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JOURNAL

of the residence of

M^r DE LANGE

Agent of his imperial majesty of all the Russias
Peter The First

AT THE COURT of PEKIN

during the years 1721, & 1722

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

à partir de :

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Agent of his imperial majesty of all the Russias Peter The First,
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Pierre Palpant
www.chineancienne.fr

TABLE

[Preface to the reader](#)

JOURNAL

1721

[March](#)

[April](#)

[May](#)

[August](#)

[September](#)

[October](#)

[November](#)

[December](#)

1722

[January](#)

[February](#)

[March](#)

[April](#)

[May](#)

[June](#)

[July](#)

Translation of the editor's
PREFACE TO THE READER

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This journal is a very curious and an authentic piece, and certainly merits the attention of the public, as well for its use as the novelty of the subject it treats of.

As the world is not so sufficiently informed of what passes in those distant countries, as to form a tolerable judgment of what the court of Russia may have to do with that of China, I am now about to give a succinct relation thereof to the reader, that it may serve him as an introduction to the work.

It is now well known, that the frontiers of Siberia are contiguous to those of China ; for this reason, it is natural to think, that the court of Russia should have more frequent correspondence with that of China, than any other court of Europe. Nevertheless, this correspondence, between the two courts, is of no ancient date, as it did not commence but since the mongall Tartars made themselves masters of China, about the year 1640 ; for it was about that time that the Russians, after being possessed of Siberia from the latter end of the sixteenth century, began to spread themselves over that vast country ; not having met with the least resistance from the ancient inhabitants of those parts ; till, at last, they came to establish themselves about the lake Baykall, and the river Amoor, thereby becoming near neighbours to the mongall Tartars ; by intercourse with them the Russians soon came to understand, that their nation had possessed themselves of China ; and that it was the prince who was actually their Chan, who filled, at that time, the throne of China.

The court of Russia was not ignorant of the extreme opulence of the empire of China ; and, apprized that the distance from Siberia could not be great, resolved to try if they could not draw some advantages from that discovery, by establishing a regular commerce between Siberia

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

and China ; promising themselves no less, than to draw into Russia, from that empire, a great part of its riches. For this purpose, the court of Russia sent, successively, several ambassadors, or envoys, to China ; who succeeded so well, that the Chinese, at length, consented to the entry of the caravans into their dominions, from Siberia, on conditions very advantageous to Russia.

During these transactions, the Russians daily gained ground, on the frontiers of the mongall Tartars ; and even made no scruple, when they thought fit, of establishing themselves on their territories, with a design to approach on one side, along the river Amoor, towards the oriental sea ; and on the other side, along the river Selinga, towards the frontiers of China.

In the mean time, the new government of China was not long of comprehending, that all these new settlements, which the Russians made upon the frontiers of the Mongalls, would, in time, render their power too formidable to the subjects of China ; and might come at last to be very dangerous to the repose of China itself, in case any misunderstandings between the two nations should arise. On these considerations, they resolved to oppose settlement to settlement ; and to build some towns, and villages on the frontiers of the mongall Tartars, at some distance from the last settlements of the Russians ; in order thereby to prevent their penetrating further into the country, to the prejudice of the tartar subjects of China.

In consequence of this resolution, the Chinese built, about the year 1670, the towns of Mergeen and Naun, and the borough of Xixigann, with several other boroughs, and villages thereabouts ; which they peopled with colonies of Mongalls, subjects of China.

Thence arose disputes between the two empires, on the subject of their frontiers. And in place of the negotiations being confined to affairs of commerce, and mutual protestations of amity and friendship, on one side and the other ; the grand object of all their aims, came now to be the accommodation of the affair of the frontiers, and the regulation of limits between the two empires. But in as much as one would preserve

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

to themselves the right of doing as they thought fit ; and the other would, at all hazards, keep them from doing what they thought dangerous ; there arose a great coolness between them ; which came to blows in the years 1684 and 1685. It is true that they laboured incessantly, both on the one side and on the other, for a re establishment of good harmony between the two nations ; to this end there were held two different congresses, at the town of Nerchinsky, between the plenipotentiaries of Russia, and those of China. But those gentlemen met with so many difficulties, in reconciling their different sentiments and interests, that they were obliged to separate without success. At last, F. Gerbillon, a jesuit, returned again to the town of Nerchinsky, in quality of plenipotentiary of the court of China ; and there, in 1689, signed a treaty of peace, and perpetual alliance, between the two empires ; which was afterwards ratified, in the usual forms, by both the courts.

That treaty was not very advantageous to the Russians ; because it set bounds to their establishments on these frontiers, which was a very disagreeable article. And as they believed the Chinese would not regard it very strictly, provided they did not advance further on the side of the Selinga, and the towns they had lately built to the southward of the frontiers ; the Russians again began to make new settlements along the river Amoor ; and, at last, to build along the south bank of that river, thirty leagues beyond their limits, a town they called Albazin ; in hopes that the Chinese could not be without Siberian furs, and would rather choose to wink at these enterprises, than enter into a new war. But they were quite mistaken in their calculation ; for the Mongalls furnished such quantities of furs to China, from the time they had orders from the Chan to spread themselves along the banks of the Amoor, that the Chinese began to perceive that they could be sufficiently supplied with furs, without those from Siberia. And in these sentiments they spoke freely their thoughts of these new enterprises of the Russians.

In the mean time, the Russians gave them good words, and fair

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Peking

promises ; but continued to carry on their point, flattering themselves, that they might find some favourable opportunity of pacifying them. Nevertheless, the Chinese growing doubtful of the Russians complying with their demands, which they thought well founded, at length, had recourse to force ; and, in the year 1715, made the Mongalls, subjects to China, take arms, and laid siege to the town of Albazin, the place which was the principal ground of their complaints. This siege continued three years ; and as the late Peter the great was occupied in his grand designs to the westward, he would not continue the quarrel with China. Thus they let the town fall into the hands of the Mongalls ; and agreed to a new provisional treaty with the court of Peking. But as other differences, on the frontiers, still subsisted, the court of Russia sent again, in 1719, an envoy extraordinary to Peking, to regulate entirely what remained to be adjusted between the two empires ; and seeing, that by means of these differences, the commerce of the caravans was much lessened, the true object of his negotiation was to re-establish that commerce ; and, to that end, to try to induce the court of China to consent to the residence of an agent, from Russia, at the court of Peking, who might take care to watch over the affairs of the caravan, and so preserve a good understanding between the two empires. The envoy of Russia, having happily executed the last part of his commission, left, at his departure from Peking, Mr. de Lange, as agent of Russia at the court of Peking, who was the author of the following journal.

The public is obliged for this tract to a foreign minister, who resided many years at the court of Russia ; and who permitted it to be communicated to the public. But, to make the reading of it more agreeable, and more useful to the world, it was thought fit to add some little remarks in the places which required elucidation ; that nothing might be wanting to the reader on so interesting a subject.

MARCH of 1721

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Mr. de Ismayloff, ambassador and envoy extraordinary of his Czarish Majesty, having fixed his departure from Pekin to be on the 2^d of March, after having finished his negotiations at the court of China in the best manner he possibly could ¹, I took the resolution of accompanying him to the wall of China ; but the gentlemen of the ministry thought proper to refuse me a passport ; pretending, that, as I was ordered by his Czarish Majesty to reside at the court of the Chan ², it was necessary that I should have permission of the Bogdoi-Chan himself ; not only for going as far as the Grand Wall, but also, for every time that I would go to stay a night without the walls of Pekin ; to the intent, that the court might always be assured that no ill accident should happen to me, being a foreigner ³. And, as the Bogdoi-Chan had already quitted his residence of Pekin, to take the diversion of hunting, it was not without a good deal of trouble that I obtained permission to accompany Mr. de Ismayloff as far as Czampinsa, which is a town 60 ly ⁴ distant from Pekin, from whence I returned, being escorted by a clerk of the council for the affairs of the Mongalls, and some soldiers ; and thus came back to Pekin on the 6th.

¹ Mr. de Ismayloff, a gentleman of great merit, and a captain in the regiment of the Preobraschinsky guards, was sent, in the year 1719, by the late emperor Peter the Great, to China, with the character of ambassador and envoy extraordinary, to renew the treaties between Russia and China ; and to endeavour to bring the court of Pekin to agree to a regulated free commerce with Russia.

² All the Tartars give to their reigning princes the title of Chan ; and, as the house, which at present fills the throne of China, is come from that branch of pagan Tartars, known to us by the name of oriental Mongalls, the emperors of China conform themselves to the established custom of their nation ; preserving, to this time, the title of Chan. *Vide Hist. généalog. des Tartares.*

³ Mr. de Ismayloff, at his departure from Pekin, left, by virtue of his instruction, Mr. de Lange, in quality of agent of Russia, to treat of, and bring to a conclusion, a regulation of commerce, and the establishment of an easy correspondence, between the two empires ; and although the chinese ministry opposed, most strenuously, the residence of the said agent at their court, on pretence that it was contrary to the fundamental constitutions of the empire ; yet the said ambassador knew so well how to take his measures, that the Bogdoi-Chan gave his consent to it, notwithstanding all the intrigues of the ministry to the contrary.

⁴ One ly of China is exactly 360 geometrical paces.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

The 7th, early in the morning, I saw enter the court-yard of my house a man who had the appearance of a poor beggar ; he brought with him some poor starved fowls, and salted cabbage, together with some pots of tarassun, which is a fermented liquor, made of grain, and what the Chinese drink instead of wine, making it warm before they drink it. This man, having set it all down in my court-yard, was returning ; when I ordered him to be called back, to inform me of the meaning of his so doing. Upon which he told me,

That it was part of the provisions he had bought for me, by order of the college who have the charge of the emperor's magazines of provisions ; but, that not being able to bring all at once, he was going to fetch the rest.

Whereupon, being informed by him what his occupation was, I understood,

That he had made a contract, with the said college, to furnish me, every nine days, with a certain quantity of provisions for my house.

Upon which I ordered him to take every thing away that he said he had bought for me ; and to bring no more to my house, till I should receive previous information, from the council for foreign affairs, how much I was daily to receive by order of the Bogdoi-Chan, and through whose hands I was to receive them.

Whereupon I sent to let the mandarins (who were appointed to propose to the council what might regard me) know what had occurred with this man, who came, in the above-manner, to bring me provisions on the part of the Bogdoi-Chan ; and, also, that I should always most respectfully receive whatever the Bogdoi-Chan, from his friendship for his Czarish Majesty, should order for my subsistence, in case it was sent me in a proper manner ; at the same time, desiring them to acquaint me with the particulars of what the court had ordered for my subsistence. Whereupon those gentlemen sent me the following answer,

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

That I should receive the same allowance which I had received before, during the residence of the envoy extraordinary at this court ; and that they had already made an agreement to deliver my allowance regularly.

I represented to them thereupon,

That I never had any separate allowance during the residence of his excellency the envoy at Pekin, having had the honour of eating always at the same table with him ; that, for this reason, I could now receive nothing, until I should know precisely wherein it was to consist ; and that, after I should know what the allowance was to be, I should desire them to pay me the amount of the same in money, which they were to pay to the purveyor.

These gentlemen were not wanting in letting me know,

That I ought not so nicely to examine what the Bogdoi-Chan, without any obligation, had ordered to be given me, out of his mere grace.

But I assured them, in strong terms, in my turn,

That I absolutely would receive nothing on these terms ; for I was very doubtful whether the Bogdoi-Chan was informed, that such a person was trusted with the disposition of what allowance he was pleased to order for me.

This resolution much discomposed the gentlemen mandarins, who had reckoned on supplying their own tables with my provisions ; but, seeing how difficult it was to obtain their ends on this occasion, they at last delivered to me the following specification, and said it was what the Bogdoi-Chan had ordered for my allowance, viz. per day,

1 fish, 1 sheep, 1 pot of tarassun, 1 fowl, 1 bowl of milk, 2 oz. of tea, 2 oz. of butter, 2 oz. of lamp-oil, ½ gin salted cabbage, 2 small measures of rice, 15 gin of wood.

To my interpreter per day,

1 oz. of tea, ½ gin of flower, 2 oz. of butter, 2 oz. of lamp-oil, 2

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

small measures of rice. 8 gin of wood, and every 9 days a sheep.

To every one of my domestics per day,

1 ½ gin of beef, 1 oz. of salt, 1 measure of rice, 5 gin of wood.

To a dragoon who was left behind, by the envoy, at Pekin, upon account of some tapestries they were working for his Czarish Majesty,

1 measure of rice, 1 oz. of tea, ½ gin of flower, 2 oz. of butter, 2 oz. of lamp-oil, 5 gin of wood, and every 9 days a sheep.

By *laen* you are to understand ounces ; and by *gin*, pounds.

Upon delivering this specification, the mandarins acquainted me,

That, as they were obliged to buy the fish, the fowls, the sheep, and the milk, for my provisions, with ready money, I might receive the value of those things in money ; but, in regard to the other articles, I must content myself to receive them, in kind, from the Chan's magazines ¹.

Upon which I assured them,

I should make no objection, provided they did it in a decent manner, and not by unknown people that marched off as soon as they had thrown it down in my court-yard, as they had once done.

At the same time I demanded of them,

Whether I could still have the Chan's horses, to make use of when I should have occasion, as I had during the residence of the envoy extraordinary.

They answered me thereupon,

That I might certainly have the Chan's horses always ; but

¹ The emperor of China receives the greatest part of the tribute of his subjects, in the country, in provisions and manufactures of the growth of the several provinces ; which are afterwards distributed, in kind, to all persons in the service of this monarchy, and reckoned to them as part of their salary ; so that all the gold and silver, that comes into the treasury of the Chan, arises from the tribute of the cities, the duties inwards and outwards, the tolls of passengers, the mines of gold and silver, and fines or confiscations ; all which together amount, every year, to immense sums.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

then, as the stables of the Chan were at a considerable distance, it was necessary for me always to acquaint them of my intentions, the day before I intended to ride out ; upon such notice, they would take care that the horses should always be ready at my quarters, very early in the morning ¹.

To avoid this inconvenience, and to avoid the being obliged to let them know every day where I would go, I took the resolution to buy six horses, and to keep them at my own expense, though forage was very dear at Pekin. The guard that had been placed upon the envoy's quarters, during the time of his stay at Pekin, under the command of a brigadier, remained still on the same footing after his departure, as did the two mandarins of the 37th order ², together with a clerk, to receive from me whatever I should have to propose, whether by word of mouth, or by writing ; and to make their report to the council of foreign affairs ; and this appeared to me a very good omen.

The 9th, the brigadier of the guard of my quarters let me know, that the Bogdoi-Chan would return from hunting the next day ; and that if I was desirous to go to meet him, he would give orders, that the mandarins should be ready to escort me, with a guard of horse, for the security of my person.

The 10th, I mounted on horse-back, very early, to go to meet the chan. When his majesty saw me, he called me to him, and asked me

If I did not repine to be alone in a foreign empire, so far from Europe ?

he further asked,

If I was well ? and if I was contented ?

¹ At Pekin they always make visits in town on horse-back. But the princes of the blood, and the grand mandarines, are generally carried in litters on these occasions attended with a numerous train of domestics.

² Every man appointed to any public charge, or dignity, in China, from the highest to the lowest, is called by the name of mandarin ; whence it comes that there are many orders, which are all distinguished, one from the other, by difference of habits, characters, and figures, which are embroidered or sewed on their habits ; in so much, that, upon seeing a mandarin, it may be immediately known of what order he is ; because every mandarin is to forbid to appear in public without the habit of his order, under pain of the most rigorous penalties.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

Upon which, having with a profound reverence thanked his majesty for my gracious reception, I assured him,

That I found myself perfectly well ; and I could not but be well content with having the honour of residing at the court of so grand a monarch.

After which his majesty, having dismissed me, was carried in his litter to Pekin, followed by a very numerous court ¹.

The 11th, 12th, and 13th, I notified to the mandarins, solicitors in my affairs,

That, having several things to get made for the emperor, my master, I should have great occasion for the money which divers merchants of Pekin were owing to the commissary Gusaitnikoff, who had been lately at Pekin with the caravan of Siberia ² ; and I craved their assistance to facilitate the recovery of those sums, seeing the debtors had engaged themselves, before the envoy extraordinary, to pay me the same immediately after his departure.

The mandarins explained themselves very favourably thereupon ; but our debtors, having got notice of it, retired into the country ; which obliged me to leave this affair to another opportunity.

The 15th, the Bogdoi-Chan went to Czchan-zchumienne, which is a house of pleasure belonging to his majesty, 12 ly westward of Pekin, where he frequently makes his residence. But having observed, in his passing, that the triumphal arches, and other like ornaments, which are

¹ The emperor of China might be then in his 69th lunar year ; but he was still very well disposed in body and mind, and was looked upon as a monarch of superior penetration and genius. The fathers jesuits, missionaries in China, had great influence with him ; and he usually consulted them on all affairs of importance. He mounted the throne anno 1662, aged eight years, and died in september 1722.

The prince, his 3rd son, who already commanded the armies of the empire, succeeded to the empire ; for the deceased emperor had confined his two elded sons in a close prison, some years before his death, upon some alledged attempts to rebel, true or false, and declared them excluded from succeeding to the empire. Nevertheless their brother set them at liberty, immediately upon his accession to the empire, and heaped favours on them, to make them forget the loss of their right, which he possessed.

² They give the title of commissary to those who have the direction of the caravans, which come from Siberia to Pekin to trade.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

raised on his birthday, on both sides of the grand road, paved with square flat stones, that reaches from Pekin to Czchan-zchumnienne, were not of the usual magnificence, all the ministry were disgraced for many weeks. Upon which the ministers, having instantly ordered the demolition of all that had been built, caused to be built up anew, from the palace of the emperor at Pekin quite to Czchan-zchumnienne, a great number of triumphal arches, and of most magnificent columns, of an exquisite taste, all embellished with gildings, and festoons of all sorts of rich silks of most lively figures and colours. At the same time, in several places, they erected theatres of great beauty ; where the most able comedians exerted their talents, in representing the most difficult and curious parts of their professions ; accompanied with the grandest concerts of music, both vocal and instrumental, diversified with the amusements of dancing, and feats of uncommon agility. All these entertainments being prepared, the ministers went in a body to the imperial palace, supplicated the monarch on their knees, with their faces prostrate to the ground, that he would be pleased to admit them to his good graces ; and that he would be pleased to send some, in whom he could confide, to examine their new structures ¹. But the Bogdoi-Chan ordered them to be told,

That he would see nothing of what they had done, and that he would never celebrate his birthday at Pekin more ; for that he was as much emperor of China at Czchan-zchumnienne, as he should be though fitting on the imperial throne at Pekin ².

The 17th, I desired the mandarins, solicitors for my affairs, to come to me upon business that regarded the council. Upon which they sent

¹ The honours which they pay to the emperors of China approach even to adoration ; all those who have audience of him, being obliged to prostrate themselves three times before him, from which none are exempted, not even ambassadors, or other foreign ministers ; Mr. de Ismayloff, notwithstanding his quality, being obliged to go through that ceremony, as well as all others.

