PREFACE

This work has grown out of a series of lectures delivered on the "History of the Portuguese in Bengal," in commemoration of the fourth centenary of the advent of the Portuguese in the Bay of Bengal.* It is scarcely necessary to explain the raison d'être of the book for, in spite of the existence of vast stores of material for a history of the Portuguese in Bengal, there is not a single comprehensive work on the subject. Most of the information about the Portuguese, given in modern historical writings and scattered in the Calcutta Journals and in the Bengal District Gazetteers, is fragmentary and often erroneous.

No Portuguese writings, except Captain Stevens' misleading translation of Faria y Souza's History, have been generally taken into account, and some errors of Faria y Souza himself, which F. Danvers perpetuated, have gained ground. Considering that the Portuguese were the earliest Europeans to found settlements in Bengal, that other European nations generally established themselves on or near the very places which had grown into centres of trade owing to the Portuguese, and that the influence which the Portuguese once exerted is still working silently in Bengal, a work presenting their history in a correct perspective is evidently a pressing need. The production of this book will, I hope, supply this long-felt need. I am conscious of its many imperfections which were unavoidable owing to the stress of other duties which left me little leisure, but I have spared no effort to sift truth from tradition, to obtain unvarnished historical accuracy,

* The lectures were delivered at the Union Chapel Hall, Calcutta, under the auspices of the Indo-Portuguese Association and the Young Men's Union, on the 3rd, the 10th, and the 17th April, 1918, the first and the second being presided over by the Hon'ble Mr. Justice W. Greaves, and the third by the Hon'ble Mr. F. J. Monahan, I. C. S. Presidency Commissioner of Bengal.
and to present a connected account of the rise, the fall and
the relics of the Portuguese in Bengal.

In the preparation of this work I cannot claim to have
exhausted all the sources of information, but I can say I have
utilized the chief Portuguese writings and balanced them
with contemporary foreign and Indian writings. The im-
portance of the Portuguese writings lies in that they give
valuable information not only about the Portuguese doings
in Bengal but also about the general history and geography
of Bengal. In this work I have, however, confined myself
to the essential facts about the Portuguese only, compelled as
I was by other duties to set narrow limits to it. In the near
future, it is my intention to bring out a contribution to the
History and Geography of Bengal, based on Portuguese and
other European writings, which have not yet been utilized or
eexist in scarce and scattered fragmentary studies. The
materials for such a work are numerous and should fill volumes.

I must express my gratitude to the Hon’ble Mr. F. J.
Monahan, I. C. S. for generously consenting to write an intro-
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Portugal for much encouragement and a donation towards the
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My thanks are due in a special measure to the Revd. Fathers
of the St. Xavier’s College, my old professors, for having kindly
placed at my disposal, their “Count Goethals Indian Library,”
which contains valuable Portuguese works and also to the
Revd. Vicars of the Portuguese Churches in Bengal, who very
kindly furnished me with information regarding the Churches
entrusted to their care.
I owe a debt of gratitude to the management of *The Bengal Past and Present*, for their courtesy in lending for this book, the blocks of the illustrations facing pages, 58, 108, and 149.

The orthography followed in the book is that of the Bengal Gazetteers, but the Portuguese proper names, with a few exceptions, have been spelt as in the Portuguese language.

J. J. A. CAMPOS