THE TRAVELS

OF

LUDOVICO DI VARTHHEMA

IN

EGYPT, SYRIA, ARABIA DESERTA AND ARABIA FELIX,

IN PERSIA, INDIA, AND ETHIOPIA,

A.D. 1503 TO 1508.

Translated
FROM THE ORIGINAL ITALIAN EDITION OF 1510,
WITH A PREFACE,
BY
JOHN WINTER JONES, ESQ., F.S.A.,

And Edited,
WITH NOTES AND AN INTRODUCTION,
BY
GEORGE PERCY BADGER,
LATE GOVERNMENT CHAPLAIN IN THE PRESIDENCY OF BOMBAY,
AUTHOR OF "THE NESTORIANS AND THEIR RITUALS,"
ETC., ETC., ETC.

WITH A MAP.

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The next day we embarked on board a ship and went to a city called Melacha, which is situated towards the west, at which we arrived in eight days. Near to the said city we found an extremely great fiumara, as large as any we had ever seen, which they call Gaza, which is evidently more than twenty-five miles wide. And opposite to the said river there is a very large island, which is called Sumatra. The inhabitants of it say that the circumference of it is four thousand five hundred miles. I will tell you about the said island at the proper time. When we had arrived at the city of Melacha, we were immediately presented to the Sultan, who is a Moor, as is also all his kingdom. The said city is

1 Malacca, or, more correctly, Málaca, the well-known town on the western side of the Malay peninsula. Our traveller was the first to make Europe acquainted with its name and situation.

2 By "fiumara" Varthema undoubtedly means the Straits, which are about twenty-five miles broad opposite Malacca. "Gaza," I take to be a contraction of Bogház, the Arabic for a strait. The Arabs of the present day use the same word to denote the passage between the island of Sumatra and the Malay peninsula, calling it Bogház Málaca, or Bogház Singafâra. I notice that Crawfurd, in his Descriptive Dictionary, sub voce Archipelago, remarks that Varthema underrates the breadth of the Strait; but he quotes our traveller from Ramusio as describing the fiumara to be only "about fifteen miles broad." (I. sub voce Malacca Straits.) Crawfurd himself says in one place, that the town of Malacca is "washed by the Straits which bear its name, and which are here about five-and-twenty miles broad;" and in another, that "the town of Malacca is distant from the nearest shore of Sumatra about forty-five miles," (I. sub voce Malacca, pp. 238, 249;) the approximate measurements being apparently given, in the one case, between Malacca and the island of Rupat directly opposite, and in the other between Malacca and the mainland of Sumatra.

3 "Of the time in which the Muhammedan religion was embraced by the people of Malacca, there is no precise statement. The Malay account assigns the event to the reign of a prince called Sultan Muham-
on the mainland and pays tribute to the king of Cini, who caused this place to be built about eighty years ago, because there is a good port there, which is the principal port of the main ocean. And, truly I believe, that more ships arrive here than in any other place in the world, and especially there come here all sorts of spices and an immense quantity

med Shâh, who ascended the throne in 1276...The statement of De Barros respecting the conversion is as follows:—'The greatness of Malacca induced the kings who followed Xaquem Darsa [Sekandar Shâh,] to throw off their dependency on the kings of Siam, and this chiefly, since the time when induced by the Persians and Gujrati Moors, who came to Malacca and resided there, for the purpose of trade, from Gentiles to become converts to the sect of Muhammed.'" Crawfurd's Descriptive Dictionary of the Indian Islands, etc., p. 245.

1 If by Cini is meant Siam, the statement is corroborated, generally, by the learned researches of Mr. Crawfurd, who writes:—'The subjection of Malacca to Siam seems, indeed, to be admitted by all parties. Four of the most northerly of the States of the Peninsula are still subject to it; while a claim of supremacy is made for, at least, three more. The author of the Commentaries of Albuquerque, giving a greater extension to Malacca than De Barros, thus describes it and its subjection to Siam:—'The kingdom of Malacca on one side borders on Queda; and on the other, Pam [Pahang]. It has one hundred leagues of coast, and inland extends to a chain of mountains where it is parted from Siam, a breadth of ten leagues. All this land was anciently subject to Siam.'" Id., p. 244-5.

"The port is an open road, but, notwithstanding, safe at all seasons, not being within the latitude of hurricanes, nor within the influence of either monsoons; or, as the Commentaries of Albuquerque express it:—'it is the beginning of one monsoon, and the end of another.'" Id., p. 249.

2 "The flourishing condition of Malacca, at the time it was attacked by the Portuguese, [five years after Varthema's visit,] has no doubt been much exaggerated; but making every abatement, enough will remain to show that it was a place of considerable commercial importance, judging it by the ideas of the beginning of the 16th century, and by the peculiar value then attached to some of the commodities of which its trade consisted. 'In matters of trade,' says De Barros, 'the people [the Malays] are artful and expert, for, in general, they have to deal with such nations as the Javanese, the Siamese, the Peguans, the Bengaliss, the Quelijo [Chulias or Talugus,] Malabaris, Gujrats, Persians, and Arabians, with many other people, whose residence here has made
of other merchandise. This country is not very fertile, yet there is produced there grain, a little animal food, wood, birds like those of Calicut, excepting the parrots, which are better here than in Calicut. A great quantity of sandalwood and of tin is found here. There are also a great many elephants, horses, sheep, cows and buffalos, leopards and peacocks, in great abundance. A few fruits like those in Zeilan. It is not necessary to trade here in anything excepting in spices and silken stuffs. These people are olive-

them very sagacious. Moreover, the city is also populous, owing to the ships which resort to it from the country of the Chijs [Chinese], the Lequios [Japanese], the Lucoes [people of Luzon in the Philippines], and other nations of the Orient. All these people bring so much wealth, both of the East and the West, that Malacca seems a centre at which are assembled all the natural productions of the earth, and all the artificial ones of man. On this account, although situated in a barren land, it is, through an interchange of commodities, more amply supplied with everything than the countries themselves from which they come."

Id. p. 245.

1 Varthema's remark respecting the comparative infertility of the country, is confirmed by De Barros in the preceding note, and fully corroborated by Crawfurd, who says:—"It is in vain to plead for the un-productiveness of Malacca the maladministration of former national administrations, for Malacca has been, with little interruption, nearly sixty years under British rule, while Arracan, in less than half the time, under the same government, competing with its immediate neighbour Bengal, has become one of the principal granaries of India."

Id., p. 239.

2 I infer from Crawfurd that sandal-wood, if it exists there at all, is produced in very small quantities in the territory of Malacca, the chief places of its growth being several of the islands of the Malay Archipelago, but more especially Timur and Sumba, which latter takes its European name of Sandal-wood Island from it.

In 1847, the quantity of tin obtained from the mines in the Malacca territory was about five thousand cwts., and it is yearly increasing. Id. p. 240.

3 Meaning, I presume, that these were the most marketable commodities. With regard to silk, Crawfurd says: "It may probably have been first made known to the inhabitants of the Indian Islands by the Hindus, if we are to judge from its Sanscrit name; but in all times known to us, they have been supplied with this article raw and wrought by the
coloured, with long hair. Their dress is after the fashion of Cairo. They have the visage broad, the eye round, the nose compressed. It is not possible to go about the place here when it is dark, because people are killed like dogs,¹ and all the merchants who arrive here go to sleep in their ships. The inhabitants of this city are of the nation of Giavai. The king keeps a governor to administer justice for foreigners, but those of the country take the law into their own hands, and they are the worst race that was ever Chinese, the original inventors of silk;"...nevertheless, he adds:—"that from the raw silk of China, the Malays and Javanese always wove, and still continue to do so, some strong and often rich domestic fabrics suited to their own peculiar tastes. *Id.*, p. 394.

¹ Crawford describes the Malays as a brown-complexioned, lank-haired people, of a squat form, with high cheek-bones, large mouth, and flattened nose. With regard to costume, I had frequent opportunities, during my long residence at Aden, of seeing many Malay merchants on their way to Meccah, who were generally dressed like the same class in Syria and Egypt. As to character, the Malays in general bear a very questionable one, and are notorious for their vindictiveness. Barbosa describes them as "very skilful and exquisite workmen; but very malevolent and treacherous, rarely speaking the truth, and ready to commit any outrage and to die...There are some of them also, if attacked with any serious illness, make a vow to God that if restored to health, they will voluntarily select a more honourable death in His service. On recovery, they leave their houses with a dagger in hand, and rush through the streets, where they kill as many persons as they can, men, women, and children, insomuch that they seem like mad dogs. These are called Amulos, and when seen in this frenzy, all begin to cry out, Amulos! Amulos! in order that the people may be on their guard, who with knives and lances immediately put them to death." (RAMUSIO, vol. i. p. 318.) *Amulos*, I take to be a corruption of the native *amuk*, and the origin of our "running a-muck," which, according to Crawford, is a phrase introduced into our language from the Malay, the latter word signifying a furious and reckless onset."—"Running a-muck with private parties is often the result of a restless determination to exact revenge for some injury or insult; but it also results, not less frequently, from a monomania taking this particular form, and originating in disorders of the digestive organs. The word and the practice are not confined to the Malays, but extend to all the people and languages of the Archipelago that have obtained a certain amount of civilization." *Desc. Diet.*, p. 12.
created on earth. When the king wishes to interfere with them, they say that they will disinherit the land, because they are men of the sea.\textsuperscript{1} The air here is very temper-

\textsuperscript{1} Considering that Varthema was the first European to describe Malacca, and that his stay there did not extend beyond a few days, it is surprising to find how strikingly correct his brief remarks are, not only as regards the natural objects which were open to his inspection, but others also which were less obvious, connected with the past history of the people and their actual civil condition at the period of his visit. The statement that Malacca was inhabited by a nation of Javanese is corroborated by the learned researches of Crawfurd, who says: “On one point, all parties seem to agree, that not only the founders of Malacca, but even of Singapore, were Javanese and not Malays; for even the Malayan account is substantially to this effect, since it brings the emigrants who established themselves at Singapore from Palembang, which was a Javanese settlement.” \textit{Id.} p. 243.