² The deceased emperor of China held the great lords of China very cheap ; for he well knew, that, in their hearts, they bore the tartar yoke very impatiently. Nevertheless, since the severe executions he ordered in the beginning of his reign, he seldom punished with death the great chinese mandarins, who fell into disgrace, contenting himself with condemning them to pay exorbitant pecuniary fines ; which incapacitated them from doing any thing against his authority, whatever desire they might have so to do.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

me word, that one of them being ill, the other dared not to meddle in matters that regarded the council, without the participation of his comrade. This obliged me to wait the recovery of the sick mandarin, and till I could see them both together.

The 18th, 19th, and 20th, I was willing to avail myself of the opportunity the sickness of one of my mandarins gave me, to make some visits to merchants of my acquaintance, and to the fathers jesuits, hoping thereby to induce them to return my visits, and give me opportunity of knowing something of the commerce of this empire. But I found that they all received my visit with very forced civilities, and great reserve ; particularly the merchants, who endeavoured to appear much occupied about other important affairs ; so that seeing it very difficult to bring them into my views, in the present conjuncture, I thought it best to postpone these sorts of visits to a more proper time. But they, not doubting that such a reception would occasion my making many reflections, let me know, by a third hand,

That my visits would be always most agreeable to them, and that they wished, with all their hearts, to divert me every day better than the custom of their country permitted them ; and likewise, on occasion, to come and see me, were it not for fear of the soldiers, who followed me everywhere, which prevented them. For in case they should not place the soldiers in the same chamber with themselves and me, and entertain them with every thing to their liking, they were capable of accusing them of having a clandestine commerce, of great importance, with me, or other suspicious negotiations, which would not fail of costing them considerable sums of money, and possibly might prove their entire ruin ¹.

¹ The princes of the house of the Tartars, who at present reign in China, have learned, at the expense of their predecessors, that they ought not to depend too much on the fidelity of the Chinese ; for this reason, all the military of the empire is, in a manner, composed of mongall Tartars, who, on that account, enjoy considerable privileges ; which makes them very insolent and almost insupportable to the Chinese. And as the number of these Tartars were not deemed sufficient to curb the Chinese, considering the vast extent of the empire, the late Bogdoi-Chan found it necessary, in order to augment their number, to make a law, whereby all the tartar Mongalls, men, or

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Peking

It is true, the fathers jesuits could not alledge such fears of the soldiers of my guard as the merchants ; their belonging to the court put them on quite another footing than the ordinary rank of people were upon ; but they pretended, that, as they were foreigners, they were obliged to act with great caution, in order to prevent suspicion ¹. This did not surprise me at all, in regard to a nation, the genius of which I already had a tolerable knowledge of. The affairs I had to manage were of a very difficult nature ; and in all countries the entering properly into such ought to be the principal care ; but I, nevertheless, flattered myself that this unpromising aspect, at my entering on my functions, would take a more favourable turn, as soon as the Bogdoi-Chan should receive the credentials I had from the emperor, my master.

The 22nd, my mandarins came together to see me, and to know what I had to propose to the council ; upon which I requested them

1. To put the Allegamba, or president of the council for foreign affairs, in mind, in my name, that they had let my credentials, from the emperor my master, remain in my hands beyond the usual time ; and that I waited, through his hands, the order of the Bogdoi-Chan, to appoint when he would please to receive them.
2. To acquaint the president, that I had resolved to hire a house for myself, near the quarters of the Russians, against the arrival of the caravan ; to the end that the said quarters might be repaired, which, from age, were gone to ruin, and might be entirely beat down by the approaching rainy season ; that, unless this reparation be made, the commissary would not know where to lodge on his arrival at Peking, except he

women, who should marry with Chinese, were obliged to bring up their children according to the customs of the Mongalls, and to teach them the Mongalls language ; and, that by means of this precaution, all those children should be deemed naturalized Mongalls, and enjoy the privileges of native Mongalls.

¹ This was but an excuse of the jesuits, to prevent the visits of Mr. de Lange, whose residing at Peking could not be very agreeable to them ; as it was to act in the affairs of a monarch who had turned all the jesuits out of his empire, and would suffer no other Roman catholic missionaries, but the capuchins, to reside in his dominions.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

would run risk of having the merchandises damaged.

3. To demand, for me, a passport, with the necessary escort, for some baggage, left at Pekin during the time of the embassy, which I wanted to send, out of hand, to Selinginsky ¹.

The said baggage was some raw silk which I had bought on account of Mr. Nicolai Christizy, with cash and effects that he had left in my hands ².

The answer, which I received immediately after from those gentlemen, contained in substance

That the emperor himself having allotted that house for my quarters, no person would readily insinuate to him that I was not satisfied with it ; and that, without a special licence from him, no person in all Pekin, were it even the imperial prince himself, would dare to let me a lodging, seeing it would thereby look as if the Bogdoi-Chan had not an inhabitable house for a foreigner.

To which I replied,

That I made no doubt of so great a monarch's having houses enough for lodging as many foreigners as he pleased ; but, that I was well persuaded, when the Bogdoi-Chan should be informed of the condition that house was in, he would not oblige me to inhabit it longer. Besides, that it was acting contrary to the common right, allowed by all the world, to restrain a person, in a public character, from hiring a lodging, with his own money, which might be commodious for him, without a previous application to the emperor himself.

¹ Selinginsky is the last fortress, belonging to Russia, towards the north-west of China. This town is in the country of the Mongalls, upon the east side of the river Selinga, 30 days journey from Pekin, in lat. 51. 30. The climate of Selinginsky is very mild, and the country about it very pleasant. The mongall Tartars did not accustom themselves to the cultivation of the ground, yet every thing that is sown or planted there thrives exceedingly.

² Through all Russia they use hardly any other silk but that of China, which is undoubtedly the best in the world ; it being certain, that two pounds of Chinese silk will go as far in manufacturing as three pounds of either persian or italian silk.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

They answered me thereupon

That the usages in Europe were not practised by them ; and, as all the countries in the world had their particular customs, China had her's, which would not be altered on any consideration whatever.

They also told me plainly,

That they could not write to the council on this subject, for that they knew of a certainty, that no person durst make the proposition to the emperor.

Upon which having told them,

That, as the case was so, I must submit to remain there, till the impossibility of abiding longer may force me to have recourse to other measures.

They, of themselves, proposed to me,

That the Chan might be petitioned to allot me other quarters, without alledging that my present quarters were in so miserable a condition.

But seeing I did not pretend to go out, but because it was in such a ruinous state, they persisted in saying, it was impossible for them to make the proposal to his Majesty on that footing.

The 23rd, the aforesaid mandarins came again to me to acquaint me,

That the president would consult the other members of the council upon my credential letters, and would put the emperor in remembrance, when occasion should offer. But, concerning the sending away the baggage, I must have patience till after the emperor's birthday, seeing the preparations for its celebration so fully employed every body, that nothing else was attended to, though of ever so great consequence.

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APRIL

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The 1st of this month, the Aloy, or master of the ceremonies of the Chan, invited me, by order of the Bogdoi-Chan, to come to Czchan-zchumnienne. Upon which I went there instantly. I was no sooner arrived, but I sent to notify the same to the said Aloy, and forthwith went to his apartment. I understood from him, that the Bogdoi-Chan had an intention to have admitted me that day to an audience, but that other affairs had unexpectedly interveened ; he had ordered him to deliver to me a piece of the tapestry which they were at work upon for the Czar, in order that I might send it to Russia by an express, and acquaint the Czar, that what pieces remained to be made should be ready in three months ¹. I laid hold of this opportunity of the passports and convoy necessary for the piece of tapestry, to request of this gentleman,

That he would be so good as to manage it so, as that, when his Majesty would give order for the passport and convoy for the piece of tapestry, I should, at the same time, be furnished with passports for the baggage above-mentioned, which I had to forward ; and that he would please to be at the trouble of informing himself, when his Majesty would be pleased to receive my letters of credence from the Czar, with which I was charged.

Whereupon the Aloy desired me to remain at his lodgings, whilst he went to make the proposal to the emperor ; and, at his return, he acquainted me,

That his Majesty would, out of hand, give orders to the council, that they should furnish me with the passports and

¹ The tapestry of China is generally made of satin, embroidered with large figures of gold and silk ; the colours very bright, but the designs not correct ; they are not adjusted to furnishing of rooms, unless bespoke on purpose, or composed of many different pieces.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

convoy necessary, as well for the tapestry as the baggage I wanted to send ; but that it could not be till after the birthday.

That as to the letters of credence, he did not find it proper to mention it to the emperor, it appearing to him that his Majesty frequently thought of me, and would not forget my letters of credence ¹ ; and gave me, in some measure, an assurance that the Chan would not long defer the receiving it. And then he made his excuses that he could not longer wait on me, being obliged instantly to return to the court.

The 2nd, according to custom, the birthday of his Majesty should have been celebrated, with the utmost magnificence, at Czchan-zchumnienne ; but, inasmuch as his Majesty was still displeas'd with his ministers, he only received the ordinary compliments on that occasion, without any other ceremony ; after which every body retired to their own houses. I had, among others, the honour of paying my compliments to his Majesty on that occasion. That which appeared, to me, most worthy of observation, at that time, was 3,000 old men, the youngest of which was above 60 years old ; which, by express order of the emperor, had been brought, to Pekin, from all the provinces of the empire. They were all dressed in yellow, which is the colour of the imperial liveries, and marched, in parade, to Czchan-zchumnienne, where they ranged themselves in the court of the castle, and had the honour of making their compliments to the emperor ; after which his Majesty distributed to every one, without distinction, 4 laen of silver, and sent them home.

¹ The late emperor of China, notwithstanding his great age, had so extraordinary a memory, till a little time before his death, that a flemish jesuit, who is yet at Pekin, recounted to one in the retinue of Mr. de Ismayloff, that, above 20 years ago, this monarch having shown him a wood-picker, asked him if there were such birds in their country ; and, having answered yes, he asked its name in flemish ; that, some time after the arrival of Mr. de Ismayloff, the emperor, having cast his eye on such a bird, asked him then, also, if such birds were in their country ; and now answering, No, the emperor asked him why he did not tell him the truth ; and, if he did not remember, that, at such a time, he told him there were such birds in their country ; upon which the father jesuit declared, that he had been so long out of his own country, that he really did not know whether there was or not. The emperor was very merry upon the jesuit's having forgot his mother-tongue ; and told him the bird's name in flemish.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

The same day, the parson of the church of st. Nicolas at Pekin ¹, presented me with a memorial of some debts which he had owing him, by diverse persons of that city, on account of the deceased Archimandrite ; praying my assistance in the affair.

The 3rd, having received, from the council, the necessary passport for the courier I was to dispatch with the piece of tapestry, I dispatched him, the same day, under the escort of a chinese courier.

The 8th, some unknown people, having entered my house, told me, by my interpreter,

That they had bought for me a certain number of sheep ; but, if I would not receive them in kind, they were ready to pay me half a laen of silver for every sheep.

I returned them in the same manner I did the former, letting them know,

That some person of the college, which had the direction of the emperor's magazines of provisions, must come to me to show me those who were to bring me provisions.

They attempted still, on several occasions, to bring in wood and other provisions, in the same way, to my house, without my being able to know who they were, or who sent them.

The 11th, I received the passport for the baggage of Mr. Nicolai Christizy, which I dispatched two days after from Pekin, under the escort of a chinese courier. The president of the council letting me know, at the same time,

That I ought not to send many of those expeditions, as long

¹ Those of the greek religion have but one church at Pekin ; but the roman catholics have three churches very magnificently built, where there resort, on sundays and holidays, a number of people of all conditions, the roman catholic religion being tolerated there ; but it is remarkable, that the men do not uncover their heads during divine service, because it is a mark of infamy, among them, to have the head uncovered ; no women appear there, having a separate apartment in the churches. The late emperor favoured the worship of the romish church to such a degree, that he ordered that all the sons of mandarins, who made their studies under the direction of the jesuits, should be obliged to go, all sundays and holidays, to their churches ; which gave great uneasiness to the chinese bonzes.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

as the new treaty of commerce, between the two empires, was unratified in the accustomed forms ; seeing it was not understood, that they consented to a continual passage, by small caravans ; which I myself sufficiently knew the reasons for, having assisted at all the conferences held on that subject.

The 13th, I learned that the Bogdoi-Chan was about to set out instantly for Jegcholl, which is a town newly built, with a magnificent castle, without the great wall 440 ly, or two days by post, eastward of Pekin, where he usually passes the fine season of the summer in hunting, and other country diversions.

The 14th, I mounted on horse-back to go to the president of the council ; being arrived at the gate, the guard made me wait till they had acquainted him of my being there ; immediately after which he sent one of his servants to inform himself

Whether I came purely on a visit, or had occasion to speak to him about business ; and, that in case I came about business, that I should communicate the same to his servant, that he might inform his master of the subject of it.

I made my compliments to the president by the messenger, and told him,

That I came to pay a visit to his master ; but as to the business I came about, that concerned the master not the servant.

After which the same servant returning, told me,

That I would be welcome to his master ¹.

Whereupon, entering into the court-yard, the president came out of his apartment to receive me ; and having taken me by the hand, after some reciprocal compliments, he led me into an open saloon, where we

¹ In China, when they go to see a mandarin, of what order soever, upon business regarding his office, the mandarin is obliged to put on the habit peculiar to his order ; upon failure whereof, he is amerced in large fines.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

sat down together, and were served with tea and milk, according to the Chinese manner. After some time, I desired that he would put the Bogdoi-Chan in remembrance, that I had letters to present to him from the Czar, my master ; and that I should be very glad to know if he would be pleased to receive them before his departure. He answered me thereupon as the master of ceremonies had done before,

That his Majesty was well informed of it, and would know himself when he would have time to receive them, without being put in mind of it ; and that, if we should put his Majesty in remembrance of it, that would look as if he or I wanted to prescribe the time of doing it to his Majesty.

I sought, by all ways possible, to engage him one way or other in this affair, but all in vain ; and I was obliged to hold this for an answer ; after which he added,

That if his Majesty had resolved not to receive my letter of credence, he would not have consented to my residing at his court, in quality of agent ; and that Mr. de Ismayloff having sufficiently explained the reasons of my stay in Pekin, these letters could contain nothing very pressing.

Upon which I replied to him,

That in Europe the monarchs were not accustomed, when the Czar wrote letters to them, to let such a length of time pass without receiving them ; nor take it amiss, from their ministers, if they put them in mind of such important affairs ; that I never expected such an answer in China ; but yet, as it was what I could not remedy, I must bear it patiently, till such time as his Majesty was disposed to receive them.

The 16th, I mounted again on horseback to go to see the Alegada, or first minister, in hopes of getting a resolution more favourable to my affair, than I got from the president of the council. Being arrived at his house, I was indeed admitted to come into his court-yard ; but, as I had no desire to go into the rooms of his servants, I was obliged to remain in

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Peking

the court till they notified to him my being there. He, like the other, sent a servant to me, to inform himself of the reason of my coming. To whom I signified, that I wanted the honour of seeing him, and of acquainting him with an affair which I did not think proper to explain to a servant. The same servant returned very soon to me, saying,

My master thanks you, Sir, for the trouble you have given yourself ; he is very well, but it is not convenient for him to see you.

The 17th, I was again in his neighbourhood ; and having sent my interpreter to him to ask permission to see him for a moment ; he sent me word, that it was impossible, because he was that instant going to his Majesty ; and that he did not know when he should have time to speak with me. Whereupon, seeing this was an affair that could not be forced, I resolved to let it ly dormant for some time.

The 19th, I went to see a german father jesuit ; who, being an old acquaintance, and a friend of mine from my first journey to China, made no scruple of telling me, that many of the principal mandarins of China much disapproved of the Chan's consenting to my remaining at Peking ¹. But that as there was no person, in all the empire, that was bold enough to dare contradict the will of the emperor, unless they would expose themselves to very great danger, it was very probable they would, by degrees, accustom themselves to my being there ². He said to me, also, that he had frequently sent his servant to me with his compliments ; but that the guard at my door had as often turned him back, as a person who had no business at my house.

¹ The Chinese regard their ancient laws and customs as sacred and inviolable ; and it is not to be wondered at, that they, with great reluctance, suffer the residence of a russian agent at Peking, as it is directly contrary to the fundamental constitutions of the empire, which absolutely forbid the Chinese to go out of the empire, and the admission of foreigners to an abode in it.

² The frequent executions which the late emperor of China was obliged to cause to be made, in the early part of his reign, in order to keep the Chinese quiet, occasioned such a dread in all the Chinese, that the greatest lords of the empire could not approach his person without fear and trembling. Nevertheless, this monarch was far from being a tyrant, in reality ; for he was a true lover of justice, and spared the blood of his subjects as much as possible. He had forbid, under the most severe penalties, the putting a criminal to death, for what crime soever, unless he should confirm and sign the sentence of death with his own hand.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Peking

Nevertheless, he did not think they would have been so untractable, if he would have given them a piece of money. He most strongly enjoined to take no notice of what he told me ; for he would by no means appear in this affair, it was sufficient that I was informed by him, in order to take my measures thereupon when occasion offered.

There are at Peking a great number of small merchants, or rather pedlars, who, as soon as they hear of any foreigners being arrived from Russia, or other parts, bring to their quarters all sorts of merchandise, which they get partly from the brokers, and partly from other houses of different sorts of people, who may have any goods which they would be willing to dispose of ; and it is often better to deal with these pedlars, for all sorts of curiosities, and for made silks, than with the shopkeepers ; for which reason I bid some of these people bring to my house, from time to time, what they should light upon most curious in its kind, whether in rich silks, or jewels, or other goods of value, to the end that I might acquire a competent knowledge of all the sorts of merchandise to be got in this city. Upon which they represented to me, that I might well believe that they fought nothing more than to gain a little money, it being their trade ; and of consequence they would not fail of doing as I desired them, if my house was occupied by different persons ; because what goods were not liked by one might find a buyer in another, and so they might probably always sell something ; but as I alone occupied the house, and had such a numerous guard at the gate, they did not know how to do it ; because, before they were permitted to enter my house, they were obliged to agree with the soldiers of the guard, how much they were to pay them on their going out ; and, whether they sold any thing or not, they were equally obliged to pay the money they agreed to for the permission of entry.

The 20th, I send to demand of the mandarins, who had the care of my affairs,

If it was with their knowledge that the soldiers of the guard that were at my gate, did not permit any person to enter my house without their giving them money ?

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

They, in answer, let me know,

That they knew nothing of the matter ; but they would not fail to make inquiry, and if they found, that the soldiers, through ignorance, had done such a thing, they would put things in better order for the future.

And I found that they had spoke to the officers of the guard, who told them,

They had strict orders to guard this house, and take particular care that the common people, who are generally very insolent, should not find means of coming into the court-yard to steal any thing ; and as they were to be answerable, they were obliged to use the precautions necessary, to this effect.

They came to report this to me, as an unanswerable argument. But I assured them, that whenever the guard admitted people to enter my house, during the day-time, I would not make them answerable for any robbery that might happen at my house ; for that I had a sufficient number of my own servants to drive out of my court-yard any persons who should dare to come there without having business.

