

the variety and abundance of wares for sale in that city is so great that it would seem past belief to many folk.

17. Fr. Odoric discourseth of the manners of the idolaters of Polumbum.

[Here all the people go naked, only they wear a cloth just enough to cover their nakedness, which they tie behind.] All the people of this country worship the ox for their god [and they eat not his flesh];<sup>1</sup> for they say that he is, as it were, a sacred creature. Six years they make him to work for them, and the seventh year they give him rest from all labour, and turn him out in some appointed public place, declaring him thenceforward to be a consecrated animal.<sup>2</sup> And they observe the following abominable superstition. Every morning they take two basins of gold or silver, and when the ox is brought from the stall they put these under him and catch his urine in one and his dung in the other. With the former they wash their faces, and with the latter they daub themselves, first on the middle of the forehead; secondly, on the balls of both cheeks; and, lastly, in the middle of the chest. And when they have thus anointed themselves in four places they consider themselves to be

places in India [Ar. *Balladi* or country ginger], *Colombino*, and *Micchino*," the two last from the countries producing them; viz., Colombo of India, i.e. our Columbum or Kulam, and the territories of Mecca.

The same authority speaks of a kind of Brazil wood (*Verzino*) which was called *Colomni* or *Colombino*, no doubt from the same place; and of cinnamon also with the same epithet. (*Della decima*, iii, pp. 210, 296, 308, 359-360, &c.)

<sup>1</sup> From PAL.

<sup>2</sup> This fuller explanation is from MUS. The copies which I am generally following (PAR. and VEN.) have simply *positus est in communi*. The custom of setting free bulls to roam at large, as offerings I believe to Siva, is here alluded to. They are known among Anglo-Indians as "Brahmini bulls", and, having the run of the bazars, are always fat. In Calcutta, where they were a dangerous nuisance, they used to be laid hold of by the police and yoked in the dust carts.

What follows about cow-worship is little, if at all, exaggerated, as may be seen by reference to Abbé Dubois (pp. 29, etc.)