

A NEW ACCOUNT  
OF EAST INDIA AND  
PERSIA. BEING NINE  
YEARS' TRAVELS BY  
JOHN FRYER  
VOLUME I

William Crooke



THE HAKLUYT SOCIETY

A New Account of  
East India and Persia.  
Being Nine Years' Travels,  
1672–1681, by John Fryer  
Volume I

Edited by  
WILLIAM CROOKE

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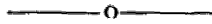
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*IOHANNES FRYER M.D.*  
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BEING  
NINE YEARS' TRAVELS,  
1672—1681.

BY  
JOHN FRYER.

*Edited, with Notes and an Introduction,*  
BY  
WILLIAM CROOKE, B.A.,  
FORMERLY OF THE BENGAL CIVIL SERVICE.

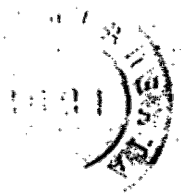
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## PREFACE.

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THE task of editing Dr. John Fryer's *New Account of East India and Persia* for the Hakluyt Society's series was originally entrusted to Mr. Arthur T. Pringle, of the Madras Civil Service. He had edited a calendar of the early Madras records, and from his intimate knowledge of Southern India was specially qualified to undertake such a work. A copy of the folio edition of the book was forwarded to Mr. Pringle at Madras, and he probably collected some materials. But his untimely death occurred before he could have made much progress; and, with the usual fate which seems almost inevitable in literary work done by British officers in the East, his library was immediately dispersed. Enquiries, conducted with the kind assistance of the officials of the Secretariat at Madras, have failed to trace any of the notes or other materials which he may have collected.

My personal interest in the book was largely

enhanced when I had occasion to study it with some care in the course of the preparation of a new edition of *Hobson-Jobson*, the Anglo-Indian Glossary of Sir H. Yule and Dr. A. C. Burnell, who had used it extensively as a source for quotations, Sir H. Yule in his Bibliography remarking: "No work has been more serviceable in the compilation of the Glossary." As no one else was prepared to undertake the edition long contemplated by the Hakluyt Society, the Council were pleased to entrust the task to me.

This duty has proved to be more difficult than I anticipated. The ideal editor of Fryer should possess a singularly wide and varied knowledge of the geography, history, archæology, natural productions, languages, religions, superstitions, and customs of India and Persia. It would have been quite impossible for me to prepare the notes to this edition if I had not received generous assistance from many scholars in various fields of knowledge. Mr. W. Foster and Miss E. B. Sainsbury have supplied me with much information from the MS. records in the India Office Library and Record Rooms; Mr. W. Irvine (whose notes on Manucci's *Storia do Magor*, covering this period, have been most useful), has helped me on various points of Muhammadan history and literature; Mr. V. A. Smith on the earlier period; Mr. D. Ferguson on the Portuguese; Sir G. Birdwood, Sir G. Watt, Sir W. T. Thistleton Dyer, Colonel D. D. Cunningham, and Lt.-Colonel D.

Prain on natural history; Professor E. G. Browne on Persia; Mr. F. C. Conybeare on the Armenians; Professor E. Bensly has traced many quotations from classical authors. Many other officers who have served, or are now serving, in the East, have taken much trouble in answering queries, among whom I may note Sir A. T. Arundel, Messrs. A. R. Becher, A. R. Bonus, E. Carmichael, Dr. A. Codrington, Messrs. H. Cousens, W. Francis, J. R. Henderson, J. A. Ismail Gracias, Jadunath Sarkar, P. B. Joshi, J. L. Rieu, W. W. Skeat, and Dr. C. M. Woodrow. I have also to thank Dr. H. M. Butler and Mr. W. Aldis Wright, of Trinity College, Cambridge, Mr. J. A. J. de Villiers, Secretary of the Hakluyt Society, Mr. R. Harrison, Secretary of the Royal Society, Mr. W. Wesley, Assistant Secretary of the Royal Astronomical Society, and Mr. W. T. Lynn, for information on various points.

A book like this offers unlimited temptations for annotation; and I fear that in some cases I have extended my notes beyond reasonable limits. But, as we know little of the history of the work, it seemed advisable to quote the accounts of contemporary travellers in order to allow the reader to judge how far Fryer was indebted to other

formation. In the case of terms explained in *Hobson-Jobson* I have usually contented myself with a reference to that Glossary. There are also many references to questions connected with religion and social life on which the general reader will require explanation. Some few quotations, in spite of investigation, still remain to be identified, and the same is the case with some words connected with weights and measures.

W. CROOKE.

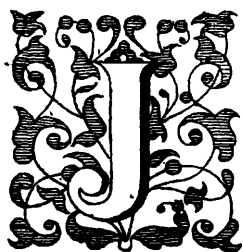
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## INTRODUCTION.

