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AFONSO  
DE ALBUQUERQUE





AFONSO DA LBOQVERQUE





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# AFONSO DE ALBUQUERQUE

GOVERNOR OF INDIA

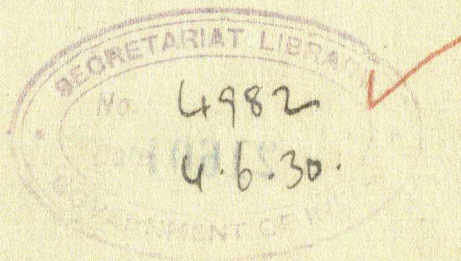
HIS LIFE

CONQUESTS AND ADMINISTRATION

BY

EDGAR PRESTAGE, M.A., D.LITT. OXON.

*Camoens Professor in the University of London, Kings College.*



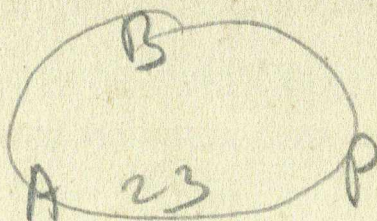
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## FOREWORD.

The following sketch is the result of a comparison of the original authorities mentioned in the Introduction, and is intended for those who are unable, or unwilling, to give the considerable time which an examination of them demands.

Professor H. Dodwell and Mr. Aubrey Bell have kindly read the proofs.

I hope the map may prove useful.

E. P.





## INTRODUCTION.

The career of Afonso de Albuquerque\* presents several problems to the historian, the least of which is the reason why, though his term as Governor of India lasted six years instead of the usual three†, he was not honoured with the title of Viceroy‡; a solution of some of these problems depends on the degree of credibility we attach to the authorities, who do not always agree with one another and keep silence on matters we should like to be informed of. Of these authorities, the most important are his official letters to King Manoel, marked by a frankness of expression unusual in such correspondence; a few addressed to friends and the letters of his captains and officials to the King, which are filled by complaints of the Governor in still more outspoken terms. The above letters are contained in the *Cartas de Affonso de Albuquerque* published by

\*He signed his name *Afonso* [or *Afonso*] *dalbuquerque*.

†Barros, *Asia*, Decad I, Book 8, Ch. 3. Nuno da Cunha had a rule of 10 years, 1528-1538, but this was exceptional.

‡Lord Stanley of Alderley gives it to him by mistake.



the Lisbon Academy of Science in six vols. (Lisbon 1884 et seq.). The title is deceptive, because nearly all his own letters will be found in Vol. I ; they run from February 6th, 1507, to December 6th, 1515, but some are undated. Albuquerque left Lisbon for the East on April 6th, 1506, he took up the reins of government in November, 1509, and died on December 15th, 1515, so that they cover the period of his second and long residence in Asia.\* They were dictated to a secretary at intervals without regard to order, hence the repetitions and there is no attempt at style ; some are lengthy and in print one takes up more than 40 pages in quarto. Subsequent volumes of the *Cartas* contain the letters of accusation above mentioned, which are useful, if only to show the difficulties under which he worked, Minutes of the Councils held to decide on military operations and matters of policy, and many hundreds of other documents, which throw light on social conditions, as well as on the details of his rule. We find some letters from the King to him, but not the *Regimento*, or *Instructions* he received when he left home, though we have that of his predecessor, the Viceroy D. Francisco de Almeida.

Next in value come the contemporary historians who wrote of him ; his illegitimate son Bras de Albuquerque (who assumed the name of Affonso), João de Barros, Damião de Goes, Bishop Jeronimo

\*His first visit to India was brief. He left Lisbon in April, 1503, and in July, 1504, had returned.



Osorio, Fernão Lopes de Castanheda and Gaspar Correa. The first four never visited India. Bras, a *fidalgo* of artistic tastes and a capable administrator in Lisbon, first published his *Commentarios* in 1557; they are a history of the time and a panegyric of Albuquerque, who is never mentioned without the epithet of "the great," and the author claims that they are derived from his father's letters to the King, but if we are to judge from what we possess of these, he must have had recourse to other sources. His object in printing the work was, he tells us, to inform the then King, Sebastian, of Albuquerque's labours in the conquest, and remind him of the small attention given by historians to his achievements. Bras was born about 1500-1 and probably wrote long after the events he records. Portuguese critics praise the elegance of his narrative, and it is certainly a contrast to Affonso's rough and manly language, but the merits have disappeared in the lame translation of Walter de Gray Birch (Hakluyt Society, 4 vols. 1875 et seq).

