SINGLE CHAPTER

Of the Journey of Father Baltasar Barreira to this Province, and particularly to the Kingdom of Bena

Men of apostolic faith are like streams of fresh water copiously irrigating the sterile wastes of Infidelity and converting them into fertile fields and green meadows. Mindful of this duty, our apostle, after having worked in the Serra, his most recent vineyard and nursery, long enough to gain a sufficient knowledge of its Christians, /f. 136v/ and when he had left there someone to instruct them in the ways of the law of the Lord, took his leave of his tender graftings and delicate seedlings. At the entreaties of the ambassadors of Massacander, and through his great and singular charity for the salvation of souls, he gave priority to another new mission, trusting that the cuttings (?) would respond with profitable works, for a noble and simple heart does not fear deceit. He was especially persuaded that all this would have a good outcome by the fact that the savage (king) had sent to him one of his sons to be instructed in the faith and baptized, and the padre straightway gave him instruction and baptism.

Seeing things this way, he bade farewell to his friends on the first night (of the journey) at the mouth of the estuary, at which point it seems that the Lord began to warn him of what Massacander's word and enthusiasm might amount to. The Lord turned the journey well off course, but it did not appear to the servant of the Lord that it was by His orders, for he attributed everything to the envy of evil spirits, to whose brotherhood the savage belonged, since it is normal for these spirits to be jealous of any conversion by us. The first port on the mainland at which they landed, which was, as it were, a stage-point or gateway for the pilgrimage to Bena, did not receive the ambassador of Heaven with the respect owed to him. A war was under way, and the village became so involved that, when the Lord did not go to their aid there, they all perished at the hands of infidels, almost without trace. From this place, the padre sent out his...
(companion). This man could not contain his joy when he saw Massacander adorned with holy relics, thus internally dressed by God, and externally already wearing the Portuguese costume from his Filipe. But when he told Massacander that the apostle was coming here, the king's excitement was even greater. He immediately despatched porters to carry not only the holy images and ornaments but also the padre whom he so much wished to see; and he would entrust him to no shoulders other than those of his own sons, all of whom were also grandsons of Farins. He sent him a horse too. The meek spirit of the venerable old man, whose eyes had in them nothing but humility, wished no such thing; with characteristic prudence he gave thanks for this token of charity and then gave the horse to a noble. Meanwhile the savage was busy with the building of a church and a dwelling for the priest and these were built most perfectly.

When the padre reached the settlement and township of the king, he was received with all the signs of sure affection; his lodgings were not (sic) arranged /f.137/ to accommodate him suitably. The tyrant gave him one of his idols and war medicines, and enjoined him to get rid of these furnishing of hell, without the apostle at that time understanding him. After the padre had paid his visit (to the king) and had declared the purpose of his journey, the time arrived for the first mass, on the holy day of the Lord's Ascension. Massacander wished to find joy in the holy sacrifice and the glory of the Lord. The infidel made his way into the house of the Lord, but from the altar was told to withdraw. He did so balefully, and then displeased the padre by saying to the whites: "How can I be cast out of the house which I have built, and (which stands) on my own land?" With this remark the lascarim had to leave; and the only minister or private secretary the king did have, or ever had, (to guide him in the conduct of relations with other Portuguese) was Antonio Fernandes, whom I discussed in Chapter V! It was due to his influence that the padre suffered all his toils. What sort of good advice could be obtained from a man who, when the king reached his house, said to
him: "What the whites consider as His death is yours"! And afterwards he acted in the spirit of this remark. Satan used this enemy to hinder the conversion of our pagan, and this was all because Fernandes begrudged not having been considered as sponsor for the catechumen.

The padre persevered, putting up with the king's complaints with the utmost prudence. Once and for all he told him that only Christians could enter that place, but that as soon as he was a Christian the church would be as much his as the whites'. He replied: "Well then, Father, baptise me now!" But when it is necessary to pick green fruit, it is as important not to do this (too) hastily before the fruit ripens than it is to cultivate the tree carefully so that it bears the fruit, hence the padre now went on to catechise and instruct the king in the principal mysteries of our holy faith. In fact the king was as far from real Christianity at this stage as he was before the minister (of religion) arrived. He was being and had been previously instructed by his (adviser) António Fernandes, but the King instead of exposing his heart to the Divine Sun, exposed it to the chattels which he had obtained from the Portuguese, by showing off his various pieces of finery and saying a thousand vain things about himself. "What king of the Sousos, what Farim ever came to have, padre, what I have?" A happy visit (?) (it might have been) if Massacander had learned to take advantage of it in order not to lose the divine (visit) of the Lord.

