

COLLECTION

OF

TRAVELS,

Thro' various Parts of the WORLD;

But more particularly, thro'

TARTARY, CHINA, TURKEY,
PERSIA, and the EAST-INDIES.

CONTAINING

An accurate and entertaining ACCOUNT of
the RELIGION, LAWS, MANNERS, COMMERCE,
and CONSTITUTION of many different NATIONS.

Compiled and arranged in Chronological Order,

By Mr. DERRICK.

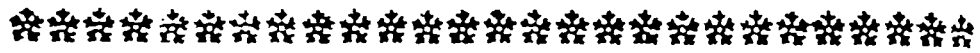
*Samuel Derrick
1724-1766*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

V O L. I.

L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN WILKIE, at the Bible, in
St. Paul's Church-Yard: MDCCLXII.



A Description of COCHIN CHINA; treating of the Constitution, Laws, Customs, and Religion of that remote nation. Extracted from the Italian of the Rev. Father CHRISTOPHER BORRI, of the Society of JESUS, who resided there as a missionary, about the year 1620.

C H A P. I.

Of the situation and climate of Cochin China; of the use of the annual inundations; of the vegetable and animal productions of this country; of some of its most valuable commodities; of the elephant and rhinoceros; hunting of the latter.

COCHIN China lies between 11 and 17° of north latitude. It stretches along the sea coast for about an hundred leagues, being in some places twenty miles broad. The opposite side of it is bounded by a ridge of high mountains, inhabited by a sort of savages that acknowledge no sort of sovereignty, and generally confine themselves to their barren rocks, where they are safe from insult or invasion. Cochin, in the language of Japan, signifies West, that being its situation with respect to China; and hence the Portuguese have given it the name of Cochin China, tho' by the inhabitants themselves it is called Ariam. To the north of it lies the kingdom of Tonquin, and the Indian sea forms its boundary on the east and south. It is a flat plentiful country, with a wholesome climate and a regular succession of seasons, tho'

The Indian brachmans and bannians make their funeral piles of it; and the consumption of it by these means is so great, that if the king allows the governor to load therewith only one ship, it is thought to be the greatest advantage he can confer.

In the mountains of Cochin China there are valuable mines of gold and other metals; and among the beasts wherewith the woods are filled, the elephant and rhinoceros being the most remarkable, we shall confine ourselves to speak only of these, other sorts being too common to merit description. The size and tractability of the elephant are very surprizing. The people of Cochin China leave the taming of this prodigious beast to their neighbours the Cambogians, as being themselves strangers to that art. The elephant of Cochin China is twice as large as that of India; its two ivory teeth are often of four yards and a half; those of the female are not quite so long. The print of its foot is half a yard in diameter.

They live to a very old age, and father Borri relates that he saw one in this country more than an hundred years old; he also asserts, that he has not only travelled by land, but also crossed an arm of the sea upon the back of an elephant, with eleven or twelve people, sitting in a kind of coach made for that purpose, and girt under the belly with iron chains. Indeed the weight, joined to the creature's bulk, fatigues it exceedingly, so that it often draws in much water with its breath, which it spouts again to a vast height, so that at a distance it might be taken for the cascade of a whale. This method of carriage is very common, and the obedience which the poor beast pays to the nayre or driver, who sits upon its neck, is very great, for it kneels at his command to take up passengers: however, if they stop upon ceremony it is obliged

to

to rise to ease itself; but it will immediately kneel again. Its leg and side serve as a ladder to the coach, the first step being the top of its foot; the second the joint a little above it; the third the bending of the knee; the fourth the hip bone, from whence the passenger mounts to his seat by the help of a chain hanging down for that purpose from the carriage; the top of which being removed in battle, soldiers from within discharge their arrows and other missile weapons upon the enemy. Those who are not accustomed to travel upon the elephant's back, will be affected with sickness, in the same manner as if they were at sea. The trunk of the elephant consists of several small sinews, strongly knit together, and so very pliable, that with them he can take up the least thing that lies upon the ground. It is generally proportioned to his height. This animal is so very strong that he can with ease throw down houses, level streets, and root up forests. Our traveller affirms that he saw one of them, upon being commanded, launch ten galliots into the sea; such docility accompanies their other powers. They are generally so attentive to the direction of the nayre, that they immediately turn to whatever course he prescribes; and if they know any thing of the situation of the place whither he is bound, they go thither by the shortest way, unmindful of the beaten track, fording the rivers without regarding where, and tearing up the trees that lie in the way, or else cutting them down with a sort of scythe, that lies to that end upon his back, and which he manages with his trunk when there is occasion. The pace of the elephant is very solemn, and being cautious of wounding his feet, which are very tender, searches the road with prying eyes, lest thorns or sharp stones should lie in the way to hurt him; and these, when found, he carefully removes. Their food is the boughs of trees, from which they

first strip the bark with great dexterity, and then devour the wood with much seeming relish. Father Borri having expressed some pleasure at seeing them eat, the nayre called one of them to him, and told him that reverend father was desirous to see him eat such a bough, as he had fed upon in his presence the preceding day. The elephant, upon this intimation, went and brought a bough, which he devoured before the father, and then retired, having first made a low reverence. However, this obedience is only paid to the nayre ; and when any person besides is going to mount him, he must be blinded with a muffer, for if he saw them he would certainly tear the coach and every thing in it to pieces. When he is unruly the nayre standing over beats him on the middle of the forehead with a cudgel, till he makes him tremble ; and he is thereby soon brought into proper order. This animal, at a particular time of the year in which he wants to copulate, is so mad that he is not to be governed ; of this the nayre is informed by some previous signs, when he immediately takes care to remove the carriage upon his back, and leaves him either with the female or in some lonesome place, until his furious fit is abated. It is admirable to observe with what shame he presents himself before the nayre, hanging down his head, and appearing as if conscious that he merited chastisement.

If a wild and a tame elephant happen to meet, a bloody combat ensues, and it generally terminates in the defeat of the latter ; which, however, triumphs over the rhinoceros, altho' armed with a natural armour of scales that run round its body. This beast partakes in shape both of the ox and horse. Its size is equal to that of a small elephant, and from the middle of its forehead rises a strait pyramidal horn, whereby it is enabled to do much mischief.

At Nuncmon in the province of Pulucambi, our author attended the governor to a neighbouring wood, whither he went with a train of about one hundred people to hunt the rhinoceros; which, when roused, made at its enemies without seeming intimidated by their number; but they falling off to the right and left, on his approach, he ran quite thro' the lane which they formed, at the rear of which he found the governor mounted on an elephant, which it immediately assailed and endeavoured to wound with its horn, still evading all the efforts made by the elephant to seize it in his trunk. At length the governor watching a proper opportunity, struck an arrow thro' the only part of it that can be wounded, so forceably that it pierced his body. No sooner was this done, than the people seized it with vast shouts of applause, and set it upon a pile of wood which was quickly in a flame. The scales being burned off, as the flesh roasted they cut it out in collops, and eat it on the spot; the heart, brains, and liver, as the most delicious part of it, were dished up for the governor, who, from a rising ground, beheld the cookery which was carried on with much merriment; the hoofs being efficacious in many disorders, were presented to the father, he having requested them by the governor. The horn is said to be an antidote against poison. This beast is sometimes called the abada.