TO THE

RIGHT WORSHIPFULL AND FAMOUS GENTLEMAN,
M. THOMAS CANDISH, ESQUIRE, INCREASE OF
HONOR AND HAPPIE ATTEMPTES.

It is now aboue fiue and thirty yeares passed, right worshipfull, since that young, sacred, and prudent Prince, king Edward the sixt of happie memorie, went about the discoverie of Cathaia and China, partly of desire that the good young king had to enlarge the Christian faith, and partlie to find out some where in those regions ample vent of the cloth of England, for the mischiefs that grew about that time neerer home aswell by contempt of our commodities, as by the arrestes of his merchantes in the Empire, Flanders, France, and Spaine: forseeing withall how beneficiall ample vent would rise to all degrees throughout his kingdom, and specially to the infinite number of the poore sort distressed by lacke of worke. And although by a voyage hereupon taken in hande for this purpose by Sir Hugh Willobie and Richard Chaunscellour, a discoverie of the bay of Saint Nicolas in Russia fell out, and a trade with the Muscouites, and after another trade for a time with the Persians by way of the Caspian sea ensued, yet the discoverie of the principall intended place followed not in his time, nor yet since, vntill you tooke your happie and renowned voyage about the worlde in hande, although sundrie attemptes, at the great charges of divers honorable and well disposed persons, and good worshipfull merchantes and others have beene made since the death of that good king, in seeking a passage thither both by the North-east, and by the Northwest. But since it is so (as wee
vnderstande) that your worshippe in your late voyage hath first of
our nation in this age discovered the famous rich ilandes of the Lu
Zones, or Philippinas, lying neare vnto the coast of China, and
have spent some time in taking good view of the same, having
brought home three boyes borne in Manilla, the chiefe towne of
the said Ilands, besides two other young fellowes of good capacitie,
borne in the mightie Iland of Iapon, (which hereafter may serue
as our interpreters in our first traficke thither), and that also your
selfe have sailed along the coast of China, not farre from the
Continent, and have taken some knowledge of the present state of
the same, and in your course haue found out a notable ample vent
of our clothes, especially our kersies, and are in preparing againe
for the former voyage, as hee that would constantly persevere in so
good an enterprise: we are to thinke that the knowledge and first
discoverie of the same, in respect of our nation, hath all this time
beene by the Almighty to you onely reserued, to your immortal
glorie, and to the manifest shew of his especiall fauour borne
towards you, in that besides your high and rare attempt of sailing
about the whole globe of the earth, in so short a time of two yeares
and about two monethes, you have shewed your selfe to have that
rare and especiall care for your countrie, by seeking out vent for our
clothes, that ought vpon due consideration to move many thousands
of English subjects to pray for you, and to loue and honor your
name and familie for euer. For as you haue opened by your
attempt the gate to the spoile of the great and late mightie,
vniuersall, and infested enimie of this realme, & of al countries
that professe true religion: so haue you by your great care wrought a
way to impioie the merchants of Englands in trade, to increase our
Nauie, to beneficiate our Clothiers, and (your purpose falling out to
your hoped effect) to releuee more of the poorer sort, then all the
hospitals and almes houses can or may, that haue beene built in
this realme, since the first inhabiting thereof.

And sir, if to this your late noble attempt, it might please you,
by your incouragement, and by the help of your purse to adde
your present furtherance for the passage to be discovered by the northwest, (for prove whereof there be many infallible reasons, and diverse great experiences to be yeilded) our course with our commodities to the rich land of Japon, to the mightie empire of China, and to the Ilandes of the Philippinas, for the vent that you haue found out, should be by the halfe way shortened, and you should double and manyfold treble the credite of your fourner late enterprise, and make your fame to mount, and yourself to live for euer in a much higher degree of glorie, then otherwise it might be, or that by any other mean you could possibly devise: In which action so highly importing the generall state of this lande I have perfect experience that many worshipfull and wealthie marchants of this citie and other places would most willingly ioyne their purses with yours: and to play the blabbe, I may tell you they attende nothing with greater desire and expectation, then that a motion hereof being made by some happie man, your selfe and they might friendly and seriously ioyne together for the full accomplishing of this so long intended discoverie: And to descende to some particulars, there is one speciall reason that giueth an edge vnto their desires, proceeeding from the late worthie attempts of that excellent and skilful pilot M. John Damis, made for the search of the afore-said northwest passage these three late yeares, hauing entred into the same foure hundred leagues further than was euer hitherto thoroughly knownen, and returned with an exact description thereof, to the reasonable contentment for the time, of the adventurers, and chiefly of the worshipfull M. William Sanderson, whose contributions thereunto, although they haue beene verie great and extraordinarie, yet for the certaine hope or rather assurance that he conceiueth upon the report of the Captaine himselfe and all the rest of any skill employed in these voyages, remayneth still constant, and is readie to disburse as yet to the freshe setting on foote of this enterprise entermittted by occasion of our late troubles, euen this yeare againe, for the finall perfection of so profitable and honorable a discoverie, a farre greater portion then in reason would
be required of any other man of his abilitie. And albeit, sir, that you have taken in your late voyage, besides the knowledge of the way to China, the intelligence of the government of the country and of the commodities of the territories and provinces of the same, and that at the full, according to the time of your short abode in those partes, yet nevertheless for that of late more ample understanding hath beene in more length of time, by woonderfull great endenour taken by certaine learned Portingals and Spaniardes of great observation, and not long agoe published in the Spanish tongue, I haue for the increase of the knowledge of the subjectes of Englande, and specially for the illuminating of the minds of those that are to take the voyage next in hande to Japan, China, and the Philippinas, translated the same worke into English, and committed it to print, passing ouer Paulus Venetus, and sir John Mandeuill, because they wrote long agoe of those regions: which labour, to say trueth, I haue vndertaken at the earnest request and encouragement of my worshipfull friend Master Richard Hakluitt late of Oxforde, a gentleman, besides his other manifolde learning and languages, of singular and deepe insight in all histories of discoverie and partes of cosmographic: who also for the zeale he beareth to the honour of his countrie and countrimen, brought the same first about two yeares since ouer into this court, and at this present hath in hande a most excellent and ample collection of the sundrie trauailes and navigations of our owne nation, a matter long intended by him, and serving to the like beneficiall and honorable purpose, which I hope will shortly come to light to the great contentation of the wiser sort.

