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Jean-Baptiste Tavernier  
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# Travels in India

VOLUME 2

JEAN-BAPTISTE TAVERNIER  
TRANSLATED BY VALENTINE BALL



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BY  
JEAN BAPTISTE TAVERNIER  
BARON OF AUBONNE

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# TRAVELS IN INDIA

BY

## JEAN BAPTISTE TAVERNIER

BARON OF AUBONNE

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL FRENCH EDITION OF 1676

WITH A

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR,

NOTES, APPENDICES, ETC.

BY

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*IN TWO VOLUMES*

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## PREFACE

IN the course of the preparation of a work of so diversified and complex a character as this, it is almost certain to be the case that, even up to the last moment before publication, matter bearing upon the subject comes to hand. The present occasion, so far from forming an exception to the rule, exemplifies it in a very remarkable degree. The subjects upon which additional information has been acquired during the progress of the printing of these volumes are many; but there are some in particular which deserve special notice, to which it may therefore be well to call attention here.

Through the kindness of Prof. Joret I have received a pamphlet, written by himself, entitled *Le Voyageur Tavernier (1670-1689)*, in which he has pursued his investigations as to the events of the last twenty years of Tavernier's life. As some of these confirm while others modify the conclusions set forth in the Introduction to vol. i, it is desirable to notice them briefly.

Prof. Joret describes his examination of the original manuscripts of Tavernier's *Memoirs*, which are in the possession of M. Schefer at his Chateau of St. Alban near Chambéry. Without entering into details, it

may be said that they completely confirm the view expressed in the Introduction, that the material made use of by Chappuzeau was largely documentary; that it could have been communicated orally by dictation, the internal evidence, as it appeared to me, sufficiently disproved.

Chappuzeau's work consisted in giving a literary style, such as it was, to Tavernier's simple and rough notes; but in this work Tavernier himself very possibly assisted. These MS. *Memoirs* contain some details not included in the *Travels*, such as personal expenses and other minor day-to-day notes. The death of M. Ardilliére, a subject of some confusion (see p. 159 *n*), is fixed by the original record as having taken place on the 12th December 1652. And Tavernier's arrival at Ispahan in 1654 was on the 9th of July, not in May as previously supposed.

It is hoped that this original text may be published, as it would seem, from the glimpse of it thus given by Prof. Joret, that it would to a great extent aid in co-ordinating various statements in the published *Travels* which are now contradictory.

The suggestion that J. B. Tavernier had been imprisoned in the Bastille on the 13th January 1686 is now shown<sup>1</sup> to be a mistake, and that it was a name-sake of his, a Tavernier of Villiers-le-Bel, who was so incarcerated.

Passing the important additional information obtained as to Tavernier's relations with the Elector of Brandenburg, we find that Prof. Joret has reason for concluding that the discovery of the supposed

<sup>1</sup> M. Douen in *Bulletin de la Société du Protestantisme Français*, vol. xxxiv, 1887, p. 95.



tombstone of Tavernier at Moscow is of a somewhat mythical character ; but, be that as it may, an important letter from the Swedish Resident at Moscow, dated 8th March 1689, has been discovered, by which the Swedish Chancellor was informed that Tavernier had died three weeks previously, not at Moscow, but at Smolensk, when on his journey to Moscow.

In Book II, chap. xxi (vol. ii, p. 122) a table is given showing the ratio between carats and a weight called *chegos*, which was used by the Portuguese in the pearl trade. I was unable to explain this table ; but since it has been in type I have shown it to Mr. A. Rambaut, Assistant to the Astronomer Royal for Ireland, who has very kindly given me what appears to be a completely adequate explanation of its construction, as follows :—For the first six equivalents the equation  $y = 3 + 1\frac{3}{4}x + \frac{3}{8}x^2$ , represents the relation where  $y$  = the number of *chegos* and  $x$  the number of carats, subject, however, to the condition that wherever an uneven number of eighths of a carat occurs one is rejected. If this rule is followed the precise figures of Tavernier's table are obtained.

From seven carats onwards a very simple rule is followed in order to obtain the number of *chegos*. It is to multiply the number of carats by 10, divide by 12, and square the result—thus  $36 \times 10 \div 12 = 30$ , which squared = 900. There is one exception to this rule in the case of 25 carats, which in the table is given as equal to 430 *chegos*, whereas it ought to be, when calculated as above, 434.05 *chegos*. This discrepancy is probably due to a misprint, so that the table should be corrected accordingly.