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JOHN FRYER,<sup>1</sup> M.D., F.R.S., the author of this work, eldest son of William Fryer of London, was probably born in that city about 1650. The facts of his career are obscure, and he displays throughout his book a notable reticence regarding his life and family connections. It is probable that some of his relations were connected with the early fortunes of the East India Company. On the last day of the year 1600, Queen Elizabeth incorporated the subscribers, 217 in number, under the title of "The Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies." In this document entitled "A Priuledge for XVteene Yeares, granted by her

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<sup>1</sup> It is remarkable that accounts of no less than four men named John Fryer, M.D., are to be found in the *Dict. Nat. Biog.* The first died in 1563, the second "flourished" about 1571, the third died in 1672. The fourth is our author. Practically all the facts of his life, so far as they are known, are given in the life by Mr. Gordon Goodwin, vol. xx, 302 f.

Matie to certaine Adventurors for the discoury of the trade for the East Indies," we find the name of "Iohn ffryre"; and among "Billes of Aduenture sealed" on 22nd July, 1601, appears the entry: "To Iohn ffryer a Bill of Aduenture & Supplies, Li 240-0-0."<sup>1</sup> Nothing more seems to be known of this John Fryer, or whether or not he was a relation of our author. But it was possibly through a connection interested in the affairs of the Company that his namesake obtained an appointment in India.

John Fryer was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, the entry in the College Register, as transcribed by Mr. W. Aldis Wright, being as follows: "1664, Julii 13<sup>o</sup> John Fryer, Pension," his Tutor being Mr. Bainbrigg.<sup>2</sup> No information is forthcoming regarding his career at Trinity College; but he must have retained a kindly interest in it, because the Library contains a copy of his *New Account of East India and Persia*, presented in 1699, "*Ex dono Authoris.*" On 22nd July, for some reason unknown, he was transferred to Pembroke College as a Fellow Commoner,<sup>3</sup> and in the same year, "*per literas*

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<sup>1</sup> Sir G. Birdwood, *The Dawn of British Trade to the East Indies* (1886) pp. 59, 165, 260.

<sup>2</sup> Communications from Dr. H. M. Butler and Mr. W. Aldis Wright, of Trinity College, Cambridge.

<sup>3</sup> The following is a copy of the entry in the College Register:—July 23, 1671. Johannes Friar Guliel: Londinensis filius maximus huc se recepit ē Coll. S<sup>tae</sup> Trinitatis cū esset Bacca-laureus in Medicinā et admissus est sub tutela, Mag<sup>ri</sup> Peechy ad mensam Sociorū.

*regias*," he obtained the degree of M.B., followed by that of M.D. in 1683. In his obituary, published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*,<sup>1</sup> he is said to have become a member of the Royal College of Physicians; but this seems not to have been the case.

In 1672, the year following that in which he took his first Cambridge degree, he was appointed to the post of Surgeon in the service of the East India Company. The Court Minute, dated 11th September, 1672, states that "The Committee for Shipping are desired to consider the entertainmt of Mr. Frier a Chyrurgeon for Surat, who is recommended by Mr. Canham [a 'Committee'] to be a skilfull and experienced artist in that profession, and to doe therein as they shall find him deserving."<sup>2</sup> Accordingly he was appointed to the post; and on 13th December, 1672, a few days after Fryer sailed from England, the Company wrote as follows to the authorities at Surat: "We have enterteined Mr. John Fryer as Chirurgeon for Bombay at 50s. per month to commence at his arriveall, and have furnished the Chirurgery Chest now sent according to the directions of Mr. Ward."

He sailed from Gravesend in the ship *Unity*, one of the annual fleet starting for the East, consisting of ten vessels, the *London* being the "Admiral," or leading vessel. In the India Office Records is pre-

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. iii, p. 214.

<sup>2</sup> *Court Minutes*, 11th September, 1672.

served the Journal of Captain William Basse, commander of the *London*, which furnishes materials for comparison with Fryer's account of the voyage.

The fleet consisted of the following ships, of which the names of the commanders, in the spelling of Captain Basse, may be compared with the list given by Fryer at the beginning of his book.

<i>London</i> (Admiral) . . . . .	commanded by Wm. Basse.
<i>President</i> (Vice-Admiral) . . . . .	„ Jonathan Hide.
<i>Sampson</i> (Rear-Admiral) . . . . .	„ Anthony Earning.
<i>Cæsar</i> . . . . .	„ Thomas Andrews.
<i>Ann</i> . . . . .	„ Zachary Browen.
<i>Massinburgh</i> . . . . .	„ Peter Westlock.
<i>Bombay</i> . . . . .	„ George Earwing.
<i>Antelope</i> . . . . .	„ John Goulsbrough.
<i>East India Merchant</i> . . . . .	„ Robert Cooly.
<i>Unity</i> . . . . .	„ William Cruft.