It must be observed, on this occasion, that the Chinese have the custom of explaining themselves but once on one proposal ; and, having once given an answer upon a matter, whatsoever it be, they always hold themselves upon this answer, as an infallible argument ; so that if you turn an affair into twenty different lights, to convince them, by one means or other, of their error, or to make them alter their sentiments, it is all lost trouble ; they firmly holding by their first word. And it is a general rule with the Chinese, high and low, in all they have to do with foreigners ; in so much that every time a proposal is made to them, which their interest or vanity may incline them not to approve, it may be certainly depended upon, that, after infinite disputes, you will be obliged to receive the first words, which they pronounced in the beginning, for an answer, be it agreeable or disagreeable.

The 21st, I spoke with the brigadier of my guard about this affair,

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

who is a person generally esteemed by all the people of merit in the empire ; some years past, he had filled the greatest posts of the state, but was disgraced, and made brigadier on account of the bad conduct of his brother. I can truly say, this is the most worthy man I have known in China, full of honour, reason, and probity, and the fathers jesuits agreed with me, that there was not his equal in all this great empire. He disapproved very much the conduct of the officers and soldiers of my guard ; but he represented to me, at the same time,

That having precise orders from the emperor, that all sorts of the lower people should be prevented from entering or leaving my house at their pleasure, to the end that no insult might be offered me ; he could not avoid giving the same orders to the officers of my guard ; but to prevent the abuse of his orders, for time to come, he would come regularly twice a week to my quarters, to have an eye on their behaviour.

Which gave me opportunities of making a particular friendship with him ; but neither mine, nor all the threats which the brigadier gave to the officers and soldiers on this head, nor the rigorous treatment he made them feel on several occasions, could get the better of the insatiable avarice of these military people, who look upon it as their right to exact contributions of those who trade with foreigners. In short, it would have become insupportable to me, to be at the mercy of the chicanes that this pretended guard of honour studied to vex me with every day, if I had not had the hope that my credential letters would be very soon received ; and that I should then be able to do my affairs with more satisfaction.

The 23rd, my interpreter having met one of our debtors, he put him in mind of the promises he had made to Mr. de Ismayloff ; and assured him, that, if he deferred satisfying me, he should be arrested, seeing this affair would not allow of more prolongation. Upon which he promised to come to me, in two or three days, with his comrades, and to endeavour, to the utmost of his power, not to come empty handed.

The 26th, two of these debtors came to my house with a chinese

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

merchant who was their security ; they told me that one of their partners, named Dzchun-dzchan, who was indebted to us in 1.400 laen of fine silver, died the year before. But, as I was apprised that three of them were firmly bound in such case, one for the other, which they could not themselves gainsay, this sum must be brought to the account of the survivors. Of these two debtors which came to my house, the one, named dzchin-borche, was still in arrear 700 laen, according to what my interpreter said, but he acknowledged no more than 650 laen, the other, called dzchin-sanga, was to deliver 340 thun of kitaika ¹ on the arrival of the next caravan at Pekin, and this by virtue of an obligation which he had given to the commissary Gusaitnikoff, payable to him, or order.

I told them,

That though I had not in my hands the obligation he had given to Mr. Gusaitnikoff, that need not hinder their paying the debt to me, if not all at once, at least, by little and little, according as their abilities would enable them, seeing this money was to come into the treasury of his Czarish Majesty, and that, as soon as they paid the whole, I would give them an obligation of indemnity, which would make their obligations to Gusaitnikoff of no value ².

Upon which they replied,

That they could not object to this expedient, and that conformable to their promises to the envoy extraordinary, to give me entire satisfaction thereupon, they would not fail to do it, so as I should receive part of their debts before the end of the month.

¹ A sort of glazed cotton, calendered and smoothed, which they make in China, of all sorts of colours, whereof they sell great quantities through all the northern Asia.

² The commerce between Russia and China is, at present, a monopoly belonging to the treasury of Siberia ; no other subjects of Russia being to concern themselves in it, on pain of death, unless employed by the crown, and for account of the crown ; though it is often evaded by connivance of the weywodes on the frontier places. By virtue of the last treaty, they can send no more than one caravan a-year, from Siberia to Pekin, which does not consist of more than 200 persons ; instead of 1,000 and more, which they amounted to heretofore, and which were subsisted at the charge of the Chan of China, whilst they were on the territories of China ; but now they are to subsist upon their own charges.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

These promises continued, from day to day, without any part of them being fulfilled ; and as I knew, by my own experience, that there are no where worse paymasters than in China, unless they can be compelled by force, I was obliged to fall on other methods.

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The 1st, I delivered to my mandarins two memorials on the subject of those debts, and the debts of the parson of st. Nicholas, desiring they would present them to the council, and communicate to me the answer which they should receive on them. The same day my mandarins put into my hands 82 laen and 26 fun of fine silver ; saying,

That his Majesty had ordered this sum to be paid me for the value of the sheep, fish, fowls, and milk, for two months past ; and for the time to come, every 9 days, a clerk from the imperial treasury would bring me 12 laen and 37 fun, in payment for the said provisions ; and that the other allowances, which I was to receive in kind, should be likewise sent me by a clerk of the magazines from whence they were taken.

So that all I should receive for my monthly allowance, in money and provisions, would amount, according to the current prices, to 48 laen ; but they allowed me no forage for my horses, which is a considerable article at Pekin, where forage is extremely dear. After which, during the rest of this day, the weather was very bad, a great deal of rain, with mighty gusts of wind ; the old house, where I was lodged, could no longer stand the bad weather ; all the wall of one side of my chamber fell, about midnight, into the court-yard ; which made me very apprehensive for what remained. I was obliged to retire into an adjoining chamber, to avoid, in some measure, the danger to which I found myself exposed ; as this chamber, though a sorry place, was very low, I found myself in less danger ; besides, it was not quite so old and infirm as the other.

The next day, the 2nd of this month, I advertised my mandarins of what had happened ; praying them to cause immediate reparation to be made, if not of the whole house, of that apartment where I lodged at least. Whereupon they sent to assure me it should be done without loss of time.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

But, on the 4th, they changed their note ; and let me know that they could do nothing in it before the departure of the emperor, seeing the college, which had the care of the buildings, were so much employed about the court, that they could give no attention to other affairs for the present. Whereupon I offered to repair it by people I would hire on my own expenses. But they wanted to impose upon me in the price. And the mandarins protested to me, that it was an affair that might be their utter ruin, if the emperor should come to know that they had consented to my repairing, with my money, a house that belonged to him ; but they assured me, they should set to work upon it very soon.

The 8th, the Bogdoi-Chan departed for Jegcholl ; and, having the honour to attend him, on this occasion, to 15 ly from Pekin, his Majesty asked me,

If I expected the caravan soon.

I answered thereupon,

That I had not received any advices from the commissary ; but, nevertheless, I computed that the caravan might be at Pekin in two months from that time.

Whereupon he asked me,

If I would not come and pass the time, with the court, at Jegcholl.

I received such a gracious invitation with all due submission ; promising to come to pay my devoirs to his Majesty at Jegcholl as soon as possible ¹. But, on my returning to Pekin, the governor of the city let me know,

That I could not follow the emperor, before his Majesty had sent the necessary orders to him and the council to give me

¹ The late emperor of China was extremely affable and gracious towards Europeans, more especially to those who excelled in any science. He was taller than usual for people of his country ; and not to be known, either by his complexion, or features, to be of tartar extraction ; it was only to be observed, that his cheek-bones, under his eyes, were a little rising and prominent, like the Mongalls.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

post-horses, and the escort of mandarins, which I should have occasion for in this journey.

In the mean time, I made several agreements, with diverse persons, for different sorts of japanned ware, which his Czarish Majesty wanted to have, which I could not get at the usual price, because those who supplied me with them, were obliged to give a great part of what they gained on them every day to the soldiers of my guard, for the liberty of entering my house.

The 10th, my mandarins being come to see me, one of them took leave of me ; being, as he told me, named by the court to go, in quality of envoy, to the Delay-Lama ¹ ; and the other gave me positive assurances, that, early the next morning, the workmen should begin to repair my quarters ; and that they had already provided the materials necessary for that purpose. In regard to my two memorials, concerning the debts above mentioned, he gave me for answer,

That the president would not receive them ; not finding it proper to meddle with such trifling things ; as he had before hand told Mr. de Ismayloff himself, that the council would absolutely not embarrass themselves with any affair of debts ; that, nevertheless, he had ordered his mandarin to press the debtors to discharge their debts, in case they were in a condition of paying such sums.

The 20th, my mandarin coming, flopped at my gate, and having learned that my apartment remained still in the same condition, he sent one of his servants to make his excuses to me, for not coming to see me ; alledging, that the great heat approaching at noon would, he feared, incommode him. But I caused him to be told, for my whole answer,

That I did not understand such a compliment ; and that I

¹ The Delay-Lama is the sovereign pontif of the Kalmucks, Mongalls, and many other idolatrous nations north of the Indies. He is adored as a god by all these people; and, by them, believed to be immortal. He lives in a convent near the city of Potala, in the kingdom of Tanguts, upon a high mountain, south of the desert of Name, towards the frontiers of China. *Vide Hist. généalog. des Tartares.*

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

wished, with all my heart, that, in time to come, he would dispense with coming to my house at all.

Upon this answer he thought fit to come himself to me, and to complain much of the negligence of the college, which had the care of the buildings, in not adverting to the repair of my house, notwithstanding he had wrote to them, several times, on the subject, in the most pressing terms. I demanded of him,

What he believed the Czar, my master, would think of such usage as he showed me ; and, if he was not afraid, that, in time, he might be made responsible for such treatment.

But he, laughing, told me,

That there passed many other things with them, and of more importance than this was, without daring to carry complaints to the Chan, and he did not doubt but that it was the same at our court.

Nevertheless the brigadier of my guard, on being informed of the affair, went to the mandarins of that college, and threatened them with his going himself to acquaint the emperor, that, by their negligence, they contributed to the diminution of his glory in foreign countries, if they did not, without further delay, cause my house to be repaired the very next day.

The 25th, At length there came workmen to put my apartment into an habitable state. The same day one of our debtors, named Dzchinsanga, brought me 50 thun of kitaika ; but I saw no appearance of getting any thing from the others, they being very poor and indigent ; and I perceived that the proceedings of our mandarin, with them, tended more to get some little presents from them to himself, from time to time, than seriously to press them to the discharge of our debt.

In the months of June, July, and a part of August, there passed nothing material regarding me, either at the court, or with the ministry ; all those of any distinction being gone to partake of country diversions. Wherefore, I shall fill this vacation by a faithful report of the

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

observations which I could make, during my stay at this court, as well myself, as by some of my friends, of the present state of trade in the city of Pekin ; but I must, at the same time, acknowledge to the reader, that there is much wanting to make the observations such as they ought to be, and might have been if I had not been so straightened, and if they had let me enjoy the means of informing myself thoroughly of things.

The people of Korea, who are tributary to China, come twice a year to Pekin ¹, viz. in the months of march and august, to the number of 40 or 50 persons, as well to pay their tribute to the emperor as to carry on their trade ; which consists principally in the following merchandises.

A sort of large paper made of raw-silk, something like the large paper for wrapping up things in Europe. They make use of this paper in China, for windows, in place of glass.

Paper, with gold or silver figures, for hanging their chambers.

All sorts of large fans, of different fashions.

Mats, very neat and fine, which they use in summer in place of mattresses.

Cut tobacco, very small, for smoking, much esteemed in China, and preferred to that of their own growth.

Stripped cotton-stuffs.

A sort of furs which the Russes call chorky, and which they call colouk in Siberia ; it is in great abundance in Korea ; they sell a great deal of it in Pekin.

A sort of dry-fish, which they get from a certain large shell-fish in the sea of Japan.

¹ Korea is a peninsula, eastward of the Grand Wall of China ; it is contiguous, on the west, to the province of Leotang of China, and on the north to the Eastern Mongalls. The Koreans are, from time immemorial, tributaries of China, who treat them very hardly, not permitting them any commerce with strangers. Nevertheless they do not fail to come clandestinely with their goods, by the sea of Japan, to the river Amoor, and thence by the Naunda to the city Naun, to traffic with the Mongalls, and indirectly with the Russians.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

It is with these commodities that they trade ; and although they may, in a manner, be considered as the same nation with the Chinese, and in some degree their subjects, yet they do not enjoy the least liberty during their abode at Pekin ; all communication and conversation with foreigners being absolutely forbidden them, and much restricted with the Chinese themselves ; insomuch, that the Chinese are not less suspicious of them, than of any other nation whatsoever. As they cannot make by their trade any thing to a considerable amount, they generally bring with them to Pekin large sums in silver, in spanish pieces of eight, and in dutch dollars, which are looked upon, in China, as inferior to the fine silver of China, which they call the Chan's silver, by 5, 6, or 7 p. cent, which shows, that the inhabitants of Korea have some trade with the islands of Japan, or, at least, with the islands lying between Japan and Korea ; although it is absolutely forbid the inhabitants of that country to have the least communication, or commerce, with other nations, or to admit foreign ships into their ports ; having, for that end, a mandarin always residing in Korea, to have an eye on the proceedings of that nation. With this money they buy, at Pekin,

The finest raw-silk.

A sort of damask, called by the Russes goly, and by the Chinese couty-toanza, that is damask of Korea ; because, at first, the Koreans alone bought that sort of damask.

A sort of stuff mixed with silk, fit for linings, called by the Chinese fanfa.

Tea and chinaware.

All sorts of dishes of white copper, for household use.

Cotton.

They likewise buy the tails of sables, to border their caps and the collars of their robes.

It is likely that they trade into other parts with the silk and damask, which they carry from Pekin, seeing they take away much greater

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

quantities than the consumption of their own country can require.

When there is no russian caravan, nor any of that nation at Pekin, they quarter those of Korea in the habitation appointed for the Russes ; but when there are Russes in this city they give the Koreans other quarters : for this reason the Chinese call this house *couty coanne*, or magazine of the Koreans, when it is occupied by the Koreans ; and *urussa coanne*, or magazine of the Russes, when occupied by people of that nation.

When the Koreans, whether deputies from that country or merchants, arrive at Pekin, there are two mandarins forthwith named to go to their lodgings to observe who goes in to them, or comes out from them ; and to examine the cause of their coming, and how they became acquainted with the Koreans : they likewise place guards all around their quarters, to prevent any person from having private access to them. When any of this nation go abroad, upon any affair, the guard follows them every where, with large whips, to prevent any person from joining them in the street ; and they dare not go to see any person without permission of the guard. As the inhabitants of Korea are not used to ride on horseback, and are afraid to mount a horse, for fear of accidents, they give them a guard of infantry, who have no other arms, when they are in garrison, than their whips. Besides all these steps, full of suspicion, they fix, at their quarters, an edict of the court, signifying, that all persons whatsoever are forbid to enter their house without the knowledge of the mandarin, deputed for that purpose, who, after examining them as to what they have to do there, takes notice of their names, and sends a soldier into the house with them to observe what passes. It is a very profitable commission for those mandarins who are deputed to guard the Koreans ; for they always farm the priviledge of trading with them to that company of chinese merchants who offer the most money for it, which sometimes amounts to a considerable sum ; and it is by no means permitted to any other merchants, besides the members of this company, to trade, for that time, with the Koreans.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

The Chinese have not, in a manner, any trade with the Indies ¹, excepting some small dealings they may have on the frontiers of the neighbouring states ; but it was impossible for me to get to the knowledge of what those trades consisted in ; for, among a thousand people of the inhabitants of Pekin, it is rare to find one person who hath the least knowledge of any thing that passes without its gates. It is true that the Chinese do carry on trade, sometimes at Bengal, to the Philippine islands, to Batavia, and even to Goa ; but that is not brought about but by stealth, by the connivance of the mandarin governors of the sea ports, obtained by means of a round sum of money, without the knowledge of the court ; besides, it is absolutely forbid, to every subject of the empire, to go into foreign parts, upon what occasion soever, without a permission, or an order, from the emperor or the government ².

The Bucharians come also to Pekin, but without observing any stated times ³. They bring large round cornelians, of a very good colour, which they barter, with the Chinese, against damasks, kitaika,

¹ China is separated from the country of the Great Mogul by sandy deserts, impassable for merchants ; and the other provinces of India by mountains, which are very difficult to pass ; which in a manner hinders all commerce between those two empires.

² The greatest part of the Chinese, who are dispersed in several places of the east Indies, for the sake of commerce, are the posterity of those who left China when the mongall Tartars made themselves masters of that empire ; and they have no other than clandestine communication with their chinese countrymen. They are easily known by their long hair, which is natural to them ; instead of which the Chinese, subjects to the Tartars, are obliged, under pain of death, to cut their hair short, like the Kalmucks and Mongalls, who have all their heads shaven, except a tuft of hair on the top of their head, which they preserve of the natural length of their hair.

³ There are two Bucharias, the Great and the Little. The Great Bucharia is situated between Persia and the country of the Grand Mogul, about the 40th degree of latitude ; this is the country of the usbeck Tartars, who are mahometans, The Little Bucharia is situated to the east of the Great, and extends to the frontiers of China, on the side of the desert Xama, and kingdom of Tibet, which is their confine to the south ; this last is subject to the Kontaysha, grand Chan of the Kalmucks. The Bucharians are a particular nation, which have no connection neither with the mahometan nor pagan Tartars, nor with any other people of those parts. They do not know themselves whence they draw their origin. Nevertheless, they make profession of the mahometan religion. They occupy the towns of the two Bucharias, and only employ themselves about their commerce. Those of the Great Bucharia carry on their trade in the dominions of the Great Mogul, in Persia, and in Siberia, and are tributary to the Chan of the Usbecks. Those of the little Bucharia trade into China, into the kingdoms of Tibet and Tangut, and with the Kalmucks and Mongalls their neighbours ; these last pay tribute to the Kontaysha. The Bucharians have many customs and ceremonies, much like those of the Jews, nor is their dialect, physiognomy, and size much unlike them ; which may give occasion to many reflections.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

tea, tobacco, china-ware, and silver. They string these on small silken lines, in the manner of beads ; and they are worn by mandarins of the first orders, when they appear at court, or in the colleges, in their habits of ceremony ; wearing one row of them about their necks, which hangs down on their bellies. They bring also musk, rough diamonds, and many other sorts of precious stones ; but, as I was informed, of no great value ; because it is rare to find, among the Chinese, any who will risque the laying out a considerable sum for a fine stone. The Chinese polish these stones, after their own fashion, in order to make them proper for ornamenting the heads of the fair sex.

I had no opportunity of being acquainted with any of this nation, not being allowed liberty sufficient for that end ; and on their part, they dared not run the risk of coming to my house, for fear of the guard at my gate ; so that I cannot give an exact account concerning them.

They also bring to Pekin gold-dust¹, which the Chinese buy commonly at the price of 5, 6, to 7 laen of silver per laen of gold-dust, because it is unrefined ; they assure me that it is very fine when purified, and is then equal to the gold of the chan.

These Tartars dwell in the provinces of Chamill and Turfan², under the protection of the emperor of China, in consideration of a moderate tribute, which they pay him annually. In return they buy at Pekin,

Hides of Russia to make boots.

Fox-skins, red and brown.