Equally remarkable is our traveller’s notice of two distinct classes among the Malays, one given to trade and agriculture and subject to an organized government, the other a wild race acknowledging no superior authority, and who either felt themselves strong enough to resist any attempt to impose it by expelling the more civilized community from the country, or who did not care to reside on land because they were “men of the sea;” for Varthema’s words—“Et quando il re si vol mettere fra loro, essi dicono che desabitaraano la terra perche sono homini de mare,”—will bear both interpretations. How surprisingly this account is corroborated by Crawfurd, except that the latter makes three sections of the Malays, will be seen by the following extract:—“The Malay nation may be divided naturally into three classes: the civilized Malays, or those who possess a written language, and have made a decent progress in the useful arts; the gipsy-like fishermen, called the Sea People; and the rude half savages, who, for the most part, live precariously on the produce of the forests. The civilized Malays consist of the inhabitants of the eastern side of Sumatra, of much of the interior of that island, and of those of the sea-boards of Borneo and the Malay Peninsula. The sea-gipsies are to be found sojourning from Sumatra to the Moluccas...The only habitations of this people are their boats, and they live exclusively by the produce of the sea, or by the robberies they commit on it. The most usual name by which they are known is orang-laut, literally, ‘men of the sea’...The rude wandering class, speaking the Malay language, is found in the interior of the Malay Peninsula, in Sumatra, and in the islands lying between them, but in no other part of the Archipelago.”...These three classes of Malays existed near three centuries and a half ago, when the 2
The Christians who were in our company gave us to understand that we ought not to remain long here because they are an evil race. Wherefore we took a junk and went towards Sumatra to a city called Pider, which is distant from the mainland eighty leagues, or thereabouts.

The chapter concerning the island of Sumatra, and concerning Pider, a city in Sumatra.

They say that in this district there is the best port of the whole island, which I have already told you is in circum-

Portuguese first arrived in the waters of the Archipelago, just as they do at the present day. That people describes them as having existed also for two centuries and a half before that event, as without doubt they did in times far earlier. Thus De Barros describes the first class of Malays as 'men living by trade, and the most cultivated of these parts;' the second as 'a vile people,' whose 'dwelling was more on the sea than the land,' and who 'lived by fishing and robbery;' and the third as 'half savages' (quasi medios salvages,) while the Malay language was common to all of them." *Id.*, p. 250.

1 "The climate of Malacca, as to temperature, is such as might be expected in a country not more than one hundred miles from the equator, lying along the sea shore,—hot and moist. The thermometer in the shade ranges from 72° to 84° of Fahrenheit, seldom being so low as the first of these, and not often higher than the last. The range of the barometer is only from 29.8 to 30.3 inches. Notwithstanding constant heat, much moisture, and many swamps, the town at least is remarkable for its salubrity." *Id.*, p. 239.

2 Mr. Crawfurd makes Varthema "the first writer who gives the name [of this island] as we now write it," which remark is only correct if restricted to the modern orthography of the word; for Sumatra is undoubtedly the island where Nicolò de' Conti was detained a year, and which he calls Sciamathera. But although Conti was most probably the first to make known the name to our continent, I deem it tolerably certain that it was the island visited by Ibn Batúta about A.D. 1330, which he designates Jáwah, but the capital of which, situated four miles from the coast, he calls Shumatrāh or Sumatrāh. *Our Java*, to which he subsequently proceeded, he distinguishes by the name of *Mul-Jáwah*. This inference is corroborated by the fact that the former place was then under a Muhammedan king called Ez-Zāhir Jamāl ed-Dīn, whereas, according
ference 4,500 miles. In my opinion, which agrees also with what many say, I think that it is Taprobana, in which there to Crawfurd, though several attempts had been made between 1358 and 1460 to convert the Javanese, it was not till 1478 that the Muham-medans succeeded in capturing the capital, and establishing their own power and faith;” which further agrees with Ibn Batûta’s account of Mul-Jâwah, who calls it “the first part of the territory of the infidels.” (See Lee’s Translation, pp. 199-205; and Crawfurd’s Desc. Dict., p. 185.) As Ibn Batûta was proceeding from Bengal to China, and appears to have touched at the Andaman or Nicobar Islands on his voyage from the former coast, I think it highly probable that the present Achin was the place which he visited in the island of Sumatra; for that town lies about two miles from the shore, and the Achinese are stated to have been converted to Isâlam as early as the year 1204. And if Achin was also the city where Conti was detained, which is not unlikely, his designation of it strikingly accords with Ibn Batûta, for he applies that of Sciamuthera to the city as well as to the island, describing the former as “a very noble emporium.” Coupling these ideas with the following quotation from Crawfurd, I think it by no means improbable that Shumatrâh, or some modification of that word, was the prevailing name of Achin (and, perhaps, of the island also,) in Ibn Batûta’s time, and that its present name is of more recent date:—“The native name is correctly Achëh; but this word, which means a ‘wood-leech,’ does not, although naturalized, belong to any of the Malayan languages, but to the Telingu or Telugu of the Coromandel coast.” (Id., p. 2.) I note, however, that the same author conjectures that the word Sumatra is of Sanscrit or Hindu origin, probably from Samudra, the sea or ocean (Id., p. 414.) Respecting Marco Polo’s visit, Mr. Crawfurd has the following observations:—“It is remarkable that the name of Sumatra had not reached Marco Polo, although he was six months wind-bound at the island, and in communication with the natives. That of Java, the only large territory of the Archipelago, familiarly called an island, by the natives, had done so; and he called Sumatra, knowing it to be an island but ignorant of its relative extent, Java Minor.” (Id., p. 414.) Whereon I venture to suggest, that although Marco Polo designates Sumatra, the compass of which he approximately estimated at 2,000 miles, by the name of Java the Less, he nevertheless describes it as comprising eight kingdoms, six of which he visited, and one of these latter, namely, that where he was detained for several months, he calls Samara. That word, as it stands, approaches very nearly the orthography of the present name, and by the simple addition of the letter t, which may have been omitted by an oversight in the original manuscript or in the first copies, we have Sumatra in full. It is further deserving of notice that the same traveller apparently makes
are three crowned kings who are Pagans, and their faith, their manner of living, dress, and customs, are the same as in Tar-

Samara the chief kingdom in the island, for he says of its people:—


Varthema greatly exaggerates the extent of the island, which is about 1,000 miles in length, its extreme ends being its narrowest parts, and its centre its broadest. Its area is reckoned at 125,560 geographical square miles." (Desc. Dict., p. 414.) Prior to the publication of his book, our traveller appears to have had some discussions with the learned men of Europe, consequent on his own discovery, respecting the ancient geography of the island, which led him, as it did many others, to identify it with the Taprobana of Ptolemy. The locality of that famous island was a vexed question at the end of the sixteenth century, for Patazano in describing Sumatra writes:—"Hanc Insulam antiquorum Taprobanan fuisse omnes penes auctores sentient, licet aliqui magne eruditionis viri ipsam Auream fuisse Chersonesum putent, ac ob id antiquis eeu peninsula creditam fuisse." And, again, under the head of Ceylon:—

"ZEILAN verò insula prestantissima est, quae...antiquam fuisse Ptolemæi Taprobanan Andreas Corsalut et Joannes Barrius cum plerisque aliis cencent; Mercator verò, cui magis in hae re fidem prestantus, putat esse Ptolemæi Nanigerim." Geographia, pp. 26.

With respect to the government of Sumatra, it has been already mentioned that Marco Polo divided the island into eight kingdoms, one of which was Felich, where the inhabitants of the coast had embraced Muhammedanism, "by frequent trade with the Saracens; but those who dwelt in the mountains were still like beasts." Varthema diminished the number to "iii Re di corona," which probably comprised only those of the principal states on the eastern side; Odoardo Barbosa says the island has "molti regni di quali il principal è Pedir della banda di tramontana;" while De Barros enumerates no less than twenty-nine on the sea-board alone, of which Pedir, then an independent sovereignty, is one. Patazano sums up the information acquired on this subject up to the end of the sixteenth century in these words:—"Scribunt quidam universam hanc insulam in quatuor regna esse divisam: alii in decem, alii autem in 29, ex quibus nota sunt tantummodo decem: nempe Regnum Pedir, quod ceteris prestat; Pamzi seu Paseem; Achem seu Acem; Campar; Menancabo, quod est fundamentum divitiarium, universæ insulae, cum in eo sint minera auri opulentissima; et regnum Zunde: et haec quidem sex regna sunt circa littus ipsius insulae, ac à Mauris occupata olim fuère." (Id., p. 265.) The last remark agrees with De Barros as quoted by Crawfurd:—"The inhabitants of the coast follow the sect of Muhammed;" nevertheless, Varthema's account, which makes some
nassari, and the wives also are burnt alive. The colour of
these inhabitants is almost white, and they have the face broad,
and the eyes round and green.\(^1\) Their hair is long, the nose
broad and flat, and they are of small stature. Here justice
is strictly administered, as in Calicut.\(^2\) Their money is gold,
and silver, and tin, all stamped. Their golden money has
on one side a devil, on the other there is something resem-
bling a chariot drawn by elephants: the same on the silver
of the sovereigns Hindu by religion, and more especially the reigning
king of Pedir, is too circumstantial to be set aside by any general de-
scriptions of an island of such vast extent, and comparatively so little
known to the best Portuguese historians of that age. Moreover, Var-
thema had become well versed in the externals, at least, of Muhammedan-
ism, and was not likely to confound the observances of Paganism with
those of Islam. In the absence, therefore, of any definite proof to the
contrary, I see no reason to discredit this part of his narrative, more
especially as we have Crawfurd's authority for believing that "the
people of Sumatra had certainly adopted a kind of Hinduism, and this
is sufficiently attested by an examination of their languages, and even
by a few monuments and inscriptions." \textit{Desc. Dict.}, p. 419.

\(^1\) De Barros, as quoted by Crawfurd, says: "The people of the coast,
as well as of the interior of the island, are all of a yellowish-brown colour
(bac), having flowing hair, are well made, of a goodly aspect, and do not
resemble the Javanese, although so near to them." \textit{Id.}, p. 419. He
does not mention the "green eyes."