At least one of these captains, John Goulsbrough, or as Fryer calls him, Captain Goldsberg, was a man of note—Sir John Goldsborough, who died at Chutanuttee (Chatānatī) in Bengal, in 1693.<sup>1</sup>

The fleet reached the Downs on 27th December, where they found five King's ships and about sixty merchantmen awaiting them. The combined naval force left the Downs on 15th January, 1672–3, and soon after, as Fryer notes, an accident occurred, Westlock in the *Massinberg* making signals of distress, and reporting, according to the log of

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<sup>1</sup> Yule, *Hedges Journal*, ii, 155 ff.; and his life, *sub nomine*, in *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

Captain Basse, that "another shipp came foule with him and carried away his head and bouldspret." Accordingly Westlock stood in for "the Wight" to repair damages. On the 18th they came up with Captain Munden, who in the *Assistance*, with three "Marchant shippmen of warr" and two fireships, was bound for St. Helena to convoy home the Company's returning fleet. On the 19th they lost sight of the *Lizard*, and soon after, as Fryer states, met five ships, three English and two French, bound for London. He remarks that soon after they lost sight of the St. Helena fleet, which, according to Basse, occurred on 25th January. Three days after they sighted Madeira, and on 1st February Munden overtook them, but parted from them on the fourth day. The next land sighted was Bonavista, and soon after Maio, which Basse calls "May." On 9th February they anchored at St. Iago, "the Lapray Road at Ste. Agoe," as Basse styles the place. Fryer gives an interesting account of this island. Here, on the day before the arrival of the English fleet, three Dutch men-of-war had come in; but being surprised by the English fleet, they cut their cables and fled, pursued by Munden. This incident alarmed Basse, who forthwith weighed anchor.

Later in the course of its voyage the fleet met with foul weather, and on 3rd April the *Unity*, Fryer's ship, and the *Cæsar*, parted company, the latter rejoining two days later, having lost her foretopmast. On the 16th they spoke the *Johanna* and *Barnardiston*, the *Rebecca* having previously

passed them—"all bound from the Coast of Cormandell," not from Bantam, as Fryer was led to believe.

On 8th May they sighted Mayotta and Johanna, islands of the Comoro group, and on the 16th they anchored at Johanna. As many members of the crews were suffering from scurvy, they halted here for four days, Fryer getting the chance of landing and collecting some curious particulars regarding the island and its inhabitants.

Thence they passed the Maldives, where the officers of the fleet held a consultation to settle their position by observations. On 16th June they sighted Ceylon, standing off at night to avoid the rocks, and by day taking advantage of the "Terrenhoes" or land breezes. Soon after, as Fryer records, they met three country junks bound for the Maldives. These, according to Basse, were Bengal "pinks." On one of them a Dutch letter of no particular importance was found. Accordingly the Admiral resolved to capture them, and took them in tow. On the 19th one of them proved to be leaky, and was cast off. On the 21st they sighted the Four Pagodas, where a boat from Porto Novo, with one Mr. Harrison on board, delivered a letter to the Admiral informing him that the Dutch, with twelve ships of war and two smaller vessels, were blockading the coast from St. Thomè to Fort St. George. A consultation was held to decide whether they should risk an engagement or go on to Masulipatam. The latter course was approved, because

they had treasure of the Company on board, which it was advisable to land in safety as soon as possible. At noon they observed the Dutch flag flying over an English factory north of "Poole Chere" or Pondicherry, where a Moorish junk was riding at anchor. Goldsborough sent a boat to board her, and was informed through Mr. Harrison that another Dutch squadron of eight ships had gone by after their main fleet had disappeared. A French man-of-war had fought her way through five Dutch ships, and was now lying in the neighbourhood with the French viceroy, Delahay, on board.

On the 24th June Basse set adrift the two captured junks, as they delayed the fleet, and on the 26th anchored at Masulipatam Road, where the treasure was disembarked. Fryer took the opportunity of a trip on shore to collect some information on South Indian politics, particularly regarding the kingdom of Golkonda.

On 4th July news reached them that the Dutch fleet of twelve ships was off Diu Point (the "Diere Point" of Fryer's map of "Mechlapatan" or Masulipatam). According to him they stayed at Masulipatam for a month; Basse's log shows that their visit extended from 26th June to 19th July, when being advised by a courier that the Dutch had raised the blockade and sailed for Ceylon, the British fleet started for Madras, and on the 30th they anchored in Madras Roads, where Fryer parted from the fleet under Captain Basse. The

latter sailed for Masulipatam on 9th August, and on the 22nd a running fight occurred between the Dutch and British fleets, the former of fourteen and the latter of ten vessels. The result was that one British ship, the *Antelope*, was sunk, and two, the *President* and *Sampson* were captured. Fryer's account of this action may be usefully compared with other contemporary narratives collected by Sir R. Temple in his edition of Bowrey's *Geographical Account of the Countries round the Bay of Bengal*, 1669-79, issued by the Hakluyt Society.

When the damages caused to the remaining ships were repaired, Fryer started, presumably in the *Unity*, for the Malabar Coast to escape the Dutch and the violence of the monsoons. He doubled Cape Comorin, and reaching the Western Coast, landed at Tanore (Tānūr), Calicut, "Cutty Cony," on the Taliparamba River, Honāvar, and Mirja, and passing Goa, arrived at Bombay on 9th December, 1673, exactly a year after his departure from England.

His account of Bombay, prepared eight years after Humphrey Cooke took possession of the Island and its dependencies, and during the Governorship of Gerald Aungier (1669-77), who was the real founder of the modern city, is most valuable. It is, however, curious that he makes no reference to Aungier's famous "Convention," a sort of Domesday Book in which the properties in the Island were registered.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately

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<sup>1</sup> J. Douglas, *Bombay and Western India* (1893), vol. i, 85 ff.

