









*Tombs at Cawpoor.*

A  
GENERAL COLLECTION  
OF THE  
BEST AND MOST INTERESTING  
VOYAGES AND TRAVELS  
IN ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD;  
MANY OF WHICH ARE NOW FIRST TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH.

*DIGESTED ON A NEW PLAN.*

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BY JOHN PINKERTON,  
AUTHOR OF MODERN GEOGRAPHY, &c. &c.

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ILLUSTRATED WITH PLATES.

VOLUME THE EIGHTH.

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OF THE  
EIGHTH VOLUME.

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## EXTRACT FROM TAVERNIER'S VOYAGES.

CHAP. I.—*Of Diamonds, and the Mines and Rivers where they are found; and in the first place of the Author's Journey to the Mine of Raolconda.*

THE diamond is the most precious of all stones, and it is the trade to which I am the most attached. In endeavouring to acquire a perfect knowledge of them I visited all the mines, and one of the two rivers where they are found; and as the idea of danger has never impeded me in my travels, the dreadful picture given me of these mines, as being placed in the most barbarous countries, only attainable by the most dangerous roads, was neither capable of frightening or deterring me from my design. I have consequently visited the four mines mentioned in the following description, and one of the two rivers from whence diamonds are procured, and have neither met with those difficulties nor that barbarity, which some persons, but ill acquainted with the nature of these countries, had taught me to expect. I can also say that I have set an example for others, and am the first European who have shewn the way to these mines to the Franks, as these are the only parts of the earth where diamonds are found.

The first of the mines I visited, is situated in the territories of the King of Visapour in the province of Carnatica, the place is called Raolconda, it is five days' journey from Golconda, and eight or nine from Visapour. As the kings of Golconda and Visapour were formerly subjects of the Mogul, and governors of these provinces, which they possess in consequence of their revolt, it may be said, and is said by many persons, that diamonds are found in the kingdom of the Great Mogul. It is but two hundred years since or thereabouts, that the mine of Raolconda has been discovered, according to the information I received from the people of that country.

All around the place where the diamonds are found, the earth is sandy and full of rocks and coppice woods, nearly similar to the environs of Fontainebleau. In these rocks are several veins, sometimes half an inch in breadth, and sometimes an entire inch, and the miners have little iron rods bent at the end, which they thrust in these veins to draw out the sand or earth, which they put into vessels, and it is amongst this earth that the diamonds are found. But because these veins are not always regular, sometimes rising and sometimes falling, they are obliged to break the rocks in order to follow their track. After they have opened them all, and collected the earth or sand they contain, they wash it two or three times, and seek for the diamonds. It is from this mine that the diamonds of the finest water are procured; but the worst is, that in order to facilitate the separating the sand from the rock, they give such forcible strokes with a great iron lever, that shocking the diamonds it causes them to be flawed; This is the cause of so many damaged stones being found in this mine; for when the miners see a stone where the crack is a little large, they cleave it, a practice in which they are more skilled than we. If the stone is clear they only turn it on the wheel, taking no pains to shape it for fear of diminishing its weight. But if it has some little flaw, or any small specks of red or black sand, they cover the stone with facets, in order to conceal its defects; and if it has some very small flaw, they cover that also by



the edge of one of the facets. But it must be observed, that as the merchant likes better to see a black spot than a red one in a stone; when they meet with a stone having a red spot, they burn it, which causes it to appear black. With this artifice I became at length so well acquainted, that on seeing a quantity of stones produced from the mine, some of which had facets, and particularly those with small facets, I was well assured such stones had some little speck or flaw.

There are a number of diamond cutters belonging to this mine, each of which has one wheel only, which is of steel, and is nearly the size of our plates. They place but one stone on each wheel, which they keep continually supplying with water, till they have found the way of the stone. That done, they take oil and are not sparing of the diamond powder, it being cheap, causing the stone to run quicker, and they load the stone with more of it than is usual with us. I have seen one hundred and fifty pounds of lead put upon one stone; it was, it is true, a large stone, and weighed one hundred and three carats after it was cut, which was done on a mill after our fashion, and the great wheel was turned by four negroes. The Indians are not of the same opinion with us, and do not believe it is the burden which occasions the flaws in the stones. If theirs take no flaw, it is because they have always a little boy, who, with a small spatula of wood held in his hand, continually supplies the wheel with oil and diamond powder: to which may be added, their wheel goes not so fast as ours, because the wooden wheel which works that of steel is not much more than three feet in diameter.

They have not the art of giving that fine polish to the stones, as we do in Europe; which I suppose is owing to their wheel not running so smooth as ours. For it being of steel, they, when it requires to be rubbed with emery, which is necessary every twenty-four hours, are obliged to take it from the tree, and in replacing it are not able to make it run so smooth as it should do. If as with us they had iron wheels, for which no emery is required but the file is used; as there is no occasion to take the wheel from the tree in order to file it, they might then give a finer polish to their stones than they are at present able to do. I have before observed, that it is necessary every twenty-four hours to rub the wheel with emery, or to file it, and it would if the workman is not idle be better if it was done every twelve hours. For when the stone has run a certain time, that part of the wheel on which it turned becomes smooth as glass, and if fresh furrows are not made with emery or the file the powder will not stay on it; without which so much work cannot be done in two hours as in one with it.

Though the diamond is naturally hard, and has in it a sort of knot similar to that in wood, yet the Indian diamond cutters always cut the stone, which Europeans find great difficulty in doing, and frequently will not undertake, choosing rather to give something to the Indians for shaping it.

To return to the order of the mines. Traffic is there carried on liberally and with fidelity. On all that is bought, a duty of two per cent. is paid to the King, who also derives a revenue from the merchants for permission to dig the mines. These merchants, after having in company with the miners examined the spots where the diamonds are found, select a place of about two hundred feet in extent, where they employ fifty and sometimes a hundred miners, according to the expedition required. From the time they commence mining, the merchants for fifty men pay daily to the King two pagodas, and four when a hundred are employed.

These poor people gain no more than three pagodas a-year, and must be expert at their trade to acquire even that. As their wages are so small, they make no scruple in searching among the sand to conceal if possible a stone for their own profit, and being entirely naked with the exception of a small cloth around their middle, they

dexterously endeavour to swallow them. The chief of the merchants one day pointed out to me a miner that had worked for him several years, who had secreted a stone that weighed a mengelin, which is nearly equal to two of our carats. He had hid it in the corner of his eye, from whence it was taken on discovering the theft. To prevent this knavery, over every fifty miners, there are always from twelve to fifteen persons employed by the merchants, to see that they steal nothing. If they by chance find a stone that weighs beyond 7 or 8 mangelins they carry it to the head miner, who rewards them with a *sarpo* which is a piece of linen cloath to make a cap, of the value of from twenty-five to thirty-pence, which is generally accompanied with half a pagoda in silver, and sometimes a pagoda when they don't give them rice, and a dish of sugar.

The merchants who resort to the mine to trade, remaining at their homes, every morning about ten or eleven o'clock, the master miners after they have dined (for the Banians never stir from their houses till they have washed their bodies and broken their fast) bring the diamonds for their inspection. If the quantity is large and there be amongst them stones of the value of from two thousand to perhaps fifteen or sixteen thousand crowns, they leave them in trust for seven or eight days or more with the merchant for his consideration. When he has examined the stones, the seller again visits him, and he must then if he wishes to purchase, conclude the bargain immediately; otherwise the owner takes them away tied in the corner of his girdle, or cap, or shirt, and he never sees the same stones again, at least they are mixed with others if he comes to visit you with another collection. When the bargain is concluded, the buyer gives a note for the amount, drawn on the *cheraf*, who is the person that pays and receives all bills of exchange. If it is agreed to pay in three or four days, and a longer delay is required, he must pay at the rate of one and a half per cent. per month interest. In general when they know the merchant to be safe, they like better to receive a bill of exchange for Agra, Golconda, or Visapour, but more especially for Surat, where as being the greatest Indian port, they go to buy the merchandize exported in foreign vessels, which tells to their advantage.