\(^2\) The same remark is made of the country by Hamilton:—"No place
in the world punishes theft with greater severity than Atcheen, and yet
robberies and murders are more frequent there than in any other place.
For the first fault, if the theft does not amount to a \textit{tayel} value, it is but
the loss of a hand or a foot, and the criminal may choose which he will
part with; and, if caught a second time, the same punishment and loss
is used; but the third time, or if they steal five \textit{tayel} in value, that
crime entitles them to souling or impaling alive. When their hand or foot
is to be cut off, they have a block with a broad hatchet fixed in it, with
the edge upwards, on which the limb is laid, and struck on with a
wooden mallet, till the amputation is made, and they have a hollow
bamboo, or Indian cane, ready to put the stump in, and stopped about
with rags or moss, to keep the blood from coming out, and are set in a
conspicuous place for travellers to gaze on, who generally bestow a little
spittle in a pot, being what is produced by the mastication of beetel,
and that serves them instead of salve to cure their wounds." \textit{Pinker-
ton}, vol. viii. p. 446.
and tin money.\(^1\) Of the silver coin ten go to a ducat, and of those of tin, twenty-five. Elephants in immense quantities are produced here, which are the largest I ever saw. These people are not warlike, but attend to their merchandise, and are very great friends of foreigners.

\(^1\) Crawfurd says that prior to the arrival of the Europeans, the natives of the Archipelago generally had no other coin than small bits of copper, brass, tin, or zinc, though he subjoins that “the Javanese appear to have coined some of their own money, as we find from many examples excava
ted from their own temples and other places. These contain impres
sions of scenic figures, such as are still represented in their dramas, called wayang or shadows, but having no date, and, indeed, no written characters, until after their adoption of Mahommedanism,” which was not till towards the end of the fifteenth century. He further excepts Achin, the state adjoining, (which probably comprised Pedir in Varthe
ta’s time,) and remarks as follows:—“The only native country of the Archipelago in which a coin of the precious metals seems ever to have been coined is Achin. This is of gold, of the weight of nine grains, and of about the value of 14\(\text{d.}\) sterling...All the coins of this description which have been made are inscribed with Arabic characters, and bear the names of the sovereigns under whom they were struck, so that they are comparatively modern.” (Desc. Dict., p. 286.) As a Muhammedan king was reigning in Sumatra when Ibn Batûta visited that island, similar coins may have been current then; but, be that as it may, Varthema’s account fully proves that such “stamped” money existed at the time of his visit, and I see no reason for doubting that it comprised, as he states, coins of silver and of tin, as well as of gold. It is by no means impro
bable, however, that some of the coined money at Achin was imported, through the ordinary transactions of trade, from different parts of India; but I have searched Marsden’s *Numismata Orientalia* in vain for a counter-
part of the Sumatran “device—a chariot drawn by elephants—on any of the early Indian coinage. That Indian coins had obtained a certain degree of circulation in the Archipelago at this period, may be inferred from Varthema’s statement regarding Banda, one of the Nutmeg Islands:—“La moneta corre qui alla usanza di Calicut.” See the chapter “Conc
cerning the Islands of Bandan.”
THE CHAPTER CONCERNING ANOTHER SORT OF PEPPER,
AND CONCERNING SILK, AND BENZOIN, WHICH ARE
PRODUCED IN THE SAID CITY OF PIDER.

In this country of Pider\(^1\) there grows a very great quan-
tity of pepper, and of long pepper which is called \textit{Molaga}. This said kind of pepper is larger than that which comes here to us, and is very much whiter, and within it is hollow, and is not so biting as that of ours, and weighs very little, and is sold here in the same manner as cereals are sold with us.\(^2\) And you must know that in this port there are laden with it every year eighteen or twenty ships, all of which go

\(^1\) Pider, or "Pedir, is the name of a Malay state on the eastern side of Sumatra, and comprising that portion of the sea-board of the island which extends from Diamond Point, the Tanjung-pârlak of the Malays, to Achin...It was the first spot in the Archipelago at which the Portuguese touched, and they found it carrying on some foreign trade, being frequented by ships from different parts of the continent of India. At present it is a place of no moment, except for its export of the areca-nut and a little pepper which is carried to the British settlement of Penang. The principal town, bearing the same name, is situated on a small river, a little east of a headland, which is in north latitude 5° 29' and east longitude 96°." \textit{Id.}, 330-1.

\(^2\) Being uncertain whether this was the \textit{Piper longum} of botanists, I consulted Mr. Bennett of the British Museum, whose kindness I have already had occasion to acknowledge, and append his note in reply:—"There can be no doubt that the second kind of pepper referred to by Varthema is the same as that which we now call long pepper. His account exactly tallies with it in every respect, and is singularly correct, as indeed most of his descriptions are." Crawfurd says: "This commodity is probably a native of Java, although now grown in other countries of the Archipelago," and then remarks: "it is singular that it is not named by Barbosa, but there can be little doubt but that it must have been an article of trade in his time." (\textit{Desc. Dict.}, p. 335.) It is mentioned by Pigafetta, Barbosa’s companion, as growing in one of the Banda islands, and he describes it thus:—"The long pepper grows on a plant or tree like the ivy, that is, it is flexible, and rests on other trees, the fruit hangs on the stem, and the leaf is like that of the mulberry. It is called \textit{budi}." (\textit{Ramusio}, vol. i. p. 368.) Conti also enumerates \textit{peper longo} among the productions of Sumatra. \textit{Id.}, p. 339.
to Cathai, because they say that the extreme cold begins there. The tree which produces this pepper produces it long, but its vine is larger, and the leaf broader and softer, than that which grows in Calicut. An immense quantity of silk is produced in this country, a great deal is also made in the forests without being cultivated by any one. This, it is true, is not very good. A great quantity of benzoin is also produced here, which is the gum of a tree. Some say, for I have not seen it myself, that it grows at a considerable distance from the sea, on the mainland.

THE CHAPTER CONCERNING THREE SortS OF ALOES-WOOD.

Inasmuch as it is the variety of objects which most delights and invites man, as well to read as to understand, it has therefore appeared to me well to add that of which I

1 It is singular that a similar statement is made by De Barros, who in describing the productions of Sumatra says: "It produces also silk in such quantity that there are cargoes of it sent to many parts of India;" whereas Crawfurd remarks:—"This is probably an error on the part of that usually reliable writer. I am not even aware that wild silk is produced in any of the insular forests such as it is found to be in many of those of Hindistan." The same author asserts, indeed, that "the culture of the mulberry and the rearing of the silk-worm have never been practised by the natives of the Archipelago, whether from the unsuitableness of this branch of industry to the climate, or to the state of society, is not ascertained." (Desc. Dict., p. 394.) The discrepancy is a wide one, and I can suggest nothing to reconcile the contradictory statements. It is noticeable, however, that Odeardo Barbosa does not enumerate silk among his list of the productions of Sumatra.

2 "Benzoin, the resin of the *Styrax benzoin*, obtained by wounding the bark. The plant, which is of moderate size, is an object of cultivation, the manner of culture being from the seed. The trees are ripe for the production of the resin at about seven years old, and the plant is the peculiar product of the islands of Borneo and Sumatra." Crawfurd thinks that it may be the *malabathrum* of the ancients. (Id., p. 50.) Benzoin is called by the Arabs *Bakh-khūr Jâwî*, Java incense.
have real certainty by my own experience. Wherefore you must know that neither benzoin nor aloes-wood comes much into Christian ports, and therefore you must understand that there are three sorts of aloes-wood. The first and most perfect sort is called Calampat, and which does not grow in this island, but comes from a city called Sarnau, which (as the Christians our companions said) is near to their city, and here this first sort grows. The second sort is called Loban, which comes from a river. The name of the third sort is called Bochor.¹ The said Christians also said

¹ The *Lignum aloes* or *Agila*, the Eagle-wood of commerce. Barbosa mentions it under the two former names, and Crawfurd in describing it says: “There can be no doubt but that the perfumed wood is the result of disease in the tree that yields it, produced by the thickening of its sap into a gum or resin...It is found in the greatest perfection in the mountainous country to the east of the Gulf of Siam, including Camboja and Cochin-China. It is found, however, although of inferior quality, as far north as Sylhet, in Bengal, and as far south as the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra.” (Desc. Diet., p. 6, 7.) In his earlier History of the Indian Archipelago, (vol. i. p. 519,) he had remarked of the wood in question that “if it be a native of the Indian islands, the countries which produce it have not been ascertained;” but his later researches corroborate Varthema both as regards the existence of the tree in Sumatra, and his other statement that the best quality of the perfumed wood, the Calampat or Kalambak, was of foreign growth. The latter I take to be the 'Ood el-Kumâri of the Two Muhammedan Travellers, (Pinkerton,” vol. vii. p. 208,) and of Ibn Batûta, (Lee’s Translation, p. 201,) who both make that quality to come from Komâri in China. I notice, however, that Castenheda, as quoted by Crawfurd, describes the Kalambak as indigenous to Sumatra. He writes:—“It [Campar, on the eastern side of the island] has nothing but forests which yield aloes-wood, called in India Calambuco. The trees which produce it are large, and when they are old they are cut down, and the aloes-wood taken from them, which is the heart of the tree, and the outer part is agila. Both these woods are of great price, but especially the Calambuco, which is rubbed in the hands, yielding an agreeable fragrance; the agila does so when burned.” Desc. Diet., p. 7.

The names of the other two qualities mentioned by Varthema are Arabic, and merely conventional, for lubân means frankincense, and bakh-châr incense generally. Ibn Batûta apparently specifies the same inferior kinds, and uses the word lubân, in describing the aromatic pro-
that the reason the said Calampat does not come to us is this, that in Gran Cathai, and in the kingdom of Cini and Macini,\(^1\) and Sarnau and Giava, they have a much greater

ducts of Java:—"There is only the lubán of Java, camphor, cloves, and 'Ood Hindi," Indian aloes-wood. (Lee's Trans., pp. 201-2.)

From Castanhed's account of the Kalamak, and the experiment of its fragrance when simply held in the warm hand, as described by Varthema in the next chapter, I am inclined to infer with him that that quality seldom finds its way to the westward. The 'Ood is generally used as a pastille by the Arabs, and their poets, ancient and modern, who are fond of dilating on the excellency of the wood, and ransack their imaginations to multiply its suggestive imagery, mostly associate the perfume with the action of fire. The following is nearly a literal translation of an Arabic couplet which I found on the fireplace of an old khàn in the district of Aleppo. For the English versification I am indebted to the kindness of my friend the Rev. P. G. Hill, rector of St. Edmund the King and Martyr:—

"When God would bring man's virtue to the light,
He sets against him Envy's tongue of spite:
Just as the flames the Aloës-wood surround,
Ere its delicious fragrance can be found."

The same pretty idea, clothed in similar language, occurs in Gregory the Great's Morals on the Book of Job:—"For as unguents, unless they be stirred, are never smelt far off, and as aromatic scents spread not their fragrance except they be burned, so the Saints in their tribulations make known all the sweetness that they have of their virtues." Library of the Fathers, vol. xviii. p. 18.

