

• 1744

BOWEN, EMANUEL [After: NIEUHOF, Joan, 1655: 35-36]

*View of the Town and Castle of Macao [added to the original: “and Commodore George Anson’s ship “Centurion” firing its canons in Macau rade with the captured Manilla galleon, the “Covadonga”].*

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[Pr.; English; autonomous engraving, hand colored, 20 cm x 31 cm (followed by black and white engraving in book)]

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and, by the 6th of April, completely rigged, and the same Day they began to unmoor. On the 7th in the afternoon the Commodore went aboard, to take his Leave of the Governor of Mexico, who, upon his coming off, kissed him with thirteen Guns. The next Day a Mandarin, and seven Chinese, in a Junk, anchored close by the Commodore, who presented to give the Commodore Advice to make Hualte, because the Typhoon Season was advancing; but the Commodore very well understood the Meaning of the Message, and that they were only desirous of being rid of him, for fear of his interrupting their Monthly Trade. This appeared more clearly on the 13th, when the Mandarin sent a Message, intreating upon his immediate Departure, to which the Commodore answered, that he would sail when he thought proper, and not before.

On the 17th a Spanish Homeward-bound East-Indiesman anchored near them, which floated the Commodore with 16 Guns, who returned 25; and soon after went on board the *Juarez*, where he was entertained with all imaginable Respect, and sailed again at his Departure with 16 Guns. The Commodore, finding the South West *Monsoon* setting in, and that it would be dangerous for him to sail for Europe before the Month of October, determined to take this Opportunity of sending some Captain Seaver, in the Spanish Ship, with an Account of his Proceedings, for the Satisfaction of the Government; and, in the meantime, resolved to cruise for the Spanish Ship, which he had certain Intelligence was very soon expected at Mexico.

The City of Mexico, which in the Chinese Language signifies a Fort, stands on the Point of an Island, called *San Juan*, in the Province of *Guano*. The Form of this Point of Land is very singular: it resembles a Man's Arm bent, the Shoulder-part being joined to the Island, and the rest surrounded by the Sea. The Haven is very safe and commodious, and the City was formerly very rich and splendid. It belongs, as it always did, to the *Paraguay*, who lived here by Permission from the Emperor of China. They have a Governor of their own, and live under their own Laws; but are, notwithstanding, subjected to the Chinese, to a Degree of Slavery. The Customs of the Port belong to the Emperor, who has in *Hogoy*, or Commissioner of Revenue, here, as in other Ports of his Dominions, and a Mandarin, who directs Civil Affairs; neither is it possible for the *Paraguay* to shake off the Yoke, because they are every way surrounded by the Chinese, and have not a Day's Provision but what they draw from the Country. While the *Paraguay* were in Possession of the Trade to Japan, this Place was in a very flourishing Condition, and one of the most considerable Cities in these Possessions; but since their Expulsion from that Island, their Trade has declined here, they it seems now to be in a better Condition than it was some Years ago; and there are a considerable Number of *Paraguay* Ships that come hither annually from their Settlements in the *West-Indies*.

But the Chinese drive a much more considerable Trade from hence, especially to Mexico, where they vend a vast Quantity of rich Goods, as a very high Price, to the *Spanish*, who pay for them all in ready Money; that is to say, in Pieces of Eight, or in Silver Bars, which they bring from the *West-Indies*. This, however, forms but a great Slip in their Policy; which may be the more easily apprehended, if we compare it with the prudent Management of the *Dutch*, who carry on likewise a great Trade with the Chinese at Batavia; where, notwithstanding, they never suffer them to deal for ready Money, but for Spices, and other Indian Commodities, and for the Manufactures of Europe; so that the same Commerce which enriches the *Spaniards*, enriches the *Dutch*, who make the Chinese their Customers, as we saw before; whereas the *Spaniards* export immense Quantities of Chinese Goods in their Monthly Ships to *Acapulco*, and bring from thence the Silver of *Mexico* in Return, the best Part of which comes, sooner or later, into the Hands of the *Chinese*; so that here, as well as in Europe, the *Spaniards* draw their own ill Management, are only Factors for other People, and have no more this extraordinary Possession of that prodigious Wealth they draw from their *Indies*. It is no Wonder therefore, that the Chinese, who are, without Question, an cunning and as self-interested a People as any in the World, were very much dissatisfied at Commodore Agate's

being so long in this Port, especially after the Arrival of a Ship from *Manila*, which happened a little before his Departure, and informed the Chinese thoroughly of the Appearances they were under from the Commodore's being in their Neighbourhood.