Fryer seems to have travelled little in the neighbourhood of Bombay, and his map of the harbour is incomplete and inaccurate. He did visit the island of "Canorein" or Kānherī, where he examined the Buddhist caves, and he inspected Bassein, then in the hands of the Portuguese.

He also gives a valuable narrative, probably derived from Henry Oxenden, the ambassador, of his mission to the Court of Sivajī, who was enthroned at Rāīgarh in June, 1674.

At the close of the rains, in September, 1674, Fryer, by order of President Aungier, was transferred to Surat. He gives an excellent account of the Factory and its administration, which throws welcome light upon the duties and condition of the Company's officers at this period. This appears in his Second Letter (the first being undated, but apparently dispatched soon after his arrival at Bombay) dated 15th January, 1674-5. He also displayed much industry in collecting information regarding the customs and rites of the native population, and the animal and vegetable productions of Surat and its neighbourhood.

On 4th April, 1675, he returned to Bombay with Mr. Philip Gyfford, who had been reinstated as Deputy Governor of the Island; and on the 23rd of the same month, St. George's Day, he was directed by Gerald Aungier, the Governor, to proceed to the fort of "Jeneah" (Junnar) in the present Poona district, the Mughal commandant "having occasion for one of my Function." Pass-

ing through "Gullean" (Kalyān) he crossed the range of the Western Ghāts, the difficulty of the route causing him rather unreasonable apprehensions. He gives a careful account of the forts on the Junnar and Shivner hills and the administration of those famous strongholds. Returning by a slightly different route, he reached Thana, near Bombay, on 26th May; and from Bombay he despatched his Third Letter dated 22nd September, 1675.

At the close of the rains of this year, that is about October, Gerald Aungier having no further trouble with the Dutch or with the factions in the Island, left for Surat, appointing Philip Gyfford to act for him at Bombay. About the same time "Curiosity more than Business" tempted Fryer to take a trip along the coast southward in company with the Chief of the Factory at Kār wār, a place situated in the present North Kanara district. After a short visit there he proceeded to Goa, where he arrived on "the Eve of the Natal, or Christmas." In this trip he had as his companion that strange personage, Captain Henry Gary, who had a house near Goa at Panjim. In company with him on "New Year's Day, *stilo veteri*" he returned to Kār wār; and on 2nd February, 1676, in company with one of the Kār wār Factors he made an excursion to Gocurn (Gokarn), a celebrated place of Hindu pilgrimage in the North Kanara district, where he again collected much information on native customs, and acquired by hearsay

some facts regarding Deccan politics and the kingdoms of Golkonda and Bijapur. Philip Gyfford, Deputy Governor of Bombay, falling ill, Fryer was recalled to that place. Leaving Kār wār in the *Phoenix* ketch on 6th April, 1676, he met with unfavourable weather, was unable to pursue his voyage and reach his patient. On 11th May he received a courteous invitation to return to Kār wār, which he hesitated to accept until he was informed that "a gentleman there being almost desperate, implored my assistance." Accordingly he returned to Kār wār, where he spent the rains, sailing on the 17th October "in the *Berkly-Castle* with Mr. Oxendine, who was called up to succeed Mr. Gyfford, the deceased Deputy-Governor of Bombaim." The recall of Oxenden seems to have been in anticipation of Gyfford's death; or rather perhaps because the latter had been for some time incapacitated from duty through illness. On his way Fryer again visited Goa, which he left on the Eve of the Feast of St. Francis Xavier, 2nd December, 1676, and arrived at Surat on the 11th of the same month. From Surat soon after his arrival he despatched his Fourth Letter, enclosing with it *A Special Chorography and History of East India*, containing much curious information, including tables of weights, measures, currency, notes on precious stones, and other valuable productions of the East, which he doubtless obtained from the Factory officials on the Western Coast.

In the meantime an order dated 8th March, 1676, was sent by the Company in England to the Surat authorities, directing that "when Mr. Fryer whome we sent out as a Chirurgeon his covenanted time is out he is to have 3*li* per month."<sup>1</sup>

Soon after Fryer's arrival at Surat "the Agent of Persia representing how highly conducing to the Company's Interest one of my Profession would be there," he was "easily won upon to embark on the *Scipio African*, which with the Persian Merchant were sent this year for the Gulf, as well to support the declining Credit of the English there" as to attempt to open up a trade in English cloth and tin. He sailed from Swally-hole at the mouth of the Tapti below Surat, entered the Persian Gulf, and on the 22nd March, 1677, reached Gombroom or Bandar 'Abbās. Of the climate there he gives a most unfavourable account. Thence on 28th June he started on his journey northwards, passing along the regular caravan route *via* "Lhor" (Lār) to "Siras" (Shīrāz), and finally reaching Ispahān on 7th August, thus accomplishing "a tedious journey in the hottest Season of the Year, over desolate parching sands and naked Rocks, through all Persia into the heart of Parthia to Ispahaun, not only the Chief City of this vast Empire, where the present Emperor sets up his Standard, with

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<sup>1</sup> *Court Minutes*, 14th January, 1675-6.

all his moving Forces, but of Parthia especially." During a halt at Shīrāz he visited the ruins of Persepolis, which he carefully describes. He states that at Ispahān he witnessed an eclipse of the sun on 19th August; but there is apparently some error in the date, and the eclipse to which he refers has not been satisfactorily identified.