When in the course of these pages reference was

made to the Grand Duke of Tuscany's diamond, it was supposed that the weight given by Schrauf for this diamond, which is now in the Imperial Treasury in Austria, was to be accepted as more correct than Tavernier's, but an examination of Schrauf's original papers shows that he really confirms Tavernier's weight for the stone in a very remarkable way. The present weight is  $133\frac{1}{5}$  Vienna carats, which are equal to  $139\frac{1}{5}$  of the lighter Florentine carats; and as Tavernier gives the weight at  $139\frac{1}{2}$  carats we are justified in concluding that in this case he used, and that in general he was probably in the habit of using, the Florentine carat = 0.1972 grams,<sup>1</sup> or 3.04 grs. troy, *i.e.* 4 per cent less than the English carat. The previous estimate of the value of the pearl *rati* given in Appendix, vol. i, having been calculated on the basis of  $\frac{7}{8}$ ths of a modern English or French carat, amounted to 2.77 grs. troy; but as  $\frac{7}{8}$ ths of a Florentine carat only amounts to 2.66 grs. troy, it seems probable that that would more closely approximate to the value of the pearl *rati* which was used in the weighment of jewels by Tavernier. From the discussion on the weight of Bábar's diamond given in Appendix I (p. 432) in this volume, it will be seen that there is independent testimony by Ferishta in favour of the view that 2.66 approximates more closely to the true value of the *rati* known to Tavernier and Ferishta. Other confirmatory evidence of this having been the value of the pearl *rati* will be found in the same Appendix.

A partial and preliminary notice of Tavernier's work has been referred to on p. 126 as having appeared

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Church, *Precious Stones*, p. 50, gives the value as 0.1965 grams.

in the *Philosophical Transactions*, to which it should be added that in the same journal abstracts of the contents of the first two volumes were subsequently published.<sup>1</sup>

The reader's attention is invited to the curious facts brought out in Appendix VI, from which it would appear that Chappuzeau obtained access to some of Tavernier's *Memoirs* while the latter was still absent on his last voyage. So far as I can ascertain it has never before been recognised that the *Histoire des Joyaux* and the English version of it, *The History of Jewels*, were founded on Tavernier's original *Memoirs*. This work serves to clear up several points commented on in the footnotes.

During a recent visit to Holland I ascertained that, as stated in the Bibliography (see vol. I, p. xlvi,) there is but one edition of Tavernier's Travels in the Dutch language. It was translated by J. H. Glazemaker, and published at Amsterdam in 1682. A copy of it which I obtained contains a number of engravings by Jan Luyken in addition to copies of the original plates in the French editions.

It is hoped that the present edition of Tavernier's Indian Travels, by drawing attention to the work, will hereafter lead to the further elucidation of many points of interest; and the Editor desires to intimate here, to those who may be willing to assist, that he will gratefully acknowledge all contributions on the subject which he may receive from readers of these volumes.

<sup>1</sup> No. 129, Nov. 20, 1676, p. 711; No. 130, Dec. 14, p. 751.

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Figures of three Rubies belonging to His Majesty.

The animal which produces musk.

Cobra di capello.

Banyan tree and Fakirs.

A Fakir.

*Canjare* (*Khánjar*), or dagger.

Marks on Batavian *reales*.

*Note.*—The Dutch Edition (see *ante*, p. xiii) contains some additional Plates.

## ERRATA ET CORRIGENDA.

- Page 53, note 1, also page 78, for identification of the fourth mine,  
see p. 476.
- „ 94, line 18, *for*  $1\frac{3}{4}$  *read*  $1\frac{1}{4}$ .
  - „ 97, note 2, *for* *Sol* 9d *read* *Sol* o.9d.
  - „ 98, note, line 3, *for*  $133\frac{1}{4}$  *read*  $133\frac{1}{5}$ .
  - „ 144, note, line 2, *for* *of* *read* *in*.
  - „ 159, note 1, line 11, *for* pp. 336 and 690 *read* 246 and 306.
  - „ 206, note, *for* Kulliani *read* Callian Bandar.
  - „ 260, note 3, *for* Arduiel *read* Ardeuil.
  - „ 282, note 3, *for* Asia *read* Assam.