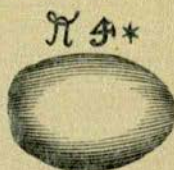
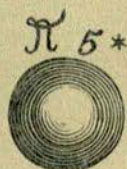
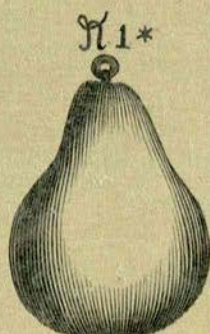
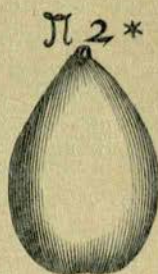
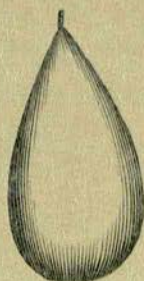
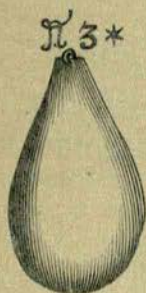


PLATE V.

PEARLS.



No. 4 is the figure of a large pearl perfect both as regards its water and its form which is like that of an olive. It is in the middle of a chain of emeralds and rubies that the GREAT MOGUL sometimes wears round his neck, and it hangs down to his waist.

No. 5. As a round pearl of perfect form, this is the largest I know of, and it belongs to the GREAT MOGUL. Its equal has never been found, for which reason the GREAT MOGUL has not worn it, but has left it with other jewels which are unmounted. For if a match for it had been found, the pair might have been used as ear pendants, and each of the two pearls would have been placed between two rubies or two emeralds, in conformity with the custom of the country, there being no one, whether small or great, who, in proportion to his means, does not carry in each ear a pearl set between two coloured stones.



CHAPTER XXIII

*Concerning Coral and Yellow Amber and the places
where they are found.*

ALTHOUGH coral does not rank among precious stones in EUROPE, it is nevertheless held in high esteem in the other quarters of the globe, and it is one of the most beautiful of nature's productions, so that there are some nations who prefer it to precious stones. I shall set down here, in a few words what I have been able to ascertain about the places where it is fished for, and of the manner in which it is obtained.

I shall say in the first place that there are three fisheries on the coast of SARDINIA. That obtained at ARGUERREL¹ is the best and the most beautiful of all, the second locality is called BOZA,² and the third is close to the island of ST. PIERRE.³ There is another fishery on the coasts of the island of CORSE,⁴ and the coral found there is slender but beautiful in colour. It is found at two other places on the coast of AFRICA—one near the BASTION DE FRANCE,⁵ and the other at

¹ *Arguerrel* not identified.

² *Boza*, on the west coast of Sardinia, about 5 miles from Cagliari.

³ *St. Pierre* is probably some small islet not on ordinary maps.

⁴ Corsica.

⁵ The *Bastion de France* was one of the forts belonging to France on the coast of Algiers before the nineteenth century. It was near La Callé, which in 1594 belonged to France, and was the centre of a coral fishery. It is now destroyed.

TABARQUE¹; the coral from this locality is fairly thick and long, but the colours are pale. There is a seventh fishery on the coast of SICILY, near TRAPANO²; the coral there is slender, but of good colour. There is still another locality on the coast of CATALOGNE, towards CAPE DE QUIERS³; the coral there is of excellent colour and thick, but the branches are very short. There is, moreover, a ninth fishery in the island of MAJORQUE,⁴ of the same nature as that of the island of CORSE; and these are all the places in the MEDITERRANEAN where there are coral fisheries,⁵ for there are none in the Ocean.⁶ The following is the method of fishing for it.

As coral grows under hollowed rocks where the sea is deep, the following device is used in order to obtain it. The fishers bind two rafters together in the form of a cross, and place a large lump of lead in the centre to make them sink to the bottom. They then bind tufts of hemp about the rafters, and twist them irregularly to the size of the thumb, and attach the wood by two

¹ Tabarka, a rocky islet on north coast of Tunis, near La Callé.

² Trepani, the Drepanum of the ancients, 18 miles north of Marsala.

³ Catalonia, in Spain. *Cape de Quiers* has not been identified.

⁴ Majorca. The fact of there being so much variation in the characters of the coral from these different localities should be of some interest to naturalists.

⁵ "The most important fisheries extend along the coasts of Tunis, Algeria, and Morocco, but red coral is also obtained in the vicinity of Naples, near Leghorn and Genoa, and on the coasts of Sardinia, Corsica, Catalonia, and Provence. It is said that it attains greater perfection in the East than in the South, and that it is rarely found in a western, and never in a northern aspect." (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Art. "Coral.")

⁶ This is now known to be not correct, since "red or precious coral occurs at San Jago and also at St. Vincent. . . . It occurs in about 100 or 120 fathoms, and is dragged for with swabs as in the Mediterranean." (Prof. Moseley, *Notes of a Naturalist on the Challenger*, p. 65.)



ropes, one of which hangs from the bow and the others from the stern of the boat. They then allow the wood to drift with the current across the rocks, and the hemp becoming entangled about the coral, it sometimes requires five or six boats to hoist the rafters ; and when exerting the great strain necessary, if one of the cables breaks all the rowers are in danger of perishing ; it is a very dangerous trade. When dragging up the coral thus, by force, for as much as is drawn out an equal quantity falls back into the sea, and the bottom being generally very muddy, the coral is injured from day to day, as our fruits on the earth are, by worms, so that the sooner it is extracted from the mud the less is it deteriorated. In reference to this I may say that I have seen, at MARSEILLES, something wonderful in a shop where coral was worked. There was a piece as big as the thumb, and as it was somewhat glassy it was cut in two, and a worm was found inside, which I saw wriggle, it had been kept alive for some months by shutting it up in its hole. For it should be remarked that among some branches of coral there grows a sort of sponge similar to our honeycombs, where small worms ensconce themselves like bees—in such ways does nature delight to diversify her works. Some persons believe that coral is soft in the sea, but, as a matter of fact, it is hard. It is, however, true that in certain months of the year one can express from the ends of the branches a kind of milk as from the breast of a woman.¹ This may be the seed which, falling upon whatsoever it meets with in the sea, produces another branch of coral,—thus, for instance, it has been found on a human skull, upon the blade of a sword, and upon a grenade which had fallen

¹ This refers to the ova of the coral polypes.



into the sea, where it was interlaced in the branches of coral to the height of six inches; and I have had the grenade in my hands.

The coral fishery lasts from the commencement of April to the end of July, and generally 200 boats are engaged in it, some years more and some less. They are built beside the GENOA river, and are very light. They carry much sail in order to sail fast, there being no other part of the MEDITERRANEAN where boats carry so much, and there are no galleys able to outstrip them. There are seven men to each boat, with a boy to attend on them. The fishing is carried on at from 25 to 40 miles from the land, where it is believed there are rocks, the boats not advancing farther to sea for fear of pirates, from whom they escape, when they meet them, by swift sailing.

I have to make a remark here about coral in reference to certain nations of the East. The Japanese, as I have said, neither esteem pearls nor precious stones, but they value beautiful beads of coral, which serves to close their bags; these bags are made, as they were formerly, in FRANCE. It is for this purpose that they use the largest beads of coral, to run on a silken cord which closes the bag, so that in order that they may be able to possess one of the size of an egg, beautiful and clean, without any spot upon it, they will pay whatever you ask. The Portuguese, who formerly did a large trade in Japan, have often assured me that they could obtain for one as much as 20,000 *écus*.¹ It is much to be wondered that the Japanese give so much money for a fine piece of coral, since they have a contempt for jewels, caring only for things which are

¹ £4500.



little thought of elsewhere. They attach great value to the skin of a particular fish, which is rougher than shagreen; this fish has on the back, as it were, six small bones, and sometimes eight, which are elevated and form a circle, with another in the middle, resembling a rose of diamonds.¹ They make sword scabbards of these fish-skins, and the more symmetrically these small bones form the rose and are arranged, the more money is given for them—sometimes up to 10,000 *écus*,² as the Dutch have assured me. To return to coral and to finish the discourse about it, it should be added that the common people wear it and use it as an ornament for the neck and arms throughout ASIA, but principally towards the north in the territories of the GREAT MOGUL, and beyond them, in the mountains, of the Kingdoms of ASSAM and BHUTÁN.³

Yellow amber is not found except on a particular coast of DUCAL PRUSSIA, in the BALTIC SEA,⁴ where the sea during certain winds throws it from time to time on the sand. The Elector of BRANDENBURG, who

¹ This appears to have been the skin of some kind of shark or ray. I have seen, but cannot now refer to figures of it in some of the old Dutch and Portuguese travels. A common kind of it is still to be seen on the handles of the Japanese swords, of which such large numbers have been recently imported. In his chapter on the *Conduite des Hollandois en Asie*, published in the *Recueil*, 1679 Ed., p. 17, Tavernier gives a further account of it. He says a perfect skin was worth up to 10,000 *écus*, an ordinary one being obtainable for 1 *écu*. The fish, he adds, occurred in the Persian Gulf.

² The French editions of 1679 and 1713 have 1000 *écus*.

³ The reason for the preference shown for coral is probably to be attributed to the way its tints adapt themselves to set off a dark skin, and also look well with a white garment.

⁴ The source of amber in Upper Burmah in the Hukung valley was not known to Tavernier. (See *Economic Geology of India*, p. 57, for a description of the mines there.)

is the proprietor of it, farms out all this coast for from 18,000 to 20,000 *écus* a year, and sometimes up to 22,000 *écus*; and the farmers employ watchmen, who traverse the length of the shore, the sea throwing the amber sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other, so that no one can steal it; and whoever ventures to do so receives corporal chastisement.

Amber is nothing more than a congelation of a species of gum which forms in the sea. This experience sufficiently proves, because numerous pieces are to be seen which contain flies and other insects congealed in them.¹ I have had many such pieces, and one, among others, which had four or five small flies inside it.

As I have made a remark about coral in reference to JAPAN, I shall make another about amber in reference to CHINA. It is a custom among the Chinese that when any great noble gives a feast, his reputation for grandeur and magnificence depends upon his having brought in, at the close of the repast, three or four perfume-pans and his having thrown into each of them a large quantity of amber, sometimes to the value of 1000 *écus* and upwards, in consideration of the fact that the more he burns, and the larger the pieces, the more magnificent is the entertainment regarded, for a piece weighing one *livre* is worth 200 to 300 *écus*.² They use amber for this purpose because they adore fire, and because amber, thrown in the fire, yields a certain odour which is not displeasing to the Chinese; as it contains a kind of oil it gives out a flame exceeding

¹ Tavernier had therefore an approximately correct idea as to the true nature and origin of amber as a fossilised vegetable production.

² *I.e.* £45 to £67 : 10s. per *livre*.



most other flames. This profusion and waste explain the reason why amber is one of the best articles of merchandise that one could carry to CHINA if trade had been open to foreigners, but the Dutch Company strictly reserve to themselves the trade in it—the Chinese coming to buy it from them at BATAVIA.

I am unwilling to finish this chapter without making some remarks on ambergris also. We do not very well know either how it is formed or where it is found; but it would appear as though it can only be in the seas of the East, although it has sometimes been found on the English and other European coasts.¹ The largest quantity of it is found on the coast of MELINDA, principally towards the mouths of the rivers, and especially at the mouth of that which is called RIO DI SENA.² When the Governor of MOZAMBIQUE returns

¹ Ambergris, as is now well known, consists of the *feces* of the Cachelot or Sperm whale, *Physeter macrocephalus*, which inhabits the Indian Ocean. Garcia de Orta in his chapter on ambergris speaks of ambergris containing beaks of birds. These were no doubt the beaks of the cuttlefish upon which these whales feed. A form of this story is told by Barbosa ("The East African Malabar Coasts," in *Hak. Soc.*, 1866), who says ambergris is the guano of birds which has been swallowed and voided by whales. Chardin (vol. iv, p. 47) doubts the connection with birds, but mentions a number of alternative myths as to its origin. Ainslie (*Materia Medica*, vol. i, pp. 15-17) gives an interesting account of it, and refers to a vegetable ambergris yielded by a tree in Guiana. He says, like many other authors, that the best ambergris was obtained on the coast of Madagascar. In the *Daily Press* there recently appeared a paragraph headed "An Ambergris King," in which one William A. Atkins, the owner of a fleet of Cape Cod whalers, is described as having the monopoly of the ambergris trade of America—the ambergris being for equal weights worth more than gold. Owing to ambergris being called *ambra* by some nations, very erroneous statements occur in many authorities as to the distribution in the East of true amber, for which it has been mistaken. (See *Economic Geology of India*.)