¹ The gold which the Bucharians bring to China comes from the high mountains which separate the dominions of the Great Mogul from the Grand Tartary. All these mountains abound in rich mines, of all sorts, but none of them are wrought ; nevertheless they make very considerable gains annually, by the great quantities of gold-dust which the mighty torrents, formed by the rains in the spring, along with the snows melting, bring down with them into the neighbouring valleys. For the inhabitants of these mountains, together with the Kalmucks, who encamp with their cattle in the adjacent plains, come afterwards to gather these grains of gold, in the pits which the torrents have made in their passage, and barter them, with the Bucharians, against all sorts of small things for which they may have occasion in their way of life,

² The provinces of Chamill and Turfan are situated to the west of the desert of Xame, towards the 40th degree of latitude. They make a part of the Little Bucharia, and have been subject hitherto to the Kontaysha grand Chan of the Kalmucks ; but a few years since the Chinese, joined by the Mongalls, have possessed themselves of it, after having driven out the Kalmucks.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

Squirrel-skins, white and grey.

Beaver skins.

Sables, and other furs.

Kitaika.

Cotton, like the woolens of Europe, of which they use part themselves, and sell part to the Kalmucks ¹, their neighbours ; they also take

Tea.

Tobacco, and of

The smallest china-ware ; of all which in pretty large quantities.

Besides the goods I have above specified, I know of no others which they bring to Pekin.

The most valuable furniture of lackered ware, viz. cabinets, chairs, tables, baskets, and other things of that sort, as also the richest porcelain-ware, come from Japan ². For, when the emperor sends any person to Japan, in a public character, moil of the princes and great men of the court seldom fail to engage him to bring them some of those things at his return. Some times they find means to bring these things into China clandestinely ; but that is very seldom. This is the reason that the commodities of Japan are not always to be had at Pekin, unless a man would pay an exorbitant price ; nevertheless they are found there some times reasonably enough ; because seldom a year passes that the emperor doth not amerce some or other of the great lords in very considerable fines, which obliges them to raise all

¹ The Kalmucks occupy a great part of the northern Asia ; they are divided into three principal branches, under one sovereign Chan, whom they call the Kontaysha ; they have no fixed habitation, but always live in tents. Though the Kalmucks are indisputably the bravest of the Tartars, they are, nevertheless, desirous of living peaceably ; contenting themselves with the subsistence which their cattle can afford them, and do no harm to any, unless they are hurt by them ; but, when once irritated, they become irreconcilable enemies. Their religion is that of the Delay-Lama.

² All merchandise of Japan is contraband in China ; which is the reason they cannot be brought into Russia, with the caravans from China, at least without very great risk. The small quantity of Japan goods, which are clandestinely brought into China, being kept very private, and paid for at very dear rates by the Chinese themselves.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

the money they can on their moveables and immoveables ; and whoever hath money lying by him doth, on these occasions, lay it out to great advantage, and buy the most curious and valuable things for little money ¹.

After the lackered ware of Japan, that of the province of Fokien is looked upon as the best ; but none of it comes to Pekin, because the great lords of China oppress the merchants to a great degree, and take their goods from them, upon many frivolous pretences, without leaving them the least hopes of ever obtaining any payment. For this reason, all merchants, and others of any lucrative trade, at Pekin, have fallen into the custom of putting themselves under the protection of some one or other of the princes of the blood, or other great lords, or ministers of the court ; and, by this means, with the assistance of a round sum of money, paid annually to their protectors, they are able to get clear of the extortions of the mandarins, and some times of those of the common soldiers. For, without such a powerful protection, a merchant must be an undone man at Pekin, where every one thinks they have an undoubted right to form pretensions upon a man that lives by trade. And, if any of them are so imprudent as to attempt obtaining satisfaction, by the way of justice, they fall from bad to worse ; for the mandarins of justice, after having drained from them all they can, seldom fail of ordering the goods, taken from them unjustly, to be brought to the college ; but he must be a cunning fellow indeed, who shall be able ever to get them from thence.

They have, at Pekin, a people dexterous enough at lackering, but their works fall far short of those of Japan and Fokien ; which may be attributed to the difference of climate ; and it is for this reason that the lackered work made at Pekin is always much cheaper than the other. Nevertheless, the lackered work made at Pekin infinitely exceeds any work of that kind made in Europe.

¹ It seems to be a favourite maxim, adopted in all the eastern courts, to wink at all the vile practices, and rapacious impositions, of the ministers ; and, when they have well plucked and drained the substance of the people, the prince then squeezes them dry for his own use.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Peking

The ships which arrive every year at Canton, from England, France, Holland, Denmark, and other parts, generally bring the following sorts of merchandise:

Silver of different coins.

All sorts of fine cloth ;

Camblets.

Woolen stuffs.

Fine Holland-linen.

Standing clocks and watches,

Looking-glasses of all sizes.

Mathematical instruments.

Etwys from England.

Pencils.

European paper of all sorts.

Different sorts of milliner-wares

Some sorts of European liquors, especially wine.

A good part of those merchandises are distributed, in presents, among the mandarins of the government of that city ; of the rest, the European merchants generally make a very considerable profit. They employ the silver these bring in purchasing diverse sorts of goods, by virtue of an agreement made before hand ; they carry away with them from thence,

Raw silk.

Damasks wrought according to draughts furnished to them.

Wrought silks.

Lackered ware.

Tea, green and bohea.

Badians, a seed having a taste much like aniseed.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

Canes, and

China-ware made according to models given them.

They also some times bring away gold, but very seldom, because they generally get it cheaper in the Indies. They also find at Canton pretty valuable stones, except diamonds, but not in any great quantities.

They make the belt silk-brocades of China, that are brought to Europe, in the provinces of Quoantung and Fokien.

The silver which they bring from Europe to Canton is received at the same rate as that brought from Korea to Pekin, and they have the advantage of buying their goods, at Canton, from 30 to 40 per cent cheaper than they could do at Pekin.

The last year there arrived at Canton a French commissary, belonging to the new India company established in Paris ¹, who obtained leave of the court to reside there for time to come ; but, when he wanted to dispatch the ship loaden with merchandise, he met with so many obstacles at the custom-house, and from the government, doubtless, to draw more money from him, notwithstanding he had already made sufficient presents, that at length, despairing to see an end of these impositions, he gave orders to the captain of the ship to weigh anchor, and depart, in spite of those people ; which was done as he desired. But he was obliged, to avoid being very ill treated on this occasion, to take the chinese habit, and to retire to a convent of dominicans, at the distance of 2 ly from Canton ² ; where he kept himself incognito, till such time as the french jesuits, at Pekin, had found means, by the force of presents, to obtain liberty for him to appear openly, with two or three domestics, and remain there till the court should otherwise direct ; on the condition that he and his

¹ The Mississippi company.

² There are many roman catholic convents in China, which, in the time of the late emperor of China, had much the same immunities as the convents in Europe enjoyed ; no person durst enter but with the consent of the religious of the convent, unless by express order of the emperor of China.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

servants should wear the chinese habit. Nevertheless I was afterwards informed, that the mandarins of the government of Canton let no opportunity escape them of chagreening him ; insomuch, that he found himself obliged to re-imbark, the first opportunity that offered itself. They also had the last year at Canton, a frigate from Ostend, bearing the emperor of Germany's colours.

For the rest, they carry to China from Europe, and bring back from China, a very great variety of toys, and different sorts of curiosities, upon which they make a very considerable profit ; but these are so numerous that it is not possible to furnish a complete specification of them.

In regard to our commerce with China, it is, at present, in a very languishing condition ; and nothing in the world would bring more prejudice to our caravans, than the commerce which is carried on at Urga ¹ ; for from this place there is brought, monthly, and even weekly, to Pekin, not only the same sorts of goods which our caravans bring, but of a better quality than those brought by our caravans ; and in so great quantities, that the merchandises which the merchants of Pekin, who go continually between Pekin and Urga, to trade with our people, and the goods which the lamas of the Mongalls ² bring from their parts, amount every year to four or five times as much value as the caravans that come to Pekin in the name of his Czarish Majesty. And I have been informed, by those who have been employed by the great men of Pekin to buy their provision of furs at Urga, that there they can buy finer, and more valuable black fox-skins, than they have ever seen in our caravan. I must add besides, that these great quantities of our

¹ The camp of the Chan of the Western Mongalls, who are tributaries of China, is called Urga. This prince encamps on the right of the river Selinga, about 500 versts south of Selinginsky, towards the frontiers of China ; and though he doth not always encamp in the same place, yet he seldom quits this country without indispensable necessity. By virtue of the last convention of the frontiers, the Russians of Selinginsky might freely come to Urga to barter russia-hides, and the coarse woolen cloth of Siberia, against cattle ; but, as under this pretext, they brought great quantities of valuable furs, which they sold against the merchandises of China ; this clandestine commerce much injured the trade of the caravans of Siberia.

² The priests of the Western Mongalls, and the Kalmucks, are called lamas ; there are different orders.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

merchandises, brought from Urga to Pekin, do considerably lower the prices ; the merchants of Pekin, and the lamas of the Mongalls, who bring them to Pekin, are always capable of affording them 4 or 5 per cent lower than the commissary of the caravan can, of which the reader will be easily convinced if he gives attention to what I am about to lay before him.

The russ merchants, and all other people, that come and go continually, between Selinginsky and Urga, buy their goods where they find it most convenient ; instead of which the commissary is obliged to receive those he brings with the caravan, out of his Majesty's treasury, from sworn appraisers of the treasury, who often set so high a price on them that they find it difficult to sell them for half the price valued at to them. Another advantage which those who go to trade to Urga enjoy, is, that they make the journey thither in 10 or 12 days ; and, beginning their traffic immediately on their arrival, they are ready to return in 2 or 3 days after ; in place of which, the commissary, after having been at considerable expense, can, with difficulty enough, get to Pekin in three months ; and when he gets there, they keep him shut up 6 or 7 weeks, according to the maxims practised by the Chinese hitherto : in consequence whereof the abundance of merchandise of Russia arrived at Pekin obliges them still to spend several months in getting quit of theirs. And as by the last treaty they are obliged to maintain themselves, and all those belonging to the caravan, at their own proper expense, all these circumstances cannot fail of occasioning a very material difference in the balance of their trade. For, before they began to trade at Urga, a caravan, how large soever, was all sold off in three months, at the prices set by the commissary himself. Moreover all the Chinese, who traded at that time with us, became rich ; instead of which, all those who have traded with us since that time, have traded to their own loss, and may be deemed at present quite ruined. The expenses of a journey to Urga are very trifling ; for they can buy at Selinginsky as much provision for 10 roubles as will serve ten persons for a month ; in place of which, 10 roubles will hardly serve them a week at Pekin. Besides, those who go into China to trade are obliged to

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

buy forage for their horses, &c. in place of which, those who go to Urga to trade put their horses to grass, without costing them a farthing. The chinese merchants, on their side, who come to Urga to trade, are likewise at much less expense than the commissary ; because they buy at Pekin, and the towns through which they pass, tea, tobacco, rice, and other grains, ordinary damasks, kitaika, and other like merchandise, at a very low price ; which they barter, on the road with the Mongalls, against horses, sheep, and in a word, all sorts of cattle ; insomuch, that as the private merchants make both their journey, out and home also, with infinite less expense than the commissary of a caravan, it cannot be otherwise, than that they can buy and sell their merchandise on much better terms than a commissary can, who is obliged to remain, with a number of attendants, in a city where living is so dear, as at Pekin, a longer time than would serve a merchant at Selinginsky for making 4 or 5 journies to Urga. In fine, when the caravan returns to Russia, they find, after such great expenses, that the quantity of chinese goods, brought to Russia by private traders, is so very large that they must sell theirs at a very moderate price. All these circumstances well considered, it is easy to comprehend that, upon closing the accounts of the caravan, the profits cannot, at this time, be much more than the disbursements. But to return to our journal.

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AUGUST

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The 14th, I received a letter from commissary Istopnikoff, dated from the river Tola ¹, 29th of July ; by which he desired me to prevail on the council for the affairs of the Mongalls ², to send him an assignment for 2,000 laen of silver upon the custom-house of Kalchanna ³ ; offering to return the same (for which he had pressing occasion, for the necessities of the caravan,) as soon as he should commence his trade at Pekin ; and he added, that the same favour had been formerly granted to commissary Oskolkoff.

The 15th, I went to the council, and having spoken of this affair with the Askinnamma, or vice-president, he promised to consult the registers of the council upon it, and to write directly about it to the president at Jegcholl, and that he would communicate his answer to me.

The 17th, having sent my interpreter to the council to know if they had come to any resolution on this affair, he brought back the following answer,

That they had indeed found, in the registers, that the council had formerly advanced money to the commissary ; but that the trade was an object of so little consequence with them, that they did not think it merited the council's being incommoded with proposals of that sort.

¹ Tola is a river in the country of the Mongalls, which comes from the east, enters the river Orchon, about 250 versts south-east of Selinginsky. By virtue of the new regulation, the caravans of Siberia, who go to Pekin, ought to enter on the territories belonging to China upon their passing this river.

² The council for the affairs of the Mongalls at Pekin, is a college who have the care of every thing regarding the nation of the Mongalls, as well those who are the hereditary subjects of the emperor of China, as, also, those who are only under the protection of this empire. This college, at the same time, enters indirectly into the cognizance of all the affairs which regard the powers who border on China, from the north-east to the west ; whence it comes, that they are the court who have most to do of any in China.

³ Kalchanna is the first chinese city, within the great wall, that you come to, in the road from Selinginsky to Pekin. It is here that the duties, inwards and outwards, are paid by the Russians ; and also for great part of the country of the Mongalls.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

The 18th, a mandarin came to me from the council, and notified to me, that his Majesty, calling to remembrance my being at Pekin, had given orders to the council, that I should be escorted to Jegcholl by a mandarin and some of the military. Whereupon I answered him, that I would be ready the next day, with my interpreter and two domestics, if they would take care to provide the relays, which I should want, for the journey.

The 19th, all being ready for the journey, I left Pekin very early in the morning.

The 21st, I arrived at Jegcholl, and repaired forthwith to the court ; and having found the chamberlain of the Chan, who is generally an eunuch ¹, I prayed him, according to the custom of the country, to inform himself, on my behalf, of the health of the Bogdoi-Chan, and to inform his Majesty of my being there; upon which his Majesty did me the favour of sending to me a salver covered with all sorts of new fruits which were followed by another, charged with diverse sorts of meat from his kitchen ; he ordered me to be told, at the same time, that he sent me those for my refreshment, and that I would do well to keep my chamber the rest of the day, to recover my fatigue from the journey. The same evening some of the father jesuits being come to see me, told me, that the Alegada had resolved to propose to the emperor to make the caravan encamp in the desert, near Kalchanna, till the court should return to Pekin ; supposing that so many of the court, and the greatest part of the people of distinction, being in the country, there would be nothing to do for the caravan at Pekin ; and, that they believed, that he would not fail of requiring from me, an order to the commissary for that purpose. It was easy to see that what determined the minister to take this resolution, was nothing else but his apprehensions that the presents he expected to have from the commissary, if he should be at Pekin at the time of his arrival, might, if

¹ All those who serve in the chamber of the emperor of China are eunuchs, and are either Chinese or Mongalls ; the Chinese nation being not less jealous of the sex than other eastern people ; but the Mongalls, and generally all the Tartars, are not very liable to this malady.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Peking

he was absent, fall into other hands. But, as this was a design that might be attended with very bad consequences, and might have been the cause of the loss of men, as well as the horses belonging to the caravan, by being exposed to the extremity of cold and famine in the deserts, I became obliged to use all my efforts to render this intention of the minister abortive.

The 22nd, being to go in the morning to court, the emperor sent the master of ceremonies to require of me passports for some mandarins, which were to pass the frontiers of Russia ; but, as I could well penetrate the grounds of their errand, I thought it my duty to refuse the passports demanded. Nevertheless, notwithstanding all my excuses, which I could muster up, to exempt me from giving them, the master of the ceremonies came to declare to me, in the cleared terms, the next day, which was

The 23d,

That the emperor was, at one time, resolved to send those people away, whether I would give them passports or not ; but that I ought to consider, that, in such case, I might expect an absolute denial to every thing which I might have to propose.

Which convinced me, that it was absolutely necessary for me, on this occasion, to conform to his Majesty's pleasure, if I would retain the least hopes of succeeding in my desire of opposing the designs of the minister. For this reason,

On the 24th, when the master of the ceremonies came again to speak with me on this affair, I put into his hands a letter, addressed to the officers commandants on our frontiers, in the form he desired to have it ; to which I joined the condition, that our caravan should not be hindered from coming to Peking directly ; and that our commissary should, on his arrival at Peking, immediately be at liberty to begin his commerce, without being shut up, for a certain time, as had at some times been practised. The master of the ceremonies promised to speak

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

to his Majesty about it ; who had not only the goodness to give his consent immediately, but he, at the same time, gave strict orders to the president of the council, that he should take special care that no person whatsoever should go about in any manner to interrupt the commissary in his business.

The 25th, a Portuguese father jesuit, called father Maurano, came to me, and told me,

That there was a person of quality, who, by him, made me an offer of 10,000 laen of silver, till the arrival of the caravan, which I might employ in what manner I thought proper ; and that this lord was very much scandalized at the disobliging answer I had received from the council of the direction of the affairs of the Mongalls, in regard to the 2,000 laen of silver which I had required of them for the necessities of the caravan.

Upon which, pressing him to let me know who this lord might be, he told me,

That he was indeed forbid to let me know who this person was ; but that he would nevertheless, in confidence, own to me that it was the 9th prince, son of the Chan, who made me this offer ¹.

Thereupon I did not omit testifying, to him, how much I was touched with the generosity of a prince to whom I had never the honour of paying my devoirs ; adding,

I should never forget the goodwill which his highness was pleased to show me on this occasion ; and that I should, all the days of my life, retain the same sentiments as if I had received his generous offers.

But the father jesuit having remonstrated,

¹ The late emperor of China had 17 princes born of his several wives and concubines. There were three present at the first audience of Mr. de Ismayloff, who were all very well proportioned, having fine complexions, and black eyes, well formed, without the least appearance of the deformities of the mongall nation.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

That the prince might possibly think himself offended if I should refuse his offer altogether ;

I was obliged to accept of 1,000 laen of silver ¹.

The 26th, I paid a visit to the father jesuits of the french nation ² ; where I found the president of the council, who let me know, by the mouth of these fathers,

That he was come from receiving the emperor's orders, which were so favourable to our commerce, that there is no instance of the like liberty having ever been granted before in China.

I answered him, through the help of these fathers,

That I had no reason to doubt of the punctual execution of his Majesty's orders, since he had the goodness to charge the governor-general of Pekin with them ; of whose indefatigable zeal for maintaining a good understanding between the Bogdoi-Chan and the Czar, my master, was sufficiently known to me.

Whereupon he caused me to be told,

That he was not a man capable of receiving presents from foreigners, for doing them a service, as many others did in such cases; and that a step of that kind would entirely prevent him from ever having the liberty of speaking to his

¹ There is an appearance as if this was a snare laid for Mr. de Lange, to render him suspected by the emperor of China, who, in the design which he had then formed of leaving the succession to his third son, could not fail of taking umbrage at the least false step which the agent of Russia might happen to take on this occasion, which might induce this monarch to consent to his being sent away ; which was probably the whole aim of this intrigue.

