our journeys into Northern Tartary, we will here give some details respecting it." And, further on, talking of the Chinese merchants' post some half-league away from the lamasery, he says: "A watch and some ingots of silver, stolen during the night from M. Gabet, left us no doubt as to the want of probity in the Holy One's disciples." Every reader of these pages would naturally conclude that Huc had accompanied Gabet at least once on a trip to Urga; and some have, as it happens, not failed to do so—

¹ That is to say he had come to join the Mongolian mission, the head-quarter of which were at Hsi-wan-tzu.

² Below, Vol. I, pp. 108-112.

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Markham, for instance (*Tibet*, XLIX). Now Gabet actually did go from Hsi-wan-tzü, but it was in the summer of 1839; and it was then that he was robbed, not near Urga, but when, to the north of Urga, he was trying to push on as far as Kiakhta. We have a detailed account of this journey by Gabet himself in his letter from "Tartary, June, 1842" (*Ann. Prop. Foi.*, XX, 4-33). Gabet's only companions were the former lamas, Peter and Paul. At this date Huc had not even arrived at Macao.¹ Further still, it is unlikely that Huc ever went to Urga. He arrived at Hsi-wan-tzü on June 17th, 1841, and did not leave for the missions opened by Gabet more to the north until the second half of May, 1843. Now it is obvious that on his arrival the chief of his district gave him mission work to do and did not send a new-comer off alone on an expedition into a distant country, which he himself had already explored.

On the other hand, Huc himself tells us (*Souvenirs*, I, 29)² that "towards the commencement of the year 1844" Gabet and he received Mgr. Mouly's instructions as to the great journey, and we know from Mgr. Mouly as well as from Gabet that their first goal was precisely Outer Mongolia, the Khalkha country where Urga is situated. So Huc assuredly did not go to Urga in this particular year either. Only one solution remains: that Huc owed his information about Urga and the Living Buddha to Gabet. As a skilled writer however, he felt that the public prefers a story told at first, rather than at second, hand; and to please

¹ Since my article in the *T'oung Pao* unpublished letters of Gabet have been communicated to me, which confirm the fact that his journey to Urga took place before 1841.

² Below, Vol. I, p. 2.

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the public he made out that he had undertaken the trip himself.

On the linguistic acquirements of the two missionaries M. Planchet (I, 66-67) has some very judicious remarks. Gabet must have spoken fluently enough both Chinese and Mongol; in addition he set about studying Manchu. His *Rapport* to Pius IX gives information on the various pieces of work he undertook. Immediately after Paul's conversion in 1837 Gabet drew up "A small collection of prayers in the Mongol tongue" and also "a small elementary Catechism of Catholic doctrine". "Paul, who knows the Manchu language perfectly, is giving me lessons, and these two small books, written in Mongol, were translated into Manchu." After Peter's conversion he says of all three: "We wrote in Mongol a complete statement of Catholic doctrine drawn from the Council of Trent and set out in the form of question and answer; then an historic treatise on the Christian religion with a refutation of the superstitions of Buddhism; and, finally, a tract for teaching purposes on the existence of God. All these works have remained unpublished. The fear, that, in the earlier parts, there might have slipped in some expression that was inexact theologically, has always hindered us from giving them to be printed and from multiplying them."¹ Later, about 1842, Gabet drew up "a Manchu grammar and then a tract on the connections between this language and the Mongol tongue". All this seems to presuppose a fairly wide knowledge of these two languages; we are all the more surprised to find Gabet, in the same

¹ Gabet was not aware that old translations of the works of Ricci and Aleni into Mongol and Manchu existed.

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Rapport to Pius IX, translating the Mongol name "Dzün-Uliaſti" on two several occasions (pp. 145-146 and 156) as "Eastern Reeds", where there seems to be a confusion involved between *qolosun*, a reed, and *uliyasun*, a poplar.

As for Huc, he is considered to have spoken Chinese very well, but he was certainly not in a position to read any but easy texts. Besides that, he had a knowledge of Mongol, sufficient for everyday needs. As regards Tibetan, in spite of some preliminary studies and the seven or eight months spent in the Kumbum district doing Tibetan with "Sandara the bearded", the stage the two missionaries reached is made clear by the fact that, in all their writings, including Gabet's note in the *Journal Asiatique* of May, 1847 (p. 464), they called the Potala "Bouddhala", a name they translated as "mountain of Buddha". Such being the state of affairs we naturally ask ourselves how they were able to carry on at Lhasa the Tibetan conversations, of which Huc has left us such pleasantly highly-flavoured accounts in his *Souvenirs*.

Of the astonishing sections in the *Souvenirs* one of the most brilliant is the "Invocation to Timur", which Huc says he heard from a wandering singer or "*toolholos*". This is one of the rare passages for which the letter of December 20th, 1846 (*Ann. Prop. Fid.*, XIX, 281-282) already gives us word for word the final version of the *Souvenirs* (I, 90-91).¹ "*Toolholos*, said we, the songs you have sung were all excellent. But you have as yet said nothing about the Immortal Tamerlane: the 'Invocation to Timur', we have

¹ Below, Vol. I, pp. 73-4.