It is a pleasing sight of a morning to see the young children of the merchants and others, from the age of ten to fifteen or sixteen, all assembled under a great tree, which is in the market-place; each with a quantity of diamonds in a little bag hung on one side, and on the other a purse fastened to his sash, in which some have from five to six hundred pagodas of gold. There they sit waiting till some person comes to offer them diamonds for sale, either from that or any other mine. When any thing is brought, it is put into the hands of the oldest, who is regarded as the chief of the band; he after examining it, puts it into the hands of the next, and so on from one to another till it returns to his own, without any one speaking a word. He then enquires the price of the merchandize, in order to purchase it if possible, and if by chance he buys it too dear it is at his own loss. When evening comes, these children collect together all they have bought in the course of the day, and after examining the different stones, separate them according to their water, weight, and clearness, then affixing on each a price nearly according with what they can sell them for to strangers, they, by comparing it with the price given, see what advantage remains to themselves. Lastly, carrying them to some of those great merchants who have always large assortments on hand, the profit is divided amongst them, only he that is the head or chief receives one quarter per cent. more than the rest. Although so young they are nevertheless such good judges of the value of stones, that if one of them should happen to purchase any thing, on which he is willing to lose half per cent. there is  
always

always one ready to give him the money; and in offering them a parcel of stones consisting perhaps of a dozen, they seldom fail to select four or five with some flaw, or speck or defect in the corners.

In general these Indians are much attached to strangers, and especially to those they call Fringuis. As soon as I had arrived at the mine I was welcomed by the governor of the place, who was also commander of the province for the King of Vifapour. This was a Mahometan, who loaded me with careffes, assured me I was welcome, and observed that as no doubt I had brought gold with me, (for at all the mines of Golconda and Vifapour they make use of new pagodas only, which is a particular species of gold), I had only to deposit it in my chamber where it would be perfectly secure, and he himself would be answerable for the whole of my effects. In addition to the servants I had brought with me, he presented me with four others, commanding them to keep a strict watch over my gold day and night, and do whatever I desired of them. A little while after I had taken my leave, he desired me to be brought to him; when entering his presence, I sent for you again, said he, to assure you once more that you have nothing to fear; eat, drink, and sleep, and take care of your health. I had also forgot to caution you against defrauding the King of his duty, to whom you must pay two per cent. on all that you buy. Don't you, continued he, do as some Mahometans that come to the mine, who leaguings with the merchants and courtiers to cheat the King of his duty, say they have bought for ten thousand pagodas only, when they have very likely purchased to the amount of fifty thousand. Then beginning to buy, I saw that there was a very great profit, the market being on the whole twenty per cent. better than at Golconda; added to which they sometimes discover very large stones.

One day towards evening a Banian but ill apparelled, having nothing but a sash round his body, and an old handkerchief on his head, civilly accosted me and seated himself down by my side. In that country they pay but little attention to dress, and some who have only an old wrapper round their loins, have nevertheless a large quantity of diamonds concealed about them. I civilly saluted the Banian on my part, who after he had been some time seated, enquired by my interpreter if I wished to buy some rubies? the interpreter replied, that he might shew them me, on which he drew from his sash a quantity of small cloths, in which were about twenty ruby rings. After having well examined them, I caused him to be told they were too small for me, and that I was in search of large stones. Nevertheless, recollecting that I had been requested by a lady at Isfahan to buy her a ruby ring of about one hundred crowns value, I bought one of these, which cost me something near four hundred francs. I was very well aware it was not worth more than three hundred, but willingly ventured a hundred francs in the idea that he had not accosted me on account of these rubies only; and judged rightly by his look that he wished to be alone with me and my interpreter, in order that he might shew me something better. As the time of prayer with the Mahometans drew near, three of the servants that the governor had given me retired, leaving the fourth to wait on me, whom I found means to get rid off, by sending him to buy us some bread, which I knew would take him a considerable time. For the people of this country being all idolators are accustomed to live on rice and eat no bread, which any one that wants must send for at a considerable distance to a fortress of the King of Vifapour, which is inhabited by none but Mahometans. The Banian then being left alone with me and my interpreter, after many formalities drew off his turban, and untwisted his hair which according to their custom was fastened up to his head. He then drew from his hair a small piece of linen cloth in which was inclosed a diamond weighing  $48\frac{1}{2}$  of our

our carats, of fine water, of a pommel shape, three quarters clear, excepting a little flaw on one side, which seemed to be of small depth. The other quarter was damaged with red points,

As I was examining the stone, the Banian observing the attention with which I surveyed it, said to me, don't trouble yourself to examine it now, you shall see it to-morrow morning at leisure when you are alone. When a quarter of a day has passed, (it is thus they speak), you will find me at the outside of the town, when if you wish to have the stone you can bring me the money, at the same time telling me what sum he would take for it. For it must be observed by the bye, that after a quarter of the day has passed, these Banians, men as well as women, return to the city or town where they live, having previously quitted it, as well to satisfy the ordinary calls of nature, as to wash their bodies and attend their priests at prayer. The Banian had appointed me to meet him at this time, not being willing that any person should see us together. I did not fail to attend, taking with me the sum he had demanded, except two hundred pagodas which I set apart; but at last after some dispute I was obliged to give him another hundred. At my return to Surat, I sold this stone to a Dutch captain, by which I gained an honest profit.

Three days after I had made this purchase, there came to me a messenger from Golconda on the part of an apothecary named Boete, whom I had left at Golconda to receive and take care of a part of my money, which in case the cheraf paid in rupees he was to get changed for pagodas of gold. The day succeeding that on which he received payment, he was taken with so violent a diarrhoea, that he died in a few days. In the letter which he wrote me, he informed me of his sickness, and of his having received my money, which was all in my chamber concealed in bags, and not expecting to live more than two days, he urged me to hasten my return, as not thinking it perfectly secure in the hands of the servants I had left with him. As soon as I had received his letter, I repaired to the governor in order to take leave of him; at which he was much surprised and asked me if I had expended all my money? I replied, that I had not yet spent half of it, and had still twenty thousand pagodas left. He then said, he would if I was willing employ it for me, at the same time assuring me I should lose nothing by any purchases of his making. He also asked me to let him see what I had bought, although previously very well informed on that head, from the custom of the sellers being obliged to give him an account of what they sell, in order that the king may not lose the two per cent. payable on all that is bought. I then shewed him what I had purchased, at the same time declaring what it had cost me, which was entered in the book of the Banian who receives the King's duty. I likewise paid him the two per cent on the amount, which having received, he said he saw plainly that the Franguis were honest people, of which he was still better persuaded on my producing the stone of  $48\frac{1}{2}$  carats; saying, Signior, that is not entered in the book of the Banian, and there is no one in the city knows of my buying it, neither would you yourself have known it, but for my own confession, for I do not wish to defraud the King of his duty; there is what is due according to the price I gave for the stone. The governor seemed much surprised and pleased with the whole proceeding, praised me much, told me I had acted like an honest man, and that no other merchant in the country, either Mahometan or idolater would have behaved in a similar manner on such an occasion. On that he sent for some of the richest merchants in the place, and after relating the circumstance, desired them to bring the finest stones they had got, which they accordingly did, and by that means I disposed of my twenty thousand pagodas in an hour or two. The bargain being concluded, and the money paid, he told the merchants that

having to do with a man of honour, they should present me with something as a remuneration, on which with a good grace they gave me a diamond of near an hundred crowns value, and the governor himself presented me with a turban and sash.

Here I have to remark the singular and curious manner which the Indians, idolaters as well as Mahometans, adopt in disposing of every sort of merchandize. All passes in profound silence, not a word being spoke. The seller and the buyer are seated opposite to each other like two tailors, and one of the two opening his sash, the seller taking the right hand of the buyer covers it with his, under which, in the presence of perhaps several other merchants met together in the same room, the bargain is concluded secretly without any one's knowledge. The buyer and seller making use of neither mouth nor eyes, carry on the traffic with their hands only, which is done in the following manner. When the seller takes the whole of the buyer's hand, that signifies a thousand, and as many times as he presses it, so many thousand pagodas or rupees are required, according to the matter in question. When he takes the five fingers only, it signifies five hundred, and if one finger, only one hundred. When he takes hold of half the finger just by the middle joint, it stands for fifty, while the tip of the finger to the first joint signifies ten. This is all the mystery used by these Indians in their traffic, and it oftentimes happens that at a place where there are several people together, one article is sold seven or eight times without any of the company knowing at either time what it is.