In the meane season, haung nowe at length finished according to my poore skill and leasure this my translation, I thought best to dedicate and commend the same to your worshipfull patronage, as the man that I holde most worthie of the same, and most able of our nation to judge aright of the contenetes thereof, and to correct the errors of the author whensoever you shall meete with them: beseeching you to accept in good part the trauaile and good mean-
ing of the translator: and so wishing vnto you health, increase of knowledge, with fortunate and glorious successe in your further courageous attempts, I leave you to the protection of the Almighty.

From London the first of January 1589.

Your worshipes alwaies to command,

Robert Parke.
THE PRINTER,

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

WHEREAS (good courteous Reader) in this historie describing the kingdom of China with the countries there adjacent, thou shalt finde many times repeated, and that in some things too gloriously, the zeal of certaine Spanish Friers that laboured in discoverie of the saide China, and the declaration of certaine myraecles (but falsely reported) by them to have beene wrought, together with examples of diuerse their superstitious practices: which haply may give offence vnto some in reading: thou must understand that this is to be rather imputed vnto the first writer of this historie in Spanish, than to any fault of mine: for the Spaniardes (following their ambitious affections) doo vnsually in all their writings extoll their owne actions, even to the setting forth of many vntruthes and incredible things: as in their descriptions of the conquestes of the east and west Indies, etc., doth more at large appeare. Notwithstanding all which, our translator (as it seemeth) hath rather chosen to be esteemed fidus interpres, in truely translating the historie as it was, though conteyning some errors, then to be accounted a patcher or corrupter of other mens workes.

But howsoever either our first authour, or the translator, haue shewed themselves affectioned, sure I am that the knowledge of this kingdome will not onely be pleasant, but also verie profitable to our English nation: and by playing the good Bee, in onely accepting herein that which is good, I doubt not, but the reading of this historie will bring thee great contentment, and delight.

Vale.
THE HISTORIE

OF THE

MIGHTIE KINGDOME OF CHINA,

IN THE WHICH IS CONTAINED THE NOTABLE THINGS
OF THAT KINGDOME, TOUCHING THAT WHICH
IS NATURALL.

CHAP. I.

The description of the kingdome and the confines that it hath belonging.

This great and mightie kingdome of China, which we do meane to treat of in this Historie, hath beene discovered by cleere and true notice, within this tenne yeares, by Spanyards that were dwellers in the Ilands Philippinas, that are three hundreth leagues distant from the said kingdome: Notwithstanding, that long time before, there was relation giuen, by way of the Portingall Indias, by such as dwelt in Macao, and did trafficke to Canton, a citie of the same kingdome of China. But this was by relation so, that the one nor the other could satisfie, for that there was founde varietie in that which was true, till the yeere of 1577. Frier Martin de Gorrada,¹ provincial of the Augustine friers, who were the first discoverers of the said Ilands Philippinas, and ministred first the holy baptisme amongst them, with his companions, frier Hieronimo Martin, Pedro Sarmiento, and Myghell de Loarcha, cheefe officers of the citie of Marrila² in the

¹ Martin de Rada, otherwise called Herrada, for an account of whom and his companions, see Introduction.
² Manilla.
A DISCOURSE OF THE

said Ilands, by the order and commandement of Guido de Labassares, gouernour thereof, did enter into the saide kingdome of China, led and gouerned by a captaine belonging to the king of the said kingdome, called Omoncon.

