

one more probable "if") he came in one of the numerous Portuguese ships which in those days frequented the waters of Eastern Bengal—we have all the materials necessary for building up the whole fabric of legend which has grown around his name. One Chittagong legend, for instance, is that he was a Portuguese sailor, whose name Dr. Wise gives in the somewhat corrupt shape of "Pas Gual Peeris Botheilo," in which we may without difficulty recognise Pascual Perez Botelho. Perhaps Badru'ddin and Botelho came ashore together, only in that case the Badru'ddin in question could not well have been the man who died in 1440, as there were no Portuguese in India till fifty years later than that date. But how and when the various legends arose, it is, I think, useless to enquire. It is of the essence of a legend that no man may tell whence it sprung. That the worship of the Chittagong saint should spread all down the Burmah coast is, as Major Temple points out, the most natural thing in the world.—Yours truly,

JOHN BEAMES.

4.

Pitfold, Shottesmill, Surrey.

24th July, 1894.

DEAR SIR,—I see that Major Temple asks, in the current number of our Society's *Journal*, for further information about the saint known as Pír Badr. Perhaps he has not seen the enclosed extract from Dr. Wise's "Notes on the Races of Eastern Bengal" (privately printed). At p. 17, under the heading Páñch Pír, Dr. Wise also quotes the song which the Muhammadan boatmen sing on the Ganges, and which ends with the words—

Sar-i-Ganga, Páñch Pír, Badr! Badr! Badr!

Dr. Wise was at one time Civil Surgeon of Chittagong.

Yours faithfully,

H. BEVERIDGE.

Extract from "Notes on the Races, Castes, and Trades of Eastern Bengal," p. 14.—J. Wise, M.D.

"PÍR BADR.

"Besides Khwájah Khizr, Bengal supplies other animistic ideas regarding water; and Pír Badr shares with him the dominion of the rivers. This spirit is invoked by every sailor and fisherman when starting on a cruise or when overtaken by a squall or storm. All Muhammadans agree that he resides at Chittagong, but his history does not disclose the reason why the attributes of a water-demon were conferred on him. According to one account, he was a shipwrecked Portuguese sailor, named 'Pas Gual Peeris Botheilo,' who reached the shore by clinging to a piece of wreck. The guardians of his shrine, moreover, say that about 150 years ago, Pír Badr arrived at Chittagong, 'floating on a rock,' and informed the terror-stricken inhabitants that he had come all the way from Akyab on this novel craft! The neighbourhood of Chittagong being then infested by Jins, or evil spirits, he exterminated them and took possession of the whole country. The modern Dargáh or cenotaph of Pír Badr stands in the centre of Chittagong, and is regarded as the palladium of the city. Faqírs are the custodians, and the mosque, with its rooms for pilgrims, is kept scrupulously clean. On the walls of the cenotaph are ten niches for oil-lamps, which are lighted every evening and burn all night. Pilgrims from all parts of Bengal visit the Dargáh in fulfilment of vows, or to obtain the favour and intercession of the saint, while Hindu fishermen regard him with as much awe as the Muhammadans. His 'Urs, or festival, is celebrated annually on the 25th of Ramazán, the anniversary of his death. There can, however, be little doubt that Pír Badr is no other than Badruddín Badr-i-'Alam, for many years a resident of Chittagong, who died A.H. 844 (1440), and was buried in the Chhotá Dargáh of Bihár, but about whom we possess no further particulars."¹

¹ J.A.S. of Bengal, part i. No. 3, p. 302 (1873).