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heard, is a famous song, dear to the Mongols.—Yes, yes, exclaimed several voices at once,—sing us the ‘Invocation to Timur’.” Then follows an epic fragment, in which the Mongols recall the happy times when “the divine Timur dwelt within our tents” and which ends “Return! Return! We await thee, O Timur!” The Mongols, however, particularly those of Inner Mongolia, have no reason to know Tamerlane, who ruled in Russian Turkestan and never in Mongolia. I imagine that Huc has here adapted a Mongol folk-song, which, among the Mongols, has as its subject some great man quite other than Tamerlane.

I will now add that if, in Huc’s two accounts, the wording is identical in the whole of both passages, yet the places where the scene is said to occur are not the same. According to the *Souvenirs* the missionaries heard the “Invocation to Timur” at “Chaberté”, otherwise called Shabartai, “a hundred leagues” to the east of Kui-hua-ch’eng, at a spot where their route crossed the road from Kiakhta and Urga to Peking. In a letter of December 26th, 1846, however, all this is related of a camping ground in a loop of the Ordos, well to the west of Kui-hua-ch’eng, and when the travellers had already crossed the Yellow River ten days before. I see no reason to choose between these two sites, of which one is, in all likelihood, no less arbitrary than the other. Huc in his notes had this scrap of bravura-writing: he localized it at a spot where the surroundings struck him as being best suited to show it off.

The conclusion from these remarks is that Huc, in writing up his *Souvenirs*, trimmed them liberally

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for public consumption. He "invented" nothing, but he transposed his material in order to please, and he succeeded. The *Souvenirs* are an artistic creation which leaves the reader with the impression of a whole, which is the more true for the very lack of exactitude in the detailed relation of facts.¹ We should very much like to know more of what Gabet thought of all this. Huc's marvellously animated narrative has thrown into the shade his companion who was both his elder and his chief. Huc must have put himself to the forefront straight away. From October, 1846, the very day after the arrival of our travellers, the French consul in Macao is already talking of MM. "Huc and Gabet". Current usage follows suit. It is our duty to-day to make an effort, having the letters of Mgr. Mouly and Daguin in mind, to reestablish the proper ecclesiastical order—Gabet and Huc.

¹ I do not want to discuss in this place the complex question of Moorcroft's fate. Although the positive statements of Huc have either shaken or convinced Waddell G. Sandberg, Landon, Holdich, and Kühner, I think it more probable that Moorcroft really did die in Afghanistan in 1825 and that Huc, by making him come to Lhasa, was guilty of an oversight, from the consequences of which he did not know how to clear himself afterwards.

EDITORIAL NOTE

In the present reprint of Hazlitt's translation the original spellings have been kept throughout except in the rare cases of obvious misprints in the original, such as Isao-ti for Tsao-ti (Vol. I, p. 2), Monhe-Dhot (Vol. I, p. 34), and Monhe Dehot (Vol. II, p. 163) for Monhe Dchot. All the Chinese, Tibetan, and Mongol names and words occurring in the text will be found in the Index with their modern scientific transcription which has been supplied by Professor Pelliot. These transcriptions have throughout the text been inserted in square brackets where these names and words appear for the first time.

APPENDIX

LETTER FROM MR. A. R. JOHNSTON TO SIR JOHN FRANCIS DAVIS, BART.,
HER MAJESTY'S PLENIPOTENTIARY IN PEKING¹

Victoria [Hong Kong],

16th February, 1847.

I was recently a fellow passenger on board the steamer from Hong Kong to Point de Galle with a French Lazarist Missionary of the name of Joseph Gabet. He was going to Paris, conceiving that he had been ill-used in L'Hassa by Ke-Shen the Chinese representative there, and if on his arrival in Paris he thought it advisable he intended to bring his case to the notice of the French Government.

Joseph Gabet entered China by the Province of Fokien in 1836, and has since been in the provinces of Se-Shewn, Hoo-Pe, Tche-Lee, Quangtung, Quang-Si, in Thibet, among the Turcomans, and the Mongols. He showed me a Mantchoo Grammar which he had written. He had lived in a large "Bonzarie" on the frontier of Thibet, for ten months, which he describes as a very fine establishment.

The *Church* covering an area of 400 feet square (40 Chang of 10 feet square). He was at L'Hassa for some time, and hoped, and still wishes to establish a mission there, but his funds having run short he wanted to open a communication with Calcutta in order to supply his Mission with resources, for this purpose he obtained the permission of the Regent of Thibet to go to Calcutta through Gorgat [? Gourkak] but Ke-Shen who is at L'Hassa as Chinese Envoy, heard of it, and has sufficient influence to prevent his executing this plan, and by his interference, to get him handed over to him in order that he might be sent to Canton, on the plea that he would shew the English the way to Thibet if he was permitted to go to Calcutta as he wanted.

The Government of Thibet is composed of the Ta-Lee Lama or "Universal Saint" and there is a King under him who is a Lama—

¹ Public Record Office, F.O. 17/123. The document is Letter 22 in the Correspondence of Sir J. Davis, January and February, 1847. It is enclosed in a short explanatory letter from Sir John Davis to Lord Palmerston.