\(^1\) Sin Máchin, or Sin wa-Máchin, and sometimes the word Sin alone, with the prefixed article, Es-Sin, are used synonymously by the Arabs of the present day to signify the Empire of China generally. I have frequently endeavoured to ascertain from masters of Arab ships whether they attached any definite limits to the country or countries designated by the double name, but the result was unsatisfactory: some maintained that it indicated the entire territory to the north of Siam; others that Sin was specially applicable to Siam and Cochin-China, and Máchin to China including Tartary; and others, again, that Máchin was Siam, and Sin, China. Conti, who most probably derived his nomenclature from native traders, does not mention either Sin or China, but says that the province of Ava was called Macinus by the inhabitants, and styles the country beyond, towards the north, Cathay. Nikitin, who wrote by report only, speaks of the seaports of Cheen and Machin as very large, and supplies a few notices rendering it probable that Siam and China
abundance of gold than we have. They also say that there are much greater lords there than there are in our parts, and that they delight more than we do in those two sorts of perfumes, and that after their death a very great quantity of gold is expended in these perfumes; and for this reason these excellent sorts do not come into our parts. In Sarnau they are worth ten ducats per pound, because there is very little of them.

are meant, but nothing further. D'Herbelot gives a clue to the origin of the conjoined names, and notices the contradictory opinions, much as I have stated them, which had obtained regarding the countries which they respectively indicated. After remarking that Sin or Chín, (China,) according to the Persians and other Orientals, took its name from the eldest son of Japhet, he adds:—" Tchin eût pour fils aîné Matchin, et il suffira de dire icy, que les Orientaux, en parlant de la Chine en general, l'appellent Tchin et Matchin, de même que pour exprimer la Tartarie entière, ils se servent des termes d'Jagioug' et Magioug', qui sont le Gog et Magog de l'Ecriture Sainte. Il y a pourtant des Geographes qui prétendent, qu’il faut entendre par le mot Tchin, la Chine Septentrionale, que plusieurs croyent être la même que la Khatha ou Kathaï, et par celuy de Matchin, la Chine Meridionale, en y comprenant la Cochin-Chine, la Tunquin, e la Royaume d'Anan avec ceux de Siam et la Pegu." (Lib. Orient. sub voce SIN.) This is satisfactory as far as it goes, but it leaves untouched another point suggested by the two names as used by the early European travellers above quoted, and their prevalence among the Arabs and Persians at the present day. Neither Suleimnân in the ninth century, nor Edrisi in the twelfth, nor Marco Polo in the thirteenth, nor Ibn Batûta before the middle of the fourteenth, all of whom describe China as Sin, ever mention the word Matchin. There must be some reason for this singular fact, though I am unable to suggest any. I note, however, that D’Herbelot, in his article on SIN, remarks that “the author of the Humaioun Naméh, which is the book of Kalilah and Dimnah, says that Homâïounfal was formerly a powerful king of Tchin and Matchin.” I have searched carefully through De Sacy’s Arabic version of those famous fables without discovering the latter word, and conclude, therefore, that the reference is to some annotations of Ali Chelebi, who translated the Kalilah wa-Dimnah into Turkish in the beginning of the tenth century, and dedicated it to Suleiman I., under the title of Humayûn-Namēh.
THE CHAPTER CONCERNING THE EXPERIMENT WITH THE SAID ALOES-WOOD AND BENZOIN.

The aforesaid Christians made us see an experiment with the two kinds of perfume. One of them had a little of both sorts. The Calampat was about two ounces, and he made my companion hold it in his hand as long as he could say four times, "Miserere mei, Deus," holding it firmly in his closed hand. Then he made him open his hand. Truly, I never smelt such an odour as that was, which exceeded all our perfumes. Then he took a piece of benzoin as large as a walnut, and he took of that [the Calampat] which grows in Sarnau about half a pound, and had it placed in two chambers in vases with fire within. In truth I tell you, that that little produced more odour, and a greater softness and sweetness, than two pounds of any other kind would have done. It is impossible to describe the excellence of those two kinds of scents and perfumes. So that you have now heard the reason why these said things do not come to our parts. There also grows here a very great quantity of lacca¹ for making red colour, and the tree of this is formed like our trees which produce walnuts.

THE CHAPTER CONCERNING THE VARIETY OF DEALERS IN THE SAID ISLAND OF SUMATRA.

In this country I saw the most beautiful works of art I ever saw in my life, that is, some boxes worked in gold, which they gave for two ducats each, which, in truth, with us, would be valued at one hundred ducats.² Again, I saw

¹ "Lacca, in Malay, Laka, the Tanarius major, a tree with a rose-coloured wood, a native of Sumatra, used in dyeing and pharmacy. It is an article of considerable native trade, and is chiefly exported to China." Crawford's Disc. Diet., p. 204.

² "Gold ornaments of considerable beauty are made by most of the
here in one street about five hundred money-changers, and
these because a very great number of merchants come to
this city, where they carry on a very extensive traffic.¹ For
the sleeping of these people, there are good beds of cotton,
covered with silk and cotton sheets. In this island they
have an extreme abundance of timber, and they make here
great ships which they call giunchi, which carry three
masts, and have a prow before and behind, with two rudders
before and two behind. And when they navigate through
any archipelago, (for here there is a great sea like a canal,) while sailing, the wind will sometimes come in their face,
they immediately lower the sail, and quickly, without turn-
ing, hoist sail on the other mast, and turn back. And you
must know that they are the most active men I have ever
met with. They are also very great swimmers, and excel-
 lent masters of the art of making fire-works.²

civilized nations of the Archipelago. The neck-chains of Manilla are
eamples of very delicate workmanship, and the filagree work of the
Malays of Sumatra is still more remarkable. In all these cases, what
is most striking is the beauty of the work compared with the rudeness
and simplicity of the workmen and their tools.” ⁴ Id., p. 145.
¹ This remark undesignedly confirms Varthema’s former statement
respecting the coins which were current at Sumatra. (See note on p.
232 ante.) The money-changers were probably foreigners, natives of
India, like those at Malacca, where Crawfurd says “a colony of the
Hindus of Telingana still exists, whose profession it is to try gold by the
touch and to refine it.” ⁵ Id., p. 287.
² “Fuochi artificiati.” Crawfurd has collected abundant evidence to
prove that fire-arms were in use among the more advanced Malay
nations when the Portuguese first arrived in the Archipelago, and he
concludes that their knowledge of artillery was communicated by the
Arabs, who had acquired it from the Christians. If such was the case,
it must have been from the Arabs of the Persian Gulf, for, as has been
shown in a former note, (p. 65,) those of Yemen were generally un-
acquainted with fire-arms when the Egyptians invaded that country in
1515. I think Mr. Crawfurd’s conclusion very probable, but I venture
to question one of the premises as contained in the following quotation:
—"The name by which fire-arms are usually called [among the Malays]
is bādi‘, a general one for any missile, and mariam, which is Arabic, and
THE CHAPTER CONCERNING THE HOUSES, AND HOW THEY ARE COVERED, IN THE SAID ISLAND OF SUMATRA.

The habitations of the said place consist of walled houses of stone, and they are not very high, and a great many of them are covered with the shells of sea turtles,¹ because they in that language signifies 'the Virgin Mary,' which would seem to imply that the knowledge of artillery was derived by the Arabs themselves from the Christians, as without doubt it was. Mariam does, indeed, mean Mary, not in Arabic only, but in several other Oriental languages, and Mussulmans are as familiar with the name through the Korân as Christians are through the Bible. Moreover, as the word is certainly never used by the Arabs in Arabia or Egypt to designate fire-arms, I can only suppose it to be a conventional term confined to those residing in the Archipelago, and, as such, can hardly be adduced in support of Mr. Crawfurd's hypothesis. Varthema's notice of the skill displayed by the people of Sumatra in the preparation of "fuochi artificiali" at this early period is corroborated by the same learned author's remarks on that subject:—"A knowledge of gunpowder must have been, at least, as early in the Indian islands as that of cannon. It is not improbable that it may have been even earlier known through the Chinese, for the manufacture of fire-works [is] known to the Malays under the name of Marchan, a word of which the origin is not traceable. The principal ingredients of gunpowder are sufficiently abundant over many parts of the Archipelago, and known by native names, sandawe being the name of saltpetre, and bolirang or wallirang, of sulphur." Desc. Dict., p. 22.

