

detail below, but here I may explain that the chief inconsistency is found in the time alleged to have been spent between Lahore and Yarkand. According to Ricci's details this period extends from February 1603, to November 1604, whereas both Jarrie's data and Ricci's own *absolute* statement make the traveller reach Yarkand in November 1603, which unquestionably is the correct date. And as Ricci's *details* allege a positive halt of *eight months* at Kabul, it is evident that there must have been some singular kind of misunderstanding either of Benedict's notes, or of Isaac's language, or of both. Isaac, it will be seen, could speak nothing more intelligible than Persian, and John Ferdinand, the Chinese convert who came to seek the party at Suchen, could not communicate with him *at all* until he had himself acquired a little Persian. This language the missionaries at Peking probably knew nothing of, and it is not therefore wonderful if misunderstanding occurred.

What the nature of this misunderstanding must have been, in some instances at least, can I think be deduced from one case in which the misstatement of the time is obvious. The journey from Attok to Peshawur is said to have occupied *two months*. Now, as the distance is about thirty miles, this is absurd. It is, therefore, not improbable that it may have been entered in Goës's notes as "*II mensil*" (Pers. *manzil*, a stage or march), and that this was understood by the Italians as "*II menses*."

The chief obscurities attending the route of Goës, concern that section of his journey which lies between Kabul and Yarkand. In the first part of this section, embracing the passage of the Hindu Kush, the country is to a certain degree known, but there

specified; to Parwan ten days, halt there five; to Aingharan twenty; to Kalcha fifteen; to Jalalabad ten; to Talikhan fifteen, halt there one month [*which brings us at least to the 15th August, 1604*]. To Cheman, and halt there, not specified; Defiles of Badakshan eight days, halt ten; Charchunar one day, halt five days; to Serpanil ten days; to Sarchil twenty, halt two; to Chechalith two; to Tanghetar six, at least; to Yaconic fifteen days; to Yarkand five days [*which brings him to Yarkand therefore on 7th November 1604 at the earliest, or just a year later than the true date*]. It is not worth while to carry the matter further, and indeed the essential error is contained in that section of the journey which we have given here.