While he stayed at Ispahān he was much in company with the Armenians who resided in the Julfa suburb of that city. He describes at some length their beliefs and customs; but his facts require correction in several particulars. He does not specify what his official duties were at Ispahān; he probably acted as medical officer to the small European community. He had some practice among the natives, and he bitterly abuses a Saiyid patient at Shīrāz, a "Varlet of the Race of Mahomet," who cheated him out of his fees.

The climate of Ispahān did not agree with him, and he fell ill in October. Towards the close of the year news arrived of the death of President Aungier at Surat, which had occurred on the previous 30th June. "The Agent of Persia [Thomas Rolt] having left Gombroon to go to fill up the chair at Surat, the Second at Spahaun was obliged to repair thither to take care of the Company's Concerns there; with whom, I being now recovered, on the 10th of January [1678] with a French Chyrurgeon in our Company, in the depth of Winter we set forth for the Persian Gulf."

The party arrived at Gombroon on 15th February. The President sailed, leaving Fryer in Persia. He remained at Gombroon till the middle of April, when a new Agent arrived, "who being sickly, was willing to leave the port with all expedition, to be in Spahaun before the Heats." Fryer set out accordingly in his company on the 30th April, reached Lār on the 8th May, and thence marched to Shīrāz. Here an epidemic of fever prevailed, and on the 29th the Agent started for Ispahān, leaving Fryer in charge of a Spanish ecclesiastic, the Father Visitador of the Carmelite Order, who had long suffered from fever. After his patient was well nigh recovered Fryer himself was attacked, and he was obliged to remain at Shīrāz till 6th July, when he marched to Ispahān.

He remained at Ispahān until the cotton was bursting the pod and the barley was still green; but when he reached Shīrāz on his homeward journey the harvest and vintage were over. He left Shīrāz on 8th October, 1678, reaching Gombroon *viā* Lār on 13th November. After a trip to Congo Bandar on the Gulf, where he investigated the condition of the pearl fisheries, he sailed from Persia in the *Phœnix* on 30th November, and reached Swally-hole, at the entrance of the river Tapti, on Twelfth Day, 6th January, 1678-9. During his voyage he compiled the important paper entitled "The Present State of Persia," which, with his Fifth Letter, he seems to have despatched on his arrival in India.

It is possible to supplement the scanty details given in his letters regarding his official duties by an extract from the India Office Records, which contain a copy of the only letter written by Fryer, besides those which make up his book, which has been discovered. The following comes from the Surat Factory Records.<sup>1</sup>

“Honourable etca Councill. Being forced by sickness to leave Persia, and thereby both myself and servant Daniell Trenchfield<sup>2</sup> becoming destitute of employment (notwithstanding still retained in the Honble Company's service), and at my arrival in India finding Mr. Thomas Pearse Chyrurgion for Surat ffactory returning for England, I thinke myself obliged to proffer myself to your Honr. etca hoping you will consider me, as next person to succeed in that office; wherefore I become your honrs etca Petitioner.”

This is enclosed in a “Consultation held on Swally Marine the 24th January 1678-79 whereat were present Thomas Rolt President, Charles James, Cesar Chambrelan & John Child,” who remark: “It will be necessary that we next consider of a Chyrurgion; who are left destitute of any by Dr. Ffryers coming away; whom we have gratified with the employment of Chyrurgion of this ffactory; as being one of the Honble Company's immediate

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. iv, Pt. II, pp. 6 f.

<sup>2</sup> Some details of a person named R. Trenchfield are given by Yule, *Hedges Diary*, ii, 285 ff.

servants ; and seeing that the Company are displeased at the Commission and Sallary formerly agreed to be allowed Dr. Thomas Wilson ; as Phisitian of Bombay ; we doe conclude that for the present (having here no other fitting person) to make Choyce of him as Phisitian there at the Sallary paid Mr. Ffryer."

The arrangement made by the authorities at Surat is somewhat obscure ; but Fryer retained the office of Chirurgion of the Surat Factory. During his term of office he made some excursions in the neighbourhood, being, for instance, summoned to visit Broach to attend one of the Merchants who had fallen sick. Of his further adventures, up to the despatch of his Seventh Letter from Swally-hole, on 25th January, 1680-1, we know nothing. A year after, on 19th January, 1681-2, he embarked for England in the annual home fleet, taking his passage in the *Massenberg* with Mr. Cæsar Chamberlane, "The Second in India." At the same time the late President, Mr. Rolt, sailed in the *Josiah* with Captain Owen. They passed Madagascar, rounded the Cape of Good Hope, landed at St. Helena and Ascension, and disembarked at Folkestone on 20th August, 1682.

Soon after his return to England Fryer married a niece of Rose Desborough, wife of Samuel Desborough, the younger brother of Major-General John Desborough (1608-1680), one of the Parliamentary Generals who brought about

the restoration of the Rump Parliament and the deposition of Richard Cromwell. Samuel Desborough was twice married: first, to Dorothy, daughter of Henry Whitfield, of Ockley, Surrey, who died in 1654; secondly, to Rose Hobson, who had been already twice married, first, to a Mr. Lacey, and secondly, to Samuel Penoyer. This latter lady was aunt of Mrs. Fryer, and died in 1698-9.

