

he had no other excuse to make, than the strong bias of his nation to dishonesty, replying, in his broken jargon, Chinese man very great rogue, truly, but have fashion, no can help.

It were endless to recount all the artifices, extortions, and frauds which were practised on the Commodore and his people by this interested race. The method of buying provisions in China being by weight, the tricks the Chinese made use of to augment the weight of what they sold to the Centurion were almost incredible. One time a large quantity of fowls and ducks being brought for the ship's store, the greatest part of them presently died: this spread a general alarm on board, it being apprehended that they had been killed by poison; but on examination, it appeared that it was only owing to their being crammed with stones and gravel, to increase their weight, the quantity thus forced into most of the ducks being found to amount to ten ounces in each. The hogs, too, which were bought ready killed of the Chinese butchers, had water injected into them for the same purpose; so that a carcase, hung up all night, that the water might drain from it, had lost about a stone of its weight. And when, to avoid this cheat, the hogs were bought alive, it was discovered that the Chinese gave them salt to increase their thirst; and having thus excited them to drink great quantities of water, they sold the tortured animals in this inflated state. When the Commodore first put to sea from Macao, they practised an artifice of another kind: for as the Chinese never scruple eating any food that dies of itself, they contrived, by some secret practices, that great part of his live sea-store should die in a short time after it was put on board, hoping to make a second profit of the dead carcasses which they expected would be thrown overboard; and two-thirds of the hogs dying before the Centurion was out of sight of land, many of the Chinese boats followed her, only to pick up the carrion. These instances may serve as a specimen of the manners of this celebrated nation, which is often recommended to the rest of the world as a pattern of all kinds of laudable qualities.