² See p. 157.



to GOA at the close of three years, when the term of his government is ended, he generally brings with him about 300,000 *pardos* worth of ambergris, and the *pardo*, as I have elsewhere said, amounts to 27 *sols* of our money.¹ Sometimes pieces of ambergris of considerable size and weight are found. In the year 1627 a Portuguese vessel sailing from GOA to the MANILLAS, after it had passed the Straits of MALACCA was overtaken by a tempest which lasted many days and nights, the sky being always concealed, and it being impossible for the pilot to take observations. Meanwhile the rice and other articles of food began to be exhausted, and the crew began to discuss whether they should not throw the blacks who were in the vessel into the sea in order to preserve the food for the white men. They were about to carry this into execution, when one morning the sun showing itself, disclosed to them an island to which they were tolerably near, but were, however, unable to anchor till the following day, the sea being high and the wind unfavourable. There were in the vessel a Frenchman, named MARIN RENAUD, of ORLEANS, and his brother, who on going on shore found a river and went to bathe at its mouth, together with two Portuguese corporals and a sergeant. One of the corporals when bathing perceived in the water a large mass which floated near the shore, and which he concluded, on going near it, was a sort of spongy stone, and left it without another thought, as did the four others, who also went to look at it and handled it without being able to make out what it was. Having returned to the vessel this same corporal reflected during the night as to what this object, of

¹ 27 *sols* = 2s. 03d., or say 2s. 300,000 *pardos* therefore = £30,000.

which he had been unable to ascertain the nature, could be, and having heard ambergris spoken of, began to think that it might be it, in which he was not mistaken. The following day, without saying anything to his comrades, he took a sack and got himself put on shore, and going to the river as though he wished to bathe again, found the piece of ambergris and carried it secretly to the vessel, where he placed it in his box. He was unable to restrain himself from communicating the fact the same evening to MARIN RENAUD, who was unwilling to believe at first that it was really ambergris, but having well considered it thought at length that the corporal was right. He, taking all chances, offered the piece to MARIN for two *pains* of Chinese gold, and the golden *pain* is equal to 600 *livres*¹ of our money; but MARIN was only willing to give one; the other held out on his side and kept the piece in his box. A few days afterwards, either spite at not being able to get the piece of ambergris for what he had offered caused MARIN to speak, or the matter was discovered by some other way, the report, however, was spread throughout the vessel that the corporal had a considerable piece of ambergris in his box, which he had found by chance on the shore of this island near to which the Portuguese were at anchor, and the sailors and soldiers then insisted on having their share. MARIN RENAUD out of petty revenge set the ball a-rolling and taught them their lesson. They told the corporal that being all comrades, and all running the same risks, it was just that they

¹ Literally "loaves." The English name for the ingots of gold used in currency by the Chinese was "shoes"; the equivalent value here would be £45. See vol. i, Appendix.

should all share the benefits which fortune offered them in common ; and, moreover, that he was not the only one to whom she had disclosed this piece of ambergris, which should consequently be divided between all the crew. The corporal defended himself on his side as well as he could, and as there were some who took his part, in the hope of having a better share of the piece if there were few pretenders to it, the dispute became so hot that at length it gave rise to a disturbance, which the captain of the vessel immediately sought to allay by his prudence. He represented to the sailors and soldiers that this large piece of ambergris, which, on his weighing it in their presence, proved to be 33 *livres* in weight, being a rare piece and worthy of being presented to the King, it was a pity to break it into so many small pieces ; that they would find it pay them better to keep it till their return to GOA, where, on presenting it to the Viceroy, he would not fail to pay well for it, and by this means they would each receive much more. This suggestion of the captain's was generally approved. They pursued their route to the MANILLAS, and on their return the piece of ambergris was taken to the Viceroy. The captain told him beforehand how the matter stood, and they concerted together as to the means whereby they could secure the ambergris without it costing the Viceroy anything. Those who presented it to him on the part of the sailors and soldiers were thanked for it, and the Viceroy told them that he recognised their goodwill by so splendid a present which he would send to the King, who at that time was PHILIPPE THE FOURTH, to whom PORTUGAL was still subject. Thus all the pretenders to the piece of ambergris were defrauded of their



expectations, and neither from the Viceroy nor the King himself, to whom the ambergris was sent, did they receive any gift.

I shall say one other word concerning a piece of ambergris weighing 42 *livres*. In the year 1646 or 1647 a ZEALANDER, of one of the best families of MIDDLEBOURG, who commanded for the Dutch Company in the Island of MAURICE, which is to the east of that of ST. LAURENS,¹ found this piece on the shore and sent it to the Company. As these people always have enemies, and there being a mark on the piece as if some one had broken a portion off, the Commander was accused of having stolen half, of which charge he cleared himself at BATAVIA. But the suspicion having always dwelt in the minds of many persons, and the Commander seeing that they would not give him another appointment, returned to ZEALAND on the same vessel upon which I then was.

¹ Mauritius and Madagascar, the latter having been known to the Portuguese as St. Lorenzo. Some say the Portuguese landed there first on the festival of the Saint, others that it was discovered by Lorenzo de Almeida in 1506. (*Varthema in Hak. Soc.*, p. 296.)



CHAPTER XXIV

Concerning Musk and Bezoar and some other medicinal stones.

Musk and bezoar being included among the rarest articles of trade, and the most precious which ASIA furnishes us with, I have considered it appropriate to devote a chapter to them, and present the reader with some remarks about these two articles.

The best kind and the greatest quantity of musk comes from the Kingdom of BHUTÁN, from whence it is conveyed to PATNA, the principal town of BENGAL, to be sold to the people of that country. All the musk which is sold in PERSIA comes from thence, and the merchants who sell musk prefer that you give them in exchange yellow amber and coral, rather than gold and silver, because they make great profits out of these two commodities. I had the curiosity to take a skin of this animal, which is here represented, to PARIS.¹

After this animal has been killed, the bladder, which is situated under the belly, is cut off—it is of the size of an egg, and is closer to the genital parts than to the navel. The musk is then extracted from the bladder which contains it—it is then like coagu-

¹ The figure in the original, which it is needless to reproduce here, is a tolerable representation of the musk deer, *Moschus moschiferus* (Linn.)



lated blood. When the peasants wish to adulterate it, they insert some of the liver and the blood of the slaughtered animal mixed together, instead of the musk which they have withdrawn. This mixture generates in the bladders certain small worms which eat the good musk, so that when one opens them he finds that much has gone bad. Other peasants, when they have cut the bladder and have drawn as much musk as they can without its appearing to be too much, put in its place small pieces of lead to make it heavier. The merchants who buy it and transport it into foreign countries prefer this fraud to the other, because it does not generate these little worms. But the fraud is still more difficult to be discovered when they make small purses of the skin of the animal's stomach, which they sew up with threads of the same skin, so as to resemble the true bladders; these purses are filled with what has been removed from the good bladders, together with the fraudulent mixture which is added to it, so that it is difficult for the merchants to discover anything.¹ It is true that if they bind the bladder directly they cut it, without letting the air get to it, and without giving time to the odour to lose some of its strength by evaporation (while they take out what they want to remove), if this bladder should be held to the nose of any one, blood would immediately issue from it in consequence of the

¹ A still more remarkable method of adulteration is that mentioned by Barbosa, which consists, in short, of putting leeches on the living animal, after the musk has been removed, and then allowing them to gorge themselves with the blood, after which they are dried in the sun and pounded, and the substance so prepared is placed in counterfeit pods made of the skin of the animal. (See *The East African and Malabar Coasts*, Hakluyt Society, p. 187.)

pungency of the odour, which for this reason must be tempered to render it agreeable and prevent it from injuring the brain. The odour from the skin of this animal, which I took to PARIS, was so strong that it was impossible to keep the skin in my rooms, as it caused headache to all the people in the house, and it was necessary to put it in a garret, where at length my servants cut off the bladder—this did not prevent its always retaining something of the odour. You do not begin to meet with this animal till about the 56° of latitude; but at 60° it is in great abundance, the country there being well wooded. It is true that in the months of February and March, after these animals have suffered from famine in their own country on account of the snow, which falls in abundance to depths of 10 or 12 feet, they come south to 44° and 45° , to eat the corn and new rice, and it is at this time that the peasants entrap them, in snares which they set, and kill them with arrows and blows of sticks. Some persons have told me that the deer are so thin and feeble in consequence of the hunger from which they have suffered, that many allow themselves to be captured by coursing. There must be an enormous number of these animals, as each has but one bladder, the largest of which is ordinarily of the size of a hen's egg, and only yields half an ounce of musk. It sometimes requires even three or four of these bladders to make an ounce.¹

¹ "The musk deer is found throughout the Himalayas, always at great elevations, and in summer rarely below 8000 feet, and as high as the limits of forest. It extends through the Himalayas to Central and Northern Asia as far as Siberia. A good musk pod is valued at from 10 to 15 rupees. One ounce is about the average produce of the pod." (Jerdon, *Mammals of India*, p. 268.) Adulteration, as it is described by Tavernier, appears to be still practised.



The King of BHUTÁN, of whom I shall speak in the following Book, in the description which I shall give of his Kingdom, fearing that the fraud done in musk might stop the trade, especially as musk is also obtained in TONQUIN or COCHIN-CHINA, but is much dearer because it is not so abundant there—this King, I say, fearing lest this falsification of goods would divert the trade from his territories, some time ago ordered that the bladders should not be stitched, but should be brought open to BHUTÁN, which is the place of his residence, to be examined and sealed with his seal. Those which I bought were of this kind; but notwithstanding all the King's precautions, the peasants open them secretly, and place small pieces of lead in them, as I have said; this the merchants tolerate, because the lead does not spoil the musk, and causes no injury, save in the weight. On one of my journeys to PATNA I bought 7673 bladders, which weighed $2557\frac{1}{2}$ ounces, and 452 ounces without the bladders.¹

*Bezoar*² comes from a Province of the Kingdom of GOLCONDA, towards the north-east. It is found in the

¹ From this, with similar statements about other commodities, we see that Tavernier did not limit his mercantile transactions to precious stones. In Book III, chap. xv, he again refers to this purchase (?), and says he bought 26,000 rupees worth—a Fr. ounce in the capsule costing 4 *livres* and 4 *sols*, i.e. about 6s. 3d., and out of the capsule 8 *francs*, or say 6s. 8d., or if *livres* are intended, 12s. But at these prices the quantity here mentioned falls far short of making the total sum of 26,000 rupees. This, supposing the occasions to be identical, as appears to be the case, is a characteristic Tavernier discrepancy.