² The jesuits had great ascendancy on the late emperor of China ; and, as the present emperor hath been under their hands, it ought not to be doubted but he is likewise well affected to them, whatever may be reported to the contrary. At the first audience of Mr. de Ismayloff, the emperor, being seated on the throne, had, on his left, as the place of honour, at three paces distance, a little advanced into the hall, three of the princes his sons ; and, on his right, a little more advanced, the jesuits belonging to the court ; at five paces behind them, a little more advanced, were placed seven mongall princes of the imperial house ; and then, on the two sides of the hall, the ministers and grand mandarins of the court ; all sitting cross legged, according to the manner of the Tartars. By so remarkable a distinction it may, in some degree, be comprehended how much these good fathers were in favour with the emperor.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

Majesty again in favour of any person whatsoever, should it come to his Majesty's ear ; but that nevertheless, he believed he might reserve to himself the privilege, when he should come to our house to buy any thing, of being treated more favourably than others in the price.

Upon which I assured him,

That we should always know to treat him with proper distinction, in such a case.

The same day, I desired the master of the ceremonies to make my most humble acknowledgements to his Majesty, for the gracious reception which he had been pleased to honour me with, during my stay at Jegcholl ; and to pray his permission for my returning to Pekin ; because I apprehended the caravan would soon arrive there. He came, some hours after, and informed me that his Majesty intended, the last day of this month, to go upon a party of hunting, in the desert, some leagues from Jegcholl ; and that I might lay hold of that opportunity of taking leave of his Majesty, and of returning to Pekin ; he added, that his Majesty had likewise ordered the governor of Pekin to go thither, and deliver to me the tapestries he had caused to be made for the Czar.

During the rest of my stay at Jegcholl, my table was furnished daily, the same as the first day of my arrival, from his Majesty's kitchen. And they showed me all the buildings and gardens of this charming place, which is certainly worthy to be the delight of so grand a monarch ; and is infinitely superior, in beauty and magnificence, to the palace at Pekin or Czchan-zchumienne.

The 31st, I had the honour of attending his Majesty when he parted from Jegcholl ; and, on this occasion, he had the goodness to ask me,

If I enjoyed my health.

After having answered with all the respect due to so gracious an inquiry, he said to me further,

That he thought he observed some alteration in my countenance, and that I ought to take care of my health.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Peking

After which he gave me permission to return to Peking, after having, by the master of the ceremonies, let me know, that, if the caravan had not been so nigh, I should have had the honour of accompanying him to the party of hunting ¹.

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¹ Hunting is the favourite employment of the tartar Pagans. And one may gather the inclination of the Tartars from the pleasure and assiduity with which the late emperor of China followed the chase ; nevertheless he mixed much of the politician with his favourite passion ; for going every year a-hunting, escorted by a body of the army, consisting of 50 or 60,000 men completely armed, and generally travelling 100 leagues in this manner, this monarch thereby inured his courtiers and his troop to the use of arms, and to fatigues ; and prevented their falling into the soft and indolent manner of living peculiar to the Chinese.

SEPTEMBER

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The 3rd, I was returned from my Jegcholl journey, being three days on the road.

The 7th, I sent my interpreter to Kalchanna, to the commissary, with 1,500 laen of silver.

The 10th, I acquainted my mandarin, that, as the caravan was at hand, it was most necessary that the house should be repaired, that I might not continue under apprehensions of the merchandise being damaged, for want of sufficient cover, during the rainy autumnal season. But he continually refused me the liberty of getting it repaired of myself, under the promise that he would take care to get it repaired before the arrival of the caravan. But, seeing one day pass after another, and nothing done, I went, on the 15th, to the president, to pray him to give orders for repairing the house ; at the least, not oppose my doing it at my own expense. But his answer was, he would instantly hire the workmen, and it should be repaired in one day. And these promises were daily repeated, as well by my mandarin as by the president, till, at length, the commissary arrived with the caravan at Pekin, on the 29th. As it rained very hard during that whole day, the commissary found, at his arrival, that there was no place where he, or any of his people, could be covered from the rain ; and he was obliged to let all the baggage of the caravan remain in the court-yard, without being able to secure one single parcel. As soon as the caravan was entered into my court-yard they re-inforced the guard at the gate, and posted sentinels all round the house, to secure us, as they said, against thieves ; but, in reality, to prevent our commissary's having any opportunities of trading with any person whatsoever, till such time as they should receive the merchandises, which they might pretend to have occasion for, for his Majesty and the court. Besides which, they ordered two mandarins, with a clerk, to remain in our house, to take good care that no merchandise was sold on credit, and to note down

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

exactly the names of all that should come into, or go out of, our house ; what goods, and how much, they bought, and at what price.

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OCTOBER

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In the beginning of this month I sent again to the council, on the subject of the repair of our house. Upon which they let me know, the 6th, by a clerk, that the president had sent a courier to his Majesty, to be informed if his Majesty would be pleased to have our house repaired by the treasury, or if it was our business to repair it ; the emperor, by virtue of the last convention between the two empires, not being obliged to furnish any thing to our people. Whereupon I patiently waited till the

12th. The workmen came, at length, to make the reparation so often promised ; but it was done so negligently, that, when they made an end, there was little alteration for the better. The commissary employed the rest of this month to unpack the goods, that he might put every thing in order against the time he should be permitted to begin to trade. In the mean while, we were visited very assiduously by four mandarins, who pretended to be deputed, from the court, to receive the merchandises appropriated for his Majesty ; demanding, from the commissary, an exact specification of all the goods brought by the caravan, that they might chuse what was necessary for the service of the court. They were answered,

That they need not expect that the commissary would give them a specification of all he had in the caravan ; but that, if they had any orders of the court for us, they ought to produce letters of credit addressed to me or the commissary ; or, at least, to let us see a specification of the goods wanted, signed by the master of the wardrobe of the emperor, whereupon they should know if such goods were in the caravan or not.

But these gentlemen would not quit their demand so, alledging,

That they must go according to the customs observed in times past, when the commissary of every caravan had been

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

obliged to give such a specification to those deputed by the court to receive the goods from him ; that they did not intend to be served at this time as they had been with former commissaries, when the court got goods of but indifferent quality, after the best goods had been disposed to private persons ; that to this end, they should be careful to examine all that the commissary had brought, and that they would take what they wanted, for the court, out of the best they could find, particularly sables at 3 laen per pair, as usual.

The commissary, seeing these people pretend to insist on his giving them goods at such an under- price, craved from me the protection of the Czar, our common master, alledging, that he had sables which cost him 20 or 30 roubles the pair ; and that it was easy to comprehend what market he should make with the rest of his goods, if he should be obliged to sell the sables at such a losing price. Upon which I made the deputies understand,

That the merchandises of the caravan did not belong to the commissary, nor to me ; and, in case they did, it was not to be supposed that we should credit them at all, at least without their bringing a specification in form, signed by the person who hath the superintendance of these affairs at court. But that did not signify, they had only to bring their money, and, when the commissary had shown them the goods, he would see if he could agree with them.

These gentlemen seemed to take offence at this answer. Nevertheless, they engaged, at last, to bring such a specification ; but they deferred it from one day to another. In the mean time, they made use of all their cunning to prevail on us to deliver them, at an under-price, all the goods they thought fit to take.

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NOVEMBER

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The 1st of this month, having sent my interpreter to the council, to desire them to admit the commissary to the liberty of trading, they let me know, in answer,

That it was impossible to do it, before the deputies of the court had received the goods they had to receive for his Majesty.

The 4th, I spoke of this affair, not only with my mandarin, but also with the Kientu, or mandarins appointed to our house, to the end that they should dispose those people to give us their specification, in order to end this affair. The same day I went to meet his Majesty, who was returning from the hunting ; and met him on the 5th, at 80 ly from Pekin, at the hotbaths of Tangzchang. His Majesty told me,

That he had received news from Europe, that his Czarish Majesty had made peace with Sweden, by the mediation of the roman emperor.

After which, he asked me,

How long the caravan had been arrived ?

Upon which I answered,

That they were, indeed, since the 29th of September at Pekin ; but the commissary had not yet got permission to trade.

Upon which his Majesty, dismissing me, went to the bath.

I must, on this occasion, acquaint the reader with the custom of this empire, in such circumstances as this of the deputies above-mentioned. All the mandarins that are charged with any commission of the court, be it to subjects or foreigners, are named and dispatched by the ministry. When such commission is finished, these people are obliged to make presents, not only to the ministers, but also to the princes of the

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

blood, to the end that they may not give them too much trouble, and that they may keep something to themselves. They have no cause to fear that the people, with whom they have to do on these millions, will find access to the ministers, or that ever a serious inquiry will be made into their conduct; which is so true, that no person will readily undertake to make complaints of their tricks, because there is no reparation to be expected. No person can carry his complaints directly to the emperor, but they must absolutely be made by the ministers, or those who hold the first office of the palace, or the chamber of his Majesty ; and these gentlemen are so closely linked to the interests of the other great lords of the empire, that, whatever party the sufferer may address himself to, he will certainly remain the dupe of the affair.

The same day, the deputies endeavoured again to get some goods from us, while the specification might be made out ; but their design did not take effect.

The 9th, I spoke again to the mandarins of the council, concerning our caravan ; but I could get no other answer, but that this affair regarded the deputies of the court only.

The 14th, when I would have gone out myself to the council, the guard, at our gate, stopped me, under pretext that the four mandarins, deputies from the court, had ordered, that no person should be suffered to go out till the goods, which they ought to have for the court, were first delivered. Though I passed in spite of the guard, I was nevertheless obliged to return without doing any thing, as the president was not in the city.

The 15th, I sent my interpreter to the council to receive the resolution of the president, upon what I had represented the day before ; and as he found him not there, but was told he was at home, he went thither to speak with him, and brought me the answer following,

That the president would take care that this affair should be ended out of hand ; that to this end it was nevertheless

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

necessary, that the commissary should put a reasonable price upon his goods.

He desired further my interpreter to tell me, that, at this season, he was rarely at home ; because he was obliged to be all day long at Czchan-zchumnienne attending his Majesty ; that when I should have any affair to propose to him, I should communicate the same, by my interpreter, to the mandarins of the council, who would not fail making him the necessary report immediately.

The 16th, the deputy mandarins having made up, according to their own fancy, a specification of merchandises to be received by them for the provision of his Majesty and the court, they came to present it to us, in order, by means of this imposition, to get a large parcel of goods from us.

But the 17th, this specification being translated into the russ language, we found that the quantity of merchandise which they demanded, was much too large to be agreed to. For which reason, it was asked of them,

From whom this specification was sent to us ? and who had made it out ?

Upon which, after many turns, and tergiversations employed to no purpose, they were at length forced to acknowledge that it was of their own forming ; it being their opinion, that such a quantity would be wanting for the use of the court. But, in making this avowal, they did not fail to make the commissary apprehend,

That he need not flatter himself with a liberty of trading, with any person, before they should receive all that was contained in the specification.

The 18th, the Alegada being come to our house to buy some goods, I besought him to remember the promises which his Majesty had been so good to make to Mr. de Ismayloff on the subject of freedom of commerce, seeing, that by the course which affairs took at present, it looked as if they were entirely forgot. But he gave me for an answer to all,

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

That it was an affair that did not in the least regard him and that I had none but the council to address myself to ¹.

The 22nd, I sent my interpreter to the council with a memorial on the subject of this affair ; but the mandarins he found there refused to receive it, under the pretext, that they must have before-hand the orders of the president thereupon, and know, from him, whether they should receive it or not.

The same day the four deputies, being come to see us, gave us to understand,

That the usual time of keeping the commissary at home being nigh finished, they were come to commence a trade with him, and to know how much he demanded for each sort of merchandise, to the end, that, after they had finished their bargain with him, they might then declare our house free for everybody to enter.

Whereupon I demanded of them,

Who could have authorised them to shut up, in the manner usual with slaves, for any time, the subjects of so potent a monarch as was the Czar my master ?

But these gentlemen, not finding it proper to answer so ticklish a question, contented themselves with saying,

That it would be well for the commissary to resolve to give them the merchandise they required, and that at a reasonable price, unless he would, out of wantonness, involve himself in expenses which would much exceed the profit he thought to make by his obstinacy ; and that, in the situation he was,

¹ In China all is done by the disposition of different colleges, to whose cognizance the affair may belong ; it not being permitted to address the court directly, upon any affair whatever. In the time of the last chinese emperor, these colleges were so absolute, that, on many occasions, the emperor himself dared not meddle with their decrees ; but, since the tartar princes have been in possession of the throne of China, they are not much regarded ; witness the exercise of all sorts of foreign religions publicly authorised, and the allowance of a russian agent at Pekin, agreed to by the sole good pleasure of the emperor, in opposition to the remonstrances of his ministers, and to the constitution of the government of China.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Peking

being obliged to feed his people at his own expense, he acted directly contrary to his own interests, not to close affairs with them.

Thereupon I desired to know,

If they had orders to press us, in so violent a manner, to deliver them the merchandises.

Upon which they answered,

No ; and that they were come to deal with the commissary ; but that he must let them have the best goods at such prices as the court always paid.

The commissary, to make his last effort, offered them merchandises, of the same quality as those which the court had received at other times, without advancing the price ; but that did not close the affair. They went away, saying they would consult together, to see if it was feasible for them to augment the price of the goods above that which the court had always given.

Soon after they came from the council to enquire for my interpreter, to communicate to him the answer of the president concerning my memorial. Upon which I sent him directly with the said memorial ; no way doubting, but, after what the president had himself told him, it would be received at once. But, on his return, he acquainted me, that the president had ordered a mandarin to let me know the answer ; which I wrote, word for word, from the mouth of my interpreter.

I applied to the Allegamba on the subject of the memorial of the agent, and he not only forbid us to receive the said memorial, but also charged me to tell the agent that which he had formerly told Mr. de Ismayloff, viz. "That commerce is looked upon by us with contempt, and as a very trifling object ; that the agent himself was not ignorant, that we had long refused to admit the present caravan, and most certainly should never have consented to its admittance into China, if

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

his Majesty had not suffered himself to be persuaded to it, at the reiterated instances of Mr. de Ismayloff”.

That the Allegamba had, at the same time, added these words, These merchants come here to enrich themselves, not our people, which is easy to be seen, because they pretend themselves to fix the price of their own goods, that they may sell them the dearer. For these reasons, go tell the agent, that we shall not only refuse to receive the said memorial, but that, in future, he need not give himself the trouble of proposing any thing to us that may be relative to commerce, because we will not embarrass ourselves hereafter with the merchants of Russia.

Whereupon our confinement continued much the same as before ; insomuch, that it was only permitted to the domestics of the first minister, of the president, and a clerk of the wardrobe, to enter our house ; which they did very frequently, and in all appearance, to spy what passed in our quarters ; in hopes that we should be obliged, at length, to submit our trade to their discretion.

The 25th, I understood that the brigadier, who, till that time, had the charge of the guard at our house, was restored to the good graces of the emperor ; and that his Majesty had made him grand marshal of the court, with the command in chief of the army which this monarch keeps in the country of the Mongalls ¹. Whereupon I repaired immediately to his house, to pay my compliments ; and having found an opportunity, at the same time, of acquainting him with what had passed regarding

¹ The Mongalls are Tartar pagans, who dwell to the north of China. They are divided into two branches, of which the first is that of the eastern, or of the Northern Mongalls, or the Nieuchu, who in habit towards the coasts of the sea of Japan, between the river Amoor and the Grand Wall ; these are the natural subjects of the tartar house which at present fills the throne of China ; and are the very people, who, in the last century, made themselves masters of the empire of China ; they are brought up in extreme gross idolatry, and have in a manner no religion ; they, for the greatest part, dwell in towns and villages, and apply themselves to agriculture. The second branch is that of the Western Mongalls, otherwise called Calchies ; these last are only under the protection of China, without being entirely subjects, having their own proper Chan ; they live in tents, and subsist by their cattle, without cultivating their lands. Their religion is the worship of the Delay-Lama.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

the four mandarins deputed from the court ; he gave me his word that he would go to court that day, to inform himself circumstantially of that affair ; and that, afterwards, he would order them to receive what might be absolutely necessary for his Majesty and the court without further delay. He, at the same time, seemed to be extremely surprised at the conduct of his brother the Allegamba on this occasion.

The 27th, the first minister, being come to our house, told me,

That he understood the interdict on our house was not taken off, and desired me to acquaint him with the cause of it.

Upon which I made answer,

That I had, for a long time, endeavoured to find it out ; but I could find no person who would seem to know it. Nevertheless it must, in time, be cleared up ; seeing it was a notorious injustice, to keep a caravan shut up so long, that came upon the faith of treaties solemnly ratified.

He replied thereupon,

That the court, for a long time, resolved to admit no caravans, because all the merchants, who had traded with the Russes, were reduced to the lowed ebb, by the very great quantity of russian goods which were at present in China ; that it was on the very strong instances which Mr. de Ismayloff had made, as well to the court as to the council ; offering, for this purpose, that the commissary and his people should subsist, for the future, at their own expense ; that, in the end, they had admitted the present caravan ; that the commissary, so far from having any regard to these circumstances, refused now to take the usual prices, that had been offered him, for the merchandise which the court had occasion for, and insisted on a very high price for them ; that he wished I would bring the commissary to reason in this affair, and let him know the result.

Upon which I told him,

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

That I had nothing to do with putting a new price on goods which the commissary had in commission ; that it did not depend on me, as it was the commissary who was to account for the goods with which he was entrusted, who would not permit any other, besides himself who sold them, to set a price ; that, as to what regarded the admission of the caravan, it was stipulated long before Mr. de Ismayloff's arrival at Pekin, and there could not the least alteration be made in it, without shaking the foundations of the treaties concluded between the two empires ; and supposing any alteration was to be made, it could not be done but by mutual consent, and after deputies, appointed for this purpose, by the two empires, should have examined this affair to the bottom, and made a new plan of convention.

This answer seemed to nettle the minister, who broke up the conversation, and ordered the commissary to show him some goods.

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DECEMBER

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The four mandarins, deputed from the court, finding, at length, that we rather chose to have our confinement continue, than to submit to their unreasonable pretentions ; and that, on the other hand, the grand marshal of the court interested himself strongly in our favour, and would absolutely have an end of this affair, the interdict on our house was at last taken off. And,

The 2nd of this month, the council made publication, that it was permitted to all persons to come and trade with us ; but they used one piece of chicanery, which hurt us much, and really kept off all the merchants ; for when they perceived the merchants began to resort to our house, they made known to them,

That no person should carry out the least thing, of what they bought at our house, without showing it first to the four mandarins-deputies, to the end that they might take what they found proper for the use of the court.

This notification took away from the merchants all desire of trading with us ; seeing they were assured of being great sufferers if they were obliged to pass through the hands of these greedy mandarins ; which made me acquainted, more than any thing else, with the misery of the profession of a merchant in China ; who are obliged to depend on the discretion of mandarins and soldiers, who have none. But the Poyamba or grand marshal of the court, having been informed of it, had the goodness to remedy this new grievance ; ordering the mandarins not to take any thing, for the use of the court, from any other person than from the commissary. For this purpose he sent, at the same time, his steward with them, to the commissary, to tell him,

That he came with them, by order of his master, to see how much, and what sorts of merchandises these gentlemen would take, to the end that they might make him an exact report.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

Whereupon they were shown the goods ; but they acted so much upon the reserve, in presence of this man, that they took in all but a very middling parcel of goods. Nevertheless, this did not prevent their repairing every day to our house, to take from the chinese merchants what goods they thought proper. And the more to counteract our trade, the ministry had represented to the emperor, that there had been brought, during many years, from year to year, into his Majesty's magazines of fur, a much greater quantity of sables than were necessary for the consumption of the court ; and that, as this quantity augmented annually, it was better that his Majesty should order some of them to be sold, than to let them lye and spoil.

