PROLOGUE TO THE KING OUR SOVEREIGN.

VERY HIGH AND VERY powerful PRINCE,

Perchance your Highness may judge me to be as ignorant as over bold, since with such weak knowledge, and little capacity, I have desired to offer to you my poor works: but the love which I bear to your service excuses my error, because I have done it with such strenuous daring, as in truth I would do other greater things, if the favour of your Highness should also oblige me as in this work of Prester John of the Indies. Because, besides that the Bishop of Lamego incited me to this, your Highness bade me print it, saying that you would receive much satisfaction from it, which was a great favour to me; I give for it great thanks to God, because with this commencement others came to me with hope of a good end, blessed ends I hope. And if, my Lord, you keep this in your remembrance, I well believe that with a royal mind you will so accept the little, as you will bestow much. For a poor man passing by one day where his King travelled, brought him a little water with both his hands, saying: drink my Lord, for the heat is great. He accepted it gaily from him, not looking to the small quality of that service, but only to the good will with which he offered it. Therefore, though in this same manner I offer to your Highness this small service of the book of Prester John, receive with content its usefulness; for in it are related many notable things; the truth of which is as much shown in the deeds as in the words. Because it is a very important thing for a Prince to recall to memory the examples of profitable lives that have passed away, for a
lesson to the living. And as, my Lord, always since I have
been yours my desire has been directed to your service in
order to derive some fruit by it, even though power may
have been wanting to me, good will has not failed: with
this I went to Paris to seek for printing types of official
letters and other things fitting for printing, which are no
less of the best quality than those of Italy, France, and
Germany, where this art most flourishes, as your Highness
may see by the work which I have established in this city,
with no small satisfaction, because it seemed to me that
your Highness took pleasure in it, as has been shewn by
the favours which you have done to me, and which I hope
you will do. Thus, with this confidence, I took this little
opportunity of Prester John, which (as the poets say) is not
the less to be praised on this account. May your Highness
receive with a royal and benignant mind this small service,
the first fruits of my small capacity, which may bring profit
and recreation from the labours which your great and
arduous affairs bring with them. And if your Highness
should find in this book any words that do not please you,
remember that the men there abroad are lords of the
words, and that Princes are lords of deeds and of fortune.
The treatise commences with the entry into the country of Prester John.

**CAP. 1.—How Diogo Lopez de Sequeira succeeded to the government of India after Lopo Soarez, who was governor before him, and how he brought Mattheus to the port of Macua.**

I say that I came with Duarte Galvan, may God keep him, and this is the truth, and he died in Camaran, an island of the Red sea, and his embassy ceased in the time when Lopo Soarez was Captain General and Governor of the Indies, as I have already written at length, and here I omit to write it as it is not necessary: I shall write that which is necessary. I say that Diogo Lopez de Sequeira succeeding to the government of India after Lopo Soarez, he set to work to do that which Lopo Soarez had not completed, that is to bring Mattheus the ambassador, who went to Portugal as ambassador of Prester John, to the port of Macua, which is near to Arquiho, port and country of Prester John. And he fitted out his large and handsome fleet, and we set sail for the said Red sea, and arrived at the said island of Macua on Monday of the Octave of Easter, the seventh day of April of the year fifteen hundred and twenty, which we found empty, because for about five or six days they had had news of us. The main land is about two crossbow shots, more or less, from the island, and to it the Moors of the island had carried off their goods for safety: this mainland belongs to Prester John. The fleet having come to anchor between the island
and the mainland, on the following Tuesday there came to us from the town of Arquico a Christian and a Moor: the Christian said that the town of Arquico belonged to Christians, and to a lord who was called Barnagais, a subject of Prester John, and that the Moors of this island of Maçua and town of Arquico, whenever Turks or Roumys who do them injury came to this port, all fled to the mountains and carried off such of their property as they could carry, and now they had not chosen to fly because they had heard that we were Christians. Hearing this the great captain gave thanks to God for the news, and name of Christians which he had met with, and which greatly favoured Mattheus, who came rather unfavourably: and he ordered a rich garment to be given to the Christian, and to the Moor he showed great favour, and told them that they had done what they ought in not stirring from the town of Arquico, since it belonged to Christians, and the Prester, as they said, and that his coming was only for the service and friendship of the Prester John and all his people, and that they might go in peace and be in security.

Cap. II.—How the Captain of Arquico came to visit the Captain General, and also some Friars of Bisam.