² Bezoar is from *padzar*, Persian, the name given to intestinal calculi. It was formerly so highly esteemed in the East as a drug that the early European travellers all seemed to believe in its efficacy, and accounts of it are to be found in the writings by many of them. (See note 1, on p. 151.)

fodder in the paunches of goats which brouse on a tree, the name of which I have forgotten. This plant bears little buds, about which, and also on the tips of the branches, which the goats eat, the *bezoar* concretes in the bellies of these animals. It assumes a form according to the shape of the buds and the ends of the branches, and this is why one finds it in so many different shapes. The peasants, by feeling the belly of the goat, know how many *bezoars* it contains, and they sell the goat for a price in proportion to the number which are therein. In order to ascertain this, they run both hands under the belly of the goat and beat the paunch along both sides, so that all the stones fall to the middle thereof, and they then estimate exactly, by touch, how many *bezoars* are in it. The value of *bezoar* depends on the size, although the small possess no less virtue than the large. But in this respect one is often deceived by the fact that there are people who enlarge the *bezoar* with a kind of paste made of gum and other materials of the same colour as the *bezoar*. They understand, even, how to give as many coats as the natural *bezoar* ought to have. One can detect this fraud easily by two methods. The first by weighing the *bezoar* and placing it to steep for some time in lukewarm water; if the water does not change its colour, and if the *bezoar* does not lose weight, it has not been adulterated. The other means is to touch the *bezoar* with a pointed hot iron; if the iron enters it and makes it fry, it is a sign that it is a mixture, and that it is not genuine. For the rest, the larger the *bezoar* the higher the price, which rises in proportion like that of the diamond. For if 5 or 6 *bezoars* weigh an ounce, the ounce will be worth from 15 to 18



francs, but if it is a *bezoar* of one ounce, the ounce will be worth fully 100 *francs*. I have sold one of 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ ounces for as much as 2000 *livres*.¹

I had the curiosity to investigate all that can be ascertained regarding *bezoar*, having already made several visits to GOLCONDA, which is the place where there is the most considerable sale of it, without being able to ascertain in what part of the body of the goat it is found. On my fifth journey some individuals who were in the services of the English and Dutch Companies, and who dared not trade on their own account, were indebted to me because I purchased about 60,000 rupees worth of *bezoar* for them. The merchants who sold it, wishing to show their acknowledgment, and to make me some present, I refused, and told them I had never taken anything from any one for a service which I was able to render. But I let them know that I would again be able to serve them in the approaching *monsoon*, and that they would oblige me also, on their part, if they would get three or four of these goats which produce the *bezoar* for me, promising to pay them for them whatsoever they were worth. The merchants appeared much surprised at this demand, and replied that the prohibition was so strict that if any one was found who dared to remove the goats out of the Province he would be executed without fail. I saw plainly that this request troubled them, for on the one side they feared punishment and on the other they were afraid lest I might prevent them from making another sale; this would have been a great loss to these poor people, who, whether they do or do not sell, are obliged to pay the King, for the farm, 6000 old *pagodas*, which

¹ £150.

amount to 45,000 *livres* of our money.¹ Fifteen days afterwards or thereabouts, not having thought anything further about them, three of them knocked at my door before daylight. As soon as they had entered my chamber, where I was still in bed, they asked me if all my servants were foreigners. As I had none from the town, and they were all either Persians or from SURAT, I told them they were all foreigners, upon which they withdrew without replying to me. Half an hour afterwards they returned with six of these goats, which I examined at my leisure. It should be said that they are beautiful animals, very tall, and having fine hair, like silk. As soon as the goats were safely in my hall, the eldest of the three merchants who had brought them, beginning to speak by paying me a compliment, told me that since I had not been willing to take the present which they wished to make me, for having procured the sale of so large a parcel of *bezoar*, at the least I would not refuse these six goats which they gave me with their whole hearts; but as I did not wish to take them entirely as a gift, as they desired, I asked what the value of them was; and, after having made great difficulty about telling me, I was at length much surprised and thought they were joking when they said that one of the goats which they pointed out was worth three rupees, that each of the two next were worth four rupees, and each of the three which remained four and a quarter rupees. Upon which I asked them why some of the goats were dearer than

¹ There may be some mistake here, as 6000 old *pagodas* are only equal to 45,000 *livres* when the *pagoda* is taken at 5 rupees, whereas Tavernier in general gives the old *pagoda* the value of only $4\frac{1}{2}$ rupees, 45,000 *livres* = £3375.



others, and I learnt that it was because one had only one *bezoar* in the stomach, and the others had two or three or four of them; this they made me see for myself, forthwith, by tapping the belly, as I have above described. These six goats had 17 *bezoars*, and a half one, like the half of a nut. The inside was like the soft dropping of a goat, as these *bezoars* grow amongst the food in the belly of the goat. Some have told me that *bezoars* originate close to the liver, others maintain that it is close to the heart, but I was never able to ascertain the truth.¹

Both in the East and West there are an abundance of *bezoars* obtained from cows, and there are some which weigh up to 17 or 18 ounces, such an one having been given to the Grand Duke of TUSCANY. But nothing is thought of this kind of *bezoar*, six grains of the other having a greater effect than thirty of it.

As for the *bezoar* obtained from monkeys, as some believe, it is so strong that two grains of it do as much as six from that of the goat; but it is very rare, and it is found particularly in the species of monkeys which live in the Island of MACASSAR. This kind of *bezoar* is round, while the other is of diverse forms, according to the forms of the buds and ends of branches which the goats have eaten. As these stones, which it is believed come from monkeys, are much rarer than the others, they are also much dearer and much more sought after; and when one is found of the size of a nut it is valued at more than 100 *écus*. The Portuguese, more than

¹ That Tavernier was not well versed in anatomy is sufficiently apparent from this passage, but at the period at which he wrote it, more than two centuries ago, such references to the heart and liver, and their communication with the stomach, would probably have passed without criticism.

other nations, attach great value to *bezoar*, because they are always on their guard, one against the other, fearing that an enemy may wish to poison them.¹

There is still another much esteemed stone which is called the porcupine stone, which this animal has in its head, and is more efficacious against poison than *bezoar*. When one has placed it to steep in water for a quarter of an hour, the water becomes so bitter that there is nothing in the world to equal it in bitterness.² This animal has also sometimes, in its belly, a stone which is of the same nature and equally good as that which comes from the head, except with this difference, that it loses nothing of its weight or size by steeping in water, while there is diminution of the other. During my life I have bought three of these stones. One cost me 500 *écus*, and I disposed of it subsequently with advantage to the Ambassador DOMINICO DE SANTIS,³ of whom I have spoken in my accounts of PERSIA. I paid 400 *écus* for another, which I still keep; and the

¹ Garcia de Orta, who devotes a chapter to *bezoar*, highly extols its merits as a medicine in cases of ague, measles, as an antidote to poison, and in the treatment of abscesses; he mentions that it was supposed, moreover, to possess aphrodisiac properties. It is not now believed to have any therapeutic value—to be, in fact, neutral.

² It seems probable that the substance supposed to be obtained in the head of the porcupine was a vegetable drug, to which that mythical origin was ascribed. Castanheda mentions a stone obtained in the head of an animal called *bulgoldorf*, which was exceedingly rare, and was said to be an antidote against all kinds of poison (*Kerr's Voyages and Travels*, vol. ii, p. 439). To test a *bezoar*, according to Fryer—(1) rub it on chalk, if it leave an olive colour it is good; (2) touch them with a hot iron, "and if they fry like wax they are naught;" (3) put them in water, if small white bubbles rise they are good, if not they are doubtful. (*Account*, Calcutta Edition, p. 469.)

³ See *Persian Travels*, Book II, chap. v, p. 181. He was an ambassador from the Venetian Republic.



third was sold to me for 300 *écus*, and I made a present of it to a friend.

I shall finally make mention of the snake-stone, which is nearly of the size of a *double*,¹ some of them tending to an oval shape, being thick in the middle and becoming thin towards the edges. The Indians say that it grows on the heads of certain snakes, but I should rather believe that it is the priests of the idolaters who make them think so, and that this stone is a composition which is made of certain drugs.² Whatever it may be, it has an excellent virtue in extracting all the poison when one has been bitten by a poisonous animal. If the part bitten is not punctured it is necessary to make an incision so that the blood may flow; and when the stone has been applied to it, it does not fall off till it has extracted all the venom which is drawn to it. In order to clean it it is steeped in woman's milk, or, in default of it, in that of a cow; and after having been steeped for ten or twelve hours, the milk, which has absorbed all the venom, assumes the colour of matter. One day, when I dined with the Archbishop of GOA, he took me into his museum, where he had many curiosities. Among other things he showed me one of these stones, and in telling me of its properties assured me that it was but three days since he had made trial of it, after which he presented it to me. As

¹ *Doubloon*? A Spanish gold coin.

² Thevenot says that they were made of the ashes of the root of a certain plant, mixed with a particular kind of clay (*Voyage*, p. 94). Some snake-stones appear to have been made of charred bone. (See for an exhaustive account of this subject Yule-Burnell, *Anglo-Indian Glossary*.) The belief in their efficacy is still very general in India; by some they are supposed to be found in the head of the adjutant bird (see *Jungle Life in India*, p. 82).



he traversed a marsh on the island of SALSETTE, upon which GOA is situated, on his way to a house in the country, one of his *pallankeen* bearers, who was almost naked, was bitten by a serpent and was at once cured by this stone. I have bought many of them; it is only the *Brahmins* who sell them, and it is that which makes me think that they make them. You employ two methods to ascertain if the snake-stone is good, and that there is no fraud. The first is by placing the stone in the mouth, for then, if good, it leaps and attaches itself immediately to the palate. The other is to place it in a glass full of water, and immediately, if it is genuine, the water begins to boil, small bubbles ascending from the stone, which is at the bottom, to the top of the water.

There is still another stone which is called "stone of the hooded snake."¹ It is a kind of snake which has, as it were, a hood which hangs behind the head, and it is behind this hood that the stone is found, the smallest being of the size of a hen's egg. There are snakes in AFRICA and in ASIA of an enormous size,² and up to 25 feet in length, as was that one whose skin is preserved at BATAVIA. This snake had swallowed a girl of eighteen years, of which fact I have elsewhere given an account.³ You only find these stones in snakes which are, at the least, two feet in length. The stone, which is not hard, when rubbed against another stone yields a kind of slime which, when dissolved in water and drunk by a person who

¹ Cobra di capello—*Naja tripudians*. The figure referred to is a spirited one of a cobra, but is not reproduced here.

² Pythons.

³ I have not met this account to which the author refers, and don't know where he has related it.



has some poison in his body, has the property of driving it out at once. These snakes are only to be found on the coasts of MELINDA, and you can obtain the stones from Portuguese sailors and soldiers on their return from MOZAMBIQUE.



CHAPTER XXV

*Concerning the places from whence gold is obtained in
ASIA and AFRICA.*

JAPAN consists of many islands to the east of CHINA trending northwards, some even believing that NIPHON, which is the largest of them, is, as it were, in contact with the mainland; it is the region of all ASIA which furnishes the greatest quantity of gold, but it is thought that the principal part of it comes from the island of FORMOSA, from whence it is carried to JAPAN. Since the Dutch have held FORMOSA they have been unable to develop the trade of the particular locality where they believe the gold to occur.¹

Gold also comes from CHINA, and the Chinese exchange it for the silver taken to them, for, price for price, they prefer silver to gold, because they have no mines of silver. This gold is of one of the lowest standards of any found in ASIA.

¹ The occurrence of gold in China, Japan, and Formosa is not a subject that can be treated of exhaustively in these notes. That mines occur in China and Japan is well known, but I have not been able to find conclusive evidence with reference to Formosa. Ainslie (*Materia Medica*, vol. i, p. 516) quotes the *Asiatic Journal* for December 1824 in support of the statement that the island abounds in gold. From a cursory examination of Mr. Locke's great work on gold, it seems to contain no reference to Formosa.

The island of CELEBES or MACASSAR¹ also produces gold, which is obtained from the rivers, where it occurs mingled with the sand.

In the island of ACHIN or SUMATRA,² after the rainy season, and when the waters in the streams have subsided, veins of gold are found in the pebbles of different sizes which the rains have carried down from the mountains facing the north-east. On the west coast of the same island, where the Dutch go to ship pepper, the peasants bring an abundance of gold, but it is of very low standard, even inferior to the gold of CHINA.

Towards THIBET, which is identical with the CAUCASUS of the Ancients, in the territories of a *Raja* beyond the Kingdom of KASHMIR, there are three mountains close to one another, one of which produces gold of excellent quality, another *grenat*, and another *lapis*.³

¹ Gold occurs in the rivers of the northern and south-western peninsulas of Celebes. (Crawfurd, *Dictionary*.)

² According to Crawfurd a small gold coin called *mas* (worth 1s. 2d.) from the Malay name of the metal, has been coined at Achin. Gold dust, however, was the common medium of exchange. The Achinese have learnt the use of the touchstone from Telugu settlers. The gold filigree work of the Malays of Sumatra is very beautiful. A total of £1,000,000 worth of gold was considered by Crawfurd to cover the annual yield of all the Malayan islands in 1856.