The 12th, 13th, and 14th, many chinese merchants, and other persons from the great houses, and ordinary people of Pekin, having come to our house, ventured to buy some squirrel-skins, and other goods of small value, in order to discover the true designs of the mandarins who kept themselves at our house ; they did not oppose them until they had fixed their bargains ; but, when the bargains were concluded, they signified to them, that they were not to carry out any of the things they had bought, till they should chuse the best of what they had for the court.

The 15th, as they were apprised at the court and council, that we had begun to trade, they published that they would sell, at reasonable prices, 20,000 sables out of the fur-magazines of the emperor ; whereupon all those who had begun to trade with us went to supply themselves there ; some for fear of the chicanery of the mandarins, others in hopes of buying cheaper there than with us. In short, they sold, by what I could afterwards learn, the best sables at 2 ½ laen, middling at 1 ½ laen to 1, and the least at 90 fun ; but these were not Siberia sables, but those of the Tonguses ¹, under the dominions of

¹ The Tonguses are a pagan people of the north of Asia, who are very probably the descendents of Tartars ; they occupy a great proportion of the eastern parts of Siberia ; and some branches of this people extend themselves even to the southern banks of the river Amoor ; the last party of the Tonguses is subject to China ; all the other Tonguses are subjects of Russia. *Vide Histoire généalog. des Tartares.*

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

China, taken about the border of the river Amoor ¹ ; of which they furnish annually a quantity to the magazines of his Majesty. The country whence these sables are brought is called Solloni.

The 16th, I was informed, that, notwithstanding the court had consented to a free commerce, between the two nations, free of all duties, the mandarins belonging to our house, had given the strictest orders to our guard, not to let any the least thing, of any kind, be brought into our house without producing a billet from them ; and such a billet cost them 30 zschoffes, which make about 4 fun. But those who would have free ingress and egress, to our house to trade, were obliged, once for all, to make a fixed agreement with them, either for a certain limited time, or for the whole time we might stay at Pekin ; upon which they received a billet, which intitled them to come into, and go out of our house as often as they pleased. All those who refused to pay in this manner, for the freedom of entry into our house, were sent back, as people who came to our house to borrow, or perhaps to steal on occasion.

The 17th, my mandarin being come to see me, I told him,

That I was very glad to learn, that the court had also begun to enter into trade ; which they had before looked upon as so contemptible a thing with them, that they always reproached us with the little importance of it ; that, since his Majesty had given such authentic marks of the esteem he had for commerce, I hoped, that in time to come, they would speak of it with more circumspection.

Whereupon he replied,

That it was not with a view of interest that the emperor had ordered the sables to be sold, that I spoke of ; but that the sale was made purely, because, having so great a quantity of

¹ The river Amoor is one of the largest rivers in Asia ; it takes its rise in the country of the Mongalls, near the river Selinga, and running from thence eastward, it makes the frontier of these parts, between eastern Siberia and the oriental Mongalls ; and, after a course of more than 300 german leagues, it discharges itself into the sea of Japan, in lat. 44 degrees north.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Peking

them in his magazines, he thought it better to order them to be sold, than that they should ly there till rotten.

I thereupon told him,

That if, at the court of his Czarish Majesty, and in his empire, they could make use of all the furs which the country furnished, they would probably see very few of them in China.

After which, I demanded of him,

If it was with the knowledge of the emperor that the mandarins, placed at our gate, sold, to the people who had business with us, permits of passage, in and out ; and absolutely denyed entrance, to our house, to those who would not pay for those permits ?

I would likewise be informed by him,

What was the meaning that the 4 mandarins, deputies of the court, were continually in our house ?

His answer to which was,

That the emperor knew nothing of it, nor did any person dare to tell him of it ; the Alegada having given them leave to sell such permits, as a small casual profit : that, as to the mandarin deputies, they were ignorant of the consequence of what they did.

Whereupon I told him, at the conclusion,

That I did not comprehend why the ministers were so averse to us in every thing, even to the refusing to see us, or receive our memorials ; that I wished, with all my heart, that they should not carry it so far, as to oblige me to carry my complaints to the person of the Bogdoi-Chan direct ; and further, that I asked nothing but what was conform to treaties, and that if the treaties were to subsist in their full force, between the two empires, there was an absolute necessity to hear what I had to say, and to give such

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

resolutions as they should think proper, upon the memorials which I should, from time to time, present them on the occasion.

The latter end of this month, his Majesty made a tour to Caisa, which is a palace, with a fine park, some lys to the south of Pekin, where he passed some weeks ; which was the occasion that nothing remarkable passed, during this time, between the ministers and me.

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JANUARY, 1722

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The 15th of this month the guard, at our gate, refused entrance to some carts of hay, which my people had bought, because the peasants had not billets of passage, and they would not give any thing to the soldiers ; and notwithstanding I sent to advertise the mandarins, and officers who commanded the guard at our gate, of this insolence of the guard, they, notwithstanding, drove away the peasants with their hay. I complained of it to my mandarin, but to little purpose.

The 16th, after having received the news of the perpetual peace, concluded between his Czarish Majesty and the ottoman Porte, I caused Te Deum to be sung in the church of st. Nicolas, and celebrated the rest of the day in festivity.

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FEBRUARY

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The 2nd of this month, and according to custom, I offered some presents to his Majesty on the new year, which is a ceremony that must be observed by every person, vested with any public character, unless he would expose himself to a general censure. His Majesty received my little presents very graciously, and presented me, in return, with some of all the sorts of game he had taken at the hunting the last autumn ¹, and of a good number of sheep ; and it is in this manner that his Majesty is accustomed to regale annually, at the close of the year, those people of his court that he would distinguish.

The 4th, which is the last day of the Chinese year, the court ended the year with a feast ; which was very short, because his Majesty was but just recovered from a fit of illness, which he had laboured under. On this occasion, I had the honour of sitting over-against his Majesty, at some distance from the throne ; and this place is a little below the seat of the princes of the blood, but above that of the mandarins of the first class. The feast being finished, and his Majesty retired, the master of ceremonies came to tell me, that I might be dispensed with coming the next day, being new year's day, to court, to pay my compliments to his Majesty ; seeing it was the custom of the princes of the blood, and mandarins of the empire, to be all ranged in the court of the castle that day, every one according to his rank ; where, as I was a foreigner, I could have no rank.

The 14th, the first minister gave me, and the commissary a dinner ; on which occasion there passed nothing remarkable, unless that he asked me,

If I was not to return with the caravan ?

Which made me think they had already settled this affair at court, I

¹ The Mongalls, and other pagan Tartars, have a particular method for drying ail sorts of flesh, by the air and the sun, which entirely prevents their perishing ; by which means they keep wild fowl from one year to another.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

answered him thereupon,

That it did not depend on my pleasure to leave the court, where the Czar, my master, had sent me to reside, till he should recall me.

The 18th and 19th, his Majesty caused the celebration of the feast of Lanthorns, which had been annually celebrated, at the court of China, for above 2,000 years. This feast was solemnized at Czchan-zchumnie with great magnificence. During the grand entertainment, which was that day at court, they represented all sorts of plays, and other diverting shows ; and, at night, they exhibited grand fire-works, which, joined to so many illuminations, and to the prodigious quantity of lanthorns, adorned with figures, and diversified with all sorts of colours, caused a surprising agreeable view, during the darkness of the night ¹. They placed me, on this occasion, the same as they did the last time at Pekin, at the distance of some paces from the emperor's throne.

The 20th, being returned to Pekin, some of the principal of the Korea merchants came to see me ; but when they would have entered my apartment, some of the soldiers, who accompanied them, opposed it ; and they narrowly escaped the lash of the soldiers whips, who had lifted them against those merchants. Upon which, I presently ordered them to be kept, by our people, in the court before my house, to wait there till the merchants should go out of my house. And I, at the same time, gave them to understand, that they for the future would do wisely not to make use of their whips at my house. After which the merchants indeed entered into my apartment, but dared not make any stay there ; for fear of being insulted by the soldiers that escorted them ².

¹ The Chinese are accustomed to be at very great expense at this festival, in fire works, and in lanthorns, having lanthorns that will cost them 10,000 laen, and upwards. The fire of their rockets are also remarkably beautiful, the variety and liveliness of their colours surpass the european performances so much, that we are obliged to own, they excel us in these performances.

² The Chinese being accustomed to treat the inhabitants of Korea with great roughness, and having prohibited them all correspondence with foreign nations, it is not to be expected that they should relax their hard treatment of them, for the sake of a minister of the court of Russia ; which is as it were the only power who could support the

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Peking

The civility with which I received them, and to which they had not been used with the Chinese, made them have a desire of being more acquainted with me. For they came again on the 22nd, before my house, but the guard at the gate refused them entrance.

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inhabitants of Korea, if they should ever be desirous of throwing off the chinese yoke ; seeing, that, by the river Amoor, the Russes could fall down into the ports of Korea, without a possibility of the Chinese hindering them. And it is not impossible but this conduct of Mr. Lange might have been one cause of the court of China's sudden resolution of ordering him to leave the country.

MARCH

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During this month, we continued our trade as much as the mandarins, and soldiers of our guard, would permit. There passed nothing else remarkable, unless that the commissary having sent a clerk of the caravan towards the deserts, to see in what condition the horses were, which were left there in their way to Peking ; he reported to us, that they were all in very bad plight ; and that if we did not, out of hand, send money, that they might be put into stables, there was danger of the greatest part of them dying.

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APRIL

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The 6th of this month, I sent my interpreter, at the desire of the commissary, to the mandarins which were placed at our house on account of the caravan, and let them know, that the commissary being obliged to send one of his people with money, towards the desert, in order that the people, who had the charge of the horses of the caravan, should be enabled to put them into stables, he would, for the greater security, have occasion for some soldiers, or some others, to escort this man ; and I prayed their care of this affair. Whereupon they returned me answer, that they would make their report to the council ; for, without their orders, they could do nothing in it.

The 7th, two mandarins, accompanied by a clerk, came to bring me an answer, from the president, on this affair ; and, it being wrote on a sheet of paper, they read the same to me in the following terms.

The Allegamba having been informed yesterday, that you wanted to send a message again towards the deserts, could not but imagine that it was for some other business than that of horses, that your people made such frequent journies between the deserts and Pekin ; this gives him reason to think, that, by the help of the Mongalls, you carry on a secret intelligence between this city and Selinginsky, which may give birth to complaints and threats between the two empires ; for he is not ignorant, that the Mongalls are a people capable of engaging in such affairs, and that the Russes do not grudge money on such occasions.

I asked them thereupon,

Whether this answer was from the Allegamba, or whether it was their own composition.

Upon which they assured me, that they wrote it, word for word, the same that the Allegamba gave them ; and that it was for the same reason he would not consent to the sending the person, as desired.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

After this explanation, I thought necessary, for my greater security, to desire them to acquaint the Allegamba, on my behalf,

That the precaution he took was not right to take, unless with prisoners, or unless he had any intercepted letter to produce, by which he could convict me of having sought to embroil the two empires ; that bearing, as I did, a public character, I might write, as often as I pleased, without having any occasion either of the escort, or the consent of the president ; and the same, if I had a courier to dispatch for my private affairs, as he could not prevent it without an open violence.

I sent forthwith my interpreter to the council, with the mandarins, to know the determination of this minister. But he sent me word, that he had no desire to employ the horses and the people of the army of the emperor, his master, in our service, on journies which must cause them to be at expenses for which they were not furnished by their ordinary pay. Upon which I made him the proposal of being ourselves at the expense of the people for the escort which he should grant us, and that we would also mount them on our own horses, that they might have no occasion for the emperor's ; or, if that was still not satisfactory, I would only demand a passport, and would run the risk of sending one of our own people without an escort. But he continued firm in his denial, and would not allow of one or other of the expedients ; contenting himself with letting me know, once for all,

That he would do nothing in it.

I learnt, at the same time, from my interpreter, that they had reasoned among themselves, on this occasion, in much the following manner :

These foreigners come here with their commerce, to encumber us every moment with a thousand petty affairs, pretending that they ought to be favoured, on all occasions, no more nor less than if they laid an obligation on us ; and yet, we are still to receive the first answer from them on the subject of our affairs.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

The 16th, I understood, that, some weeks ago, the Tush-du Chan of the Mongalls ¹ who encamp at Urga, had brought complaints to the court, of the ill conduct of the russ merchants who came to Urga ; and that he had, at the same time, advertised the ministry, that there never had been so great a concourse of russ and chinese merchants at his residence, as in this year ; that, thereupon, his Majesty had taken a resolution to send a mandarin with orders to the Chan to chase out all the merchants, as well russes as chinese, from Urga, without letting it appear that it was done by order of his Majesty ; but that it should appear as the proper act of the Tush-du Chan, as master of his own country.

The same day, a courier, who was lately arrived from Selinginsky, with dispatches from the mandarin who resided there, told my interpreter, that the intendant of Selinginsky had tendered several packets of letters, that came from Russia, to this mandarin, in order to be forwarded to the council of the affairs of the Mongalls at Pekin ; but he refused to receive them, because the intendant could not acquaint him with their contents.

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¹ This is the name of the present Chan of the Western Mongalls. This Chan was heretofore sovereign ; but, since the Eastern Mongalls have possessed themselves of China, he put himself under the protection of that empire ; in order to be the better able to make head against the Kalmucks, with whom they are, in a manner, at continual war. He is a very powerful prince ; his dominions, on the western side, reach to the banks of the great river Yenisey, and even from thence, on the other side of this river, towards the sources of the Oby ; and, on the other fide, towards the east, they reach to the Great Wall. The Chan of the Western Mongalls hath a great many petty chans of this nation for his vassals, and can bring 100,000 men, or more, into the field, all cavalry ; but his soldiers fall far short of the Kalmucks soldiery.

MAY

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The 4th of this month, two mandarins of the council, accompanied with three clerks and two officers of our guard, being come to my apartment at 11 o'clock at night, informed me, that the Allegamba, being returned from court, wanted to speak with me on an affair of consequence ; and because he was employed, during the day-time, from morning till night, he prayed me to give myself the trouble of coming to him, though it was late at night. I was a bed when the message came to me ; however I made no difficulty of rising, to comply with this minister's desire ; the more, as the mandarins assured me that the business he wanted to speak with me about was a very pressing affair. When I came to his house I was received with remarkable civility, and the Allegamba being come in person to meet me, even to the court, he led me to his apartment, and desired me to sit down by him. He then began to make excuses, that, in so long a time, he had not been able to see me at his own house, or in other places ; but that he supposed I was not ignorant that he was obliged to be every day, from morning till night, with his Majesty, at Czchan-zchumnienne. Upon which I replied, that his excuse was unanswerable ; and that I commiserated his being obliged to pass his time in so fatiguing a manner. After many other reciprocal compliments of this nature, he demanded of me,

If it was long since I had any news from Selinginsky.

I answered,

That it was some time since I had any.

In the end, the affair which he was about discovered itself, by little and little, when he asked me,

If I remembered that when I would lately dispatch a messenger, by Kalchanna, towards the desert, he had told me that he could not consent to it, because he apprehended,

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

that, by such means, secret correspondence might be carried on, which might bring on some misunderstanding between the two empires.

I told him thereupon,

That I did remember that, and the rest of the unexpected answer he then gave me ; but, not having ever been able to guess whence such suspicion could arise, he would infinitely oblige me, if he would please to speak a little more intelligibly on this affair.

Whereupon he replied,

We apprehend you have intelligence of our deserters, which you do not think fit to communicate to us ¹.

Thereupon I remonstrated,

That, if he would please to consider the vast distance between St. Petersburg and Pekin, he would himself judge whether it was possible for the courier, dispatched on this affair, to be returned already, unless he could fly ; that, as to the rest, he himself knew that affairs of such consequence were not the business of a day, and required other things to adjust them than secret correspondence.

He shook his head at this answer, because there was then a report current at Pekin, that orders were arrived at Selinginsky, from the Czar, not to restore the deserters before spoken of. Some moments afterwards he asked me,

¹ The Tonguses, as well as the Mongalls, and other people of tartar extraction, who inhabit on the confines of Russia and China, are accustomed to desert very often, by hundreds of families, from the lands of one empire to those of the other, according as their caprice or interest prompts them ; which is often the subject of altercations between the two empires. In order to remedy these inconveniences, it was agreed in the last treaty, that, for the future, such deserters should not be received by either power, but should honestly be returned to the place from whence they came. From this article the Chinese pretend a right to reproach the Russes with not acting candidly, in deferring so long the restitution of 700 families of their subjects, which went over to the Russian territories since the conclusion of this treaty ; and the Russes, on their side, also reclaim a good number of families, and insist on its being equitable to come to a liquidation of their reciprocal pretensions.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

If I would communicate to him the news, when I should receive my letters.

Upon which I assured him,

That I should conceal nothing from him, whether it regarded him in particular, or regarded the court ; seeing such affairs could not be communicated to me, but by express orders of the Czar, my master ; which, whatever desire I might have, I dared not keep secret.

This minister, not thinking he had yet sufficient reason to be satisfied, demanded a new of me,

If, when I should receive private letters, I would let him have a copy ?

I answered thereupon,

That it was certainly the first time, since the world began, such a proposal was made ; but that I could not believe that he spoke in earnest on this occasion, although it was a little too late for raillery.

This answer being not altogether such as he hoped for, he changed, for some time, the discourse, by saying,

That he had an intention of telling his Majesty, that the caravan was almost ready to depart ; and of receiving, at the same time, his orders with regard to my person.

Whereupon I desired him

To put his Majesty in mind of the affair, on the subject of which I had so often made instances to him.

At length he began to talk to me of my stay at Pekin, saying,

That the term which was agreed with Mr. de Ismayloff, for my stay at this court, wanted little of being expired.

And he made me fully to comprehend, that I ought to prepare to return with the caravan. Upon which we disputed together long enough, and I

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

told him, on this occasion,

That if he would please to remember that I assisted on all the conferences that were held on this subject ; that I had read, and had in my custody, all the correspondence of Mr. de Ismayloff, with the council, about his negotiations ; and, that I was at all the audiences which his Majesty had granted to that minister, he could not doubt, but that what was transacted by Mr. de Ismayloff, from his arrival till his departure, was as well known to me as to himself.

I further alledged to him, on this subject, the resolution of the month of February, 1721, which he himself sent to Mr. de Ismayloff ; wherein it was said,

That his Majesty had given his consent to the residence of an agent at his court, without any mention regarding the time, directly or indirectly.

But this lord, notwithstanding he had nothing to answer to what I advanced, held himself strictly to his first decision, that my stay had been agreed to only till the return of the present caravan. And this altercation did not cease till I gave him for a final answer,

That the Czar, my master, not having ordered me to enter this empire in spite of the court, or to continue to reside in it contrary to the good pleasure of the Bogdoi-Chan, I was obliged to conform myself, on this occasion, to all that his Majesty would think fit to determine in regard to me.