There is one Thing which has been before laid down in point of Facts, that seems to require some Explanation; and that is the Caution given by the Chinese Mandarin to the Commodore, in relation to the stormy Season. We have already spoken in other Places somewhat of this Subject, but here it will be necessary to discuss the Matter more at large, in order to finish this Point. With respect to the Weather in China, *Monsoon* is an Indian Word, which, strictly speaking, signifies no more than a strong Wind; and is applied to the Trade Winds no otherwise than as they are remarkably strong, as well as steady; which Observation will hereafter appear to be of much greater Use, than at first Sight may be imagined. The *Monsoon* are distinguished into the East *Monsoon*, and the West *Monsoon*: The former sets in, in the North of the Line in the Month of September, and blows till April, bringing usually fair, fair, and constant Weather; whereas the West *Monsoon*, which blows from April or September, is usually accompanied with heavy Rains, and dreadful Storms; which shows the Reason that induced the Commodore to remain in this Part of the World, till the East *Monsoon* was well set in. It is not to be supposed, that the Change of these Winds is a Thing very regular or exact, or that the Succession of them is immediate; but it is to be understood, that the Months of April and September are the dividing Months, and that there is some Variation of Winds, before the *Monsoon* becomes fixed and steady. Thus much, however, is certain, that the Alteration of these Winds is so constant as the Change of the Year; and that all the Navigation of the *Indies* depends upon them.

All who are concerned in Trade wait for these Changes, and conform their Courses, and fix out their Ships, agreeable to these Seasons, taking such Measures to dispatch their Pointments in the Places to which the Ships are consigned, as to take the Benefit of the next or contrary *Monsoon*, which brings them back again; neither is it easy to conceive, how the Trade of India could be carried on, but for this regular and constant Wind. A Coasting Trade, indeed, might be practicable, from Place near each other, by the Help of Sea and Land-breezes; but Voyages of considerable Extent could by no means be carried on by the Help of such Land and Sea Winds; or, if they were, they might take up three or four Years, instead of six Weeks. At the Change of these Trade Winds there are frequently great Storms, which are so called in the *Indies*, *Monsoon*; naming that Wind in its natural and first sense, for an high or strong Wind; and therefore this Distinction is very necessary to be understood, in order to prevent our confounding one *Monsoon* with another.

But the Winds mentioned by the Mandarin, were Typhoons, or, as some write them, Typhons; because the Greek Word *Typhon* signifies a violent high Wind. It would be at least a tedious and perplexed, and, perhaps, after all, as dry and useless Inquiry, should we endeavour to show, that the Chinese Term of Typhoon is derived from, or is no better than a Corruption of, the Greek Word *Typhon*; and so it is more agreeable to our Purpose, we will endeavour to explain the Thing, without troubling ourselves about the Name. Typhons, then, are a particular Kind of violent Storms, which happen usually in the Spring Months, here especially April, on the Coast of China. They commonly happen near the Fall or Change of the Moon, and are usually preceded by very fair Weather, small Winds, and a clear Sky. These Winds veer from the true Trade-winds, and usually blow almost round the Compass. Before these Storms come on, there appears a thick Cloud on that Point from which the Storm will blow; as suppose it be from the N. E. which Cloud hangs always near the Horizon, the upper Edge of it being of a dark Flame-colour, which grows brighter and brighter, and then falls in a whitish glazing Cloud. This is a very awful and terrible Spectacle, inasmuch as it lasts sometimes for twelve Hours before the Storm comes on: When that Cloud begins to move, the Wind suddenly follows it, and blows with incredible