In regard to the weight of the stones, they are never deceived except when they buy them in secret, for at all public sales there is a man expressly employed by the King, without deriving any private advantage, to weigh the diamonds, who declaring the weight, the buyer and seller take it at his word, as having no interest to favour either party.

Having concluded my business at the mine, the governor gave me six horse soldiers to conduct me in safety to the confines of his government, which extends as far as the river that separates the kingdom of Visapour from that of Golconda. The passage of this river is very difficult, it being wide, deep, and rapid, and has neither bridge nor boats, and in order to pass it they employ the same means I have elsewhere spoken of in passing other Indian rivers, as well for men, as for their luggage, carriages, cattle and horses. A circular vessel from ten to twelve feet in diameter, made of osier twigs like our baskets, and covered on the outside with bull hides, serves in the place of a boat, and their manner of transporting passengers over I have before observed. They could easily build good barks or erect a bridge across this river; but the Kings of Golconda and Visapour will not allow it, because it divides the two kingdoms. Every evening the boatmen on both sides the river are obliged to give in to two petty governors, who are stationed on each side about a quarter of a league from the river, an exact account of all passengers, beasts of burden, and merchandize that has passed over in the course of the day.

When I arrived at Golconda, I found the apothecary Boete had been dead three days, and the chamber in which I had left him put under two seals, the one of the Cadi, who acts as chief justice, and the other of the Cha-Bander, who acts as provost of the merchants. An officer of justice attended day and night at the door of the chamber in company with the valets I had left with the defunct. Immediately on my arrival, notice was sent to the Cadi and Cha-Bander, who presently sent to fetch me. After saluting them, the Cadi demanded whether the money found in the chamber of the defunct belonged to me, and how I could prove it? I replied, I had no better way of proving it than by producing the letters of exchange I had brought to the Cheraf, and that since my departure he had by my order paid the money to the defunct; that I had  
afterwards

afterwards written to him desiring, that in case the Cheraf payed the money in specie, he would get it exchanged for pagodas of gold and bring them to me. Upon hearing this, they sent for the two Cherafs who had paid the money, who both agreed as to the truth of my statement, on which the Cadi ordered his lieutenant to go with me to my chamber, and see that the seals had not been removed from any of the bags. Accordingly he did not leave me till I had declared that all was right and nothing wanting. I then returned with him to make the same declaration before the Cadi and Cha-Bander, and thank them for the trouble they had taken, as also to sign a paper they had written in the Persian language, by which I declared myself perfectly satisfied. The lieutenant then told me I must pay the charges of Boetes' internment, as also that of the person who had sealed the bags, and the officer who had guarded the door of the chamber; all which amounted to nine roupees only, or four crowns and a half of our money, which is much less than would have been charged in most European countries.

**CHAP. II.**—*An Account of the Author's Journey to the other Mines, with a description of the Manner in which the Diamonds are found.*

ABOUT seven days from Golconda, going due east, there is another diamond mine, which by the people of the country is called Gani, and by the Persians Coulour. It is situated near a large town through which passes the river I crossed in coming from the other mine, and at about the distance of a league and a half from the town, are several high mountains in the form of a crescent. The place where the diamonds are found; is in a plain situated between the town and the mountains, and the nearer they approach to the latter, the larger stones they find; but when they ascend too high it produces nothing.

It is not more than a hundred years ago, since this mine was first accidentally discovered by a poor man, who digging a spot of ground in order to sow some millet, found a native stone weighing nearly twenty-five carats, which he being unacquainted with the value of, and seeing it shine bright, carried to Golconda, where fortunately he addressed himself to a person who traded in diamonds. This merchant on hearing from the countryman where he had found the stone, was much surpris'd at seeing a diamond of that size, as hitherto the largest they were acquainted with weighed no more than from ten to twelve carats. The noise of this discovery soon spread itself throughout the country; and several of the town, who were people of property, began to dig up the earth, where they found and still find large stones in a greater quantity than at any other mine; so much so, that at this present time, they find many weighing from ten to forty carats, or sometimes even larger, and amongst others the great diamond that weighed nine hundred carats before it was cut, which Mirgimolas presented to Aurengezeb, as I have before observed.

But while the Coulour mine is remarkable for the large stones found it, it is to be regretted that in general they are not clear, partaking in their colour the quality of the soil in which they are found. If the ground is marshy and damp, the stone is of a black cast, if it be red, it approaches to red also, while in other places it borders on green, and sometimes on yellow, according to the soil, which is greatly diversified between the town and the mountains. On most of these stones after they are cut, there appears to be a greasy cast, which is occasioned by their continually putting their hand to their handkerchief to wipe it.

As to what relates to the water of the stones, it must be observed, that whereas in Europe we examine the rough stones by day in order to judge of their water and the spots which may be found on them; the Indians on the contrary do it by night, and in a hole which they make in a wall of a foot square, they place a lamp with a large wick, by the light of which they judge of the water and clearness of the stone held between their fingers. The water which they call celestial is the worst of all, and it is impossible to know it while the stone is unpolished, but as little can be discovered on the wheel, the infallible secret of judging its water, is to carry it under a thick tree, where by the shade of the verdure they easily discover whether it is blue.

The first time I visited this mine, it employed nearly sixty thousand persons, men as well as women and children in various offices, the men to dig, and the women and children to carry away the earth, for in working this mine they take a method totally different from that used at Raolconda.

As soon as the miners have pointed out the place for them to work, they select another spot of ground of equal extent, or even larger, and after making it perfectly smooth, encompassed it with a wall of about two feet high, and at the foot of this little wall, they make at every other step openings to carry off the water, which they inclose till they wish to let it out. This place being so prepared, those who are appointed to work, assemble all together, men, women, and children, with the master that employs them, accompanied by a party of his relations and friends. He brings with him a stone figure of the god they worship, which being fixed in the earth they all adore it, by prostrating themselves three times before it, their priest in the mean time accompanying them with a prayer. This being finished, he makes a certain mark on all their foreheads with a paste composed of saffron and gum, upon which he also sticks seven or eight grains of rice. Then after washing their bodies with water which each brings in a pot, they all arrange themselves in order, to partake of the feast which the master provides them at the commencement of their work to put them in spirits, and encourage them to be faithful to him. This feast consists of nothing else than a plate of rice for each, which is distributed to them by the Bramin, because every Idolater is allowed to eat what comes from the hand of their priest, although, such is their superstition, that they will not eat any thing of their wives preparing, choosing rather to prepare their own victuals. The dish on which the rice is served to them is nothing more than leaves sewed together, which somewhat resembles our walnut leaves. To this also is added about a quarter of a pound of butter in a small brass cup, mixed with some sugar.

The repast finished, all begin to work, the men digging the earth, and the children carrying it to the place I have before spoke of, as previously prepared for it. They dig to the depth of ten, twelve, or fourteen feet, but as soon as they meet with water there is no hope of success. All the earth being carried to this place, men, women, and children taking pitchers of water from the pit they have dug, throw them on it, in order to moisten it, so letting it remain for a day or two according to the hardness, till it is perfectly soft. That done, they open the holes they have made in the wall to give passage to the water, when throwing still more on it, they by that means draw away all the mud, so that nothing remains but the sand. There is some earth requires to be washed two or three times, when letting the whole dry in the sun, which by reason of its great heat is soon done, they take certain baskets, made somewhat like our sifters, into which putting the earth, they sift it as we do grain, by which the small dust is separated from it.

Having

Having in this manner sifted all the earth, they spread it out with a sort of rake, keeping it as smooth as possible. Then with a billet of wood in the shape of a large pestle, of about half a foot broad at the bottom, they all begin to beat the earth, from one end to the other, which they do twice or thrice, when putting it again into the baskets they sift it once more, after that they spread it out as before, and lastly collect it altogether in one spot in order to search for the diamonds, in doing which, they are superintended in the same manner as at Raolconda.

Formerly, instead of billets of wood to beat the earth with, they made use of pebbles, which was the occasion of so many flaws in the stones.

In regard to the King's duty, the sum they pay annually to the miners employed, and the reward they bestow on any one's bringing to the master a larger stone than ordinary, the same custom is observed as at Raolconda. Until latterly they made no difficulty in buying diamonds externally of a green colour, because when cut they appear white, and of a very fine water.

