

A
GENERAL DESCRIPTION

1896.
Grosier

CHINA:

CONTAINING THE
TOPOGRAPHY OF THE FIFTEEN PROVINCES

WHICH COMPOSE

THIS VAST EMPIRE;

THAT OF

TARTARY,

THE

ISLES, AND OTHER TRIBUTARY
COUNTRIES;

THE NUMBER AND SITUATION OF ITS CITIES, THE STATE
OF ITS POPULATION, THE NATURAL HISTORY OF ITS
ANIMALS, VEGETABLES AND MINERALS.

TOGETHER WITH

The latest Accounts that have reached Europe, of the Government, Religion,
Manners, Customs, Arts and Sciences of the CHINESE.

ILLUSTRATED BY A

NEW AND CORRECT MAP OF CHINA,

AND OTHER COPPER-PLATES.

VOL. I.

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ABBE GROSIER.

Jean Baptiste

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bitants of which are poor people, who have nothing to subsist on but rice and the fish which they catch.

C H A P. XIII.

THE PROVINCE OF QUANG-SI.

THIS province is situated between those of Quang-tong, Hou-quang, Koei-tcheou, Yun-nan and the kingdom of Tong-king ; neither its extent nor commerce is equal to that of the other provinces ; however, it is so abundant in rice, that it supplies, for six months in the year, the province of Quang-tong, the inhabitants of which without this assistance could not subsist. As the mountains with which it is covered, especially towards the north, abound with mines of gold, silver, copper and tin, the governor of one of the cities of the first class presented some years ago a memorial to the emperor, in which he proposed a plan for preventing the inconveniencies that might result from the working of these mines : he mentioned, among other things, that the people of the country had offered to open them at their own

own charges, and to admit no one to work in them who had not a patent from his mandarin, and who could not procure four sureties to answer for his good behaviour.

The emperor having read this memorial, referred it for examination to the *hou-pou*, or court of finances. This sovereign tribunal, after mature deliberation, approved of the plan, but insisted, that, according to what had been practised formerly upon a like occasion, forty per cent. should be given to the emperor, and five per cent. to the officers and foldiers who presided over the works: the prince afterwards reserved to himself the gold-mines, and caused them to be opened at his own expence.

A very singular tree grows in this province; instead of pith, it contains a soft pulp, which yields a kind of flour: the bread made of it is said to be exceedingly good. Besides paroquets, hedge-hogs and the rhinoceros, a prodigious number of wild animals, curious birds and uncommon insects are found here.

This province contains twelve villages of the first class and eighty of the second and third.

Quei-ling-fou, the capital, has its name from a flower called *quei*, which grows on a tree resembling a laurel; it exhales so sweet and agreeable

the testimony of the missionaries, that this drug is serviceable in all diseases of the lungs. It is taken with a decoction of simples, and sometimes in powder, but very seldom.

C H A P. IX.

QUADRUPEDS, BIRDS, BUTTERFLIES AND
FISHES OF CHINA.

THE mountains and vast forests of China abound with wild animals of every species; such as the rhinoceros, elephants, leopards, tygers, bears, wolves, foxes, buffaloes, camels, horses, wild mules, &c. Some beavers, fables and ermines are found in the northern provinces; but the skins which they furnish are much inferior to those procured from Siberia.

Game is very common in China. The squares of Pe-king, during winter, are filled with different heaps of various kinds of volatile, terrestrial and aquatic animals, hardened by cold, and perfectly secure against all corruption. Prodigious quantities of stags, deer, wild boars, goats, elks, hares, rabbits, cats, squirrels and