¹ Conti merely describes the houses at Sumatra as being very low, but Barbosa says that all the cities of the kingdoms in the island were built of straw, which contradicts Varthema, unless the latter refers to some locality unknown to Barbosa. I have discovered nothing in the accounts of the early European travellers to confirm the use made of the shell as mentioned in the text; but it is a well known fact that turtles measuring from five to six feet are found in the seas of the Indian Archipelago, and Conti had heard that some of the churches belonging to the Christians at Cathay were constructed entirely of tortoise-shell. (See India in the Fifteenth Cent., ii. 33.) There is nothing improbable, however, in Varthema's statement, and its coincidence with the accounts of the ancient Greek and Roman authors is most striking. Mr. R. H. Major's learned researches on this subject deserve to be quoted in full. Referring to the enormous tortoise described by Sinbad in the Arabian Nights as measuring twenty cubits
are found here in great quantities, and in my time I saw one weighed which weighed one hundred and three pounds. I also saw two elephants' teeth which weighed three hundred and thirty-five pounds. And I saw, moreover, in this island, serpents very much larger than those of Calicut. Let us revert to our Christian companions, who were desirous of returning to their country: wherefore they asked us what was our intention, whether we wished to remain here, or to go farther on, or to return back. My companion answered them: "Since I am brought where the spices grow, I should like to see some kinds before I return back." They said to him: "No other spices grow here excepting those which you have seen." And he asked them where the nutmegs and the cloves grew. They answered: "That the nutmegs and mace grew in an island which was distant from there three hundred miles." We then asked them if we could go to that island in safety, that is, secure from robbers or corsairs. The Christians answered: "That secure from robbers we might go, but not from the chances of the sea;" and they said that we could not go to the said island with that large ship. My companion said: "What means then in length and breadth, he remarks:—"The account of these animals is not to be attributed to a licentious exuberance of fancy in the Arabian author. He might have seen in Ælian (De Natura Anim., l. xvi. c. xvii.) that the tortoises, whose shells were fifteen cubits in length, and sufficiently large to cover a house, were found near the island of Taprobane. Pliny and Strabo mention the same circumstance (Nat. Hist., l. ix. c. 10): they likewise turn them upside down, and say that men used to row in them as in a boat. (Geog., l. xvi. 6.) Diodorus Siculus adds to their testimony, and assures us, on the faith of an historian, that the chelonophagi (shell-fish eaters, L. iv. c. 1) derived a threefold advantage from the tortoise, which occasionally supplied them with a roof to their houses, a boat, and a dinner." Mr. Major then proceeds to identify this colossal tortoise with the Colossochelys Atlas, the first fossil remains of which were discovered in the sub-Himalayahs by Dr. Falconer and Major Cautley in 1835, an idea of the vast size of which is afforded by the cast in the upper galleries of the British Museum. See Introduction to India in the Fifteenth Cent., pp. xliii-v.
might there be for going to this island?" "They answered: "That it was necessary to purchase a Chiampana,"¹ that is, a small vessel, of which many are found there. My companion begged them to send for two, which he would buy. The Christians immediately found two, furnished with people whom they had there to manage them, with all things necessary and proper for such a voyage; and they bargained for the said vessels, men, and necessary things, for four hundred pardai, which were paid down by my companion, who then began to say to the Christians: "O my very dear friends, although we are not of your race, we are all sons of Adam and Eve, will you abandon me and this other my companion who is born in your faith?" "How in our faith? This companion of yours, is he not a Persian?" He replied: "He is a Persian now, because he was purchased in the city of Jerusalem." The Christians hearing Jerusalem mentioned, immediately raised their hands to heaven, and then kissed the earth three times, and asked at what time it was that I was sold in Jerusalem. We replied: "That I was about fifteen years old." Then said they: "He ought to remember his country." Said my companion: "Truly he does recollect it, for I have had no other pleasure for many months but that of hearing of the things of his country, and he has taught me [the names of] all the members of the body and the names of the things to eat." Hearing this, the Christians said: "Our wish was to return to our country, which is distant from here three thousand miles; for your sake and for that of your companion we are willing to come where you shall go; and if your companion is willing to remain with us, we will make him rich, and if he shall desire to observe the Persian law, he shall be at liberty to do so." My companion replied: "I am much pleased with your company, but it is out of order for him to remain with you, because I have given him a niece of mine to be his wife for

¹ See note 2 on p. 188 ante.
the love which I bear him. So that, if you are willing to come in company with us, I wish that you first take this present which I give you, otherwise I should never be satisfied.” The good Christians answered: “That he might do as he pleased, for they were satisfied with everything.” And so he gave them half a curia of rubies, which were ten, of the value of five hundred pardai. Two days afterwards the said Chiampane were ready, and we put on board many articles of food, especially the best fruits I ever tasted, and thus took our way towards the island called Bandan.

THE CHAPTER CONCERNING THE ISLAND OF BANDAN, WHERE NUTMEGS AND MACE GROW.

In the course of the said journey we found about twenty islands, part inhabited and part not, and in the space of

1 See p. 104 ante. 
2 See note on p. 170 ante. 
3 See note on p. 130 ante. 
4 Bandan, the modern Banda, one of “the Banda or Nutmeg Islands, which consist of a group of mere islets, said to be five in number, like the Clove Islands, but really amounting to ten, although some of them be uninhabited.” (Desc. Diet., p. 33.) Barbosa makes the population Moors and Pagans, and Pigafetta speaks of them as being Moors only. (Ramusio, vol. i. pp. 319, 368.) De Barros, as quoted by Crawfurd, gives the following description of the inhabitants and produce of the Banda Islands, which on most points strikingly confirms Varthema’s account:—“The people of these islands are robust, with a tawny complexion and lank hair, and are of the worst repute in these parts. They follow the Mohammedan sect, and are much addicted to trade, their women performing the labours of the field. They have neither king nor lord, and all their government depends on the advice of their elders; and as these are often at variance, they quarrel among themselves. The land has no other export than the nutmeg. This tree is in such abundance that the land is full of it, without its being planted by any one, for the earth yields it without culture. The forests which produce it belong to no one by inheritance, but to the people in common. When June and September come, which are the months for gathering the crop, the nutmeg woods are allotted, and he who gathers most has most profit.” Desc. Diet., p. 35.
fifteen days we arrived at the said island, which is very ugly and gloomy, and is about one hundred miles in circumference, and is a very low and flat country. There is no king here, nor even a governor, but there are some peasants, like beasts, without understanding. The houses of this island are of timber, very gloomy, and low. Their dress consists of a shirt; they go barefooted, with nothing on their heads; their hair long, the face broad and round, their colour is white, and they are small of stature. Their faith is Pagan, but they are of that most gloomy class of Calicut called Poliar and Hirava;\(^2\) they are very weak of understanding, and in strength they have no vigour, but live like beasts. Nothing grows here but nutmegs and some fruits. The trunk of the nutmeg is formed like a peach tree, and produces its leaves in like manner; but the branches are more close, and before the nut arrives at perfection the mace stands round it like an open rose, and when the nut is ripe the mace clasps it, and so they gather it in the month of September; for in this island the seasons go as with us, and every man gathers as much as he can, for all are common, and no labour is bestowed upon the said trees, but nature is left to do her own work. These nuts are sold by a measure, which weighs twenty-six pounds, for the price of half a carlino. Money circulates here as in Calicut. It is not necessary to administer justice here, for the people are so stupid, that if they wished to do evil they would not know how to accomplish it. At the end of two days my companion said to the Christians: "Where do the cloves grow?" They answered: "That they grew six days' journey hence, in an island called Monoch, and that the people of that island are beastly, and more vile and worthless than those of Bandan. At last we determined to go to that island be the people what they might, and so we set sail, and in twelve days arrived at the said island.

\(^1\) See p. 171 and note.
THE CHAPTER CONCERNING THE ISLAND OF MONOCH,1 WHERE THE CLOVES GROW.

We disembarked in this island of Monoch, which is much smaller than Bandan; but the people are worse than those

1 Varthema here applies the collective name to one of the five islands forming the proper Moluccas, but affords no indication enabling us to identify the island where he landed, which was probably either Ternaté or Tidor. With regard to the collective appellative, Mr. Crawfurd remarks:—"The collective name, which the Portuguese write Maluca, and is correctly Maluka, is equally unknown, although said to be that of a place and people of the island of Gilolo. No such name is, at present, known to exist in that island. There can be no doubt, however, but that this word was used by the Malays and Javanese, who conducted the spice trade, before it fell into the hands of the Portuguese; for it is employed by Barbosa, who visited the Archipelago before the conquest of Malacca; and again in 1521 by Pigafetta, who writes the word Molucco." (Desc. Dict., p. 283.) It is clear that Gilolo was not Varthema's Monoch, for he describes the latter as much smaller than Bandan. Pigafetta gives a circumstantial account of the group, but Barbosa's briefer narrative comprises the most important particulars respecting their condition at this period:—"In advance of these islands, [Ambon = Amboyna,) towards the north, are the five islands of Maluco, in all of which cloves grow, and they belong to Pagans and Muhammadans, and the kings are Muhammedans. The first is called Bachan; the second, Machian, which has a good harbour; the third, Motel; the fourth, Tidoro; the fifth, Terenati, in which there is a Muhammedan king called Sultan Hennaram Corala, [the second word is probably a corruption of Khair-Allah; I can make nothing of the first,] who used to rule over all the said Clove islands, but four were taken from him, and each has a king of its own. The mountains of these five islands are all full of cloves, which grow on certain trees like the laurel, which has a leaf like the comari [?] and grows like the flower of an orange. In the beginning it [the clove] is green, then it becomes white, and when ripe is red. The people then gather it with the hand, climbing on the trees, and place it to dry in the sun, which makes it black; and if there is no sun, they dry it in smoke, and when it is well dried, they sprinkle it with aequa salsa [this may mean salt water] that it may not break, and that it may retain its virtue. Of these cloves, the quantity is so great that they can never wholly gather them, so that much of them is left to go to the bad. Those trees from which fruit is not collected for three years remain in a wild state, and those cloves are worthless. These islands are frequented every year by those from Malaca and Giava who come to load with cloves, and bring to buy with, quicksilver, cinnaber, cloths from Cambaia,
of Bandan, but live in the same manner, and are a little more white, and the air is a little more cold. Here the cloves grow, and in many other neighbouring islands, but they are small and uninhabited. The tree of the cloves is exactly like the box tree, that is, thick, and the leaf is like that of the cinnamon, but it is a little more round, and is of that colour which I have already mentioned to you in Zeilan, [Ceylon,] which is almost like the leaf of the laurel. When these cloves are ripe, the said men beat them down with canes, and place some mats under the said tree to catch them. The place where these trees are is like sand, that is, it is of the same colour, not that it is sand. The country is very low, and the north star is not seen from it. When we had seen this island and these people, we asked the Christians if there was anything else to see. They replied: "Let us see a little how they sell these cloves." We found that they were sold for twice as much as the nutmegs, but by measure, because these people do not understand weights.

THE CHAPTER CONCERNING THE ISLAND OF BORNEI.

We were now desirous of changing countries, in order to

Bengala, and Paleacate, drugs of Cambaia, some pepper, porcelain vases, large metal bells which are made in Giava, and brass and tin basins. The cloves here are so cheap, that they get them almost for nothing. This king of Maluco is a Muhammedan, and almost a Pagan, for he has a Muhammedan wife, and keeps in his house between three and four hundred beautiful girls who are Pagans, of whom he has sons and daughters, and only the sons of the Muhammedan women become Muhammedans. Besides, he has always in his service many hunch-backed women, whose shoulders and backs he causes to be broken in infancy, and this he does for the sake of show and reputation. He has between eighty and a hundred of these, who always stand around and near him, and serve him instead of pages, for one hands him betel-leaf, and another his sword, and in like manner they perform all other offices." Ramusio, vol. i. p. 319.

