

NOTE I.—Futile doubts were raised by Baldelli Boni and Hugh Murray as to the position of COILUM, because of Marco's mentioning it before Comari or Cape Comorin; and they have insisted on finding a Coilum to the east of that promontory. There is, however, in reality, no room for any question on this subject. For ages Coilum, Kaulam, or, as we now write it, Quilon, and properly Kollam, was one of the greatest ports of trade with Western Asia.* The earliest mention of it that I can indicate is in a letter written by the Nestorian Patriarch, Jesuhabus of Adiabene, who died A.D. 660, to Simon Metropolitan of Fars, blaming his neglect of duty, through which he says, not only is India, "which extends from the coast of the Kingdom of Fars to COLON, a distance of 1200 parasangs, deprived of a regular ministry, but Fars itself is lying in darkness." (*Assem.* III. pt. ii. 437.) The same place appears in the earlier part of the *Arab Relations* (A.D. 851) as *Kaulam-Malé*, the port of India made by vessels from Maskat, and already frequented by great Chinese Junks.

Abulfeda defines the position of Kaulam as at the extreme end of *Balad-ul-Falfal*, i.e. the Pepper country or Malabar, as you go eastward, standing on an inlet of the sea, in a sandy plain, adorned with many gardens. The brazil-tree grew there, and the Mahomedans had a fine mosque and square. Ibn Batuta also notices the fine mosque, and says the city was one of the finest in Malabar, with splendid markets and rich merchants, and was the chief resort of the Chinese traders in India. Odoric describes it as "at the extremity of the Pepper Forest towards the south," and astonishing in the abundance of its merchandise. Friar Jordanus of Séverac was there as a missionary some time previous to 1328, in which year he was at home; [on the 21st of August, 1329, he] was nominated Bishop of the See of Kaulam, Latinised as *Columbum* or *Columbus* [created by John XXII. on the 9th of August of the same year—H. C.]. Twenty years later John Marignolli visited "the very noble city of Columbum, where the whole world's pepper is produced," and found there a Latin church of St. George, probably founded by Jordanus.† Kaulam or Coilon continued to be an important place to the beginning of the 16th century, when Varthema speaks of it as a fine port, and Barbosa as "a very great city," with a very good haven, and with many great merchants, Moors and Gentoos, whose ships traded to all the Eastern ports as far as Bengal, Pegu, and the Archipelago. But after this its decay must have been rapid, and in the following century it had sunk into entire insignificance. Throughout the Middle Ages it appears to have been one of the chief seats of the St. Thomas

* The etymology of the name seems to be doubtful. Dr. Caldwell tells me it is an error to connect it (as in the first edition) with the word for a Tank, which is *Kulam*. The apparent meaning of *Kollam* is "slaughter," but he thinks the name is best explained as "Palace" or "Royal Residence."

† There is still a *Syrian* church of St. George at Quilon, and a mosque of some importance;—the representatives at least of those noted above, though no actual trace of antiquity of any kind remains at the place. A vague tradition of extensive trade with China yet survives. The form *Columbum* is accounted for by an inscription, published by the Prince of Travancore (*Ind. Antiq.* II. 360), which shows that the city was called in Sanskrit *Kolamba*. May not the real etymology be Sansk. *Kolam*, "Black Pepper"?

On the suggestion ventured in this note Dr. Caldwell writes:

"I fancy *Kôla*, a name for pepper in Sanskrit, may be derived from the name of the country *Kôlam*, North Malabar, which is much more celebrated for its pepper than the country about Quilon. This *Kôlam*, though resembling *Kollam*, is really a separate word, and never confounded with the latter by the natives. The prince of *Kôlam* (North Malabar) is called *Kolastri* or *Kolattiri*.¹ Compare also *Kôlagiri*, the name of a hill in the Sanskrit dictionaries, called also *Kôlla giri*. The only possible derivations for the Tamil and Malayalam name of Quilon that I am acquainted with, are these: (1.) From *Kolu*, the 'Royal Presence' or presence-chamber, or hall of audience. *Kollam* might naturally be a derivative of this word; and in confirmation I find that other residences of Malabar kings were also called Kollam, e.g. Kodungalur or Cranganore. (2.) From *Kolu*, the same word, but with the meaning 'a height' or 'high-ground.' Hence *Kollei*, a very common word in Tamil for a 'dry grain field, a back-yard.' *Kolli* is also, in the Tamil poets, said to be the name of a hill in the Chera country, i.e. the Malabar coast. *Kôlam* in Tamil has not the meaning of pepper; it means 'beauty,' and it is said also to mean the fruit of the jujuba. (3.) It might possibly be derived from *Kol*, to slay;—*Kollam*, slaughter, or a place where some slaughter happened . . . in the absence, however, of any tradition to this effect, this derivation of the name seems improbable."

¹ See II. 387.