Barros, author of *Da Asia*, which began to appear in 1552 with the magnificent subtitle, *of the deeds which the Portuguese achieved in the discovery and conquest of the seas and lands of the Orient*, is a classic, who modelled himself on Livy and produced a stately work divided into four decads. He was a man of high character, a sound scholar, a diligent investigator, and as factor of the India House in Lisbon, he must have had special



opportunities of acquiring knowledge, but he purposely avoided going into details, he was hampered by his view of a historian's duties\* even more than by his position as official recorder, and he sought to glorify his countrymen.† Goes wrote the *Chronica do felicissimo Senhor Rei D. Manoel*,‡ by royal order, but though an official historian, the celebrated humanist and friend of Erasmus did not always use his pen like a courtier; Osorio,§ the Portuguese Cicero, described the events of the reign in the universal language for the benefit of foreigners under the title *De rebus Emanuelis gestis*; he took his facts from Goes, but his sense of morality was higher than that of the other historians.

Castanheda and Correa, by reason of their residence in the East, had an advantage over their rivals, though socially and intellectually inferior to them. The former went to India in 1528 with his father, who had been appointed *Ouvidor* at Goa, and during some ten years' residence there he sought

\*See the prologue to the second decad.

†When referring to the dispute between the Viceroy and Albuquerque over the latter's succession, he says that as his purpose is to write of the war made by the Portuguese on Infidels, and not of that between the Portuguese themselves, he will speak of these differences only so far as is necessary for the understanding of the history. He prefers not to stain a record of great deeds by an account of hatreds and envies, through which victors and vanquished might lose much of their deserts. Dec.II, Book 3, Cap 8.

‡A critical edition was issued by the Coimbra University Press in 1926.

§Mr. Aubrey Bell has given us the first study of this learned bishop, ignored by his own compatriots.—*Revue Hispanique*, Vol. 73 (1928).





out facts from eye-witnesses and documents for his *Historia do descobrimento e conquista da India pelos Portugueses* in eight books; he began work on it in 1525 before leaving Europe, but only issued the first volume in 1551, and he gave an honest account of what he had seen, heard and read. If his prose is usually plain, he can be vivid, as when he narrates the attack on Calicut in January, 1510, and in the chapter describing the death of Albuquerque he is pathetic. Correa probably landed in India fourteen years\* before Castanheda, and notwithstanding, or on account of his position, he was not blind to the defects of his master.† He is far more detailed than the others, even than Castanheda, and as his *Lendas da India* only began to be published in 1858 (in 4 vols. by the Lisbon Academy of Sciences), he had not to pass the censor, nor would he have succeeded in so doing. He suggests, for instance, that the King should order a Governor to be beheaded on the quay at Goa to frighten the captains of fortresses and make them abstain from wrongdoing; not a single person, he says, has lost his head for his misdeeds in India, though Portugal possesses such good laws that a man is hanged for stealing a plaid, but while he condemns

\*Though he tells us that he arrived 16 years after the discovery, he also says that he acted for three years as secretary to Albuquerque, and that in 1563 he had seen more than 50 years' service in the East.

†He describes his cruelties in the war against Ormuz, and seems to take the part of the Viceroy D. Francisco de Almeida against him.



some acts of cruelty, he condones others. Though he exaggerates, retails gossip and, like the rest, invents discourses, he is generally trustworthy, for events from 1512 onwards, though not for earlier ones,\* and despite his lack of culture, and literary style, he makes the best reading, because his scenes and characters are full of life. He realised the value of documents and we owe to him the knowledge of a long and important letter from the Viceroy to King Manoel, referred to hereafter, which he prints in full.

The opinion of so competent an authority as Sir E. Denison Ross on the Portuguese historians of the East deserves quotation. He says that the intimacy which early Portuguese writers disclose with the public affairs and private intrigues of the Moslems in Arabia and India is astonishing; the accounts they give of the relations of the various Mohammedan states with one another is usually in striking accord with the narratives of Moslem historians.

It is unfortunate that the modern editions of the Portuguese histories lack notes,† and that no one

\*Lord Stanley of Alderley defends Correa, but Ravenstein calls his account of the first voyage of da Gama "a jumble of truth and fiction"; while Whiteway considers the first volume of the *Lendas* "legendary," and adds that the facts are "very dubious." Some of them certainly are. The analysis made by Dr. F. Hummerich confirms this view (*Studien zum Roteiro der Entdeckungsfahrt Vascos da Gama, III*, Coimbra, 1924). There is an excellent study of Correa and his work by Mr. Aubrey Bell in the series of *Spanish Notes and Monographs, Portuguese Series*, published by the Hispanic Society of America.

†The edition of Castanheda, now being issued by the Coimbra University Press, preserves the abbreviations of the older ones and their defective punctuation. Two volumes have been issued.





has given us a full comparison of their facts and dates and checked them by reference to original documents.

An English version of Book I of Castanheda by Nicholas Litchfield was printed in 1582, J. Gibbs made a free rendering of Osorio in 1752, and part of Correa is included in a translation, *The Three Voyages of Vasco da Gama*, by Lord Stanley (Hakluyt Society). Barros has never been turned into English, but there is a MS rendering of Albuquerque's letters in the India Office Library.

