

BORRI. Lai, into which *F. Alexander Rhodes* of *Avignon* made his way thro' *Cochin-Cbina*; and this kingdom, I am of opinion, cannot but border upon that of *Tibet*, newly discovered; which I am apt to believe, as well by reason of the extent and length of the land of *Tibet* and borders of *Lai*, because by the greatness and compass of these two kingdoms, it seems impossible that any other land should lie betwixt them; as also much more on account of what the same fathers who were there relate of *Tibet*, who report that the farthest province of *Tibet* eastward borders upon, and trades with a people, who sell them raw silk and fine dishes, like those of *Cbina*, and such like commodities, which we know *Tunchim* abounds in, and sell them to the *Lais*.

The government.

As to the government of this kingdom it is hereditary, and ruled as follows: The supreme regal dignity resides in one they call *Buna*; but he of himself does nothing at all, all things being left to his favourite, whom they call *Cbiuua*, whose power is so absolute both in peace and war, that he is come by degrees to own no superior; the *Buna* remaining in his royal palace, quite cut off from all management of the publick affairs, satisfied with an exterior respect due to him as a sort of sacred person, and with the authority of making laws, and confirming all edicts. When the *Cbiuua* dies, he always endeavours to have his son succeed him in the government; but for the most part it falls out that the tutors of those sons aspiring themselves to that dignity, endeavour to murder them, and by that means possess themselves of the dignity of *Cbiuua*.

Power.

The *Cbiuua's* power is so great, that suitable to the bigness of the kingdom, he is able to bring into the field three or four times the number of men as the king of *Cochin-Cbina*, whose army as was said above amounts to 80000 men. Nor is it any

difficult matter for the *Cbiuua*, as often as he pleases, to raise 300000 armed men or more, because the prime lords of his kingdom, such as among us, dukes, marshesses, and earls, are oblig'd in time of war to furnish them at their own expence. The *Buna's* strength is not above 40000 men for his guard. Yet he is always own'd as superiour to the *Cbiuua* of *Tunchim*, by the king of *Cochin-Cbina*, and by that other *Cbiuua*, we observ'd in the first book to be fled into the province bordering upon *Cbina*, tho' these are continually at war against one another; and the king of *Lais* bordering upon *Tunchim*, pays him a certain tribute.

Therefore when we say this crown is hereditary, it is to be understood only in reference to the *buna* whose children always succeed, the royal race being continued in his family. This is as much as I thought fit briefly to say of the kingdom of *Tunchim*, from what I could learn of it till my return into *Europe*.

Since then I have been inform'd, that *F. Julian Baldinotte*, an *Italian* born at *Pistoria* in *Tuscany*, was sent into that kingdom to make some way for the gospel, and arriv'd from *Macao* at the city *Tunchim*, after a month's sail. As for what the said father found in that country, what pass'd between the king and him, the solemnity of his reception, and the first foundation he laid for Christianity, I refer the reader to the account given lately by that father himself; and we are still expecting fresh advices from the other fathers, as *F. Peter Marques* a *Portuguese*, and *F. Alexander Rhodes* of *Avignon*, who we said before had been in *Cochin-Cbina* and are there still gaining Christians. We therefore hope both these kingdoms of *Tunchim* and *Cochin-Cbina*, will soon be united to the flock of the church, acknowledging and giving the due obedience to the universal pastor and vicar of CHRIST our LORD on earth.

THE CONCLUSION.

IT is not possible but that such as have least inclination to the discovery of the world, and are most affected to their own countries and homes, must be excited by this short account to desire to see not only the variety but the truth of such strange things, which tho' they be not supernatural, may yet be term'd miracles of nature. Such are those I have said I saw in *Cochin-Cbina*, a land as to its climate and seasons of the year habitable, by reason of the fruitfulness of its soil abounding in provisions, fruit, birds, and beasts, and the sea, in choice and delicious fish; and most healthy, because of the excellent temper of the air,

insomuch that those people do not yet know what the plague is. It is rich in gold, silver, silk, *Calambé*, and other things of great value, fit for trade by reason of the ports and resort of all nations: peaceable, because of their loving, generous, and sweet disposition: and lastly secure, not only by the valour and bravery of the *Cochin-Chinese* accounted such by other countries, and their store of arms, and skill in managing them; but even by nature, which has shut it in on the one side by the sea, and on the other by the rocky *Alps*, and uncouth mountains of the *Kemois*. This is that part of the earth call'd *Cochin-Cbina*, which