³ This indication as to the three mountains is somewhat vague. In all probability the *grenat* mine may be identified with the ruby, or rather spinelle mine, which is situated on the banks of the Shignán, a tributary of the Oxus in Badakshán. As pointed out in vol. i, p. 382 *n*, the name *balas* was derived from this locality. The *lapis* mine is near Firgámu, also in Badakshán, Lat. 36° 10' Long. 71°. The Thibet gold mines, famous since the days of Herodotus, are somewhat numerous. Each of these localities will be found described in the *Economic Geology of India*, pp. 213, 430, 529, where, also, an explanation of the myth of the gold-digging ants is suggested.

Finally, gold comes from the kingdom of TIPPERAH,¹ of which I shall give a description in the following Book, but this gold is of bad quality, being of about the same standard as the gold of CHINA.

These are all the places in ASIA² from whence gold comes, and I shall now say something of the gold of AFRICA, and of the region where it is obtained in greatest abundance.³

It should be remarked, under this head, that the governor of MOZAMBIQUE has subject to him the commanders of SOFALA⁴ and of SHUPANGA.⁵ The first of these two small governments is on the river SENA 60 leagues from its mouth, and the other is 10 leagues higher up. From the mouth of the river up to these places on both sides there are many settlements of negroes, each of which is commanded by a Portuguese. These Portuguese have for a long time been masters

¹ Tipra in the original. I do not know of any evidence for the occurrence of gold in Tipperah; possibly what was brought from thence in Tavernier's time was received from Assam, China, or Burmah, in exchange for other commodities. Our Author devotes chap. xvi of Book III to a description of the Kingdom, which see.

² It is strange that Tavernier should have been unaware of the occurrence of gold in any part of the Indian Peninsula, there being so many localities where it is obtained, some of which were most probably worked in his time. (*Vide* for distribution of gold *Economic Geology of India*, chap. "Gold.")

³ Of the existence of gold in Eastern Africa there is abundant evidence. Of that which reaches the coast, however, a large proportion probably comes from far off in the interior.

⁴ The position ascribed to Sofala is incorrect, as it was not on the river named, but some two degrees, or say 70 leagues, to the south of the Delta of the Zambesi, on which the town of Sena is situated. A very interesting collection of notices referring to Sofala and its gold is given in Yule-Burnell's *Anglo-Indian Glossary*.

⁵ Chepongoura in the original. The modern Shupanga on the Zambesi is probably Tavernier's Chepongoura; it is between Sena and the coast.



of the country, and act like petty princes, making war against one another on the smallest pretext, there being some among them who have as many as 5000 Cafres, who are their slaves. The Governor of MOZAMBIQUE, to whom these petty princes are subject, furnishes them with cloth and other necessary goods, each of which he sells according to its market value. When the Governor of MOZAMBIQUE¹ leaves GOA to assume possession of his government, which is the best of those subject to the Viceroy, he takes with him a great quantity of goods, and especially calicoes dyed black. His correspondents at GOA also send him every year two vessels laden with the same goods, which he forwards to SOFALA and SHUPANGA, and up to the town of MONOMOTAPA,² capital of a Kingdom of the same name, otherwise called VOUBEBARAN—the town being about 150 leagues distant from SHUPANGA. The ruler of all this country takes the name of Emperor of MONOMOTAPA, and his authority extends up to the confines of PRESTE JAN.³ It is from these territories of MONOMOTAPA whence the purest and finest AFRICAN gold comes, and it is extracted without great difficulty by excavating in the ground to a depth of only 2 or 3 feet. In certain places in this country which are not inhabited, because there is no water there, gold is

¹ Castanheda says that the Moors took from India to Mozambique "silver, linen cloth, pepper, ginger, silver rings, many pearls and rubies, and from a country inland they procured gold. He also states that much gold was brought from the interior to Sofala. (See Kerr's *Voyages and Travels*, vol. ii, pp. 317 and 427.)

² Matabele? The name is spelt Monomopata and Monomotapa in the original.

³ I.e. Abyssinia. The name Prester John was given to the ruling monarch by the Portuguese. (See note by Rev. Percy Badger in *Varthema*, *Hakluyt Society*, p. 63.)



found on the surface of the ground in nuggets of all kinds of shapes and weights, and there are some of these nuggets which weigh an ounce. I have had, as curiosities, some pieces which I have presented to my friends, and some of them weighed as much as 2 ounces. I still have one weighing an ounce and a half or thereabouts. When at SURAT with M. D'ARDILIÈRE,¹ son of M. DU JARDIN, of whom I have made mention in my account of PERSIA, an Ambassador from the King of ABYSSINIA arrived, whom we went to salute. I presented him with a pair of pocket pistols decorated with silver, and having invited us to dine with him he showed us the presents which he was carrying to the GREAT MOGUL on behalf of the King, his master. They consisted of fourteen beautiful horses, which were all that remained out of thirty he had taken from his country, the others having died in the vessel

¹ The references to M. du Jardin and his son are very perplexing. In the *Persian Travels*, Book II, chap. vi, Tavernier says he started on his fourth journey from Paris with M. Ardilière, son of M. du Jardin. When landing at Masulipatam he refers to his companion as M. Louis du Jardin (Book I, chap. xvii). He again mentions him as being with him at Madras (Book I, chap. xviii), and in chap. xix he records his death in the year 1852. In Book III, chap. xiv, he speaks of being in M. d'Ardilière's company on the road from Golconda to Surat in the year 1653. From all of which it would seem to be the legitimate conclusion that both father and son travelled with him in India, as is suggested on pp. 336 and 690. However, it is due to M. Joret to say that he may be right in treating these notices as all referring to the same person, and consequently the date 1653 must be wrong, if he died in 1652. But it should be added that this present notice seems to contradict that view, as M. du Jardin died within a few days of their arrival at Surat. Fryer in 1671 mentions M. Jordan (? Jardin) as having, with M. Rezin, succeeded Tavernier in the trade of carrying diamonds to and from Europe. (See his *Account*, Calcutta Edition, p. 276.)



when crossing the sea from MOCHA to SURAT. Also a number of young slaves of both sexes; and finally, this being the most important and worthy to be admired, there was a tree of gold 2 feet 4 inches high, and about 5 or 6 inches round the stem.¹ It had ten or twelve branches, some of which were nearly half a foot long and an inch broad, others being smaller. In some parts of the large branches there was to be seen some roughness, which in a manner resembled buds. - The roots of this tree which had been thus naturally formed, were small and short, the longest not being more than 4 or 5 inches.

The people of this Kingdom of MONOMOTAPA, knowing the time that the calicoes and other goods arrive at SOFALA and SHUPANGA, come punctually to provide themselves with what they require. Numerous Cafres from other Kingdoms and Provinces also come, and the Governors of these two towns sell them calicoes and other things of which they have need, trusting for the payment which they undertake to make the following year by bringing gold, to the amount agreed upon, for if the Governor did not trust them thus there would be no trade between the Portuguese and the Cafres. It is almost the same with the Ethiopians who every year carry gold to CAIRO, of which I have spoken in my account of the *Seraglio* of the GRAND SEIGNEUR. These people of MONOMOTAPA do not live a long time on account of the bad water in their country. At the age of twenty-five years they begin to be dropsical, so that it is considered a marvel when they exceed forty years in age. The Province where the river SENA

¹ This description suggests a manufactured article, but it is possible that it was really, as Tavernier supposed, a natural arborescent nugget.

ises is called MOUKARAN,¹ and belongs to another King, commencing at 100 leagues or thereabouts above SHUPANGA. The people of this Province find much gold dust in several rivers which join the SENA; but this gold is inferior to the other kind, and it is also taken to SHUPANGA and SOFALA. The country is very healthy, and the inhabitants live as long as those of EUROPE. In certain years Cafres arrive there from much farther than the Province of MOUKARAN, and even from the neighbourhood of the CAPE OF GOOD HOPE. The Portuguese know of the country and its name, but have not induced the Cafres to reveal more than that their country, called SABIA,² is governed by a King, and that they generally spend four months on the road to SOFALA. The gold which they bring is excellent, and is in nuggets, like that of MONOMOTAPA; they say that they find it on high mountains, where they only have to excavate the ground for it to the depth of 10 or 12 feet. They also bring an abundance of elephants' tusks, and say that there are so many elephants in the country that they are to be seen in troops in the fields, and that all the palisades of the fortresses and parks are made of elephants' tusks; this I have also observed elsewhere.³ The ordinary food of these Cafres is the flesh of this animal, and four of them, with their assegais,⁴ which are a kind of short

¹ Moukaran—not identified.

² Perhaps some mistake here. There is a Sabia river marked on the map as coming next to Sofala on the south.

³ See vol. i, p. 277.

⁴ *Ageagayes* in the original, for Assegais, the well-known hurling spears used in Africa. The word is from the Berber *zagháya*, with the Arabic article prefixed. It occurs commonly in travellers' accounts of other countries besides those included in Africa. (See Yule-Burnell, *Anglo-Indian Glossary*, p. 28.)



pike, are able to bring an elephant to the ground and kill it. All the water in their country is very bad, which is the reason why they have swollen legs, and it is a marvel when any one is exempt.

Above SOFALA there is a country commanded by a King called the King of BAROÉ. In some part of his country there grows a root which is an inch thick, and of a yellow colour. It cures all kinds of fever by causing vomiting; but as very little of it is found the King forbids, under severe penalty, any of it to be carried out of his Kingdom. While DOM PHILIPPE DE MASCAREHNAS was Viceroy of GOA the King of BAROÉ sent him a piece of this root¹ about 3 feet long, garnished with gold at both ends, and with rings of gold in the middle. The Viceroy having received it made great account of it, and causing it to be cut up into several pieces presented them to certain of his friends. He sent two to SURAT to Mr. FREMLIN, the English President, who showed them to me, and having placed a piece of the root on my tongue I found the taste very bitter.

As for silver mines, there are none in the whole of ASIA,² save only in the Kingdom of JAPAN. Some years ago very rich mines of tin were discovered at DELEGORE, SANGORE, BORDELON, and BATA;³

¹ I have not been able to identify with certainty either *Baroé* or the bitter root which it produces.

² Tavernier is here in error, as there are undoubted sources of silver in India and on the confines of Assam and Burma, which have been largely worked. This common mistake is repeated in the *Imperial Gazetteer*, vol. vi, p. 624. (See *Economic Geology of India*, chap. iv, "Silver.") Silver certainly occurs also in other parts of Asia. (See Book III, chap. xv.)

³ Delli(?), Salangor, Billiton, and Banka(?). The three last are well-known centres of the tin industry.

this has done some injury to the English, because there is no longer need of their tin as formerly, sufficient being now produced in Asia. Tin is only used in this country to tin cooking-pots, kettles, and other copper utensils.



CHAPTER XXVI

*Account of a notable act of perfidy done to the author
when he was about to embark at GOMBROON for
SURAT.*

IN the month of April 1665, being about to leave GOMBROON, and when on the point of embarkation for SURAT in a vessel which belonged to the broker of the Dutch Company, and was commanded by Captain HANS—the Agent of the English gave me a packet of letters, which had arrived by express from ENGLAND, to deliver to the President of SURAT. This packet was very large, because, besides the Company's letters, he had included in it those which were for private persons in SURAT and other parts of INDIA. I received the packet from him, on the evening of my embarkation, in presence of M. CASEMBROT, a Dutchman, who had come to PERSIA by land, and was related to M. HENRY VAN WÜCK, Commander at GOMBROON. CASEMBROT managed to accompany me on all occasions when I went to see the English Agent, and VAN WÜCK asked me at each visit which I paid him, whether the Agent had not entrusted me with letters for SURAT. I replied ingenuously that he had told me that he would give me some, without suspecting anything of the evil intention of both of these two men. Their object, as

appeared subsequently, was to obtain possession of this packet in consequence of the rumour which was in circulation of a rupture between ENGLAND and HOLLAND, and because they thought that the English had received definite news of it, as some days previously an Arab had arrived by the desert route and had brought a packet to the English Agent; this caused the Commander VAN WÜCK much anxiety.