The most important work written by a native is the Arab history of the Portuguese in Malabar by Zin-ud Din; the text has been printed with a Portuguese version by my friend Professor David Lopes.

We have no adequate modern history of the Portuguese in the East; probably scholars have been deterred from undertaking it by the wealth of printed and MS material existing.\* The work of F. C. Danvers is a mere compilation.† The period from 1497 to 1550 has been described with full knowledge of the published sources by R. S. Whiteway,‡ but he is often too severe in his criticism of the *conquistadores*. Portuguese historians

\*H. Morse Stephens had resolved to attempt it, as he told me in a letter.

†*The Portuguese in India*, 2 vols., London, 1894.

‡*The Rise of the Portuguese Power in India*, Westminster, 1899. His survey of Albuquerque's policy, pp. 169-178, is the best so far from an English pen. Unfortunately, the work is long out of print, and copies are difficult to find and expensive.





exaggerate the misdeeds of their countrymen, from the national habit of *maldizer*, or evil speaking, so that foreigners, unaware of this defect, are apt to be deceived. The little book of H. Morse Stephens on Albuquerque and his successors\* in the *Rulers of India* series is a useful summary, but both he and Whiteway only knew Vol. I of the *Cartas* because the subsequent volumes had not then been published.

The following studies deserve mention :—

M. Longworth Dames, *The Portuguese and Turks in the Indian Ocean in the Sixteenth Century* (*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, January, 1921).

Sir E. Denison Ross, *The Portuguese in India and Arabia between 1507 and 1517* (the same Review and number).

Fortunato de Almeida, *Causas da decadencia do Imperio portugues* (in the *Coimbra Review Instituto*, 1925, No. 4).

Vicente Almeida d'Eça, *Normas economicas na Colonização portuguesa*. Coimbra, 1921.

Articles by various authors in the *Boletim da segunda classe* of the Lisbon Academy of Sciences Vol. 4 (1911) in connection with the fourth centenary of the conquest of Goa.

Subsidiary authorities are mentioned in the *Historia de Portugal* of Professor Fortunato de Almeida, II, 273.

\*Oxford, 1897. Reprinted 1912. Like Dr. Antonio Baião in his *Afonso d'Albuquerque* (Lisbon, 1914), Morse Stephens puts more faith in the accuracy of the *Commentarios* than these deserve.





The frontispiece is reproduced from a pen and ink sketch in the *Lendas* and the following extract from this book describes its origin: "As the Governor (D. John de Castro) liked to do remarkable things which should remain for a memory of him, he thought it well to have some resemblance made of the Governors who had preceded him. And he called me Gaspar Correa, because I understood drawing, and had seen all those who had ruled in these parts and bid me labour at drawing all the Governors for him like as they were. And I set about this with a painter, a native of the country, who had great talent and from the information I gave him, he painted their pictures so correctly, that whoever had seen them, recognised them at once on looking at the paintings. And the Governor (D. John de Castro) also had himself painted from life, armed as when he had his triumph. And all of them were painted on boards, each one separately, on a large scale, and all armed with corselets, and some with the very weapons they had used, wearing garments of black silk, with very handsome edgings and fringes of gold, and with their rich swords and above their heads were the escutcheons of their arms. And at the foot of each were written their names in letters of gold, with the time they had governed. And he caused them to be placed in the great room of his residence, covered with hangings."\*

\**Lendas*, IV, 596.



## AFONSO DE ALBUQUERQUE.

When Vasco da Gama anchored off Calicut in the summer of 1498, after a hitherto unequalled feat of navigation, with three diminutive vessels carrying less than 160 men, he realised the dream of Prince Henry the Navigator; the sea road to India was found. At the Infant's death in 1460, notwithstanding forty years of effort, his caravels had barely reached Sierra Leone on their way round Africa, and Afonso V preferred warfare against the Moors in Morocco to maritime exploration; but John II, after his accession, took up the work of his great uncle, and rapid progress was made. In 1481 Diogo Cão discovered the Congo River, and in 1488 Bartholomew Dias doubled the Cape of Storms, re-named Good Hope by the King, from the expectation that India would soon be discovered. His illness, the death of his son and political difficulties delayed another attempt to win the goal, and it was not until 1497 that da Gama set out on the memorable voyage which was to change the face of Europe from East to West and cut the sinews of the Turkish power. All preparations had been made by John II, wood for





the ships had been cut in the royal forests under the supervision of Dias, and the King had chosen the leader, but as often happens, one sowed and another reaped the honour and profit; in the present case D. Manoel, rightly known to history as the *Fortunate Monarch*.