After which he showed me a small letter, with an address in the russ language, saying it came from Naniti Tursoff, interpreter at Selinginsky, and that the Kutuchtu ¹ had sent it to Pekin, that it might be delivered to me. He added,

That he knew very well, that since the departure of Mr. de

¹ The Kutuchtu is an high priest belonging to the Mongalls and the northern Kalmucks. He was formerly no more than a sub-delegate of the Delay-Lama, in these parts ; but he hath, by degrees, found means to withdraw from the obedience of his master, and to deify himself at the expense of the Delay-Lama.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

Ismayloff, I had received a good number of letters, the contents of which I had communicated to nobody ; but as to this letter, I must determine to open it in his presence, and let him take a copy of it, if I wished to have it ; for if he could not prevail so far upon me, I should not read it neither, as he would take care to return it whence it came.

He gave orders, for this purpose, to two translators, who were then present, to set themselves by me, and to read the letter at the same time I did. As I had not yet opened the letter, I asked him,

What occasioned a curiosity so unallowable ? and if he did not know, that this procedure was directly contrary to the rights of nations ?

His answer was,

That he was well enough apprised, that what he did on this occasion was a little irregular ; but this letter happening to fall into his hands, he expected that I would not make much difficulty of communicating the contents to him ; and that I might determine on the alternative he had proposed.

Thereupon I delivered him the letter, sealed as it was, and desired him to reflect seriously on the consequence such an unwarrantable curiosity might produce ; and, in the mean time, I should see to what lengths he would carry his authority over my letters. After which I left him, and retired to my quarters.

The 5th, two mandarins came to me, on his part, to see

If I would not resolve to comply with his will, in regard to the said letter.

I charged them to tell him, on my part,

That I always found myself ready to do him all imaginable service, which he could in honour expect ; but what he desired, on this occasion, was so unreasonable, that I could not but consider it as an affront, which he had an intention

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

wantonly to give me ; and that he might depend on being obliged, at a proper time, to give me satisfaction.

The 6th, the two translators above-mentioned were commanded to Czchan-zchumnienne, by order of this minister, which made me think they had proceeded as far as to open my letter ; but I was soon convinced of the contrary ; for

The 7th, a mandarin, accompanied by a clerk, came to bring me the said letter, which had not the least mark of having been opened. He, at the same time, made me a compliment from the Allegamba, saying,

That he desired I would conceive no ill opinion of him, upon what had passed between us on the subject of this letter ; in as much as he assured me, there was nothing serious on his side, in this adventure ; and that he only took the liberty of having a little pleasantry with me ; not altogether without flattering himself, that I might not be averse to comply with his desire, on this occasion. But now, being convinced that I was firmly resolved against this sort of complaisance, to any person whatsoever, he would no longer delay sending me the letter in question ; and, at the same time, to assure me of his friendship.

After having received the letter, I let him know, in answer,

That I had myself, in the beginning, looked on this affair as a jest ; but, finding he pushed it too far, I had been obliged to regard it in another light ; seeing I had never looked on the talking in such a manner to be jesting. Nevertheless, that, after the positive assurances that the Allegamba gave me, that there was nothing serious on his part of this affair, I ought to consider it in the same light ; desiring him, in time to come, to make use of other persons, not of me, for his diversion.

After which, having opened the letter, I found indeed that it was from the said Tursoff, dated Urga, 20th of April, 1722. And as the

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

mandarin and clerk, who brought the letter, were still in my chamber, when I began to read it, I made my interpreter translate it to them by word of mouth, in the mongall language, to the end that they might communicate the contents to the Allegamba, and know of him if he would grant me a conference on the subject of this affair, or would rather receive from me a memorial thereupon.

The 8th, the same mandarin came to my house, and upon my desiring to know if he had acquitted himself of the commission I gave him the day before, to the Allegamba, he answered in the affirmative, and that he was ordered to bring me his answer, which was,

That the Bogdoi-Chan would hear nothing for the future talked of any commerce of the Russes, in his empire, until all the disturbances on the frontiers were entirely adjusted ; and as, for this reason, there might continue a long space of time before any caravan might come again to Pekin, the Bogdoi-Chan found it proper that the agent should return with the present caravan ; and when the commerce between the two empires would come to be renewed, he should likewise be permitted to return to Pekin.

Whereupon I made answer to the Allegamba,

That the orders I received from the Czar, were, as he himself well knew, to remain at Pekin till he should recall me ; but as I was in no condition to oppose the orders of the Bogdoi-Chan, I was obliged to have patience, and to resolve to do what I had no power to avoid doing ; nevertheless, that this was no answer to what I desired to know from him, and that I waited for it with impatience, as I did for a clear explanation upon this precipitate manner of breaking off all commerce and correspondence, between the two empires, without waiting for a resolution upon the affairs of the frontiers, and without any declaration of war, or other previous mark of hostility on either side.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Peking

But the mandarin declined to charge himself with such a message, he not thinking it proper for him to repeat such terms as it was couched in to the Allegamba, saying, I must either seek an opportunity to tell him myself, or demand a conference, for that purpose, by my interpreter.

The same day, in the afternoon, I sent my interpreter to the council, to acquaint the Allegamba, by means of the mandarins he might find there, that I had, the same day received the orders of the Bogdoi-Chan for my return to Russia ; but I had received no answer on his part, upon the affair which was the subject I wanted to confer with him upon ; for which reason, if he could not spare time to speak with me himself, he would, at least, let me know whether he would receive a memorial, on that subject, from me or not.

The 9th, another mandarin came to me, and acquainted me, that the Allegamba had been informed of the subject, concerning which I had sent my interpreter to the council the day before ; and, as he had not a moment to spare, to confer personally with me, he had sent this same mandarin to me, to whom I might explain myself on what I had to say to him ; as the Allegamba had given him orders to make him a faithful report of every thing which I should charge him with. Upon which I told him, that I wished he would inform the Allegamba that I prayed him to give me, under his hand, a precise answer to the points following, viz.

I. If the Bogdoi-Chan was disposed, before my departure, to receive and to answer the credentials which I was charged with from his Czarish Majesty ?

II. If any suitable satisfaction was to be expected for the injuries done to his Czarish Majesty's subjects by the Tush-du Chan, or, at least, by his orders ?

III. What was the reason that they would not grant a free passage to the letters, addressed to the council and to me, which remained on the frontiers ?

IV. In case the Bogdoi-Chan should persist in the resolution of sending me home, what I should say to the Czar, my master,

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

regarding the perpetual peace between the two empires ?

V. Supposing that, contrary to expectation, my departure might be deferred, I desired to know, if, in conformity to the treaties of peace, the Bogdoi-Chan would grant me post-horses for my journey, or whether I must find them myself ?

The 10th, there came to me a mandarin, from the Allegamba, to inform me,

That there was no likelihood that the Bogdoi-Chan would alter his resolution with regard to my departure ; that no person had the boldness to speak again to his Majesty, after he had once explained himself so positively on this affair. But that the Allegamba, in his turn, wished to be informed why I demanded so precisely to know the motives of my being sent away ; and why I insisted so strenuously to have a clear explanation of the intentions of the Bogdoi-Chan towards the Czar ; that he did not know whether I durst make such demands, in case the Bogdoi-Chan should be pleased to speak personally to me, without my being afraid that he would make complaints of it to the Czar my master.

Upon which I returned him as follows, viz.

That it was absolutely necessary for me to be fully informed of what I desired to know ; that, without this being cleared up, I could not well resolve to depart, seeing it appeared evidently, that since the departure of Mr. de Ismayloff, the court had entirely changed its disposition regarding the preservation of the good understanding between the two empires ; that the Allegamba himself could not be ignorant, how many of his Czarish Majesty's subjects had, immediately after the conclusion of the last treaty of peace, deserted, and come to settle on the lands in the dominions of the Bogdoi-Chan, without the Czar's having shown any resentment to this time, notwithstanding the same was directly contrary to the

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

sense of the treaty ; that the Czar, on this occasion, far from forbidding the subjects of China entrance into his dominions, had always permitted them, without interruption, to enjoy, in his dominions, an entire liberty, as well in regard to trade as all other affairs which could concern them, not even excepting some of those very deserters, who, having affairs to transact at some places in the Czar's dominions, had been no less welcome than the others, subjects of the Bogdoi-Chan ; but now, that 700 of the subjects of China had passed the frontiers, and would establish themselves on the lands belonging to Russia, that would forthwith forbid all commerce, not receive any more letters, and in fine, at one stroke, break off all communication between the two empires ; and that without even waiting the answer of the governor-general of Siberia to the letter wrote to him on the subject, which was the only certain means of knowing whether his Czarish Majesty intended to retain these people, or to make them return ; that, to conclude, I prayed the Allegamba to consider, if it was not much more easy to accommodate this affair by treating of it with more mildness, than to push it with an haughtiness not to be born with ¹.

Whereupon the mandarin told me, he could not positively undertake for his daring to say all this to the Allegamba ; but that, if a proper occasion offered, he would not fail of doing it faithfully. He told me further, on the part of that minister, that the mandarins, who had been sent last year, by command of the Bogdoi-Chan, to pass the frontiers of Russia, were returned, they not being permitted to proceed on their

¹ It is certain that the judgment of the late emperor, either from jealousy, or the artifices of some secret enemies, was so altered, with regard to the russia-trade, a little before his death, that there was no other way of adjusting it, but the having recourse to arms ; which was fully resolved on, on the part of Russia, when the news of the death of this monarch arrived there ; which suspended the execution of this design, till they should see clearly into the designs of his successor. But the death of Peter the Great entirely broke these measures ; so that the affairs between Russia and China are still, at this time, on the same terms they were on the departure of Mr. de Lange from Pekin ; and, since the last caravan that left Pekin with him, no caravan hath been sent from Siberia to Pekin.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

journey, before the governor-general of Siberia was made acquainted with it ; that the Allegamba might expect to wait long enough for an answer, as well upon this affair, as upon all other affairs which regarded the interest of the two empires, so long as they did not allow of a free passage to the letters wrote, concerning them, to the court. I received no more in answer then.

In the mean time, I had made a demand, some time ago, of the council, for a free passage for the caravan by the old road of Kerlinde, (which the former caravans had been used to take,) to save them the inconveniencies attending the route by the deserts, where the people and the cattle had much to endure for want of water ; and, for this purpose, I sent my interpreter, with a clerk of the caravan, on the 14th, to the council, to know if the Bogdoi-Chan had given his consent, or not. But they told him for answer,

That they expected to have been freed from their importuning the council about their beggarly commerce, after they had been told so often, that the council would not embarrass themselves any more about affairs that were only beneficial to the Russes ; and that, of course, they had only to return by the way they came.

The same day, I sent to the house of the first minister, to know if I could have the honour of seeing him. But he excused himself ; saying, that, being far advanced in years, he wanted to be at ease.

Nevertheless I did not refrain going myself, the next day, which was the 15th, to his house ; and, the guard at the gate suffering me to pass without interruption, I entered directly into the court-yard, and acquainted him with my being there, by one of his servants; desiring he would afford me a quarter of an hour's audience. But he sent me word,

That he was not at leisure to see me ; and that, as the affairs, about which I would speak to him, very probably only regarded the council of foreign affairs, he desired I would address myself to them.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

I thereupon let him know, by the same domestic,

That I was come to speak with him, as the first minister of the Bogdoi-Chan ; and if I had not had a very pressing occasion of applying to him, he might be sure I would have been very averse to have come to give him trouble ; but, that it concerned us equally, both him and myself, that I should have the honour of seeing him ; therefore I was determined not to leave his house without speaking with him.

Upon this so precise a declaration, the same domestic returned, a few moments after, and showed me into a grand saloon, well enough furnished after the chinese manner, where the master of the household of this minister came to present me tea and milk, till his master should come. After I had waited about a quarter of an hour in this apartment, the Alegada at length came, and desired my excuse, with a number of compliments, after the chinese manner, that he was not always able to see me when I might require it ; because his great age, and multiplicity of affairs with which he was charged, did not permit him. Whereupon, we being both seated, I told him,

That, if the affairs which I had to represent to him, regarded only my own person, I should not have ventured to incommode him ; but, as they regarded our common masters, and the preservation of a good understanding between the two empires ; or, to say all in two words, peace or war between the two nations ; I thought it my duty to seek, before my departure, by every way possible, an opportunity of explaining myself thereupon with him ; that he knew that the free passage of the caravans of Siberia was made, in some degree, an essential point in all the treaties between the two empires ; that he knew, moreover, that Mr. de Ismayloff had declared, more than once, that his Czarish Majesty could never allow that they should any more cavil on that article ; that he further knew, that the free trade of the subjects of Russia, at Urga, was positively stipulated by the

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

late treaty, in which they could not make the least alteration, without a manifest violation of the said treaty ; that he knew in fine, that it was with the agreement of the Bogdoi-Chan, and by virtue of a resolution of the council, in writing that I remained at Pekin, after the departure of Mr. de Ismayloff, in quality of agent, empowered by the court of Russia, till such time as his Czarish Majesty should be pleased to recall me. Notwithstanding which, not regarding such solemn engagements, they had, in regard to this last caravan, treated us so ill, that, if they had been at open war with Russia, they could not have done worse ; that they had kept shut up, during many months, the commissary of the caravan, with all his people, just as if they had been slaves ; that there was no kind of insult to which they did not expose those who had a desire to come and trade with our people. And yet more, they had caused the russ subjects to be shamefully driven out of Urga, who had come to trade there on the faith of public treaties. And, as to what regards myself, they had made me suffer more affronts, on all occasions that offered, than can be imagined ; in the end, not yet satisfied with all those steps, the president of the council had made it be declared to me positively, that there should not absolutely, for the future, any caravan be admitted, before the affair of the frontiers should be regulated to the satisfaction of the Bogdoi-Chan ; and, at the same time, caused it to be signified to me, that I must prepare to depart with the caravan, because his Majesty would not suffer me to remain any longer at his court, in the uncertainty that affairs stood in between the two empires. That, if this order regarded me only as a private person, there would be nothing in it which did not depend entirely on the pleasure of the Bogdoi-Chan ; but having been once admitted by him to reside at his court, in quality of agent of his Czarish Majesty, it was a maxim, practised by all the civilized nations in the world, not to send away, in a manner so indecent, a

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

person vested with a public character, unless entirely to break off all good understanding with his master. That if they desired very ardently, as they asserted on all occasions, the restitution of the deserters in question, and an amicable convention in regard to the frontiers, he would permit me to tell him, that, it appeared to me, they took quite the wrong way to obtain them ; and that the sending me away, so far from facilitating those affairs, was most certainly the greatest obstacle they could think of. That I thought it my duty to remonstrate the foregoing matters at this time, that they might still be remedied ; because, after my departure, I did not well see how it would be possible to get out of this embarrassment by amicable means.

The minister thereupon answered me,

That it being already so long a time since the Russes had given them the expectation of regulating the affairs of the frontiers, conform to the treaties concluded between the two empires, without their taking the least thought of bringing things to a close, his Majesty had come to a resolution not to admit any caravan before he should be fully satisfied, on the part of Russia, of their adherence to treaties ; and, as thereby my residence at his court became quite unnecessary, his Majesty saw nothing that should oblige him to keep me longer in his empire. That, in regard to what passed at Urga, the Tush-du Chan had good reasons for removing our people from his residence, who had committed great insolencies, no ways conform to treaties. That, as to what regarded the ill usage which I pretended the caravan had suffered, he did not well know of what I spoke ; but, as to their being kept shut up a longer time than ordinary, it was our own fault, who would have made innovations in the trade of the caravans. In fine, in one word, that his Majesty was tired of receiving the law, in his own country, from foreigners, of whom his subjects

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

reaped no profit ; and, that, if the court of Russia delayed longer doing him justice, he should be obliged to do it himself, by such ways as he should find most convenient.

Upon which I replied,

That I was much surprised to find the Bogdoi-Chan in a disposition so little favourable towards his Czarish Majesty, after he had the goodness to testify himself, on more than one occasion, to Mr. de Ismayloff, that he desired nothing more than always to live in a good understanding with the Czar, my master ; and that I could not conceive what caused his change of sentiments so suddenly, with regard to his Czarish Majesty. That if the court of China had restitutions to demand from us, we had the like to expect from them ; and that, in any shape, there was no reason that could, in justice, oblige us to restore their deserters, so long as they retained ours. That if the indulgence of the Czar, my master, in the affair of Albazin ¹, had raised rash hopes in any persons, who are ill informed of the forces of Russia, and of the monarch who reigns over them, I was persuaded, that a monarch so enlightened, as was the Bogdoi-Chan, would not suffer himself to be blinded by such delusive appearances ; and that he knew full well how to distinguish an indulgence, arising from magnanimity and esteem, for a prince his friend and ally, from a forced compliance, grounded on weakness and indolence. That as I had, in my instructions, orders to apply my utmost endeavours for the preservation of the good understanding between the two empires, I thought I might tell him, that I was exceedingly surprised at the proceedings of the chinese ministry, on this occasion ; that he could not be ignorant that it depended only on his Czarish Majesty to

¹ Albazin was a little town of about 500 or 600 houses, which the Russes had built in a very fertile country, upon the south side of the river Amoor, near the mouth of the river Albazin. But at the end of the year 1715, the Eastern Mongalls, supported by the Chinese, besieged it, and, having carried it after a siege of two years, rased it to the ground.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

finish the war with Sweden, in the most honourable manner ; and that perhaps this peace was actually made at the time I was speaking to him ; after which, I saw nothing that could prevent the Czar, my master, from turning his arms to this side, in case they exercised his patience too much. That I gave him my word, that all the great difficulties, which perhaps might be imagined in China to attend such an enterprise, would vanish immediately, if ever his Czarish Majesty should resolve on transporting himself to the frontiers ; for he was a prince that did not suffer himself to be hindered by difficulties ; and that they might then have sufficient cause to repent their having despised the friendship of a monarch who was not accustomed to receive offences with impunity, and who was inferior to no monarch in the world, neither in grandeur nor power.

This discourse was not at all to the Alegada's taste ; therefore, after some silence, he demanded of me,

If I was authorised to talk to him in the manner I did ? and if I was not apprehensive of being disavowed by the court of Russia, in case they should make complaint upon the menaces I used to them ?

I thereupon replied to him,

That, in the state to which I saw affairs were brought, I thought it necessary not to disguise any thing to him, to the end that the Bogdoi-Chan, faithfully informed by him, of all he had to consider for and against this affair, might thereby be the better enabled to determine with himself, thereupon, in a manner suitable to his great wisdom and justice. That nevertheless it was wrong to take what I had said on this occasion for menaces, seeing they were only mere reflections, which I was desirous he should make on the unhappy consequences which the disdainful conduct they showed, in regard to us, might in time produce ; and that I was so little

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

apprehensive of being disavowed by the court of Russia, that I was ready to give him in writing every word I had said to him ; and that it would be the greatest service he could render me, to speak out of hand concerning it to the Bogdoi-Chan, the more as I was well assured, that, if they would give the least attention to the irregular manner in which they had acted in this affair, with a friendly and allied power, they would not fail of comprehending that my intentions were sincere, and only had for its aim the preservation of the harmony between the two empires.