As soon as I had received the packet from the Agent, CASEMBROT, who was always on the watch, and looked on, as it was put into my hands, reported it to VAN WÜCK, and told him of its form and size; and I, after having pledged the Agent in a glass of wine which he offered me when wishing me a good passage, went to take leave of VAN WÜCK, who would not allow me to go till after I had supped with him. He kept me, as it were by force, in order to have more time to accomplish his *coup*; and excusing himself for being unable to accompany me on account of the arrival of three vessels which cast anchor while we were at table, he lent me his own boat to go on board, together with four or five of the principal officers of his staff, whom he sent with me, under pretext of escorting me, and with them the captain of the vessel also, to whom he gave the word. As soon as we were on board the captain offered me his own cabin, where he had already directed my bed to be placed by my servants, who had been on board for two days before, and on my making a difficulty about accepting it, he told me that the Commander had ordered him to do so, to which I replied that I would not accept his cabin. except on the condition that I should only occupy half of it, while he took the other. This having been



arranged, I drew the packet of English letters from the pocket of my greatcoat, and giving it to one of my servants to place in my *bouccha*,¹ which is the valise of these countries, he put the *bouccha* between the side of the vessel and the head of my bed. There had come with us to the ship two small boats, which contained more than sixty bags of silver, some of 50 and others of 100 *tomans*,² all the bags being made in PERSIA in that manner. Immediately the boats were alongside, [the crew] commenced to hoist the bags, one after the other, into the vessel, but did so very slowly, with the object of delaying us the whole night, and to compel me to go to bed. But as they observed that I was unwilling to retire, the captain, the pilot, and the Company's Broker, to whom, as I have said, the vessel belonged, consulted with the Dutch, and all together conspired to let a bag of 100 *tomans* fall into the sea when hoisting it into the vessel; this was done in order to have time to accomplish their design. As soon as the bag fell into the sea they sent a boat to GOMBROON to fetch a diver, who reached the vessel by daybreak, in order to dive for the sack. Seeing then that the vessel could not leave before the following day at two or three o'clock, I went to lie down, my *bouccha* being all the time in the same place, half under the head of my bed and half outside. My servants went to rest in the gunner's cabin, and while I slept alone in that of the captain my *bouccha* was quietly drawn out, and from it the packet of letters

¹ I must relinquish it to some one else to discuss the etymology of this word. It has been suggested to me that it may be connected with the Persian *posá*, a covering.

² *Toman* (see vol. i, Appendix).



was taken, another well sealed and of similar form and size, which only contained white paper, being put in its place. The bag which they had purposely allowed to fall into the sea in order to accomplish this wicked *coup*, having been pulled up, we made sail, and arrived at the port of SURAT on the 5th of May of the same year. The Dutch Commander having done me the honour to send a barque 2 or 3 leagues out to sea to fetch me, immediately when I landed, which was about midnight, I desired before all things to pay my respects to him, asking two Capuchin Fathers, who were at the port at our debarkation, to deliver to the English President the packet which I had taken out of my *bouccha*, this service they willingly undertook. But they told me that, as it was an unseasonable hour, and that the President, who was gouty, might be then asleep, they, not considering it proper to awake him, would wait till the morrow to accompany me, when I should be able to deliver the packet to the President myself. But the gout from which he suffered not permitting him to sleep much, it was delivered to him the same hour. The President having opened the packet in presence of the chief officers of his staff, they only found white paper folded like letters inside it. This having been reported to me, I realised at once the bad turn which VAN WÜCK and his accomplices had played me. What confirmed me further as to this perfidy was, that on going to examine my *bouccha* I found that a jewel which I had tried to sell to the Governor of GOMBROON had also disappeared. Not having been able to agree with him as to the price, he returned it to me some hours before I embarked for SURAT, and I had placed it in



haste with the packet of letters in my *bouccha*, where I did not find it on arrival at SURAT.

Nevertheless the theft of this packet of letters, which had been thus accomplished, incensed the President against me so much that he refused to allow me to justify myself, and I was moreover an object for the rage of many private Englishmen affected by the loss of the letters in the packet, which were addressed to them. They went so far on different occasions as to attempt my life, as I am able to prove by the evidence and affidavits of many men of honour, and particularly of M. HARTMAN, who was then the second officer in the factory at SURAT. So, to protect myself from snares which were set for me, I was obliged to be constantly accompanied by many people, and I was even unable to go to GOLCONDA, where there is a great trade in diamonds, having been warned by my friends that ten or twelve English awaited me in that part of the world in order to do me some injury. The treachery which was thus done to me disturbed all my plans and caused me considerable loss; besides which I was obliged to carry back to PERSIA a large sum of money, in consequence of my not being able to invest it in INDIA.

This is a copy of the letter which I sent on this subject to BATAVIA, to the General of the Dutch Company and the members of his Council, dated SURAT, the 16th May 1665.

“GENTLEMEN—I take the liberty to write to you these lines in order to testify the displeasure I have experienced at the affront done me by Commander HENRI VAN WÜCK at GOMBROON, who, notwithstanding the letters of recommendation which I had from the



Ambassador to the States, an Officer of my King, addressed, one to the Chief Officer of the Company at ISPAHAN, another to the Commander at GOMBROON, and a third to the Commander in this town of SURAT, asking all three to assist me as much as possible, except in so far as the Company was interested. But M. HENRI VAN WÜCK has disregarded his, and has done me the most signal affront that a man of honour, as I am, who am an Officer of his Royal Highness, the brother of my King, could ever receive, which was to have my baggage opened, where there were many jewels, some of which have been lost, and to have ordered a large packet of letters to be taken which the Agent of the English at GOMBROON entrusted to me to deliver to the President of the English in this town of SURAT, having had another packet containing blank paper placed in its stead. I leave you to reflect as to what kind of esteem the President and all the English hold me in at present, and whether I have not good cause for making my complaints and asking justice from you. And, if it should please you gentlemen to send me permission to wait upon you at BATAVIA, in order to testify, by word of mouth, the displeasure which I feel on account of this which M. VAN WÜCK has done me in order to accomplish a crime of this nature, and to inform you in detail of the manner in which all this affair has happened, you would oblige me much. At the least, I ask you to give me some satisfaction in respect to the author of the theft, in default of which I shall not fail, as soon as I have, by the grace of God, returned to FRANCE, to make my complaints through the King my master, who has honoured me with his protection,



and through his Royal Highness, his only brother, to MM. the States, and from their Ambassador, to obtain satisfaction, at whatever cost, of the said VAN WÜCK, and by this means establish my honour. Moreover, if I return by ISPAHAN, I shall not omit to inform the King of PERSIA of it, and shall tell him, after so much honour as his Majesty has done me, and notwithstanding all the passports which I have held from him, that the said M. VAN WÜCK has treated me in this fashion. I believe also that his Majesty will not be pleased to hear that all the patterns of jewels, which I was to buy and have made for him both in INDIA and EUROPE, were lost when the packet of letters was stolen. I can also advise him of the plots and conspiracies which M. VAN WÜCK has had at GOMBROON with a Prince, an enemy of PERSIA, who came to the said place in disguise. Finally, I know enough to make him receive an equal or greater affront than he has done me; and by his receiving it the Company will receive it also. This, gentlemen, is what I am resolved upon if you do not decide to give me complete satisfaction, though I believe I shall not have that trouble. Hoping that you will not omit to do me justice before I leave this country to return to EUROPE, where as in all other places I shall always be, Gentlemen, your very humble, etc."

It is rare to see treason unpunished, and the principal actors in this plot all had miserable ends.

In the following monsoon the vessels which arrived from SURAT at GOMBROON spread in that region the tidings of the black villany which had been done me; and a short time after, M. VAN WÜCK having been attacked by a kind of fever, and the Rev. Father



BALTHASAR, Carmelite Monk, going to see him, sought to get him to speak of this affair with which he was so prominently mixed up. But he defended himself of the charge strongly, and making use of an equivocation, said, that if it was true that he had taken the letters, he wished to die without speaking, and not to live three days. He had not in truth committed the theft, but he had arranged for its being done; and he died at the end of three days, and without speaking. His Lieutenant, named BOZAN, one of those whom he had sent to escort me to the vessel, and who apparently had opened the *bouccha* and committed the theft, after a great debauch, having lain down on the terrace of the house to sleep in the fresh air, as these terraces have neither parapet nor anything to prevent a fall, on moving and rolling in his sleep, fell over, and on the following day was found dead on the seashore. As for the Captain of the vessel, who was also in the plot, four or five days after his arrival at SURAT, as he pursued his way, a Muhammadan, jealous of his wife, whom he had beaten, and excited to rage against some *Franks* who separated them, believing this Captain, whom he found alone, was of the band, stabbed him five or six times with a dagger, upon which he fell dead on the ground. Such were the miserable ends of all these people.



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BOOK III

Concerning the religion of the Muhammadans and that of the Idolaters of India: the voyage of the Author by sea from SURAT to BATAVIA, and from BATAVIA to HOLLAND; and of many peculiarities in different Kingdoms of the East.



CHAPTER I

*Concerning the religion of the Muhammadans in the
EAST INDIES.*

THE diversity which is found among the Muhammadans does not only consist in the different explanations which they give to their *Koran*,¹ but also in the different opinions which they have of the first successors of MUHAMMAD. It is from this that two sects, entirely opposed to one another, have sprung; the one calling itself the *Sunnis* is followed by the Turks, the other the *Shias*,² which is the sect of the Persians. I shall not delay here to say more as to the difference between these two sects, which divide the Muhammadan world, having spoken sufficiently of them in my accounts of PERSIA, and I shall only describe the present condition of this false religion, both in the Empire of the GREAT MOGUL and in the Kingdoms of GOLCONDA and BIJAPUR.

At the first establishment of Muhammadanism in

¹ *Alcoran* in the original.

² *Sounnis* and *Chias* in the original, and *Sunnis* and *Schiaïs* in the *Persian Travels*, Book IV, chap. vii. The former revere the direct successors of Muhammad, and the latter maintain that Ali and his sons Hosen and Hosain are the true successors to the caliphate. Sunnis predominate in the Muhammadan population of India, but there are also many Shias there, some of them being descendants of Persian immigrants.



INDIA the Christians¹ of the East were very ostentatious but not very devout, and the Idolaters were effeminate people who were unable to make much resistance. Thus it was easy for the Muhammadans to subject both by force of arms. This they did with so much success that many Christians and Idolaters embraced the law of MUHAMMAD.

The GREAT MOGUL with all his Court followed the sect of the *Sunnis*, the King of GOLCONDA that of the *Shias*, and the King of BIJAPUR had in his territories both *Sunnis* and *Shias*. The same might also be said of the Court of the GREAT MOGUL, on account of the number of Persians who came to serve in his armies. It is true that although they regarded the *Sunnis* with horror they nevertheless follow, in outward show, the religion of the Monarch, believing that to make or secure their fortune they might conceal their true belief, and that it sufficed for them to cherish it in their hearts.

As for the Kingdom of GOLCONDA, KUTAB SHAH, who reigns at present, maintains with great zeal the law of the *Shias*, and as the nobles of his Court are nearly all Persians, they observe the customs of the sect of the *Shias* with the same strictness and the same freedom from restraint as in Persia.

I have elsewhere remarked that of the native Muhammadan subjects of the GREAT MOGUL there are but few in positions of command; this is the cause why many Persians, oppressed by want, or ambitious of better fortune than that which they can hope for in

¹ M. Thevenot states that about the year 1665 some believed that there were 25,000 families of Christians in Agra, but all were not agreed as to this estimate (*Voyage des Indes*, p. 102). Colonel Sleeman, who refers to this, adds that he himself came upon a colony of 2000 in the year 1814 in Betiah in Tirhut (*Rambles and Recollections*, etc., 1844, p. 15).



their own country, go to seek for it in INDIA. Being clever they are successful in finding means to advance themselves in (the profession of) arms, so that in the Empire of the GREAT MOGUL, as well as in the Kingdoms of GOLCONDA and BIJAPUR, the Persians are in possession of the highest posts.