Within this thirty or forty years, they have discovered a mine between CouLOUR and Raolconda, but the King caused it to be shut up on account of the impositions practised, which I will explain in a few words. At this mine they found stones that externally presented this green crust, large and transparent, and which appeared even finer than the others, but when they came to grind them they broke in pieces. Nevertheless, when they grind them with a diamond of the same nature, produced from the same mine, they do not break, but if placed on the wheel immediately fly in pieces. This is the reason they are careful not to buy any which have been ground, for fear of being deceived, and it is owing to the discovery of this imposition, as I have before observed, that the King has caused the mine to be shut up.

During the time that Messieurs Fremelin and Francis Breton were presidents for the English company at Surat, a Jew, named Edward Ferdinand, a free merchant, that is to say, not belonging to any particular company, entered into a partnership with these two gentlemen for the purchase of a stone, a short time after the mine was discovered. This stone was clear, of a good shape, and weighed forty-two carats. Edward coming to Europe, Messieurs Fremelin and Breton delivered the stone into his hands to sell it to the best advantage he could on their account. On his arrival at Leghorn, he shewed it to some Jews, his friends, who offered him for it near twenty-five thousand piastres, but he not being willing to take less than thirty thousand, and they not agreeing to give it, he carried the stone to Venice in order to get it cut. It had been well ground without receiving any damage, but no sooner was it placed on the wheel than it broke in nine pieces. I was myself once deceived with one of these stones which weighed two carats, and broke in small pieces on the wheel when it was half cut.

### CHAP. III.—*Continuation of the Author's Journey to the Diamond Mines.*

I NOW come to the third mine, which is the most ancient of all, and situated in the kingdom of Bengala. This mine may be called Soumelpour, being the name of a large town, near the place where the diamonds are found, or rather Gouel, which is that of the river, in whose sand they are discovered. The land through which this river takes its course, is part of the territory of a Rajah who formerly was tributary to the Great Mogul, having revolted during the wars which took place between Cha-Gehan and Gehan-guire, his father. As soon as Cha-Gehan was raised to the throne, he sent to demand tribute of this Rajah, as well for the present as the past, when, he



seeing that his revenues would not enable him to pay it, quitted the plain country, and intrenched himself with his subjects in the mountains. On the news of the Rajah's refusal, Cha-Gehan, who had no idea of his retiring to the mountains, but thought rather, he would obstinately defend himself, led an army into his country, where he had been taught to believe he would meet with quantities of diamonds. But it happened quite the contrary, for those he sent into the Rajah's territories found neither diamonds, nor people, nor subsistence, the Rajah having caused all the grain his subjects were unable to carry away to be burnt, so that the greater part of Cha-Gehan's army perished with famine. The issue of this enterprize was, that the Rajah returned to his country on condition of paying annually a small tribute to the Great Mogul.

The following is an account of the road in going from Agra to the mine.

From Agra to Halabas, coffes	- - - - -	130
From Halabas to Banarous, coffes	- - - - -	33
From Banarous to Saferon, coffes	- - - - -	4

From Agra to Saferon you keep always to the east; but in going from Saferon to the mine, you turn to the south, when you presently meet with a large town, coffes 21. This town is in the territories of the Rajah before mentioned, to whom also belongs the land through which the river where the diamonds are found takes its course.

From this town you come to a fortress called Rodas, coffes - - 4

This is one of the strongest places in all Asia, being built on a mountain, having six large bastions and twenty-seven pieces of cannon, with three moats full of water, in which are good fish. There is but one way to gain the summit of this mountain, on which is a plain nearly half a league in extent, where they sow corn and rice, and is supplied with more than twenty springs which water the earth, and all around the mountain, from the bottom almost to the top, there are nothing but precipices for the most part covered with wood. The Rajahs generally maintain a force of seven or eight hundred men in this fortress, but at present it belongs to the Great Mogul, who gained it through the address of that great Captain Mirgimola, of whom I have so often had occasion to speak.

The last Rajah left three sons, who betraying each other, the eldest was poisoned, the second fled to the court of the Great Mogul, who gave him the command of four thousand horse, and the youngest remained in possession of the country, on paying the same tribute as his father. All the Indian kings, successors of Tamerlane, have besieged this place without being able to take it, and two of these Kings died in the town of Saferon.

From the fortress of Rodas to Soumelpour, coffes - - - 30.

Soumelpour is a large town, the houses of which are made with earth, and covered with branches of the cocoa tree. In travelling these last 30 coffes, you pass through nothing but woods, rendered extremely dangerous on account of robbers, who knowing the merchants never go to the mine without money, sometimes lay wait to murder them. The Rajah lives about half a cofs from the town, and his dwelling is under tents erected on a charming eminence, at the foot of which runs the Gouel, and it is in this river, which takes its source from the high mountains on the south side, afterwards losing itself in the Ganges, that the diamonds are found.

The following is the method of searching for diamonds in this river. After the rainy season has passed, which generally lasts till December, they yet wait all the month of January till the river be clear; because then in several places it is not more than two feet deep, leaving much of the sand discovered. About the end of January

or beginning of February, from the town of Soumelpour, as also from another, which is twenty cosses above on the same river, and some small villages on the plain, there issue about eight thousand persons of both sexes and all ages capable of labour. Those who are expert, know by the appearance of the sand whether there are any diamonds in it, and when they see amongst it small stones which very much resemble what we call thunder stones, they begin to search the river at the Town of Soumelpour, and always in returning go up as far as the mountains from whence it issues, which are about fifty cosses distant from the town. At those places where they think there are diamonds, they examine the sand in the following manner.

First they surround it with stakes, fascines, and earth, as is done in building the arch of a bridge, to drain off the water and leave the place dry, then they draw out the sand, yet not digging more than two feet deep. All this sand is carried and spread in a large place prepared on the bank of the river and encompassed with a small wall of about a foot and a half high, at the foot of which holes are made, and when they have brought as much sand into this place as they think proper, they throw water on it to wash it, after which, the same method is pursued as at the Coulour mine.

From this river all the fine stones are produced, which are called native, but it is seldom that they find a large stone. Several years have elapsed since any of these stones have been seen in Europe, on which account many dealers have thought the mine was exhausted, which is not the case, though for a long time nothing has been drawn from this river on account of the wars.

I have spoken elsewhere of another diamond mine in the province of Carnatica, which Mirgimola, general of the army and prime minister to the King of Golconda, commanded to be shut up, not allowing it to be worked any more, because the stones found in this mine, or rather in the six mines, (for there are six close to one another,) were all black or yellow, neither of them producing a clear stone.

Lastly, in the island of Borneo, which is the largest island in the world, there is a river called Succadan, whose sand produces fine stones, having the same hardness as those of the river Couel, or the above mines before mentioned. General Vandime one day sent me six from Batavia to Surat, weighing from 3 to 4 carats each, which he thought were not so hard as those found in other mines, and had therefore sent them to me to know the truth, but in this he was mistaken, since there is no difference between them. When I was at Batavia, one of the heads of the company shewed me a native stone weighing  $25\frac{1}{8}$  carats, quite perfect, found in this river Succadan, but according to the price he told me it had cost him, he had paid 50 per cent. more than I would have given, although it is true I have always heard these stones mentioned as being very dear. The principal reason which prevented me from going to this river of Borneo, is that the Queen of the island not allowing strangers to export the diamonds, there is great difficulty in getting them away, and the few which they contrive to bring secretly, are sold at Batavia. Here, doubtless, it will be asked why I mention the Queen of Borneo only, and not the King. The cause is, that in this kingdom women alone reign, men not being allowed, by reason that the people are extremely fearful of not having a legitimate heir to the throne, and as the husband cannot be certain that the children his wife brings him are really his, while the wife on the contrary, is always certain as to her own children, they like better to have a woman rule over them, on whom they confer the title of Queen, while her husband being her subject, has no more power than what she chooses to invest him with.

CHAP. IV.—*Of the various sorts of Weights used at the Mines for weighing the Diamonds; of the different Gold and Silver Coins there current; of the several Roads leading to the Mines, and of the Rule they have to ascertain the price of Diamonds.*

I NOW come to speak of some particulars observed in the diamond trade, which I doubt not will be acceptable to the reader, no one having before written on this subject.