At this time the religion of the Arabian prophet was approaching its political zenith; its adherents threatened Europe with conquest and cut it off from contact with the East; they levied toll on it, because they controlled the routes by which drugs and spices came from India to the West. These highly-esteemed products were carried by Moslem vessels to the heads of the Persian Gulf and Red Sea, then transported by camels across the lands of the Sultans of Turkey and Egypt to Tripoli\* and Alexandria, whence Venetian galleys fetched and distributed them throughout Europe. They were used to preserve and season food, and their cost at the end of their journey was proportioned to its length and the many lands through which they had passed. The wealth which this trade brought to the Sultans and the Republic excited the envy of other countries, and the desire to share in it was one of the reasons that determined the Portuguese voyages, culminating in that of da Gama. King Manoel sent him not only as an explorer but as ambassador to make a commercial treaty with the Samuri of Calicut, the richest port

\*The one in Syria.





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in India, his aim being to divert trade from the old routes for the benefit of his people and of himself, for he became the chief trader in the monopoly his countrymen established.\*

The Portuguese arrived in India at an opportune moment for themselves; the Mogul power was still confined to the North, and they found the South-Western coast line divided among several small states, whose Hindu rulers were at issue with one another, and had no objection to sell their products to the strangers. But the export trade was entirely in the hands of Moslem merchants, belonging to two classes, convert natives and their descendants and recent arrivals, chiefly Arabs and Persians, for whom the coming of the Christians represented a serious menace. Difference of religion and self-interest, two powerful causes of enmity, led them to oppose the Portuguese from the beginning, and the challenge had to be accepted by the latter, unless they were to renounce the plans of many years and the dreams of future wealth. There could be no compromise between rival creeds and traders; one must win the contest and oust the other. According to the *Roteiro*, the first individual who landed from da Gama's squadron at Calicut met two Tunisian Moors who greeted him with the words: "May the devil take you. What brought you here?" "We have come to

\*The spice trade was a royal monopoly, but merchants, even foreigners, were allowed to share in it by agreement with the King.



find Christians and spices," was the reply. The Moslems warned the Samuri that he would lose the revenue they brought him if he encouraged the Portuguese, with the result that da Gama had to return with only a small cargo, but its value and, above all, the discovery of the road to India, earned him an enthusiastic welcome and a rich reward from his master, who determined to develop the new route, and in 1500 dispatched a large fleet.

Cabral, the commander, touched at the Brazilian coast and was long considered its discoverer\*; he established a factory at Calicut and then proceeded to Cochin. After he had left, his agents in the Samuri's capital were assaulted and killed,† but he succeeded in loading his ships at Cochin and leaving a factor there to purchase goods for dispatch by the next fleet, he went home with a cargo whose value surpassed expectations.

It was then that King Manoel added a new title to his crown, styling himself "Lord of the Conquest, Navigation and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India," the explanation of which occupies

\*Duarte Pacheco appears to have found it in 1498 (*Historia da Colonização portuguesa do Brasil*, Oporto, 1921, Vol. I, Cap. 4,) but it may have been known to the Portuguese even earlier. This would explain the insistence of John II that the dividing line between the Portuguese and Spanish spheres, established by Pope Alexander VI, should be moved further to the West. He obtained his desire by the Treaty of Tordesillas, and thus the Brazilian coastline and a large part of the interior was secured to Portugal.

†Albuquerque attributes this outrage to the mistakes of Aires Correa the factor. Zin-ud Din says that the Samuri ordered the massacre because of the hostile actions of the Portuguese in their trade dealings. Ed. cit. p. 36.





most interesting chapter in Barros.\* The Portuguese founded their claims on discovery and Papal concessions, bestowed on account of the blood and treasure they had expended, and in the following century their case was ably presented and defended by the eminent jurist Frei Serafim de Freitas in his *De Justo Imperio*,† a reply to Grotius. If the title adopted by D. Manoel is magniloquent, like that of Barros' history, it sounds modest when compared with those of some Oriental potentates, and under Albuquerque the King did actually dominate the navigation and maritime trade of the countries named, though on land his rule never extended beyond the coast. Succeeding Kings of Portugal, in memory of past glories maintained the title long after it had ceased to have a foundation; in the same way British sovereigns continued to call themselves Kings of France, after losing Calais and *Defenders of the Faith*, when they were no longer Catholics, and sought to destroy the same faith by severe penal laws and sanguinary persecutions.

Opinions in the Royal Council differed as to the wisdom of pursuing the Eastern adventure, in view of its magnitude, but the opportunity of

\*Decad. I, book 6, cap. 1, but from a draft letter of the King to the Cardinal Protector dated August 28th, 1499, if authentic, it seems that the title was assumed on the return of da Gama, and therefore before facts justified it at all. Teixeira de Aragão, *Vasco da Gama e a Vidigueira*, p. 219.

