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THE BOOK
OF
DUARTE BARBOSA.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE COUNTRIES
BORDERING ON THE INDIAN OCEAN AND THEIR
INHABITANTS, WRITTEN BY DUARTE BARBOSA.
AND COMPLETED ABOUT THE YEAR 1518 A.D.

*Translated from the Portuguese text, first published in 1812 A.D.
by the Royal Academy of Sciences at Lisbon, in Vol. II of its
Collection of Documents regarding the History and Geography of
the Nations beyond the seas, and edited and annotated*

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VOL. I.

INCLUDING THE COASTS OF EAST AFRICA, ARABIA,
PERSIA, AND WESTERN INDIA AS FAR AS
THE KINGDOM OF VIJAYANAGAR.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR THE HAKLUYT SOCIETY.

MCMXVIII.

time. His father was called Soltam Mahamude (Mahmūd Shāh) who from a child was brought up and fed on poison. His father wished to rear him this way that they might not be able to kill him by poison; (for the kings of the Moors have this custom; that they give orders to kill one another by poison). He began to eat it in such small doses that it could do him no evil, and in this manner he continued so filled with poison that when a fly touched him, as soon as it reached his flesh it forthwith died and swelled up, and as many women as slept with him perished.

"And for this he kept a ring of such virtue that the poison could have no effect on her who put it in her mouth before she lay down with him." And he could never give up eating this poison, for if he did so he would die forthwith, as we see by experience of the opium which the most of the Moors and Indians eat; if they left off eating it they would die; and if those

of the Gujarāt Sultānat, by Revd. G. P. Taylor, Journal Bombay Branch R.A.S., 1903, p. 290, and the *Mīrāt-i-Sikandarī* translated in Sir E. C. Bayley's *History of Gujarāt*, p. 162.)

Ramusio's versions of Varthema and Barbosa spread the story through Europe, and it found its way into Purchas (II, 1495). Butler's allusion in *Hudibras*, where he turns the poison into "asps, basilisks and toads" is well known.

(*Hudibras*, Pt. II, Canto I, l. 753 ff.)

The Prince of Cambay's daily food
Is asp and basilisk and toad,
Which makes him have so strong a breath,
Each night he stinks a queen to death.

Probably out of his enormous appetite stories grew as to the abnormal nature of the things he ate. He was also known for the length of his mouth-teeth, which he could tie together over his head, a feat which many Sikhs in the Panjab can rival.

Tales of kings with poisoned breath wander about in the east and are fathered generally upon conquerors known for their violence and cruelty. I heard such a story about Nādir Shah among the Baloches (see *Folklore*, 1897, p. 77).

¹ *Opium*. This account of the practice of opium-eating, and its gradual effects, is very accurate. The Portuguese word used, "*anfiam*," is taken from the Arabic *afyūn* which is itself derived from the Greek *ἄνω*. Ramusio also uses the Portuguese term and explains it by the Italian *oppio*.

ate it who had never before eaten it, they too would die; so they begin to eat it in such small quantities, that it can work them no ill, as they are reared on it, and as they grow up they are accustomed to it. This opium is cold in the fourth degree; it is the cold part of it that kills. The Moors eat it as a means of provoking lust, and the Indian women take it to kill themselves when they have fallen into any folly, or for any loss of honour, or for despair. They drink it dissolved in a little oil and die in their sleep without perception of death.

§ 49. THE CITY OF CHAMPANEL.

THIS same King of Guzerate has in his realm great and fine cities, of which I shall henceforth treat, and in the first place is the City of Champanel¹ where he always dwells with all his court, the which city lies inland in a land of broad plains, which yield great store of food; *scilicet*, abundance of wheat, barley, millet, rice,

¹ Champanel, spelt Champaver in the Spanish version, and Campanero in Ramusio.

The proper form of the name is Champānēr, the termination -nēr being a Prakrit form of the Sanskrit *nagara*, a city. It is supposed to have been founded by a king named Chāmpā.

Champānēr, now entirely ruined, is situated a short distance N.E. of Baroda in the hill country of the Pānch Mahāls. It was a strongly fortified mountain town and the capital of a Rājput chief, Rāwal Jai Singh (whom Firishta calls Rai Banāhi.) It was taken after a two years' siege by Mahmūd Shah in 1484 A.D. He immediately made it his capital and a mint town, giving it the name of Muhammadābād. On one of his coins it appears as "Muhammadābād alias Chāmpānēr." Its prosperity under the kings of Gujarāt fully bears out Barbosa's description. It was specially famous for its fruit, its mangoes being famous. The Mughal Emperor Humāyūn took it in 1535 A.D. and made it a mint town, but thereafter it declined rapidly. The kings of Gujarāt as long as they remained independent of the Mughal Empire made Abmadābād their capital.