In the first place, I come to speak of the various sorts of weights in use, as well at the mines as in the other parts of Asia.

At the Raolconda mine they weigh by mangelins, and the mangelin there is  $1\frac{3}{4}$  of a carat, that is to say seven grains.

At the mine of Gani or Coulour they use the same as at Raolconda.

At the mine of Soumelpour in Bengala, they weigh by the ratis, which is  $\frac{7}{8}$  of a carat, or  $3\frac{1}{2}$  grains, and they use the same weights throughout the Great Mogul's empire. In the kingdoms of Golconda and Visapour they likewise make use of the mangelin, but in these places it is only  $1\frac{3}{8}$  of a carat. The Portuguese also use the same kind of weight in Goa, but there it is only five grains.

I come in the next place to speak of the coins used for buying diamonds in the Indies.

First, at the kingdom of Bengala in the territory of the Rajah before mentioned, being tributary to the Great Mogul, they make their payments in roupees.

At the two mines, which are in the kingdom of Visapour, in the neighbourhood of Raolconda, the payment is made in new pagodas, which the King causes to be coined in his name, as being entirely independent of the Great Mogul. The new pagodas are not always of the same value, sometimes going for three roupees and a half, sometimes for more, and sometimes for less, rising and falling according to the course of trade, and the agreement entered into by the money changers with the princes and governors.

At the Coulour or Gani mine, which belongs to the King of Golconda, the payment is also made in new pagodas, which are of the same value as those of the King of Visapour. Although they are sometimes obliged to buy them at from one to four per cent. more, on account of their being better gold, and their not taking any other at this mine. These pagodas are made by the English and the Dutch, who are privileged by the King, either of his own accord or from necessity, to coin them in their forts. Those of the Dutch cost one or two per cent. more than the English, because they are of a finer standard, and the miners like them much better. But as the merchants in general are prepossessed with the false opinion, that the people at the mine are rude and almost like savages, as also that the roads from Golconda to the mines are very dangerous, they generally remain at Golconda, where those who speculate in mining have their correspondents, who send them the diamonds. They pay there in old pagodas, coined several centuries ago, bearing the impressions of the various princes who reigned in the Indies before the Mahometans had got footing there. These old pagodas pass for four rucees and a half, that is one roupee more than the new ones, although they have no more gold in them, and of course do not weigh more, which might occasion some surprize, did I not explain the cause, which is, that the cherafs or money changers to influence the King in their favour, pay him annually a large sum, they themselves deriving a great profit; for the merchants never receive any of these pagodas, without having one of the money changers to examine them, some being defaced, others of a bad standard,

standard, and some again short of weight, so much so, that were they to take them without examining, they would be considerable losers, and for the trouble of perfecting them, incur a charge of from one to perhaps five or six cent. added to which they give the changers a quarter per cent. for their trouble. When the miners are paid, they also never receive these pagodas without the changer's preference, who points out the good and the bad, taking as before a quarter per cent. for himself. But to save time, when they are about to make a considerable payment, of perhaps a thousand or two thousand pagodas, the changer on receiving his duty, incloses them in a little sack, on which he fixes his mark, and when they are about to pay the merchant for his diamonds, they bring him with the bag to the changer, who seeing his mark unaltered, assures him that he has examined the contents, and will be answerable for any that are not good.

With regard to the roupees, they take indifferently both those of the Great Mogul and the King of Golconda, because such as are coined by the King bear the Mogul's impression, as they agree.

Besides, the Indians have more wit, and are more refined than people think. The pagoda is a thick little piece of gold, not bigger than the nail of the little finger, and as from their size it is impossible to clip them without its being known, they have the address to bore little holes all round, from whence they get to the value of about three or four pence in gold dust, and they know how to conceal it so cleverly, that no one can perceive they have been touched. Moreover, when they go to buy any thing in a village, or when they pass a river, if a roupee is given to them in change, they directly light a fire and put it in, when if it comes out white they keep it, if on the contrary it is black they return it, for all the money in the Indies is of the first standard, and if any be brought from Europe, it must be carried to the mint. I must also observe, that they are much deceived, who (as a merchant would have persuaded me during my first travels) imagine it is quite enough to carry to the mines, spices, tobacco, looking glasses, and other trifles of that sort, in order to receive diamonds in exchange; but I have had convincing proof to the contrary, and can positively affirm, that the merchants who sell the diamonds at the mine will take nothing but fine gold of the best quality.

Lastly, with respect to the roads we must pass to arrive at the mines.—In some modern accounts, which are a little fabulous, we are told, as I have before observed, that they are dangerous and difficult, abounding with lions, tigers, and savages; but I found them quite different to what they had been represented, meeting with no wild beasts, and the people full of kindness and frankness towards strangers. As to Golconda, they can have been but little acquainted with the map of that country, to be ignorant of its situation; but from Golconda to Raolconda, which is the principal mine, the road is less known, and the following is the route I have taken. In this country the roads are measured by the gos, one of which is equal to four French leagues.

From Golconda to Canapour, gos	- - - - -	1
From Canapour to Parquel, gos	- - - - -	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
From Parquel to Cakenol, gos	- - - - -	1
From Cakenol to Canol-Candanor, gos	- - - - -	3
From Canol-Candanor to Setapour, gos	- - - - -	1
From Setapour to the River, gos	- - - - -	2
This river is the frontier of the kingdoms of Golconda and Vifapour.		
From the River to Alpour, gos	- - - - -	$\frac{3}{4}$
From Alpour to Canal, gos	- - - - -	$\frac{3}{4}$
From Canal to Raolconda, where the mine is, gos	- - - - -	2 $\frac{1}{2}$

So that in all, from Golconda to the mine, it is 17 gos, which is equal to 68 French leagues.

From Golconda to the Colour or Gani Mine, by the same measure, they reckon 13 $\frac{3}{4}$  gos, which is equal to 55 of our leagues.

From Golconda to Almafpinde, gos	- - - - - 3 $\frac{1}{2}$
From Almafpinde to Kaper, gos	- - - - - 2
From Kaper to Montecour, gos	- - - - - 2 $\frac{1}{2}$
From Montecour to Naglepar, gos	- - - - - 2
From Naglepar to Eligada, gos	- - - - - 1 $\frac{1}{2}$
From Eligada to Sawaron, gos	- - - - - 1
From Sawaron to Mellaferou, gos	- - - - - 1
From Mellaferou to Ponocour, gos	- - - - - 1 $\frac{1}{4}$

From Ponocour you have only the river to pass to arrive at Coulour or Gani.

I come now to an important article, known to but few persons in Europe.

*A Rule to ascertain the exact Price or Value of Diamonds of any Weight, from three to One Hundred Carats and upwards.*

I shall say nothing of diamonds weighing less than three carats, their value being so well known.

In the first place you must learn how much the diamond weighs, and see if it is perfect, if it is a thick stone, well squared and got all its corners, and also if it is of a fine white lively water, and without spots or flaws. If it is a stone cut facet wise, which is generally called a rose, you must observe that it is of a good round or oval form, if it be of a proper breadth, and not of an aukward form; and lastly, that it has the water and other properties above mentioned.

A diamond of this nature, weighing a carat, would be worth one hundred and fifty livres, or more, and the question is, to show, by an example, how much a stone of the same perfection, weighing twelve carats would be worth? The following method will serve to explain this.

Multiply the twelve again by twelve, which will produce one hundred and forty-four, then multiply the one hundred and forty-four by one hundred and fifty, which is the value of the stone weighing one carat, and the produce will be, twenty-one thousand six hundred livres.

Example of the foregoing rule.

$$\begin{array}{r}
 12 \\
 12 \\
 \hline
 144 \\
 150 \\
 \hline
 7200 \\
 144 \\
 \hline
 \end{array}$$

21,600 livres.

Which is the value of the diamond weighing twelve carats.

But it is not alone sufficient to know the value of perfect diamonds, since we should also be able to tell the worth of those that are not perfect, which may be learnt by the same method, as for example:

Let

Let us suppose an imperfect diamond is offered you, weighing fifteen carats, which is not of a good water, or of a bad shape, or full of spots or flaws. A stone of this quality weighing a carat, would not be worth more than sixty livres, or from that to eighty or one hundred at most, according to the beauty of the diamond. You must then multiply the weight of the diamond, which is fifteen carats, by fifteen, then again multiply the produce, which will be two hundred and twenty-five, by the value of the stone weighing one carat, which for example is eighty livres, and the produce, which will be eighteen thousand livres, is the value of the diamond weighing fifteen carats.