1 Meaning, perhaps, as to latitude.
learn new things in every way. Then said the Christians: "O dear companion, since God has conducted us so far in safety, if it please you, we will go to see the largest island in the world, and the most rich, and you will see a thing which you have never seen before. But we must first go to another island which is called Bornei, where we must take a large ship, for

1 By "the greatest island in the world" the Christians appear to have meant Java, showing how ignorant they were of the comparative size of Borneo. At what point of the latter island the party landed is uncertain, but it was undoubtedly on the southern part, for our author says: "pigliammo il camino verso la detta isola, alla qual sempre si va al mezzo giorno." And yet, if this inference is correct, one fails to perceive the necessity of the precaution suggested by the Christians, that they must first go to Borneo, and take a larger vessel there, because the sea on the way was rougher; since, from the southern part of that island, their route to Java would have been much the same as that by which they had sailed from Sumatra to the Banda Islands, except, indeed, that in the one case they probably hugged the coast of Java, (Varthema tells us that they found about twenty islands on the way,) and in the other would have to cross the Java sea. Unfortunately, the approximate measurement given of the distance between the Moluccas and Borneo affords no aid in settling either the course pursued or the point of disembarkation, as the nearest extremities of the two places are 450 miles apart, which leads to the conjecture that by some mischance "200 miles" may have been substituted for "200 leagues" in the original MS., or in the first copies. Further, it is open to question whether the mainland of Borneo was the locality visited: Varthema's description of the island as being "alquanto maggiore che la sopraddetta [referring to his Maluch,] e molto più bassa," would rather indicate one of the islets on the south-eastern side of Borneo, though perhaps by "bassa" he refers to latitude; otherwise we must pronounce his usual accuracy greatly at fault in this instance, or infer that his informants were as unacquainted as himself with the real size of Bornei. However this may be, his statement respecting the large export of camphor warrants the inference that the place was situated in the highway of the trade of that period, and his account of the inhabitants shows that they had attained a degree of civilization far beyond that of the aboriginal Dayaks. These latter, according to Crawfurd, rarely reach the sea-coast, which is in the occupation of foreign settlers, whom he considers to be generally of Malay descent, and Varthema's brief description of those whom he met at Bornei coincides with that opinion.

For further information respecting Borneo, I refer the reader to the
the sea is more rough.” He replied: “I am well pleased to do that which you wish.” And so we took our way towards the said island, the route to which is constantly to the southward. While on our way the said Christians had no other pleasure, night and day, than that of conversing with me upon subjects relating to the Christians and about our faith. And when I told them of the Volto Santo which is in St. Peter’s, and of the heads of St. Peter and St. Paul, and of many other saints, they told me secretly that if I would go with them I should be a very great lord, for having seen these things. I doubted that after they had conducted me there I should ever have been able to return to my country, and therefore I abstained from going. When we had arrived in the island of Bornei, which is distant from Monoch about two hundred miles, we found it to be somewhat larger than the abovementioned, and much lower. The people of this island are Pagans, and are good people. Their colour is more white than otherwise. Their dress consists of a cotton shirt, and some go clothed in camelots. Some wear red caps. In this island justice is strictly administered, and every year a very great quantity of camphor is shipped, which they say grows there, and which is the gum of a tree. If it be so, I have not seen it, and therefore I do not affirm it. Here my companion chartered a vessel for one hundred ducats.

THE CHAPTER SHOWING HOW THE MARINERS MANAGE THE NAVIGATION TOWARDS THE ISLAND OF GIAVA.

When the chartered vessel was supplied with provisions, we took our way towards the beautiful island called Giava, able article under that head in Mr. Crawfurd’s Descriptive Dictionary, where he has collected together all the available authorities on the early history of the island, and the first attempts made by Europeans to open commercial relations with the inhabitants.
at which we arrived in five days, sailing towards the south. The captain of the said ship carried the compass with the magnet after our manner, and had a chart which was all marked with lines, perpendicular and across. My companion asked the Christians: "Now that we have lost the north star, how does he steer us? Is there any other north star than this by which we steer?" The Christians asked the captain of the ship this same thing, and he showed us four or five stars, among which there was one which he said was contrario della (opposite to) our north star,¹ and that he sailed by the north because the magnet was adjusted² and subjected to our north. He also told us that on the other side of the said island, towards the south, there are some other races, who navigate by the said four or five stars opposite to ours;³

¹ In Varthema's Travels as contained in the edition of Remusio of 1613, the words are: "ch'era incontro della." The meaning doubtless is, over against, opposite to.
² In the original "acconcia," i.e. conformed to, adjusted to.
³ Being but very imperfectly acquainted with nautical astronomy, I submitted this chapter to my friend C. R. Markham, Esq., the Honorary Secretary of the Hakluyt Society, and also to R. H. Major, Esq., of the British Museum, whose able Introduction to the Early Voyages to Terra Australis, now called Australia, is a sufficient warranty of his qualifications to give an opinion on any subject connected with the infancy of navigation in that part of the globe. I append their respective notes, with the initials of their names attached.

"These four or five stars are the constellation of the Southern Cross. When the Southern Cross is vertical, a line drawn through the upper and lower stars passes through the South Pole, and meets a star called B. Hydrus, which is about twice as far from the South Pole as the star which we call the Pole Star is from the North Pole. This, no doubt, is the star alluded to by Varthema as being 'contrary to our North Star.' The skipper navigated by the North, because his compass was of European manufacture[?], its index pointing to the North, and not like that of the Chinese pointing to the South."—C. R. M.

Andrea Corsalis, a century after Varthema, gives the following interesting account and diagram of the Southern Cross, which he also describes as being "opposta alla nostra Tramontana:"—"After passing the equinoctial line, we were in an altitude of 37°, in the other hemisphere, opposite the Cape of Good Hope,—a stormy and cold climate,
and, moreover, they gave us to understand that beyond the
the sun being at this season in the northern constellations, and we found
the night fourteen hours long. Here we saw a wonderful order of
the stars, which, in the part of the sky opposite to our north, revolve in
infinite numbers. Wherever the Antarctic Pole might be, for the degrees
of altitude we took the day by the Sun, and we reconnoitred the night by
the astrolabe, and they made manifest two nebulae [or clouds] of tolerable
size, which, alternately falling and rising, continually moved round it, [this
order of the stars,] having a star always in the centre, which, with them,
revolved about eleven degrees from the Pole. Above these, there ap-
peared a wonderful Cross in the midst of five stars which surround it,
(as the Wain does the North [Star],) with other stars which, therewith,
go round the Pole, revolving round it at a distance of about 30°, and
performed the circuit in twenty-four hours; and it [the Cross] is so
beautiful, that in my opinion none of the celestial constellations can be
compared to it, as will be seen by the annexed figure. And, unless I
am mistaken, I believe this to be the Crusero of which Dante, with a
spirit of prophecy, speaks in the beginning of his Purgatory."

[Reference is here made to the opening part of Canto I :—

" Io mi volsi a man destra, e posi mente
   All’ altro polo, e vidi quattro stelle
   Non viste mai, fuor ch’alla prima gente.
   Goder pareva ’l Ciel di lor fiamelle.
   O settentrional vedovo sito,
   Poi che privato se’ di mirar quelle!"

We may fairly question Dante’s prophetic powers, but if the Southern
Cross is indicated in these lines, whence did he obtain his knowledge ?]
said island the day does not last more than four hours, and
that there it was colder than in any other part of the world.
Hearing this we were much pleased and satisfied. 1

THE CHAPTER CONCERNING THE ISLAND OF GIAVA, OF
ITS FAITH, MANNER OF LIVING AND CUSTOMS,
AND OF THE THINGS WHICH GROW IN
THE SAID ISLAND.

Following then our route, in five days we arrived at this
island of Giava, in which there are many kingdoms, the
kings of which are Pagans. Their faith is this: some adore
idols as they do in Calicut, and there are some who worship
the sun, others the moon; many worship the ox; a great
many the first thing they meet in the morning; and others

1 "This sentence is very important if it should point to latitudes on
a line with or south of Australia. The point where the shortest day
would only last four hours would be 15° south of the southern point of
Van Diemen's Land. It is most improbable that the Malay skipper
should have been so far south; yet his statements indicate a knowledge
of countries as far south, at least, as Australia." C. R. M.

"Vague as this sentence is, it either means nothing, or it contains
information of very great importance. It is difficult to suppose that
the Malay skipper should have been so far south as the great Southern
Continent; yet it is more difficult to believe him capable of describing
a phenomenon natural to these high latitudes, except from his own ob-
servation, or that of other navigators of that early period. But even
should we feel disposed to withhold our belief in the probability of an
event so astonishing as this would be, there yet remains the almost
unavoidable conclusion that Australians are alluded to in the descrip-
tion of people to the south of Java who navigated by the four or five
stars, doubtless the constellation of the Southern Cross. This reference
to Australia is the more remarkable, that it precedes, in time, even those
early indications of the discovery of that country which I have shown to
exist on manuscript maps of the first half of the sixteenth century,
although the discoverers' names, most probably Portuguese, and the date
of the discovery, as yet remain a mystery." R. II. M.
worship the devil in the manner I have already told you.¹
This island produces an immense quantity of silk,² part in
our manner and part wild, and the best emeralds³ in the

¹ Java was unknown, even by name, to the civilized nations of Europe
before Marco Polo's time, and his account of the island was founded on
the report of others. Of the government, he merely remarks that the
king was independent. Ibn Batūta, who visited Java circa a.d. 1330,
says that the king was an infidel. Varthema places the country under
many rulers, and makes all the rulers and people Pagans. The first
statement is confirmed by De Barros, who says: "The island of Java is
divided into many kingdoms;" the second is modified by Barbosa, who
describes Java Major as "inhabited by many Pagans, and in the sea-
ports by Moors, wherein there are many villages and localities containing
very many dwellings of Moors and of Moorish kings, who, however, are
all subject to the king of the island, who is a Pagan, and resides inland.
He is a very great lord, and is called Palendora. Sometimes they rebel
against him, but he immediately reduces them again." (Ramusio, vol. i.
p. 319.) This appears to be the most probable account of the govern-
ment and religion of the Javanese at the period referred to, though
Crawfurd says: "All authorities are agreed in assigning the year of
Christ 1478 as that in which Majapait [the capital of the principal
Hindu state] was overthrown." I am unable to adjust the discrepancy,
which, after all, is not a wide one; but that Islamism had not absorbed
the population generally till long after is evident, for Crawfurd himself,
quoting from De Barros, writes:—"When Henrique Leme visited the
country of the Sundas in 1522, forty-four years after the supposed final
conversion of the Javanese, he found idolatrous temples, nunneries, and
the practice of concremation, still existing;" (Deser. Dict., pp. 185-6;) and
Hamilton describes the religion of Java at the beginning of the last
century as partly Muhammedan and partly Pagan. See Pinkerton,
vol. viii. p. 455.

