

**JOURNALS KEPT BY MR.
GULLY AND CAPT. DENHAM
DURING A CAPTIVITY IN
CHINA IN THE YEAR 1842**

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Mr. Gully & Capt. Denham

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JOURNALS

KEPT BY

Robert
MR. GULLY/AND CAPT. DENHAM

DURING A

‘CAPTIVITY IN CHINA’

IN THE YEAR 1842.

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H. J. Coolidge

C. WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.

NOTE.

December 5, 1843.—The Indian Mail, which has just arrived, has brought the Report of the Chinese authorities on the Inquiry they were ordered to make respecting the murder of the crews of the Nerbudda and Ann. This Inquiry was undertaken on the demand of Sir H. Pottinger. The Report is ridiculously defective in every respect but one; namely, in that which declares the authorities at Formosa to have obtained from the Emperor rewards and honours, by fraudulently and falsely representing the mode of the capture of the two unfortunate crews. The parties thus guilty are doomed to punishment. On this point it is plain enough, and so far it fully confirms the statements made in the Journals of Mr. Gully and Captain Denham. Those Journals will furnish, if the Chinese think fit to use them, the means of obtaining fuller information on other points. And it is even yet to be hoped, that they who caused the murder of so many of the captives, will be at least equally punished with those who won honours and rewards by false representations. The Chinese government should be pressed to make further inquiries.

INTRODUCTION.

THE following pages are chiefly composed of the Diary of Mr. Robert Gully, a fine, gallant, and excellent-hearted young man, who, after enduring an imprisonment of some months in a Chinese jail, was barbarously murdered. He had been engaged in commercial pursuits but quitted them for a time to join the British expedition. He was on board the *Nemesis*, and honourably distinguished himself at the taking of Ningpo, and in the other actions in which that vessel was engaged. His amiable manners, as well as his undaunted courage, won him the esteem and friendship of the officers of the expedition, whose dangers and whose glories he shared, and by all of whom the necessity for his return to the occupations which first brought him to China was sincerely regretted. In order to return to Macao he put himself on board the *Anne*, a merchant vessel, which was afterwards wrecked on the island of Formosa, where the events related in this Diary occurred, and where his life was at length cruelly taken by his barbarous captors. A gallant fellow-captive, (Capt.

Denham, commander of the *Ann*) who happily escaped the same cruel end, but who underwent similar sufferings, and was in one instance very savagely treated, also kept a Diary, and his labours will be employed to render the narrative unbroken, and to continue it after the death of his companion. These Diaries are offered to the public with the view of informing them as to matters of which hitherto they have had but slender and doubtful accounts.

Notwithstanding a commercial intercourse of many years' duration, our knowledge of the Chinese was but small. Their absurd jealousy of foreigners and contempt for them; the fact, that what we wanted in the way of trade could be procured without any direct diplomatic intercourse, and the few cases of necessity that arose for more intimate acquaintance with them, left us much in the dark as to their habits and manners. Of their laws and of the mode of administering them, there was happily for a long time but little cause for seeking knowledge. But at length two or three cases occurred which allowed no room to doubt, that whatever chance of justice or protection the law afforded to the subjects of China, foreigners were not to expect it to yield them any such advantage. Indeed Mr. Davies, in his excellent work on the Chinese, distinctly states their explicit avowal, that whenever

foreigners came under the criminal jurisdiction of the Chinese authorities, they must submit with implicit obedience, not to what the laws had provided, but to what the Chinese officers thought fit to order. The cases of foreigners were those not for the operation of the laws, but cases of exception to their operation; in the instance of an offending foreigner, the laws were declared to be suspended, and the will of the authorities assumed their place. It is somewhat strange that so many and such gallant nations whose citizens visited China, and who would quarrel among themselves on the slightest provocation, should have submitted for so many years to a jurisdiction so capricious in itself, and, as experience proved it, so cruel in its operation. The great demand for the staple article of the Chinese trade, the large profits made by those who engaged in it, the great distance of China from Europe (a circumstance more important formerly than at present), and a vague notion perhaps that the conquest of a people so indefinitely numerous would be impossible, and the coercion of them by any thing short of actual conquest absolutely hopeless, no doubt contributed to produce this result. The people of each country treated with indifference the loss of an individual subject or an individual insult offered by the Chinese to their flag. The locality of the wrong was distant—the