

and geographical works of pretension, but from that time its appearance could only condemn the ignorance of the authors.

Benedict Goës was born at Villa Franca, in the island of St. Michael (Azores), about 1561. I find no particulars of his rank in life or early history, nor any statement of the circumstances under which he originally went to India, but in his twenty-sixth year we first meet him as a soldier on board the Portuguese fleet on the coast of Travancore, a high-spirited and pleasure-loving young man. The dignity and culture of his character, as it shows in later life, seems to imply that he had been educated for a higher position than that of a common soldier; and it is probable that, like many a wild youth since, he had enlisted for the Indies in consequence of some youthful escapade. Happening, we are told, to enter a church near COLECHEA,¹ and kneeling before an image of the Madonna and Child, he began to reflect seriously on his past life, and was seized with such remorse that he almost despaired of salvation. This spiritual crisis ended in his making full confession of his sins to a Jesuit priest, and eventually in his entering the Order as a lay coadjutor. This position he held for the rest of his career, always modestly refusing to take orders, though often pressed to do so by his superiors in the Society.

In the end of 1594 a detachment of missionaries was sent to the Court of Akbar, at the request of the great king himself, whose oscillating convictions appear often to have been strong in favour of Christianity.² The head of the mission was Jerome

¹ *Kolechi*, a small port of Travancore, which Fra Paolino will have to be the Colchi of the Periplus. It has dropt out of our modern maps.

² The inquiries of Akbar about Christianity dated from the visit of Antony Capral, whom he received as envoy from Goa in 1578. Hearing then of a Christian priest of eminent virtue in Bengal, he sent for him to Futtehpur Sikri (which Jarric calls *Patefula*), and made him argue with the Mullahs. Moved by what this anonymous father said, the king wrote to Goa, begging that two members of the Jesuit Society might be sent to him with Christian books. This of course caused great delight and excitement, and the Provincial sent off Rudolf Aquaviva, a man of illustrious family (afterwards murdered by the natives of Salsette near Goa), and Antony Monserrat. They were most honourably received by Akbar, and great hopes of his conversion were raised. The celebrated Abul Fazl and other eminent men of the Court also showed great interest in the subject; but nothing material resulted. Some years