†A new edition of this remarkable work, with a Spanish translation was issued at Valladolid in 1925 at the cost of the University.





preaching the Gospel and the large profits to be made, led the majority to vote for perseverance ; and as the Moslems had endeavoured to destroy da Gama's fleet on its outward voyage and at Calicut, while the attack on Cabral's men had come from the same quarter, it appeared necessary to teach them a lesson, if trading was to continue. For this purpose da Gama received a fleet of 15 ships with which he left the Tagus in February 1502, and on arriving in India he took a cruel vengeance for the massacre of the preceding year, and left a squadron under Vicente Sodré to defend his countrymen and intercept Mohammedan merchant ships sailing to the Red Sea.

In 1503 three separate squadrons sailed to the East, one of which was commanded by Afonso de Albuquerque and another by his cousin Francisco. They arrived just in time to save the friendly Raja of Cochin, whose state had been invaded by the Samuri to punish him for having befriended the Portuguese. They raised a wooden fort and garrisoned it to safeguard the factory and protect their ally. This was a first step towards dominion, and no sooner had they departed for home than events justified their action, for the Samuri returned. Duarte Pacheco, who had been left in charge with a small force,\* defeated him in seven battles at the

\*Castanheda says 90 men and three vessels ; Barros 150 and three ; Correa 600 and seven, an evident exaggeration, because many members of the crews of the Albuquerque vessels were ill and others were needed to navigate them.





ports of Cochin, and also routed a large Calicut fleet. He thereby gained such prestige for his countrymen throughout Southern India that the native princes showed more eagerness to trade and ally with them, while for himself he earned a coat-of-arms from the Raja of Cochin, and at home the title of the *Lusitanian Achilles*.

In consequence of the reports he had received and of the counsel of Vasco da Gama, Admiral of the Indian Ocean, and chief adviser in its affairs,\* King Manoel now decided to maintain a larger and permanent force in the East under a general of rank and experience. He had a strong commercial instinct and realised that the gains to be made were incalculable, but that to secure them he must embark on a war, not only with the Moslems in India, but with their co-religionists, the Egyptians and Turks, or Rumes,† subjects of the most powerful military state in the world, who would surely assist them; he therefore prepared deliberately for the struggle. His choice fell on D. Francisco de Almeida, a distinguished member of a noble house, who left Lisbon on March 25th, 1505, with a fleet of 20 sail carrying 1,500 soldiers and established his seat of government at Cochin, assuming the title of Viceroy. On the way out he had secured a base on the African

\*According to Correa, *Lendas I*, 493, 525, 529.

†Rumes = Romans, inhabitants of New Rome, or Constantinople.





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coast, where ships could refit and provision before crossing the Indian Ocean, by building a fort at Kilwa, and he now sent his son D. Lourenço to bombard Quilon, where the Moslems had murdered the Portuguese factor and then to visit Ceylon and arrange for supplies of cinnamon. In March, 1506, the young man with only 11 vessels defeated the Samuri's fleet of 84 ships and 120 galleys by superior gunfire, but two years later he perished like a hero in an action off Chaul against a great fleet from the Red Sea; manned by soldiers used to fighting Christians in the Mediterranean, Turks, Circassians and renegades, it had been sent by the Sultan of Egypt to expel the intruders. The very existence, and not merely the reputation, of the Portuguese depended on the delivery of an effective counter blow. Sailing north with 19 ships, the Viceroy met the combined Egyptian and Indian fleets off Diu on the coast of Guzerat on February 2nd, 1509, and gained a complete victory. It was one of the decisive battles of Asiatic history and won for Portugal the military supremacy of the Indian Ocean. By the irony of fate, or Divine judgment,\* the Viceroy with many of his companions, died on his way home the following year in a skirmish with savages at Saldanha Bay, S. Africa.

The policy he favoured is set out in a long letter to King Manoel, written in December, 1508:†

\*This was the general belief, according to Osorio and Goes.

†Printed by Correa, *Lendas* I, 897-923.





"The greater the number of fortresses you hold, the weaker will be your power. Let all your force be on the sea, because if we should not be powerful at sea, everything will at once be against us . . . our past wars were waged with animals, now we have wars with the Venetians and the Turks of the Sultan . . . as long as you are powerful at sea, you will hold India as yours, and if you do not possess this power, a fortress on shore will avail you little." Notwithstanding the fair words of Pietro Pasqualigo in his address to the Portuguese sovereign, the unholy alliance, above referred to, between Christian and Infidel had been formed, and vainly sought by threats and hostile combinations to compel King Manoel to abandon his Eastern enterprise.\* This alliance was not unique, for history records similar pacts between French kings and sultans, and between Englishmen and Persians, against their fellow Christians.

Almeida seems to have objected to fortresses, because, if numerous, they would require men to hold them which Portugal could not furnish. She had a population of a million and a half, and apart from her engagements in India, which were only in the beginning, she had contracted others in Morocco† and was about to embark on the settlement of Brazil. Nevertheless, he recognised

\*v. David Lopes *op. cit.* p. xlviii et seq.