AURANGZEB, especially, shows great zeal for the *Sunni* sect, of which he is so faithful a follower that he surpasses all his predecessors in external observation of the law, which has been the veil by means of which he has concealed his usurpation of the kingdom. When he took possession of the throne he proclaimed that it was with the design of insisting upon the law of MUHAMMAD being observed in all its strictness, as it had been relaxed during the reigns of SHÁH JAHÁN his father and JAHÁNGIR his grandfather. To show himself still more zealous for the law he became a *Dervish* or *Fakir*, i.e. a professional beggar, and under this false mantle of piety made his way cleverly to the Empire. Although he had, as I have said, numerous Persians in his service, he did not allow them to celebrate the festival of HOSEN and HOSAIN,¹ sons of ALI, who were killed by the *Sunnis*, as I have mentioned in my accounts of PERSIA; and they themselves, to please the King and advance their own fortunes, made no scruple about conforming themselves externally to the cult and customs of the *Sunnis*.

¹ *Hosen* and *Heussin* in the original.



CHAPTER II

Concerning Fakirs or Muhammadan beggars in the
EAST INDIES.

It is estimated that there are in India 800,000 Muhammadan *Fakirs*, and 1,200,000 among the idolaters, which is an enormous number. They are all vagabonds and idlers, who blind the eyes of the people by a false zeal, and lead them to believe that all that escapes from their own mouths is oracular.

There are different kinds of these Muhammadan *Fakirs*; some are almost naked, like the *Fakirs* of the idolaters, who have no regular dwellings, and abandon themselves to all kinds of impurity without any shame. They persuade simple souls that they possess a privilege to do all kinds of evil without sin.

There are other *Fakirs* who are clad in garments of so many pieces of different colours that one is unable to say what they are. These robes extend half way down their legs and conceal the miserable rags which are beneath. These *Fakirs* generally travel in company, and have a chief or superior over them who is distinguished by his garment, which is poorer and made up of more pieces than those of the others. He, moreover, drags a heavy iron chain which he has attached to one leg; it is 2 cubits long and thick in

proportion. When he prays it is with great noise, which he makes with this chain and a loud voice ; this is accompanied by an affected gravity, which attracts the veneration of the people. However, the people bring him and his followers food to eat, which they serve him in the place where he stops, generally some street or public place. He has carpets spread by his disciples, and seats himself on them in order to give audience to those who wish to consult him. On the other hand, his disciples proclaim throughout the country the great virtues of their master and the favours which he receives from God, who reveals to him the most important secrets, and confers upon him the power to aid afflicted persons with good advice. The people give him easy credence, and regard him as a holy man, and come to him with great devotion, and when one of them approaches close to him, he takes the shoes from off his feet and prostrates himself before the *Fakir* in order to kiss his feet. Then the *Fakir*, in order to appear humble, extends his arm and gives his hand to be kissed, after which he makes those who come to consult him, sit near him, and he listens to each in turn. He boasts of possessing a prophetic spirit, especially for indicating to women who are sterile the way in which they may obtain children, and how to constrain any one they wish to manifest love for them.

There are *Fakirs* who have more than 200 disciples, whom they assemble by the sound of the drum and a horn similar to the horns of our huntsmen. When marching, the disciples carry their standard, lances, and other arms, which they stick in the ground near their master when he halts to rest anywhere.



The third kind of these *Fakirs* of the EAST INDIES consists of those who, being born of poor parents, and wishing to know the law thoroughly, in order to become *Mullás* or doctors, take up their abode in mosques, where they live on whatever charity is bestowed upon them. They occupy their time in reading the *Koran*, which they learn by heart, and when they are able to add to this study some little knowledge of natural things, with the example of a good life, according to their ideas, they become heads of mosques, and reach the dignity of *Mullás* and judges of the law. These *Fakirs* have wives, and some, through piety and the great desire they have to imitate MUHAMMAD, have three or four of them, believing that thereby they do God a great service, by being fathers of many children who will follow the law of their Prophet.



CHAPTER III

Of the Religion of the Gentiles or Idolaters of INDIA.

THE idolaters of INDIA are so numerous that for one Muhammadan there are five or six Gentiles. It is astonishing to see how this enormous multitude of men has allowed itself to be subjected by so small a number of persons, and has bent readily under the yoke of the Muhammadan Princes. But the astonishment ceases when one considers that these idolaters have no union among themselves, and that superstition has introduced so strange a diversity of opinions and customs that they never agree with one another.¹ An idolater will not eat bread nor drink water in a house belonging to any one of a different caste from his own, unless it is more noble and more exalted than his own; thus they can all eat and drink in the houses of the *Brahmins*,² which are open to all the world. A caste is, so to speak, among these idolaters that which formerly a tribe was among the Jews, and

¹ This has ever been the strength of those who have conquered India.

² *Bramines* in the original. Brahmins' houses are certainly not now open to all the world, the very reverse is the case. The accuracy of this statement, even in Tavernier's time, may be doubted. True as it is that a man of lower caste may eat from the hand of a Brahmin, a Brahmin has, himself, to guard against defilement by contact with men of lower caste.



although it is commonly believed that there are seventy-two of these castes, I have ascertained from the most accomplished of their priests that they are able to reduce them to four principal (castes), from which all others derive their origin.

The first caste is that of the *Brahmins*, who are the successors of the ancient *Brachmanes* or philosophers of INDIA, who specially studied astrology. There are still to be found their ancient books, in the reading of which the *Brahmins* generally occupy themselves, and they are so skilled in their observations that they do not make a mistake of a minute in foretelling the eclipses of the sun and moon. And in order that they may preserve this science among them, they have a kind of university in a town called BENARES,¹ where they principally study astrology, and where they also have doctors who teach the law, which is followed with very great strictness. This caste is the most noble of all, because it is from among the *Brachmins* that the priests and ministers of the law are selected. But as they are very numerous and cannot all study in their university, the majority are ignorant and consequently very superstitious, those among them who pass as the most intellectual being the most arrant sorcerers.

The second caste is that of the *Rajputs* or *Ketriss*, *i.e.* warriors and soldiers. These are the only idolaters who are brave, and distinguish themselves in the profession of arms. All the *Rajas*, of whom I have often spoken, are of this caste. They are like so many petty kings, whose disunion has made them tributaries to the GREAT MOGUL; but as the majority are in his service, they are highly recompensed for the small

¹ Benares in the original, elsewhere written *Benarow* or *Banarous*.

tribute which they pay him by the large and honourable salaries which they receive from him. These *Rajas*, and the *Rajputs* their subjects, are the most firm supports of the GREAT MOGUL's kingdom ; and it was the *Rajas* JAISINGH and JESWANTSINGH who placed AURANGZEB on the throne. But it should be remarked that this second caste does not altogether consist of people who follow arms (as a profession). It is the *Rajputs*, alone, who go to war, and who are all cavaliers ; but as for the *Ketrís* they have degenerated from the bravery of their ancestors, and have quitted arms for merchandise.

The third caste is that of the *Banians*,¹ who attach themselves to trade, some being *Shroffs*, i.e. money-changers or bankers, and the others brokers, by whose agency the merchants buy and sell. The members of this caste are so subtle and skillful in trade that, as I have elsewhere said,² they could give lessons to the most cunning Jews. They accustom their children at an early age to shun slothfulness, and instead of letting them go into the streets to lose their time at play, as we generally allow ours, teach them arithmetic, which they learn perfectly, using for

¹ Tavernier spells this word *Baniane*, which has been altered in the text to *Banian*. It is otherwise, and perhaps more properly, spelt *Banyan*. It signifies a trader or merchant, especially in Gujarát. In Calcutta it is a title still used for the native brokers attached to houses of business. It is derived from *Vániya* (Gujarátí *Vániyo*), and that from the Sanskrit *Vānij*, a trader. Our author's testimony as to the astuteness of the men of this caste is borne out by many authors, notably P. F. Vincenzo de Maria, who says to make one it takes three Chinese, and three Hebrews to make a Chinese, therefore a *Banian* ought to possess the subtlety of nine Jews. (See "Banyan" in Yule and Burnell's *Anglo-Indian Glossary*, p. 48.)

² See Book I, chap. ii, p. 29.



it neither pen nor counters, but the memory alone, so that in a moment they will do a sum, however difficult it may be. They are always with their fathers, who instruct them in trade, and do nothing without explaining it to them at the same time. These are the figures which they use in their books, both in the Empire of the GREAT MOGUL, as well as in other parts of INDIA,¹ although the language may be different. If any one gets in a rage with them they listen with patience, without replying anything, and they withdraw coldly, not returning to see him for four or five days, when they believe his rage to be over. They never eat anything which has had sentient life, and they would rather die than slay the least animal, not even excepting an insect or vermin, being in this respect very zealous observers of their law. It is sufficient to add that they never strike one another, and that they never go to war, and cannot eat or drink in the houses of the *Rajputs*, because they slay animals and eat meat, with the exception of that of the cow, which is never eaten.

The fourth caste is called *Charados* or *Soudra*.² Like that of the *Rajputs*, it occupies itself with war; but with this difference, that the *Rajputs* serve on horse, and the *Sudras* on foot. Both glory in dying in battle, and a soldier, whether of the cavalry or foot, is esteemed for ever infamous if, in the moment of combat, he runs away. It is an eternal disgrace in his family, and in this connection I shall relate a story which was told me in the country. A soldier who loved his wife passionately, and by whom he was

¹ These figures are not reproduced here.

² More properly *Sudras*, from the Sanskrit *Sudra*.



equally beloved in return, fled from combat, not out of fear of death, but simply on account of his wife's sorrow should she find herself a widow. When she heard the cause of his flight, as she saw him approach the house she closed the door, and told him she was unable to recognise as a husband a man who had preferred the love of a woman to honour; that she did not wish to see him any more, in order not to leave a blot on the reputation of her family, and to teach her children to have more courage than their father. This woman remained firm in her resolution. The husband, to regain his reputation and his love, returned to the army, where he performed noble actions which redounded to his credit, and having splendidly repaired his fault, the door of his house was opened to him, and his wife received him with pleasure.¹

The remainder of the people, who do not belong to either of these four castes, are called *Pauzecour*.² They all occupy themselves with mechanical arts, and do not differ from one another except by the different trades which they follow from father to son; so that a tailor, although he may be rich, is unable to push his children, except in his own calling, nor to marry them, be it a son or a daughter, to others than those of his trade. So also when a tailor dies all those of his calling go to the place where his body is burnt,

¹ Sleeman tells a similar story about Jeswantsingh, who was so treated by his wife on his return from the battle of the 17th April 1658. (*Rambles and Recollections*, vol. i.)

² *Pauzecour*, as here used, appears to be a synonym of *Pariah*, a name applied to people of the lowest caste of Hindus in Southern India. It is pointed out in the *Anglo-Indian Glossary* that the *Pariahs* are not outcasts, as is commonly supposed. Possibly, however, the word Tavernier got hold of was *Phánsigár*, a synonym for *Thug*; if so, he defines it incorrectly.



and the same custom is observed among all the other artisans.

Among the particular castes there is one that is called *Halálkhors*,¹ who only engage in cleaning houses, each house paying them something monthly, according to its size. If a man of quality in INDIA, whether a Muhammadan or an idolater, has fifty servants, not one of them will be willing to use a broom to clean the house, for he would consider himself contaminated by it, and one of the greatest insults that one can do to a man in INDIA is to call him *Halálkhor*. It is proper to remark here that each of these servants having his own special duty, the one to carry the vessel of water for drinking by the way, another to have the pipe of tobacco ready—if the master asks one to perform the service for which the other is employed, that service will not be performed, and the servant remains as though he were immovable. As for slaves, they have to do whatever their master orders them. As this caste of *Halálkhors* is only occupied in removing the refuse from houses, it gets the remains of what the others eat, of whatever caste they may be, and it does not make any scruple about eating indifferently of all things. It is the people belonging to this caste, alone, who make use of asses, to carry the sweepings from the houses to the fields; while all other Indians will not touch this animal. It is otherwise in PERSIA, where asses are used both for baggage and for riding. It is also the *Halálkhors* in INDIA who alone feed pigs and use them for food.

¹ *Alacors* in the original. The name *Halálkhor* signifies an eater of lawful food, euphemistically applied to the Sweepers, to whom all things are lawful. (Yule-Burnell, *Anglo-Indian Glossary*.)