(See Sir E. C. Bayley's *History of Gujarāt*, 1880; Rev. G. P. Taylor, *Coins of the Gujarāt Sultānat* Journal Bombay Branch R.A.S., 1903, pp. 291-293.; Whitehead, *Coins of the Mughal Emperors*, Lahore Museum, pp. lxx.)

kermes¹ grain, chick-peas, lentils and many other kinds of pulse. They also rear much cattle, sheep and goats, whence the country-folk obtain good nurture: here, too, there is much fruit, and in the city there is enough and to spare of all things. In the surrounding country are great mountains, where are found many deer and other beasts of the chase. Here also there is much hunting of fowls, for which they keep falcons,² sparrow-hawks, greyhounds, bloodhounds and lybreos, and for mountain hunting they keep trained cheetahs,³ which hunt game of all kinds. The king has a great curiosity about animals, and possesses many of divers kinds, which he orders to be sought for his diversion, and to be bred throughout the world. He sent a Ganda⁴

¹ *Kermes grain*. The word *grão* (*gram* in the old spelling, is almost always used in the sense of the red dye (not really a grain). The use of the word *gram* (pronounced as an English word) to denote the chick-pea (*Cicer arctium*) is modern. For this Barbosa employed the word *chicharo* (*chicharro* in modern spelling, the correct Portuguese name for this pea.

It is not given in the corresponding list in the Spanish version and Ramusio.

² In this list of dogs and hawks used for hunting and hawking, the Spanish version and Ramusio only say "dogs and falcons." The Portuguese terms are "*falcoes, gaviões, galgos, sabujos, e lybreos.*" *Líbreo* is given by Vieyra as a large Irish greyhound, and also as an equivalent of *cão de fila* (a mastiff). Possibly the Persian greyhound is intended, while *galgo* refers to the light and swift greyhounds found in Balochistan. *Sabujo*, properly a bloodhound, probably denotes any kind of hound which hunts by scent rather than by sight.

³ The word I have here translated "Cheetahs" is in the Portuguese *onças, i.e.,* some kind of ounce or panther, undoubtedly the hunting cheetah.

⁴ It is only necessary to allude here to Lord Stanley's unfortunate mistake in his note on p. 58 of his translation. He supposed the word *ganda*, a rhinoceros, to denote a woman of the Gond tribe, as to which Sir H. Yule observes in his Glossary (*Hobson-Jobson, s.v. Genda*) that it is "a marvel in the way of error." The use of the feminine in the Portuguese text no doubt contributed towards the error. *Gēndā*, the Hindi and Gujarati word for a rhinoceros, is a masculine form. The feminine would be *gēndī*. But the Portuguese naturally took the termination in *a* to be feminine.

The full story as told by De Barros deserves quotation. It relates to the events of the year 1514.

"In return for many rich gifts which Diogo Fernandez took to the king, besides others which he sent to Afonso d'Albuquerque,

(rhinoceros) to the King our Lord, as they told him he would be pleased with it.

§ 50. THE CITY OF ANDAVA.

IN the inland country going forwards from this city of Champanel there is another much greater than it, called Andava,¹ in which the kings of this kingdom held their courts of old, inasmuch as it is very rich. Both of these towns are girt with strong walls and have fine stone and mortar houses roofed in our fashion. They have large courtyards in which are tanks and wells of sweet water. Their beasts of burden are camels. They have beautiful sweet-water streams in which many fishes breed; here, too, are many fruit-gardens and orchards. In this city and in many other inland towns the King of Cambaya keeps his Governors and Collectors of Revenue. And if, in the discharge of their duties, they do any wrong, the king, when he has

there was an animal, the greatest after the elephant which nature has produced, his great enemy, a beast with one horn, which it carries directly over the nose, about two palms in length, thick at the base and sharp at the point: which the natives of the land of Cambaya, whence it came, call Ganda, and the Greeks and Latins Rhinoceros: and Afonso d'Albuquerque sent it to the King, Dom Manuel, and it came to this kingdom, and was lost in a ship on the way to Rome, whither the King was sending it as a present to the Pope" (De Barros, *Dec. II, Bk. x, Ch. 1*).

Mr. Whiteaway says "It is the very animal immortalised by Dürer" (*Rise of Portuguese Power in India, p. 151, n.*).

This unlucky beast was probably the first of its race to visit Europe.

¹ The text as printed has Andana, doubtless an error for Andava. The Spanish version has Andavat and Ramusio Ardavat. Ahmadābād takes its name from its founder, Ahmad Shah the third king of Gujārāt, and the first to raise the kingdom to the high rank it long held. He chose the position for its salubrity and fertility, and in 1411 commenced the erection of the beautiful mosques and other gems of architecture which have made Ahmadābād famous. It ceased to be the capital when Mahmūd Shah took Champānār, but recovered its dignity when that town was sacked by Humāyūn in 1535. Under the Mughal emperors it continued to be a centre of provincial government and its importance is attested by the long series of coins in gold, silver and copper struck at its mint. Under the British Government it continues to be an important centre, and gives its name to a district.