The answer of the minister to this was,

That it being his Majesty's custom never to take any resolution, without first well weighing all circumstances, he never changed his measures for any reason whatsoever ; and, after what he had declared positively, in regard to the caravan and my person, he had no inclination to propose to him a change of sentiment in this regard. That we had nothing to do but to make a beginning in complying with our engagements ; after which they would see what they had to do as to the rest.

Upon which I concluded, by telling him,

That the case being so, I saw plainly, that it was in vain, on our side, to use more endeavours for preserving the good understanding between the two empires, as long as they would contribute nothing towards it on their side ; that therefore the game must go on, seeing the dice were thrown already. That however I had, at least, the satisfaction of having done my duty in advertising him, as first minister of the Bogdoi-Chan, of the unhappy consequences which would ensue from all this ; and that was the sole reason which made me think it absolutely necessary, for me to give him the trouble of this visit.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

After which I rose up and took leave of him. On parting he reconducted me to the entrance of the saloon, where he stayed till I was mounted on horseback.

The same day I was likewise to take leave of the Poyamba, or great marshal of the court ; and, after having returned him thanks, which were truly due to him, for all the goodness which he had showed to me ever since the first moment I had the honour of being known to him, I profited myself of the present opportunity, to represent succinctly to him the same things which I had represented to the Alegada. He thereupon assured me,

That he was sorry to see that the success of my negotiations did not answer my wishes. That it was true, that the Bogdoi-Chan was very much piqued that he saw there was no end made to the affair of the deserters ; and that he had certain advice, that our court had no desire to satisfy him on this article ; and that we only sought to protract time : that it was on these considerations that he had been prevailed on, by the ministry, to order my return. That, for his part, he was astonished to see that our court could hesitate a moment to sacrifice some hundreds of families, who were in the utmost poverty, to the solid advantages which we might promise ourselves, from the friendship which the Bogdoi-Chan had conceived for the person of the Czar my master ; and he made no manner of doubt, but that, if the Czar had been well informed of the justice of the pretensions of the court of China, and the little importance of that affair, he would instantly have given orders for restoring the families reclaimed. I would have had him consider the distance of the places, and that it was in a manner impossible that an answer could have arrived from st. Petersburg, on this affair, since the departure of Mr. de Ismayloff.

But he flopped my mouth by telling me,

That he could not say precisely what the distance was, but he knew very well, that, on other occasions, our couriers had

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

made the journey in much less time. That he advised me to do my best in this affair, when I should arrive on the frontiers ; and that he could assure me, that when the Bogdoi-Chan was made easy on this point, he would explain himself very reasonably on all the rest of what we should wish to have done ; that however, as to myself, I had cause to be well satisfied with the sentiments the court entertained of me ; and that his Majesty had himself declared, that, in case affairs should come to be accommodated, he would not be sorry to see me return to Pekin.

The 16th, I went to pay my court to the Bogdoi-Chan, upon his departure from Pekin to pass the summer at Jegcholl, but had not the honour of speaking to him at this time ; his Majesty letting me know, by the master of the ceremonies,

That he recommended the same thing to me which he had charged Mr. de Ismayloff with, to tell his Czarish Majesty ¹. That, for the rest, he wished me a good journey ; and expected that I would not fail to write from the frontiers, in case I should there be informed of any news from Europe.

A little before I received the message from his Majesty I had an interview with the Allegamba, who, after an infinite deal of caressing and flattery, begged of me to labour, as much as possible, to forward the returning their deserters ; at the same time adding,

That the Bogdoi-Chan had great reliance on me in regard to this affair ; in expectation, that, according to all appearances, I would not be backward to return soon to China, either on the subject in question, or on the subject of commerce.

¹ When Mr. de Ismayloff had his audience of leave of the late emperor of China, this monarch declared expressly, that he would permit Mr. de Lange to remain at Pekin, in quality of agent of the court of Russia, expecting that Mr. de Ismayloff would, on his return, prevail with his Czarish Majesty to send back the deserted families in question ; but, in case that would not be effected instantly, he would send away the said agent, but [][] no more caravans, till he should be entirely satisfied on this article. But Mr. de Ismayloff, on his arrival at Mosco, found the court so busily employed about the expedition to Persia, that he found no opportunity of getting a final resolution on this affair.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

I assured him thereupon,

That his Czarish Majesty, having subjects in abundance, had at no time the least temptation to keep the vassals of neighbouring powers unjustly.

And I promised, at the same time, to write to him, if, at my arrival on the frontiers, I should learn that any resolution was taken on this affair. Afterwards I demanded of him,

For what reason they refused conveyance of the letters which were on the frontiers.

At the same time I led him to imagine some appearance that those letters bore something relating to their affair. Whereupon he answered me,

That, if it was possible to believe it to be so, he would not make the least difficulty of instantly ordering the letters to be brought hither ; but that, if they contained orders for the rendering back their deserters, they would not have failed to communicate the same to the mandarin, who kept himself at Selinginsky purely on that affair.

At length, not seeing any appearance of being able to prolong my stay at Pekin till the recall of his Czarish Majesty, I pressed the commissary to neglect nothing that might facilitate his departure as soon as possible ; and thereupon he dispatched beforehand,

on the 25th, a part of his baggage for Krasnagora, which is a place, a day's journey without the Great Wall, appointed for the rendezvous of all the caravan. On this occasion they did not give a guard of chinese soldiers to the caravan, as had been formerly practised ; but they had ordered all the towns, where they should stop, to give them guards ; besides which, there was a bonska, or courier of the council of the affairs of the Mongalls, ordered to attend the baggage, who was not to leave them without a new order.

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JUNE

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The 6th, a mandarin, named Tulishin, let me know, that, having received orders from the Bogdoi-Chan to accompany me to Selinginsky, and to furnish provisions and post-horses on the road, he would be glad to be informed when I thought I should be ready to depart ; that he might take his measures accordingly, and dispatch in good time the couriers necessary for the deserts, to make the requisite dispositions for my passage.

The 8th, the commissary went to the council, to demand a guard for the caravan ; but they granted none ; acquainting him, at the same time, that the mandarin Tulishin was also charged with the care of the caravan ; and that, as he would be obliged frequently to leave the route of the caravan, for providing victuals and horses which I should have occasion for on my journey, he was to have with him a clerk and two couriers, under his command, who were not to leave the caravan before they should safely arrive at Selinginsky.

The same day, 36 carriages were dispatched, laden with merchandise, for the place of rendezvous, without any other escort than some of our own people, and a courier of the council.

The 16th, the Allegamba invited me to come to him at the palace of the Bogdoi-Chan ; and, when I arrived, he presented me with two pieces of damask, on the part of the Chan ; telling me,

That his Majesty having received presents from me, on the entrance of the new year, he was pleased, in his turn, to make me a present of these two pieces of damask.

I received this present with all due respect ; assuring this minister, that I should eternally cherish the remembrance of all the gracious favours which the Bogdoi-Chan had deigned to honour me with, during my residence in his empire ; and that, in whatever place I should be, in time to come, I would never fail of making it a subject of particular glory to me.

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JULY

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The 4th, the Allegamba sent a mandarin to me, to show me a letter, which he had very lately received from the mandarin who resided at Selinginsky, in which he made heavy complaints of the chicaneries that he was forced to bear with, during his residence in that place, as well from the officers of his Czarish Majesty as the other inhabitants of that city ; adding,

That every body demanded of him perpetually, the reason why he tarried there so long, and if he did not intend soon to return home. That thereupon having demanded of them, if they had come to any resolution on the affair which was the cause of his being there, they had answered him, that they had no other orders but to conduct him back, with all civility, when he should think proper to return.

He related besides in this letter,

That the allowance they gave him, for the subsistence of himself and retinue, was so very scanty, that, if he had not had of his own money wherewithal to supply himself, he should have been reduced to great extremities. They had, besides, pressed him very hard on the subject of the letters, for the council and for me, that were arrived on the frontiers ; and they would, by force, know of him the reason why he refused to receive the letters, and to forward them to Pekin ; but that he had always answered them, that, his sole errand to Selinginsky being on the affair of the deserters, he could not charge himself, either with letters, or any other affair whatsoever.

After the mandarin had explained to me the contents of this letter, he told me, that the Allegamba demanded to know of me,

Whether it was possible that all this could be done by order of his Czarish Majesty.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

I let him know in answer,

That if he had formed ideas of the person of the Czar, my master, by those passages, he would do well entirely to efface them ; for that, as his Czarish Majesty was more magnanimous than to treat, in the manner there laid down, even prisoners of war in his dominions, he would certainly not begin so bad a practice with the subjects of an empire in amity with him, who came into his country.

I added, that notwithstanding I had reason to complain of things of more consequence than this mandarin, I was nevertheless so far from approving the want of complaisance used towards him, that, if the Allegamba thought fit to give me a copy of that letter, I was ready to take charge of it, and to make it my business that the Czar, my master, should be acquainted with it. But with regard to the orders, which this mandarin hinted he was charged with, not to receive any letters, though even for the council itself, before he should receive the deserters in question, I could not help observing that such a procedure bespoke much coolness on their side.

The 8th, the Allegamba sent to me, in the evening, a mandarin, who told me, after making me a compliment from him, that he would be, the next day, at the council ; and that, if I had time to come there likewise, he would explain the reasons which determined the court to resolve on my return ; and that he would give me the same in writing. Upon which I told him, I should come there with great pleasure, that I might be informed of them.

The 9th, having notice that the Allegamba was already arrived at the council, I forthwith mounted on horseback to go there also. He came in person to receive me at the door, and desired me to place myself at a little table with him. After which he gave me to understand,

That it were to be wished that my residence at that court might continue longer, as the Bogdoi-Chan himself, and all the ministry in general, were so well satisfied with the

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

conduct I had observed during my residence ; that they had nothing to say against my person ; that they had remarked, with much satisfaction, that, by the good order I had kept, the present caravan had begun and finished its commerce, without producing the least dispute between the merchants of the two nations ¹. It had also formerly been too usual to see the servants and people of the caravan do numberless insolencies in the streets, and commit all sorts of excesses ; but that, for this time, they could not without surprise observe that nothing of this sort had appeared ; but that every thing passed with all desirable decency ².

After I had paid this compliment by another, I told him,

That it was with intention of maintaining the like good order, that his Czarish Majesty sent me to China ; and that it would be owing to themselves, if things, for the future, should not be carried on in the same order ; and if any other petty incidents did not come to an accommodation with the like ease.

After which, I prayed him to let me know the true source of the disorders which happened, at Urga, between the subjects of the Czar, my master, and the Mongalls ; and

wherefore they obliged the Russia merchants to leave that

¹ The Chinese usually bought, from the caravan, goods on credit, for which, at the time when due, they could not pay ; which occasioned very frequent disputes between the two nations ; to remedy this, the court of Pekin had been accustomed to put into the hands of the commissary, at his departure, all those who could not pay what they were indebted to the caravan, in order that he might compel them to pay as they best could ; in which cases the commissaries had frequently committed great abuses, and treated the poor Chinese, whom they had in their custody, in the most barbarous manner ; which very much disgusted the people of Pekin, and rendered them very averse to trading with the russian caravans.

² The excesses committed, by those of the caravan, had been but too frequent till this time ; and the commissaries, in place of redressing those disorders, had been very often themselves the authors of them, without giving themselves the trouble of making the least satisfaction for them to the Chinese, notwithstanding the great complaints to the russian ministers thereupon on many occasions. In all appearance, what contributed principally to the good order observed by the russ-servants of this caravan, was their not getting brandy, at free cost, as they did when the Chinese furnished the subsistence for the caravan.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

place before they had finished their trade.

He answered me thereupon,

That it was done by orders of the Tush-du Chan and his council, as supreme judges in their country.

Upon which I demanded of him,

Whether the Tush-du Chan was a sovereign prince of the Mongalls, or a subject of the emperor of China ?

He replied,

That, in truth, the Chan was a vassal of the Bogdoi-Chan's ; but that did not hinder his being master in his own country ¹.

I then prayed him to tell me,

Whether the Tush-du Chan was obliged to conform himself to the engagement stipulated by treaty, between the two empires, to the end, that I might know if we ought to address the court at Pekin, on the subject of satisfaction we had to demand on that affair ? or were to take it of the Tush-du Chan ? as it was not to be expected that affair would be let pass without an exact inquiry. That, for my part, I thought the best means of terminating that affair amicably, was, that they should order the mandarin, who was to accompany me on the journey, to go with me to Urga, in our way to Selinginsky ; to the end, that, after having full information of this affair, I might be able to send a circumstantial account of it to our ministry.

But he answered me thereupon in these terms,

¹ Though the Chan of the Western Mongalls is tributary to the Chinese, they have nevertheless a great regard for him at the court of China ; the more, as he is a very powerful prince, and, that in case of a revolt in China, it is from him that the present imperial house is to expect the greatest assistance ; his subjects being beyond comparison much better soldiers than the mongall Chinese, insomuch, that, if he should be disobliged, and should join himself to the Kalmucks, or to the Russes, nothing could prevent his entrance into China when he pleased, and probably bring about another revolution.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

With us no judge who hath given a just sentence can be made responsible for his judgement, was he no more than a mere clerk. Your people who were at Urga have affronted the lamas, as well by words as deeds ; and they have, moreover, attempted to carry off some mongall families from those quarters ; it is for this reason that the Tush-du Chan was in the right to remove them from his territories.

I answered him thereupon,

That this judge ought, most certainly, to render account of his judgment, because he had judged people who were no manner of way under his jurisdiction ; but he would have acted with justice if, after having sent the culpable to Selinginsky, he had prosecuted for satisfaction at that place. Whereas, now that he hath punished the innocent equally with the guilty, and hath infringed the treaty of peace in so essential an article, his judgment cannot be regarded but as a manifest act of violence.

The Allegamba, finding me insist so strenuously for an inquiry into this affair, smiling, told me,

Mr. Agent you do well to make so much work about this affair, but I do not know how to explain myself more precisely upon it at present ; all that I can say to you is, that all of it will be easily accommodated when we mail receive a satisfactory answer upon the affair of our deserters.

After which he presented me a writing, which he said had been drawn up by order of the Bogdoi-Chan, to serve for my information regarding the reasons of my being sent away. Upon which we again entered into dispute together ; but as these gentlemen, on these occasions, hold themselves strictly tied down to a single word, whether essential to the affair they are upon or not, it was impossible for me to draw from him any other answer, than that they had not designed to grant my remaining at Pekin longer than the time of the present caravan ; and,

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

that when the affair of the frontiers should be accommodated, they would not be wanting to give a definitive resolution, as well upon this article, as upon the other propositions which Mr. de Ismayloff had made to the court. He afterwards presented to me a letter, saying it was wrote by order of the Bogdoi-Chan, to prince Cherkasky, governor general of Siberia ¹ ; but I having refused to receive the said letter, it displeased him a little and made him say,

That it was hardly civil in me to refuse a letter, which the emperor, his master, had ordered to be written, and to be put into my hands.

I answered thereupon,

That I would not chuse to do what I did on this occasion, if the letters which the said prince Cherkasky, in quality of governor general of Siberia, had wrote to the council, were not likewise written by the order of the Czar, my master. That he could give this letter to the mandarin, who was to accompany me to Selinginsky, with orders to receive the letters for the court which were lying there ; and, that being done, I should not then make the least difficulty to receive the said letter.

He declared to me afterwards, that it was the pleasure of the Bogdoi-Chan that I should take Jegcholl in my way, to have my audience of leave of his Majesty. And again resuming the article of the letter from the court for the prince Cherkasky, he told me,

That what I had done on this occasion was not altogether so right ; seeing it was not allowed to any person, when in China, to oppose themselves to the will of the emperor.

Upon which I answered him,

That I was persuaded his Majesty would put a different

¹ The prince Cherkasky, governor general of Siberia, was recalled by the court of Russia, in the year 1722, upon his own sollicitations ; and they afterwards sent thither a person in quality of vice governor, who remains there still.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

construction on this affair, from what he did.

But that I wished, in my turn, to know from him,

Upon what he grounded his suspicions, when he refused us, the last spring, the passage to the deserts for some of our people, whom we would have sent with money to provide subsistence for our horses ; and, that under the pretext, that by such expeditions secret correspondence might be carried on, which might produce misunderstandings between the two empires.

Thereupon he said,

That in reality he had no such suspicions ; but that he would willingly prevent the disorders, which might have happened on the journey of these people ; seeing, that if they had been robbed, or assassinated on the road, we would not have failed to demand satisfaction from the court.

Thereupon I put him in mind,

That he was now brought to explain himself ; that it was not to hinder secret correspondence that he refused us passage, and that he might very well have spared himself that useless precaution, as to what regarded us ; which had caused us an expense of some thousands of laen, for not being able to put our horses into stables, to which purpose the money we wanted to send to the deserts was appropriated ; and had occasioned the death of a great many horses ; and even those that survived were in such a miserable condition that they were by no means capable of serving in the waggons ; which obliged our commissary to transport the greatest part of his baggage to Selinginsky by carriages hired at Pekin, which could not be done but at a very considerable charge.

This answer made him a little thoughtful ; but at length he replied to me,

That he did not say so, but, be it so or not, we must now part

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

good friends ; to which end he prayed me to have no ill-will towards him upon account of the liberty he had taken to trifle and jest with me on the subject of the letter from Tursoff ; that he could assure me he had no ill intention on that occasion ; and hoped that I would be satisfied with this explanation, and not think otherwise of that affair, in time to come, than as a piece of innocent raillery.

To which I answered him,

That, as to what regarded myself in particular, he might depend that I should absolutely think no more of it ; but, for the rest, I could not do in it according to my own pleasure.

Whereupon he asked me, if, at my return to Russia, I should be obliged to give a relation, in writing, to our ministry, of every thing that passed, during my residence in China, in regard to my negociations ; and, having answered him yes, he said to me, that, in this case, I would do well not to insert a number of trifling things, which could answer no good end, but might embroil matters more ; for that it was much better that a good understanding between the two empires should continue, than that differences between them should be widened. I replied thereupon, that, not having been sent to the court of Pekin as an instrument for creating misunderstandings, I would make it my business, in my relation, not to touch upon any things but such as it was necessary for our court to be informed of. After which we both rose up, and having mutually embraced, we took leave of each other, reciprocally wishing to meet again soon.

The 12th, the commissary having left Pekin, with all the rest of the caravan, I likewise departed for Jegcholl, where I arrived on the 15th ; and having forthwith made known my arrival to the chamberlain of the Chan, he let me know he would instantly inform his Majesty ; and, till he should receive his orders for appointing the day of my audience, the intendant of his Majesty's kitchen would take care that my table should be furnished with every thing I might have occasion for.

Journal of the residence of Mr de Lange at the court of Pekin

The 17th, I had my audience of leave of the Bogdoi-Chan, with the ceremonies usual at this court.

The 18th, I left Jegcholl, and met the caravan the 24th ; which being still within the Great Wall, I passed it, the 26th, with the caravan, which I left, on the 28th, near Krasnagora in the deserts. And, on the 26th of August, 1722, I arrived at Selinginsky, after having resided near 17 months at the court of China.

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