The Company's records in the India Office supply an account of another incident in Fryer's life. On 19th November, 1684, "J. Fryer, Dr. of Physick, was admitted in the freedom of the Company by Patrimony." In order to effect this, it was necessary that he should be a holder of Stock; and accordingly on the same date William Fryer transfers to John Fryer £225. Fryer did not long remain a proprietor of the Stock, because on the following 17th December he transferred it to Sir John Moore.

He was elected Fellow of the Royal Society in 1697. At the time of his election no record was made of the grounds on which this honour was conferred upon him. He was probably elected in consideration of his professional standing and his sympathy with scientific work. His book bears ample record of his interest in science; in fact, he was evidently well informed both in the scientific literature of his day and in the writings of classical authors. He continued to be a Fellow until 1707; but he seems never to have contributed to the *Philosophical Transactions*.

He died on 30th March, 1733. In the Letters of Administration granted on 14th April, 1733, to his daughter, Anna Maria Sanderson, widow, he is recorded as late of the parish of All Hallows, Bread Street, London, widower. His portrait, drawn from the life by R. White, forms the frontispiece to the present volume.<sup>1</sup>

In 1698 he published, "printed by R.R. for R. i. Chiswell, at the *Rose* and *Crown* in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*," the book on which his reputation depends. He explains that he now "exposes this Piece to the World" not so much on account of the "Importunity of some, as the Impertinencies of others; there being more than Four hundred Queries now by me, to which I was pressed for Answers, and wherein I found a necessity, if I declined this Work, to appear from other Hands in Print. This then was the first and chief Cause; resting all that while content, that many Foreigners had their Memoirs translated, whereby I thought myself excused this Task; most of whom I had either seen or heard of beyond Sea, but never had read any of their Works, nor knew of their intentions to declare themselves to the World: Finding therefore on my Return, that they had been beforehand with me, I did believe it almost impossible, so many

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<sup>1</sup> Burke (*A General Armory of England*, etc.) describes the coat-of-arms there reproduced as follows:—"Sa. a chev. betw. three dolphins embowed *ar.* Crest—Out of a ducal coronet *or*, an antelope's head *ar.* attired, crined, and tufted of the first."

writing on the same Subject, should not in many, and the most material Points especially, if they followed Truth, relate the same things; which made me still desist, supposing it a lost Labour. But at last, considering these Travellers before me had few of them been in those parts where I had been, or at least not dwelt so long there, I venture to offer some Novelties, either passed over by them, or else not so thoroughly observed."

Here he may be supposed to refer chiefly to the writings of Jean Baptiste Tavernier, of which various translations in English were published between the dates of the commencement of Fryer's travels and the publication of his letters (1672-1698). *A New Relation of the Inner Part of the Grand Signor's Seraglio*, and *The Six Voyages of John Baptiste Tavernier Baron of Aubonne through Turkey into Persia and the East Indise for the Space of Forty Years*, were issued in 1677, with editions in 1678, 1680, 1684, and 1688. Fryer mentions Tavernier at the close of Letter II, as one of the foreign jewellers "who have made good Purchase by buying Jewels here, and carrying them into Europe to be Cut and Set, and returning sell them here to the Ombrabs." From the parallel passages quoted in the notes to this edition there seems little doubt that Fryer must have read Tavernier, particularly his account of Persia.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Other accounts of the East published in English translations about this period were those of Olearius (1662, 2nd ed., 1669);

An English translation of the *History of the Late Revolution of the Empire of the Great Mogul*, by F. Bernier, was published in 1671-72. Fryer was certainly a careful student of Sir Thomas Herbert, whose *Description of the Persian Monarchy now beinge: the Orientall Indyes, Iles and other parts of the Greater Asia and Africk*, was published in 1634. Four years later a new and enlarged edition appeared under the title *Some Yeares Travels into Africa and Asia the Great*; a third in 1664; a fourth in 1677. Fryer refers in his Preface to *The Ingenious Sir Thomas Herbert*, and in his Fifth Letter, Chap. III, in a side-note, he mentions his identification of Gerom (Jahrūm) with Kirjoth-Jerom, Kiriath-Jearim of the Old Testament. He seems to have been indebted to John Huyghen van Linschoten, of whose voyage an English translation appeared in 1598, for his account of seed pearl and mother of pearl.

Fryer's book purports to be a reprint of a series of letters addressed to some unnamed correspondent in England. This was clearly a person of distinction and learning, because Fryer (I, 29) speaks of his "singular favour in seeing me aboard ship;" and (I, 126) speaking of the causes of floods in the Nile and Indian rivers, he remarks: "You

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Della Valle (1665); Texeira (1668); G. Vermeulen (1677); Jean Struys (1686); Thevenot (1687); M. Duquesne (1691); Dellon 1698; Sanson (1695). How many of these Fryer may have consulted it is impossible to say.

who have greater Reading and Leisure to digest these Metaphysical Notions, will mightily oblige me to furnish me with your solid arguments."