Example of the foregoing rule :

$$\begin{array}{r}
 15 \\
 \times 15 \\
 \hline
 75 \\
 \times 15 \\
 \hline
 225 \\
 \times 80 \\
 \hline
 18,000 \text{ livres.}
 \end{array}$$

By this the great difference between a perfect and an imperfect stone is easily perceived; for if the stone of fifteen carats was perfect, the second multiplication would be by one hundred and fifty, which is the value of a perfect stone weighing one carat; and then the diamond, instead of eighteen thousand livres, would amount to thirty-three thousand seven hundred and fifty; that is, to fifteen thousand seven hundred and fifty livres more, than an imperfect diamond of the same weight.

According to the foregoing rule, the following estimate may be formed of the value of the two largest cut diamonds in the world; the one in Asia belonging to the Great Mogul, and the other in Europe, in the possession of the Grand Duke of Tuscany.

That belonging to the Great Mogul, weighs  $279\frac{9}{16}$  carats, is of a perfectly fine water, good shape, and has but one small flaw, which is on the edge of the bottom of the stone.

Without this little flaw, the first carat might be valued at 160 livres, but on account of that I have put it at 150 only, at which calculation, according to the rule laid down, it amounts to the sum of 11,723,278 livres, 14 sols, and 3 liards. Had this diamond weighed 279 carats only, it would have amounted but to 11,676,150 livres, these  $\frac{9}{16}$  making a difference of 47,128 livres, 14 sols, 3 liards.

The diamond belonging to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, weighs  $139\frac{1}{2}$  carats, is clear, of a fine form, and cut on all sides facet-wise, but as it somewhat approaches to a lemon colour, I have estimated the first carat at 135 livres only, according to which calculation it amounts to 2,608,335 livres.

As a conclusion to the remarks contained in this chapter, I have to observe, that according to the language used at the mines the diamond is called Iri; in Turkish, Persian and Arabic, they call it Almas, while in all the European languages, it is known by the name of diamond only.

Thus have I in a few words discovered all the information I have been able to collect on this subject during my several journies to the mines; and if by chance some other person has written on this matter before me, they must necessarily have derived their intelligence from my communication.

CHAP. V.—*Of coloured Stones, and the Parts where they are found.*

THERE are but two places in the East in which coloured stones are found, that is the kingdom of Pegu, and the island of Ceylon. The first is at a mountain about a dozen days journey from Siren, on the north-east, and is called Capelan. This is the mine which produces the greatest quantity of rubies and spinels, otherwise called the mother of rubies, yellow topazes, blue and white sapphires, jacinths, amethysts, and other stones of different colours. Amongst these of a hard nature they find others of various colours, but very soft, which in the language of the country are called Bacan, but they are in little estimation.

Siren is the name of the city in which the King of Pegu has his residence, and Ava is the port of his kingdom. From Ava to Siren you go up the river in large barks, which are very flat. It is about sixty days voyage, and cannot be performed on land by reason that you have to travel through woods full of lions, tigers, and elephants. This is one of the poorest countries in the world, producing nothing but rubies, and those not in so great a number as is generally believed, seeing that taking one year with another the exportation does not amount to one hundred thousand crowns. In the number of these stones you rarely meet with a fine one weighing three or four carats, by reason of the great difficulty in conveying them away till the King has seen them, who always retains all the fine ones he meets with. Whence it happens, that in all my voyages, I had a very considerable profit to derive from European rubies brought to Asia; and the relation of Vincent le Blanc, who boasts of having seen rubies in the King's palace as big as eggs, is very doubtful.

The following is an account of the price of some rubies, that might pass for fine ones, which I have in my various travels seen for sale by merchants who came from the mine, when I was at Maslipatan and Golconda. All rubies are sold by a weight called a ratis, which is three grains and a half, or seven eighths of a carat, and the payment is made in old pagodas, of which I have spoke in the preceding chapter.

	Pagodas.
A ruby weighing one ratis has been sold for	20
A ruby weighing 2 ratis and $\frac{1}{8}$	85
A ruby weighing 3 ratis and $\frac{1}{4}$	185
A ruby weighing 4 ratis and $\frac{5}{8}$	450
A ruby weighing 4 ratis	525
A ruby weighing 6 ratis and $\frac{1}{2}$	920

When a ruby weighs more than six ratis and is perfect, it will fetch almost any price.

In this country they call all coloured stone rubies, only distinguishing them by the colour itself. Thus in the language of Pegu, the sapphire is a blue ruby, the amethyst a violet ruby, the topaz a yellow ruby, and so on with all others.

In trading they are so greedy of gain, that they will not shew you a parcel of rubies, of however little value, without you promise beforehand to make them a small present, such as a turban or shawl, in case you do not buy, but if you behave liberal to them, they will shew you the whole of their merchandize, when you may generally buy to advantage.

The other part of the East, from which rubies and other coloured stones are produced, is a river in the island of Ceylon. It runs from the high mountains which are

about the middle of the island, and as it is greatly swelled by the rains, three or four months after they have fallen and the water is low, the poor people go and search amongst the sand, where they find rubies, sapphires, and topazes. All the stones found at this river are generally finer and clearer than those of Pegu.

I had forgot to observe, that in the mountains which run from Pegu to the kingdom of Camboya, there are places where rubies are found, though they are more of balays than the others, with many spinels, sapphires, and topazes. In these mountains gold mines are also met with, and it is from this place that the fine rhubarb is produced, which is held in high estimation, because it does not spoil so soon as that which grows in other parts of Asia.

There are also two other places in Europe in which coloured stones are found, that is Bohemia and Hungary. In Bohemia is a mine, containing certain flint stones of various sizes, some as big as eggs, and others as large as the fist, which on breaking are found to enclose rubies as hard and fine as those of Pegu. I remember being one day at Prague with the viceroy of Hungary, to whose suite I belonged, when he, washing with General Wallestein, Duke of Fridland, before sitting down to table, saw on the finger of the general a ruby, of which he greatly praised the beauty: but his admiration was further increased on the general's informing him that the mine which yielded those stones was in Bohemia, and in fact on the viceroy's departure he presented him with about a hundred of these pebbles in a basket. As we were on our return into Hungary, the viceroy ordered them to be broke, but in all the number there was only two that each contained a ruby; the one, a large stone, might weigh near five carats, and the other about one carat.

In Hungary there is also a mine in which alone opals are found, it being the sole place on earth that produces them.

The turquoise is only found in Persia, being produced from two mines, one called the old rock, about three days journey from Meched, approaching to the north-west near a large town called Nichabourg; and the other which they call the new mine, at about five days journey from the same place. Those found at the new mine are of a bad blue approaching to white, they are but little valued, and a great number of them may be purchased for a small sum. But for several years past the King of Persia has forbid any one digging in the old rock except for himself, because there being no goldsmiths in that country, but those who work in thread or wire, and who understand nothing of enamelling on gold, as people that have few designs or patterns, he instead of enamel, causes his sabres, poignards, and other articles to be ornamented with these turquoises from the old rock, which they cut and fix in the collets in the shape of various flowers and figures, according to fancy. This strikes the eye as a tedious minute work, but is without any design.

Lastly, with respect to the emerald, it is an ancient mistake of many well-informed persons, that they are found originally in the East, and even to this day the greater part of the jewellers and goldsmiths, as soon as they see an emerald of a high colour approaching to black, are accustomed to call it an oriental emerald, in which they are mistaken. I confess that I have not yet been able to discover those places on our continent, from whence these stones are procured, but I am well assured that they are never brought from the East, nor in the continent of Asia, nor any of its isles, and that having made a diligent enquiry in all my travels, I have never been able to meet with any person that could point out any part of Asia in which they were found. It is true that since the discovery of America, they have often brought by the south seas some unpolished stones from Perou to the Philippine



island, from whence they have passed into Europe; but that neither authorises us to call them oriental, or to suppose they were produced in the East, seeing that before this discovery and passage they were accustomed to trade in emeralds all over Europe, but now that they have quitted this route, they send them all by the north sea to Spain. In the year 1660, I saw them purchased in India twenty per cent. cheaper than they could have been bought in France.

