

Indeed the 'Umani Arabs followed up their successes by having the Portuguese molested on the Indian coast, as appears from 'news' of Fr. Barnabas, 14.7.1653:

"The Hindu princes, at the instigation of the Arab Imam, have taken the fort of Canara "from the Portuguese."

Matters standing thus, it is difficult to verify a statement by Fr. Felix, also from Basra, 6.2.1653:<sup>1</sup>

"The Portuguese . . . last October gained a signal victory over the Arabs, and this year I have sure news of the safe arrival in Goa of a new viceroy with four galleons . . . it is hoped that they will regain Masqat, if the Dutch do not disturb them . . . it is said . . . that they are at war. . . ."

Hostilities had indeed again broken out, correspondence being seized on the seas, and even the English, through whom the Carmelites sometimes received letters from Europe, were prevented by the Dutch from bringing them.<sup>2</sup> That July Fr. Barnabas reported:<sup>3</sup>

"the Dutch in the Persian Gulf have at various times taken four merchant ships of the "English, with a great quantity of money and precious merchandise . . ."

(it was the period of the hostile relations with the Commonwealth in England, the Dutch house of Nassau being connected by marriage with the exiled Stuarts):

"the Dutch in the Gulf have also captured a Portuguese ship . . . they are masters of the "Persian Gulf with a fleet they have off cape Ras-ul-Had. . . ."

(He gives details of the attack by the Dutch on the Portuguese positions in Ceylon.)  
Three weeks later he emphasized the situation:

"The Dutch . . . remain masters, as it were, of the whole trade of India and Persia "and of this port at Basra, so that this year no English nor Portuguese ships have come to "Basra, whence also it comes about that we totally lack the financial aid we used to have "from the latter nation. . . ."

On 9.11.1653 the same vicar of Basra added—to show the plunder taken:

"This year no Portuguese nor English have come to this port, but Arabs and Dutch, "and more than 3 millions of Spanish gold reals; and more than 6 million have been "landed at Gāmbnun. From what I see, all the money of the West Indies is coming to "these East Indies. The Dutch have taken this year 4 English and 10 Portuguese ships "and of those ten two with great riches. . . ."

To the Procurator General of the Order in Rome from Basra Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns, 16.1.1654,<sup>4</sup> pointed out that:

"La grande guerre qui est en mer entre les Portugais et les Anglois d'un costé et les "Hollandois de l'autre a interclus le passage de l'Inde en Perse . . ."

while the Vicar of Basra, 27.5.1654, after stating that he was sending two couriers with the letters of the Dutch Company, went on:

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

<sup>3</sup> 14.7.1653, O.C.D. 241 f.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Balthazar, 9.8.1653, O.C.D. 236 k.

<sup>4</sup> O.C.D. 242 e.