

stories about the numerous wives of the King of Laos, such as Polo had heard ; but the interpretation is doubtless rubbish, like most of the so-called etymologies of proper names applied by the Chinese to foreign regions. At best these seem to be merely a kind of *Memoria Technica*, and often probably bear no more relation to the name in its real meaning than Swift's *All-eggs-under-the-grate* bears to Alexander Magnus. How such "etymologies" arise is obvious from the nature of the Chinese system of writing. If we also had to express proper names by combining monosyllabic words already existing in English, we should in fact be obliged to write the name of the Macedonian hero much as Swift travestied it. As an example we may give the Chinese name of Java, *Kwawa*, which signifies "gourd-sound," and was given to that Island, we are told, because the voice of its inhabitants is very like that of a dry gourd rolled upon the ground ! It is usually stated that Tungking was called *Kiao-chi*, meaning "crossed-toes," because the people often exhibit that malformation (which is a fact), but we may be certain that the syllables were originally a phonetic representation of an indigenous name which has no such meaning. As another example, less ridiculous but not more true, *Chin-tan*, representing the Indian name of China, *Chinasthána*, is explained to mean "Eastern - Dawn" (*Aurore Orientale*). (*Amyot*, XIV. 101 ; *Klapr. Mém.* III. 268.)

The states of Laos are shut out from the sea in the manner indicated ; they abound in domestic elephants to an extraordinary extent ; and the people do tattoo themselves in various degrees, most of all (as M. Garnier tells me) about Kiang Hung. The *style* of tattooing which the text describes is quite that of the Burmese, in speaking of whom Polo has omitted to mention the custom : "Every male Burman is tattooed in his boyhood from the middle to his knees ; in fact he has a pair of breeches tattooed on him. The pattern is a fanciful medley of animals and arabesques, but it is scarcely distinguishable, save as a general tint, except on a fair skin." (*Mission to Ava*, 151.)

CHAPTER LVII.

CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF ANIN.

ANIN is a Province towards the east, the people of which are subject to the Great Kaan, and are Idolaters. They live by cattle and tillage, and have a peculiar language. The women wear on the legs and arms bracelets of gold and silver of great value, and the men wear such as are even yet more costly. They have plenty of horses which they sell in great numbers to the Indians, making a great profit thereby. And they have also vast herds of buffaloes and oxen, having excellent pastures for these. They have likewise all the necessaries of life in abundance.¹