But with regard to this navigation, and the American trade to the Phillippine islands, it must be observed that the Americans export from these islands, as well as from Bengal, Aracan, Pegu, Goa, and other places, all sorts of linen cloth, quantities of precious stones, as diamonds, rubies, &c. with various works in gold and silver, silk stuffs and Persian carpets. Yet it is also necessary to notice, that as they are not permitted to sell any thing directly to the Americans, but only to those who reside at the Manilles, it is of them they purchase these articles on their return; and even if any one should obtain permission to depart from Goa to Spain by the way of the South Sea, he would be obliged to pay from eighty to one hundred per cent. as far as the Philippines, without being allowed to purchase any thing, and the same again from the Philippines to New Spain.

#### CHAP. VI.—*Of Pearls, and the Places where they are found.*

PEARLS are found both in the eastern and western seas, and as well for the satisfaction of the reader, as also to omit nothing on this subject, although I have never been in America, I shall here take notice of all those places that contain pearl fisheries, beginning with those of the east.

In the first place, there is a pearl fishery round the island of Bahren in the Persian gulf, which belongs to the King of Persia, and there is a good fortrefs, garrisoned with three hundred men. The water they use in this island, and also on the Persian coast, is salt and of a bad taste, and it is only the natives of the country that can drink it. With respect to strangers, it costs them a considerable sum to get it good, for they have to draw it from the sea at a distance of from half a league to two leagues beyond the island. Those that go to fetch it are commonly five or six in a bark, from which one or two of them dive to the bottom of the sea, having a bottle or two hung at their girdle, which they fill with water, and then cork them tight; for at about two or three feet from the bottom of the sea the water is sweet and of the very best quality. When those who are let down have filled their bottles, they pull a small cord which has one end fastened to some person in the boat, and it serves as a signal for their comrades to draw them up.

While the Portuguese were in possession of Ormus and Mascaté, every terate or bark that went out to fish was obliged to have a passport which cost fifteen abassis, and they continually employed several brigantines to sink those that had not got them. But since the Arabs have retaken Mascaté, and the Portuguese have no strength on the gulf, every man that goes a fishing pays to the King of Persia five abassis only, whether his success be good or bad. The merchant also pays some small trifle to the King on every thousand oysters.

The second pearl fishery is over against that of Bahren, on the coast of Arabia the Happy, near the city of Canifa, which as well as the surrounding country belongs to an Arabian prince. All the pearls that are fished in these places, are generally sold in the Indies, because the Indians are not so difficult as we, and buy indifferently the rough ones

ones as well as the smooth, taking the whole at a fixed price. They also carry some to Baliora, while those that are carried to Persia and Muscovy, are sold at Bander-Congo, two days journey from Ormus. In all these places I have mentioned, as well in other parts of Asia, they like better to see the water of a yellow cast than white, because they say that those pearls in which the water is a little tinged like gold, always retain their brightness, and never alter: while those that are white, seldom last longer than thirty years without changing; when, owing as well to the warmth of the country as the heat of the body, they take a dull yellow colour.

Before taking leave of the gulf of Ormus, I shall speak a little more in addition to what is mentioned in my account of Persia, of the admirable pearl in the possession of the Arabian prince that took Mascaté from the Portuguese, on which occasion he assumed the name of Imenhect prince of Mascaté, being before called Aceph Ben-Ali, prince of Norenuac. This, though but a small province, is the finest in all Arabia the Happy, containing every thing necessary for the life of man, but particularly fine fruits, and above all, most excellent grapes, from which they can make very good wine. It is this prince that possesses the finest pearl in the whole world, not on account of its size, for it weighs but 12 carats and  $\frac{1}{16}$ , nor for its perfect roundness, but because it is so bright and transparent, that you can almost see the light through it. As the gulf over against Ormus is little more than twelve leagues from Arabia the Happy, on the Persian side, and the Arabs are at peace with the Persians, the prince Mascaté came to visit the Khan of Ormus, by whom he was magnificently treated, at the same time inviting the English, Dutch, and French, amongst which number I was one. At the close of the entertainment, the prince drew out this pearl from a little purse, which he wore suspended from his neck, and shewed it to the Khan and all the company. The Khan would have bought it, to present to the King of Persia, and offered as far as two thousand tomans, but the prince would not sell it, since which I crossed the sea in company with a Banian merchant, sent by the Great Mogul to this prince, with an offer of forty thousand crowns for his pearl, but which he also refused. This story shews us that with respect to jewels, those which are very fine, should not always be brought to Europe, but rather, as I have before noticed, carried from Europe to Asia, where they highly value those jewels and pearls, which are of extraordinary beauty, with the exception of the Chinese and Japanese, who set no esteem upon them.

Another place in the East remarkable for a pearl fishery is in the sea which washes a large town called Manar in the island of Ceylon. These are the finest with respect to water and roundness of all the other fisheries, but they rarely find any that weigh more than three or four carats.

Also on the coast of Japan there are large pearls, and of fine water, but very rough, however they never fish for them, because, as I have already observed, the Japanese hold jewels in no estimation.

Notwithstanding the pearls found at Bahren and Catifa approach a little upon the yellow, they are yet, as I have already remarked, in as much esteem as those of Manar, and throughout all the East they say they are ripe, and never change their colour.

I now come to the western fisheries, which are all in the great gulf of Mexico, extending along the coast of New Spain, where there are five, stretching from east to west.

The first is along the island of Cubagua, which is not more than three leagues in circuit, and about five distant from Terra Firma. It is placed at ten degrees and a half in the northern latitude, and is about one hundred and sixty leagues from St. Domingo, in the island of Hispanolia. The land is here quite barren, and destitute of every

every thing, particularly of water, which the inhabitants are obliged to fetch from Terra Firma. This island is noted throughout the west for producing the greatest number of pearls, though the largest never exceed five carats.

The second fishery is at the island of Marguerite, that is to say, the island of pearls, and is about a league's distance from Cubagua, which it much surpasses in size. It contains every thing essential for life, except water, in which like Cubagua it is deficient, and they go to fetch it from the river Cumana, near New Cadiz. This fishery, though not the largest of the five found in America, is yet reckoned the principal one, by reason that its pearls surpass the others in perfection, as well for water as in size. One of these pearls I had formerly in my possession, which was finely shaped like a pear, and of clear water, it weighed fifty-five carats, and I sold it to Cha-Est-Kan, the Great Mogul's uncle.

Many persons are much surpris'd at pearls being carried from Europe to the East, where they are found in great quantities; but it must be considered that the eastern fisheries never produce any so large as the west, to which may be added, that all the kings and great lords in Asia, give a much better price than Europeans, not only for pearls, but all sorts of jewels when they are any ways uncommon, diamonds alone excepted.

The third fishery is at Comogote also near Terra Firma. The fourth is at Rio de la Hacha, along the same coast.

The fifth and last is at Saint Martha, sixty leagues from Rio de la Hacha. All these three fisheries produce pearls of a large size; but they are in general ill shaped and of a lead coloured water.

With regard to the pearls of Scotland, and those found in one of the rivers of Bavaria, although necklaces are made of them to the value of one thousand crowns and upwards, yet they will not bear a comparison with those of the East and West Indies.

I believe no one that has preceded me in writing on pearls, has taken any notice of the fishery that within these few years has been discovered on the coast of Japan, many of which pearls brought from thence by Dutchmen I have seen. They are of a very fine water, and some of them large, but are all rough. The Japanese, as I have observed elsewhere, hold them in no estimation, and it is not unlikely, were they disposed to search, that they might meet with some sand banks containing finer.

