

“Recently, two months ago, four English and as many Dutch ships met on the bar off “Sindi” (i.e. Tatta): “they fought courageously, but finally the Dutch made themselves “masters of one English vessel and sent another to the bottom, and 75 English were left “prisoners. The Dutch were building a strong residence in Tatta, the English went with “a force and pulled it down. . . .”

By 29.10.1655,¹ when he was writing, Fr. Dionysius of Jesus had already been:

“detained for 22 months at Kung on my way” (on transfer) “to Tatta, because of the war “between the Portuguese and, on the other side, the Dutch and the Arabs. I have asked “the Dutch for a *passport* and already have it with me. . . .”

Fr. Casimir Joseph, 6.4.1655,² related:

“Since the loss of the five great galleons of the Portuguese, the Dutch wanting to take “advantage of the victory made a plan to attack Goa from the sea, while the king of the “Deccan (instigated thereto by the Dutch, according to what is said) went to attack Goa “by land; but, not having been supported by the Dutch on account of the winds being “contrary, the king was driven back and defeated by the Portuguese, leaving several “thousand dead and prisoners. The Portuguese have received a reinforcement of three “ships; but, on the other hand, the Dutch have received one of eighteen ships, all at once, “and expect another. It is feared that they will make an attack on Colombo.”

This Religious resumed, 31.1.1656,³ from Basra:

“The English have a reinforcement of five vessels. The Dutch have not appeared this “year, which is a sign that they are having their work cut out in India. . . .”

and from Isfahan Fr. Stephen, 4.4.1656,⁴ confirmed that impression to a Definitor General in Rome:

“This year more than 20 Dutch ships with 6,000 fighting men have come down on “Ceylon and, on disembarking, had a battle with the Portuguese: after many had been “killed on both sides the Portuguese retired to the town of Colombo, to which the Dutch “laid siege by sea and land. . . .”

By July of that year, 20.7.1656,⁵ Fr. Barnabas at Basra had the news:

“The Dutch have made two valiant assaults on the town of Colombo in Ceylon, but “were repulsed after having entered the town . . . of the Dutch some 4,000 were killed, “and the general of the Dutch slain. None the less they have returned to besiege it. . . .”

With the loss of Ceylon by 1657 the Portuguese possessions in Indian waters were reduced to a skeleton of their former wide frame: the Vicar of Basra wrote to his colleague at Aleppo, Fr. Bruno, 24.1.1657:

“The illustrious consul for France will show your Reverence the terms which the Dutch “victors have concluded with the Portuguese who have lost Ceylon in the surrender of the “almost impregnable town of Colombo, which maintained itself for seven months without “receiving any succour. In the places occupied by the Dutch the Catholics are not per- “mitted to retain any church where Catholic rites are celebrated, nor are any Religious

¹ O.C.D. 238 s.

⁴ *Idem*, 238 c.

² *Idem*, 236 l.

⁵ *Idem*, 241 f.

³ *Idem*, 241 h.