² I find nothing to corroborate this statement about the growth of
silk at Java, on the contrary, Crawfurd's account entirely contradicts it:
"The only material, besides cotton, from which cloth is made by the
Javanese is silk, and as the art of rearing the silk-worm has never been
introduced into Java, with any effectual result, the raw material has
always been imported." Id., p. 178.

³ If emeralds were found at Java, they must have been imported from
some other quarter. These stones appear to have been very scarce even
in India at this period, for Andrea Corsali, writing of that country, says:
"I do not know where emeralds are produced: here they are in greater
estimation than any other stone." (Ramusio, vol. i. p. 180.) Varthema
himself says the same of Pegu. See p. 218 ante.
world are found here, and gold and copper in great quantity;¹ very much grain, like ours, and excellent fruits like those of Calicut. Animal food of all kinds, like ours, is found in this country. I believe that these inhabitants are the most trustworthy men in the world: they are white and of about our stature, but they have the face much broader than ours, their eyes large and green, the nose much depressed, and the hair long.² The birds here are in great multitudes, and all different from ours excepting the peacocks, turtle-doves, and black crows, which three kinds are like ours. The strictest justice is administered among these people, and they go clothed all' apostolica in stuffs of silk, camelot, and cotton, and they do not use many arms, be-

¹ I infer from Crawfurd that gold is found in its native state in Java, where also "massive ornaments of this metal, with images of the same, are frequently discovered." (Hist. of the Ind. Archts., vol. i. p. 183.) With regard to copper, the same author says: "Ores of this metal have been found in Sumatra, Celebes, and Timur...In Sumatra, mines of it are said to be worked, but if such be the case, even their locality has certainly never been shown. The probability is, that this metal has always been, as it now is, imported...The use of copper in Java, chiefly in the formation, with tin and zinc, of alloys, is attested to have been of considerable antiquity by the discovery in old ruins of many statues and utensils of bronze, and even of copper itself. Desc. Dict., pp. 116-7.

² "Java, whether the inhabitants be of the Javanese or Sunda nation, is peopled by the same race, the Malayan. This is characterized by a short and squat person,...the face is round, the mouth wide, the cheekbones high, the nose short, small, never prominent as with the European, and never flat as with the African negro. The eyes are always black, small, and deep-seated. The complexion is brown, with a shade of yellow, not so dark as with the majority of Hindus, and never black as with some of them." As to the moral character of the Javanese, Mr. Crawfurd fully coincides with Varthema, in which respect, however, both are decidedly at issue with Barbosa, who calls them, by report, "genti molto superbe, bugiarde, e traditori." Crawfurd, on the contrary, says they are "a peaceable, docile, sober, simple, and industrious people;" and adds:—"from my own experience of them, I have no difficulty in pronouncing them the most straightforward and truthful people that I have met with." Desc. Dict., pp. 173-4.
cause those only fight who go to sea.\(^1\) These carry bows, and the greater part darts of cane. Some also use *zara-bottane*\(^2\) (blow-pipes), with which they throw poisoned darts; and they throw them with the mouth, and, however little they draw blood, the [wounded] person dies. No artillery of any kind is used here, nor do they know at all how to make it.\(^3\) These people eat bread made of corn; some also

\(^1\) Barbosa speaks of the Javanese as being "gran corsari, perché vanno travagliando per mare;" and Crawfurd says that boat-building is still an art extensively practised all along the northern coast of Java. Their maritime propensities may be inferred also from the fact that they have no fewer than four generic names for a ship or vessel: *prau, jong, biita, and palwa,*—all native words." See Desc. Dict., p. 176.

\(^2\) This weapon is thus described by Crawfurd:—"The chief missile in use before the introduction of fire-arms, was a small arrow ejected from a blow-pipe by the breath, called a *Sumpitan,* meaning the object blown through. This instrument is at present in general use by most of the wild tribes of Sumatra, Borneo, and Celebes. The bow for discharging arrows is well known to all the more advanced nations of the Archipelago, but does not seem, at any time, to have been generally employed, the blow-pipe probably superseding its use, although a far less effectual weapon. It is found represented on the sculptures of some of the monuments of Java of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries." *I. d.,* p. 21.

\(^3\) Barbosa, in describing the Javanese by report from four to nine years subsequent to Varthema, says: "they are great masters in casting artillery. They make here many *spingarde,* [one-pounders?] muskets, and fire-works, and in every place are considered excellent in casting artillery, and in the knowledge of discharging it." (Ramusio, vol. i. p. 310.) Crawfurd also adduces satisfactory evidence to prove that fire-arms were used by the natives of Malacca when that place was assaulted by Albuquerque in 1511, and sums up his researches into the subject with this inference:—that although there is no record of the actual year in which fire-arms were first made known to the inhabitants of the Archipelago, yet, considering the frequent intercourse which subsisted between them and the maritime parts of Western India, "we may safely conclude that the event did not take place earlier than fifty years before the arrival of the Portuguese, that is, about the middle of the fifteenth century, or about a century after they had been in common use in Europe." (I. d., p. 23.) Varthema's contrary statement cannot stand against this weight of authority; nevertheless, I venture to suggest in his behalf, what I am disposed to consider very probable, especially from the subject of the next chapter, whereon he is again in
eat the flesh of sheep, or of stags, or, indeed, of wild hogs, and some others eat fish and fruits.

THE CHAPTER SHOWING HOW IN THIS ISLAND THE OLD PEOPLE ARE SOLD BY THEIR CHILDREN OR THEIR RELATIONS, AND AFTERWARDS ARE EATEN.

The people in this island who eat flesh, when their fathers become so old that they can no longer do any work, their children or relations set them up in the market-place for sale, and those who purchase them kill them and eat them cooked.¹ And if any young man should be attacked by any antagonism with Mr. Crawford, that our traveller may have landed at some out-of-the-way place in the island, where the people were comparatively uncivilized, and that he drew his general inferences from what he saw in that restricted locality. Under any circumstances, the introduction of fire-arms into Java at this period was recent, and their use at the outset was most likely confined to the people of the more advanced maritime districts, whilst those residing in less frequented parts, and in the interior, would not have adopted them till some time after. In support of the plausibility of this suggestion, I submit the two following considerations:—1st., that the Arabs of Yemen were unacquainted with fire-arms in 1515, although the Egyptians, who invaded their coast in that year, had long possessed them, (see note on p. 65 ante;) and, 2ndly., that notwithstanding the contiguity of the two countries, and the frequent intercourse which had for centuries subsisted between them, the inhabitants of Ceylon appear to have been ignorant of artillery in 1507 when Don Lorenzo De Almeyda first discovered that island, whereas those of Western India had certainly used it at least twenty-five years before. See p. 193 ante, and note.

¹ Mr. Crawford remarks on Varthema's description of Java generally, and on this statement in particular, that "his account is obviously false or worthless, for he describes parents as selling their children to be eaten by the purchasers, and himself as quitting the island in haste for fear of being made a meal of." (Desc. Dict., pp. 165-6.) Now, it is evident that our traveller is speaking of a class quite distinct from the more civilized community of the place, for these latter he had designated as "the most trustworthy men in the world;" hence, the question arises whether among the rude aborigines of the island at that period, (and I have already conjectured that Varthema may have visited
great sickness, and that it should appear to the skilful that he might die of it, the father or the brother of the sick man kills him, and they do not wait for him to die. And when they have killed him they sell him to others to be eaten. We, being astonished at such a thing, some merchants of the country said to us: "O you poor Persians, why do you

a part where such were likely to be found,) there were not some addicted to the practice of eating human flesh. *Non nobis tantas componere lites;* nevertheless, I would submit the following independent testimony as to the prevalence of cannibalism in the Malayan Peninsula and the Archipelago at this period, leaving the reader to form his own judgment on Varthema's credibility. Premising as possible, that the credulity and fears of the party may have been imposed upon in this instance, such a supposition is inadmissible in the case of Nicolò de' Conti, who resided in Sumatra a whole year, and who describes the custom as prevailing there in his time:—"In one part of the island called Batech, the inhabitants eat human flesh, and are in a state of constant warfare with their neighbours. They keep human heads as valuable property, for when they have captured an enemy they cut off his head, and, having eaten the flesh, store up the skull and use it for money." To which quotation the editor appends the following note:—"Batech=Batta; a district extending from the river Singkell to the Tabooyong, and inland to the back of Ayer Bañgis. Marsden, in his History of Sumatra (p. 390, 3rd edit.) gives instances of cannibalism among this people as late as the year 1780." (India in the Fifteenth Century, ii. p. 9.) Pigafetta also, describing Sulacho, fifty miles distant from the Moluccas, says: "The men of this island are Pagans, and eat human flesh;" and he subsequently attributes the same practice to one of the Ladrone or Marian Islands, which he calls Maulla, stating that "its inhabitants are savages and bestial, and eat human flesh." (Ramusio, vol. i. p. 368.) I note that Mr. Crawfurd must have used a different edition of Pigafetta's Voyages from that given in Ramusio, for this passage does not appear in his long quotation from that author. (Desc. Dict., pp. 268-9.) Lastly, De Faria y Souza, in his account of the territory of Siam, says: "It contains much mountain and plain, and in both sundry sorts of people, some most barbarous and cruel, who feed on human flesh, as the Guei, who for ornament make figures on their bodies with hot irons." Portuguese Asia, translated by Stevens, vol. i. p. 223.

On the whole, although Varthema's account of Java is certainly less accurate than his descriptions in general, I hardly think it merits the epithets of being "obviously false or worthless" which Mr. Crawfurd casts upon it.
leave such charming flesh to be eaten by the worms?” My companion hearing this immediately exclaimed: “Quick, quick, let us go to our ship, for these people shall never more come near me on land.”

THE CHAPTER WHERE, AT MID-DAY, THE SUN CASTS A SHADOW\(^1\) IN THE ISLAND OF GIAVA.

The Christians said to my companion: “O my friend, take this news to your country, and take this other also which we will show you. Look there, now that it is mid-day, turn your eyes towards where the sun sets.” And raising our eyes we saw that the sun cast a shadow to the left more than a \(\textit{palmo}\).\(^2\) And by this we understood that we were far distant from our country, at which we remained exceedingly astonished. And, according to what my companion said, I think that this was the month of June; for I had lost our months, and sometimes the name of the day. You must know that there is little difference between the cold with us and here. Having seen the customs of this island, it appeared to us that there was not much reason to remain in it, because it was necessary to be all night on guard for fear some wretch should come and carry us off to eat us. Wherefore, having called the Christians, we told them that, as soon as they could, we would return to our country. Before we departed, however, my companion

\(^1\) In the original, “\(\textit{fa spera}\),” but in the edition of \(\textit{Ramusio}\) of 1613 it is rendered “\(\textit{faceva ombra}\).” This is undoubtedly a gloss, but the meaning is preserved.