The question remains whether such letters were really despatched or not ; or whether the book was compiled in England from the author's note-books. All doubts on this matter have practically been set at rest by the researches kindly made by Miss Sainsbury in the India Office Records. She finds that in cases where Fryer dates his letters, ships carrying mails were, about those dates, despatched to Europe. Thus, for example, in the case of the Second Letter, dated Surat, 15th January, 1674-5, she finds that "the shippes *Faulcon* and *Mary*, who set saile from Bombay the 18th January last, carried you large advices from us dated 16 Xber and 18 Jan."<sup>1</sup> So with the Third Letter, dated Bombay, 22nd September, 1675, the *Golden Fleece* leaves Bombay for Surat on 30th September, 1675.<sup>2</sup> The Sixth Letter, dated Surat, 31st December, 1679, may have gone by the *Bengalla Merchant*, which sailed on 24th January, 1680;<sup>3</sup> and the Seventh Letter, dated Swally, 25th January, 1681, was probably conveyed by the *Williamson*, *Lancaster*, and *Johanna*, which left on that date.<sup>4</sup> This, of course, only proves that mails for Europe did leave on dates which would permit the conveyance of certain dated letters. That they were rewritten,

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<sup>1</sup> O.C. 4118, 10th October, 1675.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 4118.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 4692.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 4729.

revised, and extended for publication in 1698 is more than probable.

The peculiarities of Fryer's style immediately strike any reader. He probably kept note-books or a diary in which he jotted down his rough memoranda; his concise, jerky style seems to be largely due to his habit of transcribing *verbatim* from notes of this kind. In part, it was probably modelled on that of Sir Thomas Herbert. He was also a student of Sir Thomas Browne, whose *Religio Medici*, in fourteen editions, was published between 1642 and 1685. With this book he was certainly acquainted, because he quotes from it a denunciation of the Koran in the Thirteenth Chapter of his Fifth Letter.

In connection with this denunciation of the religion of the Prophet, Fryer takes occasion strongly to commend Christianity; and in his Preface he mentions as one of the objects of his book that he desires to reclaim the atheist and inculcate a purer form of belief. He reprehends Puritanism, remarking in the First Chapter of his Third Letter that it was from the custom of the Musalmān Qāzī conducting the marriage rite that "doubtless our Phanaticks borrowed their custom of Marrying by a Justice of Peace"; and he calls the "Hodges" or Muhammadan pilgrims "such strict Puritans, that if they met a Christian, Jew, or Banyan, and by chance his garment brush against them, they hye them home, shift and wash, as if they had been defiled with some unclean

thing, a Dog or Hog." While marching in Persia, as he states in the Third Chapter of his Fifth Letter, he fasted on the 30th January, "for the Execrable Death of the Martyr Charles the First," a proceeding which amazed his companion the Carmelite friar, who observed that "on their Fasting days they were allowed a Buccado of Sweetmeats and a Glass of Wine before Noon, and at Noon a small Repast, and so likewise in the Afternoon, but at Night a good plentiful Supper; With the latter part we promised we would agree with him, but for the other we thought there was no great Restraint put upon Nature."

More than one cause prevented Fryer from utilising his great industry and powers of research to greater advantage. In the first place, he had little or no knowledge of the vernacular dialects, and was largely dependent upon a "linguist" or interpreter. His perversions of vernacular words are instructive, and often amusing, and have supplied some of the best examples in the *Hobson-Jobson* of Sir H. Yule. When he quotes passages in Persian, they are often so distorted as to be unintelligible. It must, however, be remembered that, as has been pointed out in a note to this edition, the knowledge of native languages among the British officers of the day was inconsiderable, and they seem generally to have used a sort of "pigeon" dialect, largely composed of corrupted Portuguese, in their business transactions at the trading stations on the coast.

It is, in the second place, unfortunate that his travels were practically confined to the seaboard; and he had no personal acquaintance with the great cities and States situated in the interior. The only important journey which he made inland was to Junnar, which as the crow flies is about seventy-five miles from Bombay. He knew little or nothing about the Mughal Empire save from meeting a few of its officials. He had heard the names of "Bonares" (Benares), "Lhor" (Lahore), and "Shaw Juan Abad" (Delhi); but he never visited any of the great cities, even Ahmadābād, Bijapur, or Golkonda. What he knew of these cities, their rulers and politics, was mere gossip current in the marts on the coast. In Persia he merely traversed the caravan track leading from Bandar 'Abbās *via* Shīrāz and Lār to Ispahān.

In spite of these deficiencies, his work is rightly described by Sir G. Birdwood<sup>1</sup> as "the most delightful book ever published on those countries, and invaluable for the graphic descriptions it gives of the factory life and general condition of the people of India in his time." He was versed in all the learning of his age, and was specially interested in all questions connected with the natural sciences, the botany, zoology, geology, and meteorology of the lands which he visited. He paid particular attention to the scientific acquirements of the people of the East; and he

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<sup>1</sup> *Report on the Old Records of the India Office*, (1891), p. 238.

naturally investigated with care their knowledge of medicine and surgery. He was a good Latin scholar, and had some knowledge of Greek. Numerous quotations, not only derived from classical authors, but from later and less known writers, are scattered through his work. The task of identifying these has been rendered difficult by the almost complete absence of references, and from his habit of quoting from memory, and often in an incorrect form. The love of quotation was common to the writers of his day; and, though he never names him, it would be a pleasure to believe that he was familiar with one of the most delightful books ever written, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* of Robert Burton, first published in 1621, reprinted four times before the death of the author in 1639, and assuming its final form in the sixth edition, published in 1651-2.