Before closing this chapter, I wish to make an important remark respecting pearls and the difference of their water, some being very white, others bordering upon yellow, and some again of a blackish or lead colour. With respect to the latter, they are found only in America, and their colour is owing to the nature of the bottom, which contains more mud than in the East. In a cargo that the late Monsieur du Jardin, the famous jeweller, had in the Spanish galleons, he found six pearls perfectly round, but black as jet, which, taking the one with the other, weighed twelve carats. He gave them to me, in company with other articles to carry to the East and endeavour to sell, but I brought them back to him, not having been able to find any person who was pleas'd with them. As to those which have a yellow cast, this arises from the pearl fishers selling the oysters to the merchants by heaps, who sometimes keep them as long as fourteen or fifteen days until they open of themselves when they take out the pearls; during which time some of these oysters losing their moisture, spoil and waste, by means of which infection the pearl turns yellow, which is so true, that in all the oysters that have preserv'd their moisture, the pearls are always white. The reason why they keep them till they open of themselves is, that if opened by force as we do our shell-oysters, they would run the risk of damaging or breaking the pearl. The oysters at

Manar open naturally five or six days sooner than those in the Persian Gulf, because the heat is greater at Manar, which is in the tenth degree of north latitude, than at the island of Bahren, which is about twenty-seven degrees: thus amongst those pearls that come from Manar there are few yellow. In short, all the eastern nations are exactly of our taste with regard to whiteness, and I have always observed that they like the whitest pearls, the whitest diamonds, the whitest bread, and the whitest women.

CHAP. VII. *Shewing in what Manner the Pearls are engendered in Oysters, how they fish for them, and at what Time.*

I AM well aware that, according to the opinion of some ancient authors, not very conversant in these matters, pearls have commonly been thought to be engendered by the dew from heaven, and that never more than one is found in each oyster, all which experience has shewn to be erroneous. With respect to the first, the oysters are found only at the bottom of the sea, where the dew cannot penetrate, they being sometimes, as I shall presently shew, obliged to dive for them as low as twelve fathoms; and in regard to the other, it is certain, that as many as six or seven pearls have been found in one oyster; nay, I myself have had one that contained to the number of ten, regular in a train of formation. They were not it is true all of the same bigness; because they engender in the oysters in the same manner as eggs in the belly of a fowl, where as the largest egg being most advanced towards the orifice, comes out first, leaving the smaller ones behind till further perfected, so likewise in the oysters the largest pearl first presents itself, leaving the smaller ones not yet arrived at perfection under the oyster at the bottom of the shell, until they have attained their natural size. But yet I do not mean from this to infer that it is a general rule, as, on the contrary, many oysters are met with containing no pearls at all.

It must not be imagined that these pearl divers derive any great advantage from their labour, for if the poor people thus occupied had any thing else to employ them, they would willingly quit this trade, which they follow only to keep them from starving. I have, in my account of Persia, before observed, that from Balsora as far as Cape Jafque, on both sides the Persian Gulf, the earth produces nothing. The people are there so poor, and live in a manner so pitiable, that they see neither bread nor rice, living entirely on dates and salt-fish, as they must go twenty leagues up the country before they meet with any herb.

They fish in the oriental seas twice a year, first in March and April, and secondly, in August and September, and the time for selling them is from June till November. But this fishery is not carried on every year, because those who undertake it wishing to learn beforehand, whether or not it will tend to their advantage; send out to the place where they fish six or seven barks, when each of them bringing back about a thousand oysters, they open them, and if in every thousand, pearls are not found to the value of five fanos, which is about equal to half-a-crown of our money, it is a sign that the fishery will not be productive, and these poor people would not be able to make good the expences they are put to, since as well to cloath as support them during the time of the fishery, they borrow money at three and four per cent. per month; so that if the thousand oysters does not produce pearls to the amount of at least five fanos, they fish none that year. The merchants that buy these oysters must do it at a venture, taking their chance as to their contents. This, when they find large pearls, turns out fortunate, although it happens but seldom

feldom, especially at the Manar fishery, where, as I have already observed, none but small ones are found, the most part of them being such as are sold by the ounce. They have several as large as half a grain or a grain, but it is a great thing when they find one to weigh two or three carats. There are some years that a thousand oysters are worth seven fanos, and that the fishery amounts to an hundred thousand piaftres or more. When the Portuguese were in possession of Manar, they imposed a duty on every bark, and since the Dutch have taken possession of it, from every diver they receive eight piaftres, and sometimes nine, which, in a profitable year, has brought them in as much as seventeen thousand two hundred reals. The reason why the Portuguese took this tribute of these poor people, as likewise why the Dutch continue it, is to defray the expence of defending them against the Malavares their enemies, who, coming in armed barks, endeavour to take them for slaves. All the time the fishery is carried on, the Dutch have two or three armed barks at sea, on the side that the corsairs come from, by which means they are enabled to work in peace. These divers are for the most part idolaters, although there are some Mahometans who have their barks by themselves. They never mix together, and the Dutch receive more from these latter than the former, for besides that the Mahometans pay as much as the idolaters, they also give the produce of one day's fishery, which day is at the choice of the Dutch.

The more it rains in the course of the year, the more productive it is for the fishery, but many persons imagine that the deeper water the oyster is found in, so much is the pearl the whiter, because the water is not so hot, the sun not penetrating to the bottom, but this is an opinion I beg leave to contradict. They fish in from four to twelve fathom water, which fishery is carried on upon the banks, where there are sometimes as many as two hundred and fifty barks, in the greater part of which there is but one diver, some of the largest only having two.

These barks sail from the coast every morning before sun rise, with a constant breeze from the land, which lasts till ten o'clock. After dinner they return with a breeze from the sea, which succeeds that of the land, regularly springing up about eleven or twelve o'clock as soon as the other has ceased. The banks on which they fish, are five or six leagues out in the sea, and when there, the following is the method used to procure the oysters.

Under the arms of those who dive, they fasten a cord, one end of which is held by them that remain in the bark, while to their great toe a stone is tied of eighteen or twenty pounds weight, the cord also being held by those in the bark. Then they have a net made like a sack, the mouth being encircled with a hoop to keep it open, and this net is fastened like the rest. The diver is now let down into the sea, where directly he gets to the bottom, which he very soon does by means of the stone fastened to his toe, he immediately unties it, and those who are in the bark draw it up. He now keeps filling the net with the oysters as long as he can hold his breath, which when he finds beginning to fail him, he pulls the cord fastened under his arms, and that serving as a signal to those in the boat, they draw him up as quick as possible. The divers at Manar are much cleverer at fishing, and remain longer under the water than those of Bahren and Catifa, neither closing up their nostrils with pincers, nor putting cotton in their ears to hinder the water from entering, as they do at the Persian Gulf.

After the diver is drawn into the bark, they drag up the net with the oysters, when he remains about half a quarter of an hour, as well to allow them time to take out the oysters as to give him time to breathe, which done he returns again to the bottom of the sea in the same manner as before, repeatedly continuing so to do for the space of ten or twelve hours, when they make for land. Some that are in want of money sell what

what they have immediately, whilst those that have wherewith to live, keep them till the fishing season is over. They leave the oysters to open of themselves, which they do as soon as they begin to spoil. Some of the shells are four times as large as those we have at Rouen, but as the oysters are of an insipid, unpleasant taste, they always throw them away.

As a conclusion to this discourse on pearls, it must be observed, that throughout all Europe, they sell them by the carat, which is four grains, the same as in diamonds, whereas in Asia, they have various weights. In Persia they weigh their pearls by the Abas, which is one eighth less than our carat, while in the Indies, and throughout all the Great Mogul's territories, as also in the kingdoms of Golconda and Vifapour, they weigh them by the ratis, which is likewise one eighth less than the carat.

Goa was formerly the greatest mart in Asia for diamonds, rubies, sapphires, topazes, and other stones. Here all the miners and merchants resorted to sell the finest productions of the mines, because they were at free liberty to dispose of them as they pleased, whereas in their own country, upon shewing any thing particular to any of the kings or princes they were obliged to accept just what he chose to give them. Goa was also famous for the great trade there carried on in pearls, as well those brought from the island of Bahren in the Persian Gulf, as from Manar on the coast of Ceylon, and also those from America. It must be observed, that at Goa and all other Portugueze possessions in the Indies, they weigh their pearls with a particular weight, not used at any other place either in Europe, Asia, or America. I make no mention of Africa, because this trade is not known there, the women in that part of the world contenting themselves, in the place of jewels, with some grains of false coral or yellow amber, of which they make collars and bracelets to ornament their legs and arms.

Notwithstanding the Portugueze, in all their Indian possessions, sell the pearls by a weight called chegos; they nevertheless buy them of the merchants according to the custom of their various countries, either by the carat, abas, or ratis.

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