CHAPTER IV

Concerning the idolatrous Kings and Princes of ASIA.

IT is necessary to place in the front rank of the idolatrous Kings of ASIA, the King of ARAKAN, the King of PEGU, the King of SIAM, the King of COCHINCHINA, the King of TONQUIN, and, as for the King of CHINA, we know that he was an idolater before the irruption of the Tartars into his territories; but since that time one can say nothing certain about him, because these Tartars, who are now the masters of the country, are neither idolaters nor Muhammadans, being, rather, both combined. In the principal islands, firstly, the King of JAPAN, next the King of CEYLON, and some small Kings of the islands of the MOLUCCAS, and, finally, all the *Rajas*, both of the Empire of the GREAT MOGUL and of the neighbourhoods of the Kingdoms of BIJAPUR and GOLCONDA, are all idolaters. In general, all the common people, whether in the territories subject to the GREAT MOGUL, or the Kings of GOLCONDA and BIJAPUR, and the islands of ACHIN, JAVA, and MACASSAR, the Kings of which, as I have elsewhere said, are Muhammadans,—all the common people, I say, of these countries are idolaters.

I have stated that the King of CEYLON is an idolater, and it is true. But it is true also that about



fifty years ago a King of CEYLON became a Christian, and received at his baptism the name of JEAN, having been previously called the Emperor PRIAPENDER.¹ As soon as he embraced Christianity, the Princes and priests of the country established another King in his stead. He did what he could to induce all his people to imitate him, and for this purpose assigned to the Jesuit Fathers twelve of the largest villages which were around COLOMBO, so that from the revenue of these places they might support the children of the country in colleges, where, being well instructed, they would afterwards be able to teach others. For the King represented to these Fathers that it was impossible for them to learn the language of the country well enough to preach to the people, and in effect they found that the youth of CEYLON were so quick and intelligent that they learnt, in six months, more Latin, philosophy and other sciences, than Europeans acquire in a year, and they questioned the Fathers with such subtlety, and so deeply, that they were amazed.

Some years after the King had become a Christian, a very accomplished man and good native philosopher, named ALEGAMMA MOTIAR,² as one might say master of the philosophers, after having conversed some time with the Jesuit Fathers and other priests at COLOMBO, was inspired to become a Christian. With this object

¹ Although the period of his reign was somewhat more remote than Tavernier states, it seems probable that this Emperor *Priapender* was Don Juan Dharmápála, who was raised to the throne in 1542 by the Portuguese, and reigned thirty-nine years. He was baptized by Wilponte Alphonso Perera, who went to Ceylon from Goa for the purpose. A number of his chiefs and people also became Christians at the same time. He was opposed throughout his reign by Rájá Singhá, who ultimately superseded him (Forbes, *Eleven Years in Ceylon*, vol. ii, p. 315).

² For *Mudaliyar*, a Cingalese title. I cannot identify *Alegamma*.



he went to see the Jesuit Fathers, and told them that he desired to be instructed in the Christian faith, but he inquired what JESUS CHRIST had done and left in writing. He set himself then to read the New Testament with so much attention and ardour that in less than six months there was not a passage which he could not recite, for he had acquired Latin very thoroughly. After having been well instructed, he told the Fathers that he wished to receive holy baptism, that he saw that their religion was the only good and true one, and such as JESUS CHRIST had taught, but what astonished him was, that they did not follow Christ's example, because, according to the Gospel, he never took money from any one, while they on the contrary took it from every one, and neither baptized nor buried any one without it. This did not prevent him from being baptized, and from working for the conversion of the idolaters afterwards.

Such is the present condition of the idolaters throughout ASIA. I come now to those of INDIA in detail and to their gross errors, after which I shall speak of their customs and of the penances of their *Fakirs*.



CHAPTER V

Concerning the belief of the Idolaters with respect to the Deity

THE idolaters of INDIA yield to creatures as the cow, the ape, and different monsters, the honours which are only due to the true Deity, although it is certain that they acknowledge one infinite God, all-powerful and all-wise, Creator of the heavens and the earth, who is omnipresent. They call him in some places PERMESSER, in others PEREMAEL,¹ as, for example, towards the coast of MALABAR; and VVISTNOU² in the language of the *Brahmins* who inhabit the coast of COROMANDEL. As the idolaters have perhaps heard that the circle is the most perfect of all figures, they have thought to improve upon it by saying God is of an oval figure, and it is for this reason that they generally keep in their pagodas an oval pebble, which they obtain from the GANGES,³ and adore as god. They are so strongly fixed

¹ *Parameswara* or *Bramha*, the one true and omnipotent God, to whom, as Ward remarks, there is not a single temple in the whole of India. Educated Hindus maintain, however, that although they may select special gods as the objects of their homage, their worship is addressed really to the Supreme Deity; of uneducated Hindus the same can scarcely be said.

² *Vishnu*, the preserver, one of the Hindu triad. He is represented as a black man with four arms—one hand holds a club, another a shell, the third a *chukra* (or metal quoit), and the fourth the lotus.

³ This is the so-called *saligram* stone. The Sone river supplies

in this foolish idea that the wisest among the *Brahmins* will not listen to any argument against it, and thus it is not to be wondered at if a people who have such evil guides fall into this gross and monstrous idolatry. There is a caste so superstitious about this, that those who belong to it keep these oval stones suspended from their necks, and press them against their bodies while they pray.

In this gross and pitiable ignorance the idolaters, like the ancient pagans, regard their gods as men, and even bestow wives upon them, thinking that they love the same things as those in which men take pleasure. Thus they regard their RĀMĀ as a great deity on account of the wonders which they believe that he performed during his life. The following are the fables which they relate regarding him, as I have learnt from the most accomplished among their *Brahmins*:—

RĀMĀ was the son of a powerful *Raja*, who called himself DESERET,¹ and the most virtuous of many children which he had by two legitimate wives. He was particularly beloved by his father, who had destined him to be his successor. The mother of RĀMĀ having

some which are, I believe, silicious pebbles derived from the basalt; others are obtained from the Himalayas, and these are said to include fossils, *ammonites*. The *saligram* is connected with the worship of *Vishnu*, but it may be worshipped as representing for the time being any god. According to Ward (*History of the Hindus*, chap. xvi) the *saligram* is black, hollow, and nearly round, and is obtained from Gundukee (? a sulphur spring) in Nepal. As much as 2000 rupees was given for one of the first class. Vast sums of money are expended on the festivities connected with the marriage of the *saligram* to the *tulsi* plant (*Ocimum sanctum*). (See Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections*, vol. i, p. 158.)

¹ Rāmā, son of *Das'aratha*, King of Ajodhya. What follows is a tolerably correct version of the Rāmāyana.



died, the other wife of the *Raja*, who possessed entire control over her husband, induced him to drive RĀMĀ and his brother LAKSHMĀN¹ from his house and territories; this was done, and by the exclusion of these two brothers, the son of this other wife was declared to be heir to the *Raja*. RĀMĀ and his brother having then received an order to depart, obeyed the command of their father, and as they were about to leave, RĀMĀ went to bid farewell to his wife Sītā, whom these idolaters regard as a goddess. She was unwilling to part from him, and protested that she would follow him everywhere, and so they all three left the house of the *Raja*, to seek their fortunes. They were unlucky at first, for while passing through a forest, RĀMĀ having gone in pursuit of a bird, where he remained a long time, Sītā, fearing that some disaster had happened to her husband, by force of her entreaties obliged LAKSHMĀN to go in search of him. He strongly objected, RĀMĀ having told him not to leave Sītā, having foreseen by a spirit of prophecy what would happen if she remained alone. Nevertheless LAKSHMĀN, moved by the earnest prayers of his sister-in-law, went to seek for RĀMĀ his brother. In the meantime RĀVANA,² another god of the idolaters, appeared to Sītā in the garb of a *Fakir* and asked alms of her. RĀMĀ had told Sītā not to go outside the place where he had left her,—this being well known to RĀVANA he refused to receive the alms which Sītā offered him unless she moved from her position. Sītā, either by mistake or forgetting the command of RĀMĀ, passed beyond the limits which he had indicated, and then

¹ *Lokeman* in the original.

² *Rhevan* in the original.



RĀVANA seized her and took her into the depths of the forest where his followers awaited him, with whom he departed to his territories. When RĀMĀ returned from the chase, not finding Sītā, he fell senseless from grief, but LAKSHMĀN his brother having brought him round, they went together to search for Sītā, who was tenderly beloved by her husband.

When the *Brahmins* recount this ravishment of their goddess Sītā they do so with tears and demonstrations of excessive grief, and they add to the story a multitude of ridiculous fables, extolling the great bravery of RĀMĀ in the pursuit of the ravisher of Sītā. All the animals were employed in order to discover her, among which the monkey HANUMĀN,¹ alone had the good fortune to be successful. He crossed the sea with a bound, and arrived in the gardens of RĀVANA, where he found Sītā in the deepest affliction, and she was much surprised on beholding a monkey, who spoke on behalf of her husband. At first she was not willing to give credence to what was said to her by such an ambassador, but the monkey in order to authenticate his mission handed her a ring which her husband had given her, but which she had left in her baggage. She had much difficulty in believing such a miracle, and that RĀMĀ her husband had been able to make a beast speak to give her news of him, and such certain indications of his love. The monkey HANUMĀN did wonders at this interview, and having been recognised as a spy by the servants of RĀVANA, who wished to burn him, he made use of the fire which they had prepared for him to kindle the palace of RĀVANA, which was consumed almost entirely, by

¹ *Harman* in the original.



means of the rags which they tied to his tail and body and set on fire. He threw himself immediately among the straw and other combustible matter, which caused a great conflagration in the palace. The monkey realising that he would not escape the hands of RĀVANA if he again fell into them, promptly retook the same road as that by which he had come, and having bathed himself in the sea, which he recrossed at a single bound, he went to give RĀMĀ an account of his adventures, and told him of the affliction in which he had found Sītā, who was in despair at finding herself so far removed from her husband. RĀMĀ, touched by the affection of his wife, resolved to deliver her from the hands of RĀVANA at whatever cost it might be. This was accomplished, the same monkey serving him as guide, and with the aid of some forces which RĀMĀ had collected from different places. With much difficulty he approached the palace of RĀVANA, which was still smoking, so great had been the fire; and the subjects of this Prince having been dispersed in divers places, it was easy for RĀMĀ to again see his beloved Sītā, whom RĀVANA abandoned and fled in fear to the mountains. RĀMĀ and Sītā experienced infinite joy at seeing one another again, and did much honour to the monkey HANUMĀN, who had rendered them so great a service.

As for RĀVANA, he passed the remainder of his days as a poor *Fakir*, his country being altogether ruined by the troops of RĀMĀ, who avenged the injury he had received, and it is from this RĀVANA that this incredible number of *Fakirs*, whom one sees in peregrination throughout INDIA, have taken their



origin. These *Fakirs* lead a life of such austerity that their penances amount to prodigies, and I have had the curiosity to collect several pictures of them, some of which I shall show to the reader in the following chapter.



CHAPTER VI

*Concerning Fakirs, or the professional Mendicants of
INDIA, and their penances.*

THE *Fakirs*, as I have just said, take their origin from RAVANA, whom RAMA despoiled of his kingdom, who on that account felt so much annoyance that he resolved to wander like a vagabond throughout the world, poor and bereft of all property, and likewise completely nude. He at once found many people who followed him in this kind of life, which afforded them all kinds of liberty. For being revered as saints, they had abundant opportunities of doing whatsoever evil they wished.

