

But Fr. Jerome of Jesus Mary, the Pole, writing from Basra, 30.8.1673,<sup>1</sup> made it clear that:

“. . . war continues between the same nations as in Europe, yet with unequal forces; for “here the Flemings (i.e. Dutch) are very strong and in large numbers: and they say they “have captured seven French ships. . . .”

The Portuguese continued to show their flag in the Gulf, and made a number of naval demonstrations against the Arabs, but failed to get to grips, or re-establish themselves at Masqat:

“30.7.1668. . . . The Portuguese Armada has left Kung to go and set fire to the port “of Masqat. . . .”<sup>2</sup>

“2.9.1670. . . . The Portuguese Armada, composed of 25 men-o’-war, has arrived off “Masqat: and 7 vessels are at Kung, to recover their (Customs) dues from the king of “Persia. . . .”<sup>3</sup>

“20.3.1671. . . . Fresh news received that the Armada has reached the Gulf: 14 galleons “of which Don Antonio de Mello is the general. . . .”

“12.11.1672. . . . The news here is that the Portuguese fleet, which is this year at Kung, “i.e. in the Persian Gulf, is about to make war on Persia, in order to compel payment of “the duties due to the king” (of Portugal) “from that port, not paid for several years past “because of their lack of power and the decline of their nation. . . .”

“30.8.1673.<sup>4</sup> . . . The Portuguese fleet and its commander remain here in the Persian “Gulf for the present: he had declared war on the Arabs of Masqat, but no warlike opera- “tions have ensued so far, for neither do the Arabs put out to sea, nor do the Portuguese “approach the fortress to attack it—a very difficult business with their small numbers and “its situation, so well fortified by nature and artifice. . . .”

Then in regard to the difficulties between the Portuguese and the recently established Turkish government at Basra in August 1682 the Vicar of Basra noted:<sup>5</sup>

“. . . We are expecting today or tomorrow a French vessel. We have two Turkish “in port, which came from India under the English flag, and thus escaped the Portuguese “who detained eleven other Turkish vessels at Kung. The Pasha, or governor, of this “place asked me to send one of my companions to Kung to arrange the dispute between “him and the Portuguese. . . .”—

an early example of the use of the neutral flag at sea.

It was in Basra, however, that the Carmelites were definitely affected during the period under review by local struggles, in no sense directed against themselves. This part of Mesopotamia had remained under nominal Turkish suzerainty: and in the year 1665 the local Arab ‘Pasha’ or governor, who had an understanding with the Persians, rose against Turkish overlordship, aiming at independence. The Turkish Pasha in Baghdad with a force descended the rivers to attack him. From that time till 1669 Basra and its inhabitants, including the Carmelites, went through a series of sieges, plunderings, changes of masters, massacres, vivid accounts of which by the several Religious concerned are not repeated here, but may be read in detail in the section of this work dealing with the Residence at Basra—and, as recorded by eye-witnesses, they probably contribute a chapter to the history of Basra more or less unknown to the present generation of Basrawis. That Residence was almost entirely destroyed in the prolonged fighting: so much so that, with the impression caused in Rome by the recital of its misfortunes, the Pope himself granted 700 scudi in aid of reconstruction:<sup>6</sup> in 1672 a receipt of 100 scudi from the Sacr. Congregation on this account is mentioned.<sup>7</sup> From 1669

<sup>1</sup> O.C.D. 241 l.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Angelus, O.C.D. 241 d.

<sup>3</sup> O.C.D. 236 i, *idem*.

<sup>4</sup> Fr. Jerome of Jesus Mary, O.C.D. 241 l, Basra.

<sup>5</sup> Fr. Agathangelus, Basra, O.C.D. 241 c, 8.8.1682.

<sup>6</sup> *S.R.*, vol. 428, p. 562.

<sup>7</sup> O.C.D. 241 l. Fr. Jerome of Jesus Mary, 7.6.1672.