In many respects he was a model traveller, dignified, good tempered, with a keen sense of the humorous, ready to make light of the difficulties and privations which fell to the lot of a European wandering in strange places and among strange races unfamiliar with the white man and his ways. A Londoner by birth and training, he was unaccustomed to mountain travel, and he was wont to exaggerate the difficulties of crossing the Indian Ghats and the hill passes on the road from the Persian Gulf to Ispahān.

It can hardly be said that he was in full sympathy with the peoples of India and Persia.

He felt the contempt characteristic of his day for the religion and manners of peoples whom he regarded as semi-savages and mere idolators. The spread of the new sciences of comparative religion and ethnology has forced us to adopt a different attitude towards the beliefs and usages of the East. But the value of his investigations of their religions, customs, and folk-lore, made at a time when they had been little influenced by the West, cannot be overrated.

His relations with these races seems to have been generally friendly, and his skill in medicine and surgery doubtless earned their respect. On one occasion, at any rate, he admits behaving with brutality to the unfortunate bearers of his litter, who, strange to say, were, he asserts, alarmed at some fire-flies in a bush, a sight with which it is difficult to believe that they could have been unfamiliar. In the Fifth Chapter of his Third Letter he writes: "The *Coolies* beheld the Sight with Horror and Amazement, and were consulting to set me down, and shift for themselves; whereof being informed, I cut two or three with my Sword, and by breathing a Vein, let *Shitan* (the Devil) out, who was crept into their Fancies, and led them as they do a startling Jade, to smell to what their Wall-Eyes represented amiss."

Mr. Anderson<sup>1</sup> charges him with being addicted to excess in the use of intoxicating liquor. "A

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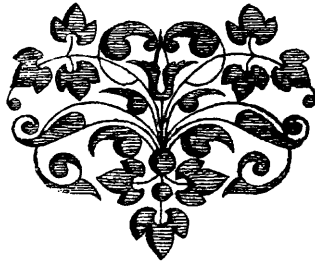
<sup>1</sup> *The English in Western India*, 2nd ed. (1856), p. 282.

fondness for intoxicating spirits was carried even by superior minds to an astonishing degree of coarseness. Fryer, man of excellent education as he was, could not attend the banquet of a Mussalman officer, without having the bad taste to draw a flask out of his pocket, and qualify his sherbet with the more potent draught to which he was accustomed. This he tells us himself with an evident conviction that he had been knowing and clever." Fryer's account of this transaction does not justify the charges brought against him by Mr. Anderson. He writes in the Fifth Chapter of Letter III: "Having feasted the Fancy, he contends to cloy the Stomach, with loads of *Viands* stowed in Plate, serving me with his own Hands, his Friends and he being content to feed on the desire they had to satisfy me, not to be courted to fall to till I had done; they served me with a Variety of Stews and Baked Meats, but offered me *Sherbet* only for Drink; I had provided against this chance by filling my *Metarra* with Beveridge, which passed for Water, being drunk out of a Leather Bottle Tipped with Silver, for Travel." Fryer obviously meant no discourtesy to his hosts, nor does it appear that they were offended. Throughout his book there is no evidence that he exceeded in any way.

His pages display many instances of graphic description, terse and vivid narrative; and he can tell a good story with quaint dry humour. His accounts of the island of Johanna, of the caves

at Kānherī and Elephanta, are in their way excellent. His sketches of the austerities of the Faqīrs, the customs of the people of Surat, the Banyans and Pārsīs of the West Coast, the Armenians of Julfa, are all admirable.

Many readers will prefer the almost contemporary accounts of the East by Bernier, Tavernier, and Manucci. But to these the work of Fryer will always remain a most valuable supplement.



## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.

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IF the interesting nature of the work be considered, it is surprising to find that this is the first full re-print in English of Fryer's *East India and Persia*.

Letters I—IV, being that part of the book relating to India only, appeared in various issues of *The Englishman*, a Calcutta weekly, in the 'sixties of the last century, and were subsequently published in book form, together with the account of some travels by Sir Thomas Roe, in 1873. The title ran :—

Travels in India in the Seventeenth Century ; by Sir Thomas Roe and Dr. John Fryer. London : Trübner and Co. 1873. Pp. 474.

That issue, copies of which are now very rarely to be met with, was without notes and disfigured by many typographical errors.

A Dutch translation appeared as early as 1700. It is full, and has all the plates (somewhat reduced), and even an extra one opposite the frontispiece. The title runs :—

Negenjarige Reyse door Oostindien en Persien . . . In agt Brieven beschreven door d'Heer Johan Freyer, M.D.† tot Cantelberg. 's Gravenhage, 1700. Pp. 566.

The Plates have been reproduced and slightly reduced from those of the Edition of 1698 by Mr. Donald Macbeth.