

faction, for he was more particularly attentive to the authentic precedent established on this occasion, by which his Majesty's ships of war are, for the future, exempted from all demands of duty in any of the ports of China.

In pursuance of the promises of the Viceroy, the provisions were begun to be sent on board the day succeeding the audience; and four days after the Commodore embarked at Canton for the *Centurion*. And now all the preparations for putting to sea were pursued with so much vigilance, and were so soon completed, that the 7th of December, the *Centurion* and her prize unmoored, and stood down the river, passing through the Bocca Tigris on the 10th. On this occasion I must observe, that the Chinese had taken care to man the two forts on each side of that passage, with as many men as they could well contain, the greatest part of them armed with pikes and matchlock muskets. These garrisons affected to show themselves as much as possible to the ships, and were doubtless intended to induce Mr. Anson to think more reverently than he had hitherto done of the Chinese military power; for this purpose they were equipped with extraordinary parade, having a great number of colours exposed to view; and on the castle in particular there were laid considerable heaps of large stones; and a soldier of unusual size, dressed in very sightly armour, stalked about on the parapet, with a battle-axe in his hand, endeavouring to put on as important and martial an air as possible, though some of the observers on board the *Centurion* shrewdly suspected, from the appearance of his armour, that instead of steel, it was composed only of a particular kind of glittering paper.

While the ships lay here, the merchants of Macao finished their purchase of the galeon, for which they refused to give more than 6000 dollars: this was greatly short of her value; but the impatience of the Commodore to get to sea, to which the merchants were no strangers, prompted them to insist on these unequal terms. Mr. Anson had learnt enough from the English at Canton, to