

It was to this reign also that the project of establishing a mission post at Kung is to be assigned: the centre of Portuguese trade in the Persian Gulf, a few miles along the coast east of modern Lingeh, the port attracted the attention of a Vicar Provincial fresh from Europe and new to Eastern affairs, Fr. Dominic of S. Nicolas, in 1649. He anticipated that thence the Carmelites would find a door to work among the Arabs on the opposite shore of the Gulf, in Hasa in particular where the Portuguese had planted their flag in a vague way. On his recommendation sanction would seem to have been granted by the Order, for in a letter of 4.12.1651 Fr. Stephen of Jesus wrote of: "two foundations having been accepted—Julfa and "Kung . . ."; but the other Carmelites were sceptical—"small hope of results . . . that at "Kung still less in results, but easy to work . . ."—and some antagonistic because of the abandonment of Shiraz, with which the proposal was coupled.<sup>1</sup> Evidently by 1654 the Definitory General had cancelled their approval, for Fr. Felix, by then Vicar Provincial himself, added, 20.6.1654:

" . . . recently a letter has come from our Father General, addressed to Fr. Stephen of "Jesus, in which it was stated that our Superiors consider establishments at Julfa and Kung "useless. . . ."

Although in the course of the next seventy years Carmelites used that port for a Congress, for meetings and discussions, and like many other travellers also for taking ship to and from India or Basra, Kung was never an established mission post of the Carmelites (as can be judged from the further details and facts known, which are given in the section of this work dealing with the separate Residences). The Portuguese Augustinians alone maintained a foundation at Kung until the Portuguese 'Factory' and official representatives withdrew after the Afghan invasion.

It remains only to note developments by the other Orders in the time of 'Abbas II, and the episcopal situation. As to the Capuchins, representing the king of France and under his protection, in 1656 they founded a small House at Tabriz, which was to last nearly a century;<sup>2</sup> but at Isfahan they never maintained more than two or three Religious and, apart from their failure to effect a permanent lodgment in the Armenian stronghold of Julfa, little is mentioned in the correspondence examined. Fr. Raphael du Mans, who accompanied the traveller Tavernier on one of his journeys to Persia, in 1644<sup>3</sup> with his learning in mathematics was welcome in Court circles. Fr. Barnabas<sup>4</sup> wrote of him as:

"a Capuchin, who is a mathematician and is constantly with the greatest persons of the "country. . . ."

The East India Company's records<sup>5</sup> have it in a letter of 10.4.1696:

"Fr. Raphael had deceased at Isfahan, aged 83 years: he had resided at Isfahan 50 "years. . . ."

Their other pioneer, Fr. Valentine from Angers, died aged 66 in November 1665, as another tombstone in the old cemetery outside Julfa still shows.<sup>6</sup> As regards their foundation at Baghdad a letter of 14.6.1658 from Fr. Barnabas at Basra reported:

"In Baghdad the Pasha has put into prison the Capuchin Fathers, but used none of the "wonted ill-treatment. Then he sent the Qazi to pray in their church, and at once had "the church and everything pulled down, and has begun to build a rather fine mosque "on the site of the said church. . . ."

<sup>1</sup> Fr. Felix of S. Antony, 8.4.1654.

<sup>3</sup> See Tavernier's *Voyages*, VI, 670, and book IV, 179.

<sup>5</sup> No. 6207 in the catalogue.

<sup>2</sup> *S.R.*, vol. 428, p. 139 *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> 12.10.1652.

<sup>6</sup> See *Osservatore Romano*, 18.2.1933.