†A map showing the Portuguese fortresses will be found in my *Chronicles of Fernão Lopes and Gomes Eannes de Zurara*, Watford, 1928.



the need of some land strongholds ; he constructed that of Cananor and, in the letter quoted above, advised that one should be built at Cranganore to hinder the transport of pepper to Calicut. Hence he differed in degree only from the views of his great successor, who is the subject of this study.

Afonso de Albuquerque was probably born in or about 1462,\* and had royal blood in his veins, though it came to him through more than one illegitimate ancestor.

He was educated at Court with Prince John and studied Latin and mathematics, in which latter science he became an expert. In 1476 he took part in the invasion of Spain by King Afonso V, fighting at the battle of Toro, and afterwards served for some years in the African fortress of Arzila ; it was a good school of arms, for combats with the Moors occurred almost daily. When John II ascended the throne in 1481, he was made Master of the Horse, and eight years later we find him in the fortress of Graciosa near Larache, when the Moors besieged it. Next year he was acting as a member of the King's personal guard, with the pay of £3 10s. od. a month.

He had little favour at first with King Manoel who succeeded in 1495, and he returned to Arzila, where his brother, Martin, was killed at his side in a foray. Until then his only reward had been a

\**Cartas* I, 34 and 362, and J. J. de Brito Rebello, *Ementas historicas I, A idade de Affonso de Albuquerque*, Coimbra, 1896, but cf. *Cartas* II, 13.





small pension, but in April 1503, as we have seen, the King sent him to India in command of a squadron. On his return in July, 1504, he seems to have expected some acknowledgment of his services, though, from lack of opportunity, he had no signal achievement to his credit, and his subsequent appointment to the highest office under the crown was due to a turn of fortune which he alludes to, but does not explain. We do not know how he came to obtain the position, and there were other men, like da Gama, who on their record had a prior claim, but the King and his counsellors deserve credit for their foresight. Some modern writers state definitely that Albuquerque laid his imperialistic designs before D. Manoel on his return from his first visit to India and obtained approval for them, but though this is likely enough, they do not produce any authority for the assertion.

He accompanied Tristão da Cunha to the East in April, 1506, with a squadron of six ships, piloting his own vessel. His business was to intercept vessels entering and leaving the Red Sea, and when the three years' term of Almeida expired, he was to succeed him by virtue of a secret patent he carried.\* On the way out, according to instructions, the island of Socotra off Cape Guardafui was seized as a naval base and a fortress built, and when

\*His homage on the appointment, dated February 23rd, 1506, is written by his own hand. *Cartas* IV, 193.



da Cunha crossed to India, Albuquerque stayed behind to prey on Moslem merchantmen; but lack of provisions obliged him to seek a port, and he decided to make for Ormuz, in the Persian Gulf, called "the richest jewel set in the ring of the world," which commanded the trade route between India and Persia. He had received orders to visit it and obtain information,\* but having grasped the importance of the island city, he determined to win it. He thus took, apparently on his own responsibility, the first step in the execution of the great designs with which his name is connected.

To frighten the place into submission, he began by capturing and burning Muscat and other coast towns, but when he reached his destination on September 25th, he found a fleet of 60 ships and 100 armed boats† ready to resist him, while thousands of soldiers on shore awaited his landing.‡ Retreat seemed the only prudent course, but though the enormous disparity in numbers naturally alarmed some of his captains, it did not daunt him, and he sent his demands to Khwaja Atar,

\*Letter of King Manoel to D. Francisco de Almeida in *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes*, IV, 112. Correa says (*Lendas I*, 659) that the King in Council resolved to have Ormuz conquered, and in the *Regimento* given to Albuquerque instructed him how to act in the matter, but this must be a mistake, for if Albuquerque had such orders, they would have transpired in his conflict with his captains. Barros also says that the *Regimento* authorised the conquest of Arabia.

†Correa says 300.

‡Castanheda says there were 30,000 in the city.



the Prime Minister and real ruler. They were that the King should accept Portuguese suzerainty and pay a tribute; a refusal would entail the destruction of the city. This audacity must have intimidated the King and his advisers, for instead of attacking, they delayed an answer until they could get reinforcements. When these came, they took steps to overwhelm the intruders, but Albuquerque delivered the first blow and in a six-hours' engagement sunk some vessels of the fleet by gunfire, boarded and captured others and bombarded the sea front.\* He thus secured what he wanted; 15,000 *xerafins* of tribute, 5,000† for the expenses of the expedition and a site for a fortress, which was begun on October 24th. About the same time an ambassador from the Shah of Persia arrived to demand the tribute which Ormuz was wont to pay him, and Khwaja Atar asked Albuquerque what reply he was to give. The latter told him to say that Ormuz belonged to the King of Portugal who had conquered it, and that if the King of Ormuz rendered tribute to another monarch, he would lose his throne. Moreover, he

\*King Manoel sent letters to the towns of Portugal describing the affair, and the one to Elvas dated January 30th, 1509, was reprinted privately in 1908. It is a most interesting document, and rare because the edition was a small one.

