

“the ship, seeing that, as they had taken about 4 months to pass the Cape, it appeared that there would not be sufficient water to reach Portugal. . . .

“ . . . But it pleased the Lord that so much water remained in the casks that there would be more than enough, so it was unnecessary to make the land: in particular the king’s casks, 150 in number, were well supplied, and also the 38 of the ambassador. . . . The Religious were drinking from these, and many other poor people to whom they gave it: the ambassador and his wife were being very charitable daily and giving free rations, not only of water but of many other things . . . for there were many poor persons on board that ship, who had no one else to come to their aid. . . . As his household and dependants numbered more than 25 persons, he had brought large stocks” (of food) “to supply their other needs.

“On 2.6.1617 they passed the latitude of St. Helena, 16 degrees . . . on 21.6.1617 that of Ascension Island, 8 degrees. . . . On the feast-day of S. Antony of Padua, 13.6.1617, they fired off some pieces of artillery on board the ship in honour of the saint as he was a Portuguese. There was a solemn Office, Mass being sung by Fr. Isidore . . . in the afternoon a comedy, very well done, was played, and afforded much amusement. On 24.6.1617 at night the latitude of the island of Fernando de Noronha was passed, 6 degrees. On 3.7.1617 the ‘general’” (i.e. ‘trade’) “winds ceased, and very little way was made until 9.7.1617, when we were at 8 degrees north. . . .

“ . . . The voyage direct from Goa to Portugal is 3,700 leagues; but, as we were tacking so much, especially since the Cape of Good Hope, the passage was increased to more than 5,000 leagues. . . . On 16.7.1617, the day of our Lady of Carmel, the captain and crew of the ship took it on them to make a great festival of it, because it was the name-day of our ship and for other reasons. . . . The ambassador and his wife were foremost in assisting in this, being so devoted to our Lady of Carmel and wearing her scapular: and thus they gave some very fine pieces of cloth of gold and silk, with which an altar was decked as handsomely as it could be done in any church. Vespers were sung and afterwards there were some dances: and, on the day itself, Fr. Redempt said the Mass. . . . On that day many went to Confession and Communion, and took the scapular . . . the ambassador had food given to the poor people and invited the captain of the ship to dinner. After dinner the crew of the ship performed a comedy very well, and they celebrated the festival in other ways to the great pleasure of all. The lady Countess sent a very appetizing refreshment for the performers (in the play). . . .

“ . . . The coast of Guinea begins shortly after passing the Line . . . we passed this latitude with a fair wind and so did not feel the heat so much, although the rain was so heavy that it damaged much gear of the ship . . . after some great calms, which lasted almost a month, during which we made very little way.

“These calms beget various sicknesses, which are customary on this route and which they call—Mal de Loanda”—(the Loanda disease or fever). “Tired out by so long a journey and such hard work and discomforts with insufficient good food, and what little there is has already lost its value as nourishment, so that it serves of very little benefit and sustenance, the bodies of all become so debilitated that even the very sailors come to lack sufficient strength for the work they have to do for the trimming of the ship, and so, whoever catches this sickness, it goes at once to his chest and suffocates him in two days.<sup>1</sup>

“As the number of cases of sickness increased and some men were dying, and provisions for everyone were coming to an end, and there was very little water left, on account of which all the men were without the necessary strength to do their work—it was now nearly 7 months since we left Goa without having touched land anywhere, nor having had any relaxation—and, as the crew knew that the orders of the Viceroy were not to make land before getting to Lisbon . . . the sailors of the ship with one accord decided

<sup>1</sup> Fr. Redempt, who wrote this in 1617, was to die on board ship off this same coast of Guinea on his return voyage in 1619, after nursing the Lay Brother Elisaeus—perhaps of this very sickness.