Of the comming of this Omoncon vnto the Ilands Philippines, and of his hardines to carrie the aforesaid vnto the firme land, he being commanded to the contrarie vpon paine of death, and how he was receiued, and great courtesie shewed, and of other things verie curious, you shall finde in the second part of this historic, where as is the substance and whole relation of all that was brought vnto the king of Spaine.

You shall vnderstande that this mightie kingdome is the Orientaleast part of all Asia, and his next neighbour towards the Ponent is the kingdome of Quachinchina, whereas they doo obserue in whole all the customes and rites of China. The greatest part of this kingdome is watred with the great Orientall Ocean sea, beginning at the Iland Aynan, which is hard by Quachinchina, which is 19 degrees towards the North, and compassing towards the South, whereas their course is northeast. And beyond Quachinchina towards the North, the Bragmanes do confine, which are much people, and verie rich, of golde, siluer, and pretious stones, but in especiall, rubies: for there are infinit. They are proude and hawtie men, of great corage, wel made, but of browne colour: they haue had (but few times) warre with them of China, in respect for that betwixt both the kingdomes, there are great and mightie mountaines and rockes that doth disturbe them. And harde vnto this nation ioyneth the Patanes and Mo-

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1 Quachinchina.
2 Hainan.
3 Birman Empire.
4 Bernier, in his *Lettre à Colbert sur l'étendue de l'Hindoustan*, describes the Patans as “peuples mahometans, sortis du coste du Gange vers Bengale, qui avant l'invasion des Mogols dans les Indes avoient seceu se rendre puissans dans plusieurs endroits, et principalement à
KINGDOM OF CHINA.

goers,¹ which is a great kingdome, and warlike people, whose head² is the Gran Samarzan³. They are the true Scythas or Massagetas, of whom it is affirmed that they were neuer overcomen by any other nation: they are a people well proportioned and white: by reason they dwel in a cold countrie. Betwixt the West and the South is the Trapobana, or Samatra, a kingdome very rich of gold, precious stones, & pearles: and more towards the South, are the two Iauas, the great and the lesse, and the kingdome of the Lechios⁴ and in equall distance, are the Iapones: yet notwithstanding those that are more indifferent to this kingdome are the Tartarians, which are on the selfe firme land or continent, and are alonein diuided by a wal, as shal be declared in the 9 chapter of this booke. These Tartarians haue had many times wars with them of China: but at one time (as you shall perceive) they got the whole kingdome of China, and did possesse the same for the space of 93 ycares, till such time as they of China did rebell and forced them out again. At this day they say that they are friends one with another, and that is, for that they bee all Gentiles, and do vse all one manner of ceremonies and rites. They doo differ in their clenes⁵ and lawes, in the which the Chinas doth exceede them very much. The Tartarians are very yellow and not so white: and they go naked from the girdledest vpwards, and they eate raw flesh, and do annoint themselves with the blood of raw flesh, for to make them more harder and currish, by reason whereof they doo so stinke, that if the aire doth come from that part where they be, you shall smel them afar off by the strong sauer. They haue for certainty, the truth of

Dehly et faire plusieurs Rajas des environs leurs tributaires. Ces Patans ... haissent mortellement les Mogols, souvenans toujours de ce qu'ils ont été autrefois, avant qu'ils les eussent chassee de leurs grandes principautez et les eussent obligez de se retirer deça délà, loin de Dehly et Agra dans des montagnes où ils se sont habituez.”

¹ Moguls. ² Capital. ³ Samarcand. ⁴ LoO Choos. ⁵ Cleanness.
A DISCOURSE OF THE

the immortalitie of the soule (although it be with error), for they say that the soule doth enter into other bodies, and that soule that liued well in the first bodie, doth better it from poore to rich, or from age to youth: and if it liued evil, to the contrarie in worse. The sons of the Tartarians do very much obserue and keepe the commandement in obeying their parents, for that they doo wholly accomplish the same without failing any iot of their will, vnder paine to be seuerely and publike licie punished. They confess one God, whom they worship, and haue him in their houses carued or painted, and every day they doe offer vnto it incense, or some other sweet smelles: they do call him the high God, and do craue of him vnderstanding and health. They haue also another god, which they say is son vnto the other; they do call him Natigay: this is their god of terestrial things. They haue him likewise in their houses, and every time they go to eate they doo anoint his face with the fattest thing they haue to eate: that being done they fall to eating, hauing first giuen their gods their pitance. They are a kinde of people that verie seldom doo faile a lie, although their liues should lie thereon, and are verie obedient vnto their king: but in speciall in their warres, in the which euerie one doth that he is appointed to doo: they are led by the sound of a drome or trumpet, with the which their captaines do gonerne them with great ease, by reason that they are trained vp in the same from their youth. And many other things are amongst them, in the which they do resemble them of China, (who) if they did receiue the faith of our Lord Jesu Christ, it is to be believed that the Tartarians would do the same, for that they are taken for men very ducible, and do imitate verie much them of China.