These *Fakirs* ordinarily travel in troops, each of which has its Chief or Superior. As they go perfectly nude, winter and summer, always lying on the ground, and since it is sometimes cold, the young *Fakirs* and other idolaters who have most devotion, go in the afternoon to search for the droppings of cows and other animals, which are dried by the sun, with which they kindle fires. They seldom use wood through fear lest it may contain some living animal which would be killed—that which is used to burn the dead is a kind of drift-wood which does not engender worms. These young *Fakirs*, having collected a



quantity of these droppings mingled with dry earth, make many large fires according to the size of the troop, and ten or twelve *Fakirs* seat themselves around each fire. When sleep overtakes them, they allow themselves to fall on the ground, upon which they spread ashes to serve as a mattress, and they have only the heavens for a covering. As for those who perform the penances, of which I shall presently speak, when they lie during the night in the same position as one sees them during the day, fires are kindled for them on each side, without which they would be unable to withstand the cold; this will be seen at the end of this chapter in the illustrations which I give of the penances. Wealthy idolaters consider themselves happy, and believe that their houses receive the blessings of heaven, when they have as guests some of these *Fakirs*, whom they honour in proportion to their austerity; and the glory of a troop is to have some one in it who performs a notable penance, like those of which I shall hereafter speak.

These troops of *Fakirs* join together in numbers to go on pilgrimage to the principal pagodas, and to the public bathings which are held on certain days of the year, both in the river GANGES, which they specially esteem, as also in that which separates the territories of the Portuguese at GOA from those of the King of BIJAPUR.¹ Some of the most austere *Fakirs* dwell in miserable huts near their pagodas, where they are given food, for the love of God, once in every twenty-four hours.

The tree, of which a picture will be seen at the

¹ This, I suppose, means the Kistná, though I believe the authority of Portugal did not extend so far to the east and north-east.



end of this chapter, is of the same kind as that near GOMBROON, and I have given a description of it also in the accounts of PERSIA.¹ The *Franks* call it the tree of the *Banians*, because, in places where there are any of these trees, the idolaters sit under them and cook their food there. They reverence them specially, and generally build their pagodas either under or close to one of these great trees. The one which the reader will see depicted further on is at SURAT, and in its trunk, which is hollow, a monster is represented like the head of a deformed woman, which is said to be the representation of the first woman, whom they call *Mamaniva*.² Every day a large number of idolaters assemble there to adore this monster, near to which there is constantly some *Brahmin* detailed for its service, and to receive the offerings made to it of rice, millet, and other grains. On all those who have prayed in the pagoda, both men and women, the *Brahmin* makes a mark on the middle of the forehead with a kind of vermilion, with which the idol is also painted. With this mark on them they do not fear that the devil will injure them, because

¹ Namely the Banyan, *Ficus Indica*, Linn. The reference is to Book V, chap. xxiii, of the *Persian Travels*.

Another example with its numerous stems is the famous *Kabir bar* on an island in the Narbadá 12 miles above Broach. At one time it covered an area of 2000 feet in circumference, and had upwards of 3250 separate stems. It has afforded shelter to 7000 men at a time, but is now much reduced in size. The particular tree at Gombroon referred to by our author is also mentioned by Mandelslo, Valentjin, and Della Valle. The Persian name for the tree is *lâl*.

This is a distinct species from the famous *Bo* tree (*F. religiosa*) of Ceylon, one of which, having a known history, recorded in full detail by Sir Emerson Tennent (*Ceylon*, vol. ii, p. 613), was planted B.C. 288.

² This is a corrupt form of one of the names of *Durga*, the wife of *Shiva*, perhaps *Muhishu-murdinee*. (See Ward, *History of the Hindoos*, vol. i, p. 129.)

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they are, as they say, under the protection of their God.

I give here the explanation of the figures represented under the tree of the *Banians*, marked by the numbers 1, 2, 3, etc.¹

1. Is the place where the *Brahmins* dress up a representation of some one of their idols, as MAMANIVA, SITÁ, MADEDINA,² and other similar ones which are very numerous.

2. Is the figure of MAMANIVA which is in the pagoda.

3. Is another pagoda close to the preceding. It has a cow at the door, and inside a representation of the god RÁMÁ.

4. Is another pagoda, where *Fakirs* betake themselves for penance.

5. Is a fourth pagoda dedicated to RÁMÁ.

6. Is the form of a grave, where several times during the year a *Fakir* withdraws, where he gets no light except through a very small hole. He sometimes remains there nine or ten days without drinking or eating, according to his devotion—a thing which I could not easily have believed if I had not seen it. Curiosity led me to go to see this penitent in company with the Dutch Commander of SURAT, who ordered a watch to be set in order to see whether he did not receive anything to eat by day or night. The watch were unable to discover that he received any nourishment, and he remained seated like our tailors without changing his position either by day or night. He

¹ This plate has not been reproduced, being rudely drawn and of no great interest or importance.

² *Mahádeva*? another name for *Shiva*.



whom I saw was not able to remain more than seven days out of the ten which he had vowed to spend, because the heat stifled him on account of the lamp in the grave.¹ The other kinds of penance, of which I am about to speak, would still further exceed human belief if thousands of men were not witnesses of them.

7. Is the position of a penitent who has passed many years without ever lying down either by day or night. When he wishes to sleep he leans on a suspended cord, and in that position, which is very strange and inconvenient, the humours descend to the legs, which become thereby swollen.

8. These are the positions of two penitents who, till death, keep their arms elevated in the air, so that the joints become so stiff that they are never able to lower them again. Their hair grows down below the waist, and their nails equal their fingers in length. Night and day, winter and summer, they remain quite naked in this position, exposed to the rain and heat, and to the stings of mosquitoes, without being able to use their hands to drive them away. With regard to the other necessities of life, as drinking and eating, they have *Fakirs* in their company who wait on them as required.

9. Is the position of another penitent, who stands

¹ Ibn Batuta speaks of *Jogis* who used to allow themselves to be buried for months, or even for a twelvemonth together, and were afterwards revived, upon which Col. Yule remarks, "This art, or the profession of it, is not yet extinct in India." A very curious account of one of its professors will be found in a *Personal Narrative of a Tour through the States of Rajwara* (Calcutta, 1837, pp. 41-44), by Major-General A. H. E. Boileau. (See *Cathay and the Way thither*, p. 413.) (See *post*, chap. x.)

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for several hours daily on one foot, holding in his hands a chafing-dish full of fire, upon which he throws the incense which he offers to his god, having his eyes at the same time turned towards the sun.

10 and 11. These are the postures of two other penitents, seated, who have their hands elevated in the air.

12. Is the position in which the penitents sleep without ever lowering their arms; this without doubt is one of the greatest torments which the human body can suffer.

13. Is the position of another penitent, whose weakness has caused his hands to fall behind his back, not being able to lower his arms, which are dried up from lack of nutrition.

There are an infinity of other penitents, some of whom assume positions altogether contrary to the natural attitude of the human body, having their eyes always turned to the sun; others who have their eyes directed to the ground, without ever looking at any one in the face, nor saying a single word; and the diversity is so great that it would be sufficient to form the subject of a long discourse.

In order to give more satisfaction to the curious, and to enable them to understand matters more distinctly, I shall add here other pictures of these same penitents, which I have had drawn, on the spot, after nature. Modesty has compelled me to conceal the parts which they have no shame about exposing to view, for at all times, both in the country and in the towns, they go about altogether as naked as they came out of their mothers' wombs; and although the women approach them out of devotion in order to



If these men, during their lives, perform virtuous actions, such as pilgrimages and the giving of alms, they hold that after death their souls pass into the bodies of some powerful *Rajas* or other rich persons, who enjoy the pleasures of life as a reward for the good deeds they had done in other bodies.

This is the reason why the *Fakirs*, of whom I have spoken in the preceding chapter, perform such horrible penances; and as all men are not able to bring themselves to suffer so much in this world, they seek during their lives to make up by good works for the want of these penances, and further direct their inheritors by their wills to give alms to the *Brahmins*, to the end that, by the power of the prayers which they cause them to say, God may assign them the body of some grand personage. In the month of January of the year 1661 the *Shroff* or money-changer of the Dutch Company, named MONDAS PAREK, died at SURAT. He was a rich man and very charitable, having bestowed much alms during his life on the Christians as well as on the idolaters; the Rev. Capuchin Fathers of SURAT living for a part of the year on the rice, butter, and vegetables which he sent to them. This *Banian* was only ill for four or five days, and in that time, as also during eight or ten days after his death, his brothers distributed 9000 or 10,000 rupees, and burnt his body, adding to the ordinary wood much sandal and aloes, believing that by this means the soul of their brother, on passing into another body, would become a great noble in some other country. There are some among them who are foolish enough to bury their treasures during their lifetime, as, for instance, nearly all the rich men of the Kingdom of ASSAM, so that if they

enter, after death, the body of any poor and miserable mendicant, they can have recourse to the money which they have buried in order to draw from it at necessity. This is the reason why so much gold and silver and so many precious stones are buried in INDIA,¹ and an idolater must be poor indeed if he has no money buried in the earth. I remember that I one day bought in INDIA, for 600 rupees, an agate cup 6 inches high and of the size of one of our silver plates.² The seller assured me that more than forty years had elapsed since it was buried in the earth, and that he preserved it to serve his need after death, it being a matter of indifference to him whether he buried the cup or the money. On my last voyage I bought from one of these idolaters sixty-two diamonds weighing about 6 grains apiece, and on telling him of my astonishment at seeing so fine a parcel, he replied that I need not be astonished, seeing that it took nearly fifty years to accumulate them for his wants after death; but his affairs having changed, and having need of money, he had been obliged to dispose of them. These buried treasures were one day of great service to the *Raja SIVAJI*, who took up arms against the GREAT MOGUL and the King

¹ The enormous absorption of gold by India and its disappearance, is explained by many writers in the same way. Bernier, among others, may be mentioned, but the subject is too extensive to be entered on here. Quite recently about £5,000,000 of horded treasure, including precious stones, was taken from pits and wells sunk in the palace zenána at Gwalior.

² This was probably of the kind known to the Romans as the Murrhine cups. The custom of roasting the agates to develop the colours doubtless gave rise to the idea that the material was some form of porcelain; while the suggestion that they were made of fluor spar may be rejected, as that mineral is not known in India, and there is no trace of its ever having been imported or worked by the lapidaries of Western India.



of BIJAPUR. This *Raja* having taken CALLIAN BONDI,¹ a small town of the Kingdom of BIJAPUR, by the advice of the *Brahmins*, who assured him that he would find a considerable amount of buried treasure, he ordered it to be partly demolished, and found in fact great riches, with which he supported his army, consisting of more than 30,000 men. It is impossible to disabuse these idolaters of their errors, because they will not listen to reason, and they entirely subordinate their own judgment to their ancient customs, the principal of which is to burn the bodies of the deceased.

¹ Probably Kullīāni, in District of same name, Long. 77°, Lat. 17° 53' 30", A. S. No. 57.



CHAPTER VIII

Concerning the idolaters' custom of burning the bodies of the deceased.

THE custom among the Gentiles of burning bodies after death is very ancient ; they generally burn them on the banks of rivers, where they wash the bodies of the deceased to complete the cleansing of those sins from which they have not been purified during life. This superstition goes to such extremes that very often sick persons, when on the point of death, are carried to the margin of a river or tank, and their feet are placed in the water. According as nature fails the body is pushed forwards, and at last it is held by the chin only, so that at the moment when the spirit departs and leaves the body, both the one and the other can be purged of all defilement by plunging the body wholly into the water, after which it is burned in the same place, which is always close to some pagoda. There are people who make it their business to collect wood, and there is a fixed rate of payment for their trouble. When an idolater is dead, all those of his caste or tribe who are in the place assemble at the house of the deceased, and the body having been placed on a litter covered by some fine cloth, according to the station of the defunct and the property which he has



left, they accompany it to the place where it is to be burnt, following the litter, which is carried on the shoulders of those appointed for that duty. They always proceed chanting some prayers to their god, and calling out *Rám, Rám*, and, while carrying the body, there is some one who sounds a small bell to give notice to the living to pray for the deceased. The body having arrived at the margin of the river or tank, it is plunged into the water, and afterwards burnt. This is done in three different ways, as I shall describe in the following chapter. According to the wealth of the deceased, there is mingled with the ordinary wood which is collected for burning, more or less sandal-wood or other scented wood.

But the idolaters not only burn dead bodies; their cruel superstition goes further, for they also burn the bodies of the living. They make scruple about killing a serpent, and even a bug, yet they regard it as a highly meritorious action to cause a living woman to be burnt in the fire together with the body of her deceased husband.