†Whiteway states the English equivalents as £5,000 and £1,600. If Correa is correct that the custom house produced over 500,000 *xerafins* in dues, the demands of the victor were moderate. He tells us that Albuquerque asked 100,000 for the expenses of the fleet, but this is not supported by other authorities and is an evident exaggeration.



sent on shore specimens of arms and munitions\* and directed that these should be forwarded to the Shah, for that was the money which King Manoel ordered his captains to give by way of tribute for a kingdom which was his.

Dissensions had already arisen between Albuquerque and his captains led by João da Nova, *alcaide* of Lisbon and the discoverer of St. Helena. They objected to be detained at Ormuz indefinitely when they might have been enriching themselves by making prizes off Cape Guardafui and loading spices in India for home. Albuquerque was an empire builder; they showed the courage of their race in many engagements through those months of dreadful heat, but thought of their own interests first.† They sent him two written protests against the erection of the fortress,‡ declaring it was not in his instructions, or in the interests of the King; that it would jeopardise them all and prevent their leaving that year; that their vessels were unfit to keep the sea, and they had not sufficient men to spare for garrisoning the fort when built; they

\*These are reproduced on the monument to Albuquerque, surmounted by his statue, at Belem, on the banks of the Tagus, outside Lisbon, which was inaugurated by King Carlos on September 22nd, 1902. I was present at the ceremony by invitation of the Conde d'Avila, President of the Lisbon Municipality. Barros says that the Persian ambassador never existed; it was a trick of Khwaja Atar.

†Some modern writers, however, consider that their opposition to Albuquerque was also political, that they shared the views of D. Francisco de Almeida already referred to. In that case we should have to judge their conduct less severely.

‡That of November 13th, 1507, is in *Cartas III*, 283, cf. pp. 278 and 287.



claimed a right to be consulted in the operations and complained of their leader's rough temper. They had a plausible case, but spoiled it by their subsequent treachery. Albuquerque tore up the first protest and had the second inserted under the threshold of the gate in construction. The quarrel came to a head at a Council meeting. In a hot dispute with da Nova, Albuquerque drew his sword and is said to have torn some hairs from the man's beard, which he denied, and after this da Nova and another were temporarily deprived of their ships.

Unfortunately these events reached the ears of Khwaja Atar, who saw in the rising walls of the fort a menace to his influence, and they encouraged him to break the peace he had made. He enticed away, or welcomed, four gunfounders from the fleet, set them to cast artillery and refused to give them up, for he knew the small numbers of the Portuguese, less than 500, and that they were quarrelling among themselves. Albuquerque induced the captains to support him in a renewal of hostilities to compel surrender of the fugitives, and though they changed their minds the next day, he withdrew the factor from the city and after due warning bombarded and then beleaguered it, to prevent the entry of supplies from the mainland. This was in January, 1508. As the weeks passed, the obedience of the captains to orders became more and more difficult to rely upon



and they endeavoured by one means and another to compel their commander to leave ; they had already been negotiating with the enemy, and finally three ships stole off and da Nova followed with his.

In a letter to the Viceroy, Albuquerque protested that it was three hundred years since Portuguese knights had done such an evil thing as to run away from war and abandon their commander ; but for this conduct, he said, he would have had Ormuz in his power in fifteen days, owing to the lack of food and water caused by his blockade. Only a very strong personality could have carried on so long with mutinous subordinates and a few unseaworthy vessels against a brave, numerous and well-armed foe. Albuquerque was foiled but not vanquished ; he promised to himself that he would not cut his beard until he could do it over the dead body of Khwaja Atar. For the moment he had no alternative but to suspend operations, and with the remaining ships he went to Socotra, where with two others that joined him from Portugal, he wintered.

In the following September he returned to Ormuz and received from Khwaja Atar a copy of a letter written by the Viceroy, in which the latter, acting on the information given by the deserters, whom he had received well, condemned Albuquerque's proceedings, and declared that he had sent for and would punish him.\* If the censure

\**Cartas* III, 295. It is dated March 10th, 1508. Correa declares



was deserved, it could only damage Portuguese prestige to communicate that censure to a Moham-medan ; moreover, it happened that Albuquerque's instructions authorised him to do all that he considered for the royal service. Notwithstanding this rebuff, he endeavoured by a fresh blockade and desultory attacks to compel delivery of the half-finished fort and the refugees, but after two months' waiting he had no success and sailed for India. Prudence had prevented him going there earlier ; the Viceroy might have been induced to order him home, but Almeida's term had now almost expired, and it was time for him to succeed. He reached Cananor in December, 1508. He had been two years and eight months at sea since leaving Portugal.