At this point he said that he must be a Christian in his own way. He made much of the religion of the Saviour and denied the Mohammedan sect. He made large declarations, but (only) like a metal bell, so that the fruit of his conversion, when it had been gathered, was a very chancy crop (?). /f.137v/ What could be expected from an embassy and an alleged letter? The king wished to be a freakish sort of Christian, saying that this would suit him. For the padre once said to him, "I cannot admit you into the church unless you burn the idols"; and he replied, "How can I burn my
father and my sons and my wives who are with God?" Then the padre retorted, "Your father and all the others you name in the company of demons!" At this the King was greatly upset and resented the divine reply. He did much to see if he could deceive the apostle by persuading him that he would rid of the statues and portraits, (but) he sent them to his wives.

There was a great dispute over the many different kinds of amulets and the shirts which had amulets attached all over. The padre ordered the king to put the whole lot on the fire. He asked, "What must I then take to war? How can I suffer the loss of that great sum in gold which these items cost me? I will order them all to be handed over to the bexerim; and thereafter grant me what I wish - bathe me in the holy waters." Already he was alarmed lest the Farim Concho should receive complaints about him, etc. The padre laboured hard to lessen his concern. But Massacander was not amongst those elected to be a true Gideon, and so everything grew worse. Now he paid no attention to the apostle when he told him that his father was in hell; (instead) he turned his back on him. And when a Portuguese, who saw how very discourteously the savage behaved, said to him, "As a king, do you treat the padre so?" He replied coldly, "Might not comer (不及 me vai comer, me go eat), leave that business of the padre alone!" All now is coldness, everything has changed! This was strongly regretted by those who wished to be baptised. The priest asked the king for porters, and took his leave of him. (But) everything was delayed first with one excuse, then with another. Now the apostle realised that the king was attempting to keep him in his kingdom because this brought worldly glory to His Majesty. At that moment of time it was God's will that a message should come from the port to say that a ship had arrived from the Windward Coast with a Portuguese on board, a great friend of the king's. (a) The king then found for this man (the porters) which had been lacking for the padre.

(a) Ambrosio Dias Camelo, our devotee, who also had him carried part of the way to Aldeia Nova.
In this way the Lord delivered him from that great predicament, and he now began a journey in which there were difficulties greater than those on the first journey. The streams were very swollen and the porters were obliged to go on foot part of the way, and since they did not travel willingly now, at each step they put the padre down /f.138/ and would only pick him up again when they felt like it.

On the final (part of the) journey, while the padre was in a hut with the other people sheltering from a thunder-storm, one of the father's houseboys, whom he had left in the Serra, arrived with letters telling of the advent of a companion. From this spot with all speed he dispatched the porter with a letter, so that the fastest possible arrangements could be made to complete the journey. Thus things proceeded most actively, and since there was no boat, Father Manoel Álvares obtained the slaves of a zealous disciple of his in order to transport over land the images and items of holy worship as well as other necessary baggage. When the journey was over the padre did not cease giving thanks to the Lord for the mercy of his favours, which is what he called the labours involved in his unique pilgrimage to Bena.

I shall not remain silent about the complaints of the (image of the) child Jesus on the first journey, for certain savages told me that as they carried him in his casket they had heard Him cry out, to show some kind of feeling of irritation that they should be taking Him to a place where He was to be so poorly received and respected, (indeed) would instead be rejected.

In Bena, when the image came into the church following the heathen who carried the padre, they said, "There you see the Child who cried because, when the padre ate, he did not set him at the table with him."

So much for the mission of our apostle. He was not deprived of the reward, nor was Massacander exempt from the eternal pains which he suffers today, in the company of the evil spirits which, on the padre's departure, he had
as guides for the dungeons of hell, the just place for the malice of such a deceitful barbarian. (b) He served these spirits in life and found them in death, as they told me, since on the day he died the storms and tempests were so great that it seemed as if they desired to carry off the whole town and all its people to accompany Massacander's wicked soul. The Lord punished his secretary first, as can be seen in Chapter XXV of the second part. The king profited neither from the company of Simão Caldeira nor from his dealings with the Portuguese, who, when they fail to lead an exemplary life, by which alone the infidels can be guided, sometimes serve to discredit greatly the religion of the Saviour. (c) When we are not exemplary, they use our intercourse with them as an opportunity more for scorn and contempt of our holy faith than for belief in it and affection for it, as can be seen by what has been stated in the present work, in the relevant chapters, where it deals with the necessity for a good example on the part of Christian peoples. /f.138v/

(b) "Onibana officru o Summa" say the idolaters when they see the thunder, lightning and storms on the mountains of the Kings. Thus it happened when Old Farma died; it was a sad day; they say, "Cru usuma cru"
"God is angry", etc.

(c) May they carry the padre not only in their hearts but in their arms.

"Pone me ut signaculum" /"Set me as a seal (upon thine heart)/, Song of Songs 6, 3. See Exodus 12, 7: hidden faith was not enough for delivery from Egypt, it was necessary to proclaim the faith publicly by marking the door posts with lamb's blood.