

“found the king absent, busy with the war against the Great Mogul of India. . . .”<sup>1</sup>

In 1649 Kandahar was at last captured, changing hands once more but, as noted in one letter from the Convent at Isfahan,<sup>2</sup> 20.4.1650, the Persians had to fight

“that year the Great Mogul who sent a large number of men to recover it, if it were not “already taken” (by the Persians) “and to retake the place, if they found it already (as “they have in fact found it) in the hands of the Persians. . . .”

Before the end of the summer of 1650 the young Shah had “returned to Isfahan”.<sup>3</sup> The struggle for this oft-contested position continued: twice before October 1652 the Mogul Emperor from Delhi

“had come against Kandahar, but been driven back by the Persians, and now has with-  
“drawn some 12 days’ distance from it . . .”<sup>4</sup>

and the pressure from India became so strong that ‘Abbas II left his “pastimes”,<sup>5</sup> in which he was then alleged to be indulging, and was on 9.8.1653<sup>6</sup>

“at present away succouring Kandahar, because of the great siege by” (the forces of)  
“the king of India, which has come upon it. . . .”

The news Fr. Barnabas had at Basra three months later, 9.11.1653,<sup>7</sup> was that:

“the Mogul” (Emperor, and his forces) “was still staying round Kandahar, but it is thought  
“that he will raise the siege this month, because the Indians cannot remain on campaign  
“in winter. It is considered unlikely that he will accomplish anything, because the strongest  
“arm of his forces are Persians, and he cannot utilize them against their own king of Persia.  
“The others are Rajputs who are the most valiant of men in India, but of small value  
“against men from cold countries. None the less the latter” (the Rajputs) “have let the  
“king of India” (i.e. the Emperor from Delhi) “know that they would retake Kandahar,  
“if he will give orders that cows shall not be killed, for these Rajputs are idolaters, whose  
“greatest cult concerns the cow. . . . The Shah is in Mashhad, in order to be nearer the  
“army. . . .”

So in December<sup>8</sup>

“. . . the Shah and all his kingdom are rejoicing over the victory gained against the king  
“of India, the Great Mogul, from whose possession Kandahar had been wrested and freed  
“—already thrice recaptured, this last time with greater triumph and glory. . . .”

The same writer, the following year, 22.4.1654,<sup>9</sup> refers to a continuation of the epic struggle:

“. . . The king at present is at Farrahabad, in order to be nearer to aid the fortress of  
“Kandahar, from which he has driven back the king of India, who was besieging it. Still  
“they say that the Emperor will soon return, and some say he has already arrived with  
“a large army. . . .”

By that date the chief minister, and Wazir,

<sup>1</sup> 17.1.1649, O.C.D. 237 g.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Barnabas, 1.9.1650, O.C.D. 242 a.

<sup>3</sup> Fr. Balthazar of S. Mary, Isfahan, O.C.D. 236 k.

<sup>4</sup> Fr. Balthazar, 3.12.1653, O.C.D. 236 k.

<sup>5</sup> Fr. Dominic of S. Mary, O.C.D. 237 f.

<sup>4</sup> and <sup>5</sup> *Idem*, 12.10.1652, O.C.D. 241 f.

<sup>7</sup> O.C.D. 241 f.

<sup>9</sup> Fr. Balthazar, O.C.D. 236 k.