The following day, Wednesday of the Octave, the captain of the said town of Arquico came to speak to the Captain General, and he brought him a present of four cows: and the Captain General received him with much show and honour, and gave him rich stuffs, and learned from him more details about the Christianity of the country, and how he was already summoned by the Barnagais, the lord of that country, to go there. This captain came in this manner: he brought a very good horse, and he wore a cloak over a rich Moorish shirt, and with him there were thirty horsemen, and quite
two hundred men on foot. After the long and agreeable conversation which they held by interpreters, the Captain General speaking Arabic well, the captain of Arquiquo went away with his people much pleased, as it appeared from what they said. At a distance of seven or eight leagues from this town of Arquiquo, in a very high mountain, there is a very noble monastery of friars, which Mattheus talked of a great deal, and which is called Bisan. The friars had news of us, and on Thursday after the Octave there came to us seven friars of the said monastery. The Captain General went out to receive them on the beach with all his people with much pleasure and rejoicing, and likewise the friars showed that they felt much pleasure. They said that for a long time they had been looking forward for Christians, because they had prophecies written in their books, which said that Christians were to come to this port, and that they would open a well in it, and that when this well was opened there would be no more Moors there. They talked of many other things in similar fitting conversations, the ambassador Mattheus being present at all; and the said friars did great honour to Mattheus, kissing his hand and shoulder, because such is their custom, and he also was much delighted with them. These friars said that they kept eight days after the feast of Easter, and that during that time they did not go on a journey or do any other service, but that as soon as they heard say that Christians were in the port, a thing they so much desired, they had begged leave of their superior to come and make this journey in the service of God; and also that news of our arrival had been taken to the Barnagais; but that he would not leave his house except after the eight days after Easter had passed. The conversation with these friars and their reception having been concluded, the Captain General returned to his galleon with his captains, and the friars with him. These friars

1 Or "of the Vision", according to some.
were received on board with the cross and priests with surplices, giving them the cross to kiss, which they did with great reverence. They were treated with many conserves which the Captain General ordered to be given them, and much conversation passed with them of joy and pleasure over a matter so much desired on both parts. The said friars departed and went to sleep at Arquiquo.

CAP. III.—How the Captain General ordered mass to be said in the chief mosque of Maçua, and ordered it to be named St. Mary of the Conception, and how he sent to see the things of the Monastery of Bisam.

On Friday after the Octave of Easter, the thirteenth day of the said month of April, very early in the morning, the said friars returned to the beach, and they sent for them with honour; and the governor with his captains passed over with the friars to the island of Maçua, and he ordered mass to be said in the principal mosque, in honour of the five wounds, as it was Friday. At the end of the mass the Captain General said that the mosque should be named St. Mary of the Conception: from that time forward we said mass every day in the said mosque. At the end of that mass, on botaking ourselves to the ships, some of the friars went with Mattheus, others with the Captain General: to all cloths were given for their clothes, that is to say, stuffs of coarse cotton, for that is the stuff which they wear; they also gave them pieces of silk for the monastery, and some pictures and bells for the same monastery. These friars all carried crosses in their hands, for such is their custom, and the laymen wore small crosses of black wood at their necks. Our people in general bought those crosses which the laymen wore, and brought them with them, because they were novelties to which we were not accustomed. Whilst these friars were
going about amongst us, the Captain General ordered a man named Fernan Diaz, who knew Arabic, to go and see the monastery; and for greater authority, and for the matter to be better known for it to be written to the King our sovereign, he sent besides the said Fernan Diaz, the licentiate Pero Gomez Teixeira, auditor of the Indies. These each for their own part said that it was a great and good thing, because we ought to give great thanks and praise to the Lord for that we had come from such distant lands and seas, through so many enemies of our faith, and that we here fell in with Christians with a monastery and houses of prayer where God was served. The said auditor brought from the monastery a parchment book written in their writing, to send to the King our sovereign.

— CAP. IV. — How the Captain General and the Barnagais saw each other, and how it was arranged that Rodrigo de Lima should go with Mattheus to Prester John.

On Tuesday, the seventeenth day of the said month of April, the Barnagais came to the town of Arquiquo, and sent a message to the Governor of his having come. As it seemed likely to the governor that he would come to speak to him on the beach, he ordered a tent to be pitched and stuffs to be arranged in the best manner possible, and ordered seats to be made for sitting on. When all was done, a message arrived that the Barnagais would not come there: then the same day Antonio de Saldanha went to this town of Arquiquo to speak to the Barnagais, and he brought a message and agreement that they should meet and see one another midway, and so we all got ready to go with the

¹ Gaspar Correa says it was a breviary on parchment, and describes a picture contained in it on paper which had come from Jerusalem or Rome.
INTERVIEW WITH BARNAGAIS.

