

tremity of the Mogul territories. But merchants, who were sure to know the shortest routes, were in the habit of going from Lahore to Kashmir, and thence by the kingdom of REBAT,<sup>1</sup> the king of which was in alliance with the Mogul, they went straight to Kashgar, from which it was said there was a direct and easy route to the first mercantile city of Cathay, a place which the merchants asserted to be inhabited by Christians. Xavier was now quite satisfied that the country in question was indeed the Cathay of Polo, and the Christian king the representative of the famous Prester John. He sounded the king on the subject of an exploratory mission, and found him disposed to assist it cordially. All this was duly communicated to the Provincial, and through him it would appear to the higher powers in Europe.

In 1601 the encouragement of those higher powers had been received in India, and the Provincial turned his attention to the selection of a fit man for the expedition. Now it happened that Xavier and Goës had accompanied King Akbar some time previously on his expedition into the Dekkan. After the conquest of Kandesh, Akbar on some pretext sent an embassy to Goa, partly it was supposed in order to spy out the land with a view to extending his conquests in that quarter. And with this embassy he sent Goës in charge of some children of Portuguese parentage who had been found in Burhanpur and other captured fortresses.

In Goës the Provincial discerned the very man that he wanted; his judgment, courage, and skill in Persian marking him out as especially qualified for such an enterprize. Goës readily accepted the duty, and in the following year (1602) arrived at Agra to make arrangements for his journey. Akbar praised his zeal, and contributed the value of four hundred pieces of gold to the expenses of the journey, besides giving the passports mentioned in the narrative.

And some years after Akbar's time, the two Jesuits, Grueber and Dorville, found their way from China *via* Lassa and Katmandu to Patna (*Kircher, China Illustrata*, pp. 64 *seqq.*).

<sup>1</sup> I do not know what the name *Rebat* is intended for (proper names in Jarric being often sadly mangled); perhaps for *Tibet*. The kingdom intended must be either Ladakh or Balti, which were known in those days as Great and Little Tibet.