\(^2\) I am indebted to my friend Mr. Markham for the following note on this passage:—“The equator bisects the island of Borneo, therefore, in the month of June, when Varthema was navigating, his vessel on the way to Java would have crossed the sun's path, and, as he so concisely observes, when he looked to the west the sun would be to his north, and the shadow or reflection would be cast on his left hand.”
bought two emeralds for a thousand *pardai*, and he purchased for two hundred *pardai* two little children who had no sexual organs; for in this island there are a kind of merchants, who follow no other trade excepting that of purchasing little children, from whom they cut off in their childhood everything, and they remain like women.\(^1\)

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**THE CHAPTER CONCERNING OUR RETURN.**

Having remained in this island of Giava altogether fourteen days, we determined to return back, because, partly through the fear of their cruelty in eating men, partly also through the extreme cold, we did not dare to proceed farther, and also because there was hardly any other place known to them [the Christians]. Wherefore we chartered a large vessel, that is, a *giunco*, and took our way outside the islands towards the east; because on this side there is no archipelago, and the navigation is more safe. We sailed for fifteen days and arrived at the city of Malacha, and here we stopped for three days, where our Christian companions remained, whose bewailings and lamentations it would be impossible shortly to describe; so that, truly, if I had not

\(^1\) Barbosa attributes a similar inhuman practice to the Mussulmans of Bengal:—"Li Mori mercatanti di questa città vanno fra terra a comprar garzoni piccolini dalla lor padri e madri gentili, e da altri, che gli rubbano, e li castrano, levandogli via il tutto, di sorte che restano rasi, come la palma della mano: e alcuni di questi moiono, ma quelli che scampano, gli allevano molto bene, e poi li vendono per cento e ducento ducati l'uno ali Mori di Persia, che gli apprezzano molto, per tenerli in guardia delle lor donne, e della lor robbia, e per altre dishonestà." Pigafetta also mentions the kingdom of Cirote in Burmah as the place "dove si fanno tutti li Eunuchi che sono condotti di Levante." (Ramusio, vol. i. pp. 316, 391.) It is a well known fact, that the excision described was at one time extensively practised in Upper Egypt, and that rumour, whether true or false I know not, attributed the horrible operation to certain Coptic monks.
had a wife and children, I would have gone with them. And likewise they said, that if they had known how to come in safety, they would have accompanied us. And I believe also that my companion comforted them for not coming, because they would not be obliged to give an account to the Christians of so many lords who are in their country, who are also Christians and possess immense riches. So that they remained, saying that they would return to Sarnau,1 and we went with our ship to Cioromandel. The captain of the ship said that around the island of Giava, and around the island of Sumatra, there were more than eight thousand islands. Wherefore my companion bought in Malacha five thousand pardai worth of small spices, and silk stuffs, and odoriferous things. We sailed for fifteen days, and arrived at the said city of Cioromandel, and here the ship chartered in Giava was unladen. We remained in this country about twenty days, and then took a ship, that is to say, a Ciampana, and went to Colon,2 where I found twenty-two Portuguese Christians. On which account I had a very great desire to escape, but I remained, because they were few, and I was afraid of the Moors; for there were some merchants with us who knew that I had been at Mecha and to the body of Mahomet, and I was afraid that they might imagine that I should discover their hypocrisies, wherefore I abstained from running away. Twelve days afterwards we took our route towards Calicut, that is, by the river,3 and arrived there in the space of ten days.

Now it will be an easy thing for every kind reader to perceive, by the long discourse concerning various countries contained in the above written books, that my companion and myself having become wearied, partly by the different temperatures of the air as may be imagined, partly by the

1 See note 3 on p. 212 ante.
2 Colon=Quilon. See note on pp. 182-4 ante.
3 See note on pp. 179-80 ante.
different customs we met with at every step as has been described, and especially by the inhuman men not unlike beasts, determined to return. I will now recount shortly, (in order that my narrative may not be wearisome,) what happened to me on our return, because it will be useful to some either in restraining their too eager appetite for seeing the inestimable greatness of the world, or, being on their road, in knowing how to regulate themselves and use their understanding in sudden emergencies. Being then arrived in Calicut on our return, as I have shortly before written, we found two Christians who were Milanese. One was called Ioan-Maria, and the other Piero Antonio, who had arrived from Portugal with the ships of the Portuguese, and had come to purchase jewels on the part of the king. And when they had arrived in Cocin, they fled to Calicut. Truly I never had greater pleasure than in seeing these two Christians. They and I went naked after the custom of the country. I asked them if they were Christians. Ioan-Maria answered: "Yes, truly we are." And then Piero Antonio asked me if I was a Christian. I answered: "Yes, God be praised." Then he took me by the hand, and led me into his house. And when we had arrived at the house, we

1 Don Emanuel of Portugal, surnamed the Fortunate.

2 Cochin:—"a town which, though giving name to a small rāj or native state, belongs to the British, and is included within the district of Malabar, under the presidency of Madras. Lat. 9° 8', long. 76° 18'." (Thornton’s Gazetteer.) When the Portuguese first arrived in India, Cochin was governed by a Rajah called Triumpara or Trimumpara, who appears to have been subject to the Zamorin of Calicut. Pedro Alvarez Cabral was well received by this sovereign, and established a factory in the town as early as 1500. In 1502, the Zamorin endeavoured to detach Triumpara from the Portuguese, but without effect, and the latter on their part engaged to support him against his suzerain, who in the following year attacked and defeated him. He was subsequently restored by the Portuguese, on which occasion they received permission to build a fort and church at Cochin, and became virtually masters of the place. It was taken from them by the Dutch in 1662. This is the first time that Varthema mentions Cochin.
began to embrace and kiss each other, and to weep. Truly, I could not speak like a Christian: it appeared as though my tongue were large and hampered, for I had been four years without speaking with Christians. The night following I remained with them; and neither of them, nor could I, either eat or sleep solely for the great joy we had. You may imagine that we could have wished that that night might have lasted for a year, that we might talk together of various things, amongst which I asked them if they were friends of the king of Calicut. They replied that they were his chief men, and that they spoke with him every day. I asked them also what was their intention. They told me that they would willingly have returned to their country, but that they did not know by what way. I answered them: "Return by the way you came." They said that that was not possible, because they had escaped from the Portuguese, and that the king of Calicut had obliged them to make a great quantity of artillery against their will, and on this account they did not wish to return by that route; and they said that they expected the fleet of the king of Portugal very soon. I answered them, that if God granted me so much grace that I might be able to escape to Cananor when the fleet had arrived, I would so act that the captain of the Christians should pardon them; and I told them that it was not possible for them to escape by any other way, because it was known through many nations that they made artillery. And many kings had wished to have them in their hands on

1 Meaning, Europeans or European Christians.

2 Most of the cannoniers in the service of the Indian states at this period appear to have been either Franks or Turks; and a knowledge of artillery was evidently much prized, for Varthema professed himself capable of making the largest mortars in the world in order to escape from his Mamlûk companions at Meccah. (See p. 50 ante.) De Faria y Souza mentions incidentally, that in 1597 a renegade Christian directed the assault against the fort which the Portuguese had then recently built on the island of Angediva. Stevens's Portuguese Asia, vol. i. p. 108.
account of their skill, and therefore it was not possible to escape in any other manner. And you must know that they had made between four and five hundred pieces of ordnance large and small, so that in short they had very great fear of the Portuguese; and in truth there was reason to be afraid, for not only did they make the artillery themselves, but they also taught the Pagans to make it; and they told me, moreover, that they had taught fifteen servants of the king to fire spingarde. And during the time I was here, they gave to a Pagan the design and form of a mortar, which weighed one hundred and five cantara, and was made of metal. There was also a Jew here who had built a very beautiful galley, and had made four mortars of iron. The said Jew, going to wash himself in a pond of water, was drowned.

Let us return to the said Christians: God knows what I said to them, exhorting them not to commit such an act against Christians. Piero Antonio wept incessantly, and Ioan-Maria said it was the same to him whether he died in Calicut or in Rome, and that God had ordained what was to be.

The next morning I returned to find my companion, who was making great lamentation, for he thought that I had been killed. I told him, in order to excuse myself, that I had been to sleep in a Moorish mosque to render thanks to God and to Mahomet for the benefit received in that we had returned in safety, and with this he was much pleased. And in order that I might be able to know what was going on in the country, I told him that I would continue to sleep in the mosque, and that I did not want any goods, but that I wished always to be poor. And wishing to escape from them, I thought that I could only deceive them by hypocrisy; for the Moors are the most stupid people in the world, so that he was satisfied. And this I did in order that I might be able to talk frequently with the Christians, because they knew everything, from day to day, from the court of the king. I began to put my
hypocrisy in practice, and pretended to be a Moorish saint, and never would eat flesh excepting in the house of Ioan-Maria, where every night we ate two brace of fowls. And I would no longer associate with merchants, neither did any man ever see me smile, and all day I remained in the mosque excepting when he [my companion] sent for me to go and eat; and he scolded me because I would not eat flesh. I replied: "That too much eating leads man to many sins." And in this manner, I began to be a Moorish saint, and happy was he who could kiss my hand and some my knees.

THE CHAPTER SHOWING HOW I MADE MYSELF A PHYSICIAN IN CALICUT.

It happening that a Moorish merchant fell sick of a very great malady, and could not by any means get natural relief, he sent to my companion, who was a great friend of his, to know if he or any one in his house could give him any remedy. He answered that I would go to visit him; and so he and I together went to the house of the sick man and questioned him about his illness. He said to us: "I feel very bad in my stomach and bowels." I asked him if he had had any cold by which this illness might have been caused? The sick man replied: "That it could not be cold, for he did not know what that was." Then my companion turned to me and asked me: "O Iunus, dost thou know any remedy for this my friend?" I replied: "That my father was a physician in my country, and that that which I knew, I knew by the practice which he had taught me." My companion said: "Well, then, let us see if by any remedy this merchant, my very dear friend, can be relieved." Then I said: "Bizmilei erechman erathin!"¹ and then I took his hand, and, feeling his pulse, found that he had a great

¹ See note 1 on p. 41 ante.