governor: some by sea and some by land, as far as half way where they were to see one another. There the Governor ordered his tents to be pitched and seats to be made. The Barnagais coming first would not come to the place where the tents were spread and the seats made. The Captain General having landed, and learned that the Barnagais would not come to the tents, ordered them to go with the seats and leave the tents; but still he would not stir with his people to where the seats were placed. The Captain General again sent Antonio de Saldanha and the ambassador Matheus to him: then they agreed that both should approach each other, that is, the Captain General and the Barnagais. So they did, and they saw each other and spoke in a very wide plain, seated on the ground upon carpets. Among many other things that they talked of, the principal one was that both gave thanks to God for their meeting, the Barnagais saying that they had it written in their books, that Christians from distant lands were to come to that port to join with the people of Prester John, and that they would make a well of water, and that there would be no more Moors there: and since God fulfilled this, that they should affirm and swear friendship. They then took a cross which was there for that purpose, and the Barnagais took it in his hand, and said that he swore on that sign of the cross, and on that on which our Lord Jesus Christ suffered, in the name of Prester John and in his own, that he would always favour and help to favour and assist the men and affairs of the king of Portugal and his captains who came to this port, or to other lands where they might be able to give them assistance and favour, and also that he would take the ambassador Matheus into his safe keeping, and likewise other ambassadors and people, if the Captain General should wish to send them through the kingdoms and lordships of Prester John. The Captain General swore in like manner to do the same for the affairs of Prester John and the Barnagais, wherever he might meet
with them, and that the other captains and lords of the kingdom of Portugal would act likewise. The Captain General gave to the Barnagais arms, clothes, and rich stuffs; and the Barnagais gave the Captain General a horse and a mule, both of great price. So they took leave of each other very joyful and contented, the Captain General to the ships, and the Barnagais to Arquiquo.\footnote{Gaspar Correa says that at this leave-taking the Portuguese sounded their trumpets and drums and the fleet saluted, and a ball from a camel gun made three rebounds amongst the men of the Barnegaeas, without hitting anyone. The Governor sent to ask pardon of him, saying it was a mistake of the bombardier. The Barnegaeas answered that no one was safe unless God pleased, and that the ball had done no one any harm.} The Barnagais brought with him quite two hundred horsemen, and more than two thousand men on foot. When our gentlemen and captains saw this novelty which God had so provided, and how a path was opened for aggrandising the holy Catholic faith, where they had small hopes of finding such; because they all held Mattheus to be false and a liar, so that there were grounds for putting him on shore and leaving him alone; many then clamoured and asked favour of the Governor, each man for himself to be allowed to go with Mattheus on an embassy to Prester John, and here they all affirmed by what they saw that Mattheus was a true ambassador. Since many asked for it, it was given to Don Rodrigo de Lima; then the Captain General settled who were to go with him. We were the following: First, Don Rodrigo de Lima, Jorge d’Abreu, Lopo da Gama, Joam Escolar, clerk of the embassy, Joam Gonzalvez, its interpreter and factor, Manoel de Mares, player of organs, Pero Lopez, mestre Joam, Gaspar Pereira, Estean Palharte, both servants of Don Rodrigo; Joam Fernandez, Lazaro d’Andrade, painter, Alonzo Mendez, and I, unworthy priest, Francisco Alvarez.\footnote{Gaspar Correa says of the Embassy that Don Rodrigo de Lima was a man of good presence, and a fit man for such a service; that Jorge
with Don Rodrigo; the Captain General here said, in the presence of all: Don Rodrigo, I do not send the father Francisco Alvarez with you, but I send you with him, and do not do anything without his advice. There went with Mattheus three Portuguese, one was named Magalhaës, another Alvarenga, another Diogo Fernandez.

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CAP. V.—Of the goods which the Captain sent to Prester John.

They then prepared the present which was to be sent to the Prester: not such as the King our Sovereign had sent by Duarte Galvan, because that had been dispersed in Cochim by Lopo Soarez: and what we now brought was poor enough, and we took for excuse that the goods which we brought had been lost in the ship St. Antonio, which was lost near Dara in the month of the straits. These were the goods which we took to Prester John: first, a gold sword with a rich hilt, four pieces of tapestry, some rich cuirasses, a helmet and two swivel guns, four chambers, some balls, two barrels of powder, a map of the world, some organs. With these we set out from the ships to Arquiquo, where we went to present ourselves to the Barnagais. Thence we went to rest about two crossbow shots distance above the town, in a plain at the foot of a mountain. There they soon sent us a cow, and bread and wine of the country. We waited there because they had to
d’Abreu, the second person of the Embassy, was a very well dressed gentleman; that Francisco Alvarez was a very prudent man, and well informed in all matters of the altar and divine services; that Estevan Palharte was a good fencer; the three Portuguese who accompanied Mattheus were Miguel Fernandez, Diogo Tatys, and João d’Alvarenga, all men skilful in manual arts, and who could sing at mass, for which the priest carried rich ornaments and all that was necessary, and irons for making wafers.