Almeida showed no signs of ill-will when they met, but when Albuquerque asked him to hand over the government, he refused, first on the pretext that his term had still a month to run, and next that he must avenge the death of his son, Lourenço. At the same time he wrote to inform the King that Albuquerque was greatly disliked, that his voyage to Ormuz had been unnecessary, that all said they would not stay with him, and if he compelled them, they would go over to the Moors, and that was true ; surely a strange endorsement of a wild threat from the

(Lendas I, 735) that the Viceroy received the captains badly and told them that whatever Albuquerque had done, they had no right to leave him and deserved punishment, but he is clearly mistaken.



King's representative.\* He had already marked his disapproval of his successor's policy in another way, for at the petition of the captains alleging Albuquerque's incompetence for so great a post, he had in the previous June allowed a judicial enquiry into his conduct at Ormuz,† in the course of which charges of abuse of authority, acceptance of bribes and cruelty were made. The latter accusation was well-founded, for Albuquerque had ordered some captured Moors‡ to be maimed and to reduce the city, he had caused the water tanks to be fouled by throwing their bodies in, thus justifying the epithet "terrible" bestowed on him by Camoens; but if he followed Vasco da Gama in frightfulness, it was done from policy, as both Correa and Castanheda testify. Perhaps in no other way could he have obtained his object, for he found himself with a small force, a year's journey from home, amid hundreds of thousands of enemies, actual and potential. After this enquiry the Viceroy sent him a detailed list of the accusations to which he gave adequate answers.

In March, 1509, when Almeida returned from Diu, Albuquerque again demanded possession of his post, but met with another, and a curt refusal;

\*We also have a letter from the Viceroy's secretary (?) saying that India was in more danger from Albuquerque than from the Rumes *Cartas III*, 297.

†Only a part has been preserved, and it is in *Cartas II*, 159-231. The evidence is mostly hearsay, and some of the charges are fantastic.

‡All Mohammedans were so designated by the Portuguese.





the reason now alleged by the Viceroy was that the ship to take him home had not arrived. Mischief-makers prevailed so far that Almeida imprisoned and banished some of his friends,\* and confined Albuquerque himself to his house at Cochin, and in September sent him a prisoner to Cananor, ordering that he was to see and write to none of the native rulers, on the ground that he was jeopardising the state.† He even ordered the wooden house Albuquerque had occupied at Cochin to be thrown down by an elephant, on the ground that he had incurred the guilt of treason.‡ It has been suggested that the latter made one or two false moves during these anxious months, on the advice of Gaspar Pereira, the secretary, yet on the whole he evinced rare patience and prudence under extreme provocation, as the Raja of Cochin informed King Manoel.§ What this cost a man of his temper can be imagined, but he realised the danger that the Viceroy might yield to persuasion and send him home, thus robbing him of the great prize. Many would have approved of this course, for Albuquerque was regarded as a madcap, but Almeida did not dare to take so drastic a step. According to Castanheda, the Viceroy had one

\*Including Ruy d'Araujo, referred to later.

†*Cartas* III, 306.

‡*Cartas* IV, 510. According to one version, letters forged by Albuquerque's enemies led to this action of the Viceroy.

§*Cartas* IV, 42.





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quality which his rival did not possess, he never punished a man until he had reprehended him thrice; and Correa calls him "in everything so perfect that I know not if India will have another such."\* This eulogy is remarkable in view of some of his acts, including his treatment of Albuquerque, and though the latter was a greater man, Correa does not put him on a pedestal; perhaps because he was one of his secretaries, for no one is a hero to his valet.

In October the situation changed completely, owing to the arrival of D. Fernando Coutinho, Marshal of Portugal, and nephew to Albuquerque, with orders to instal him as Governor; if the latter was still in prison, he was released and the two proceeded to Cochin. The Viceroy offered no further resistance; he took the royal letter, kissed and put it on his head in token of respect, and made preparations to leave. He carried with him many fidalgos and captains who dared not stay in India owing to their opposition to the new Governor; and eleven of these died in the skirmish at Saldanha Bay. It was a piece of good fortune for Albuquerque, because it meant his delivery from as many enemies who would have delated him to the King. If, as Castanheda says, he put every obstacle in the way of the Viceroy provisioning himself for the voyage home, it goes

\**Lendas I*, 994. Yet Goes says that on his return from Diu the Viceroy saluted the fort of Cananor by firing prisoners from his guns.





to show that after all he was human, but there is evidence that he could forgive, when he had time to reflect. In the previous July, when João da Nova died in poverty at Cochin, he accompanied the body to the grave and paid for the funeral. It was a real proof of magnanimity, for this man had been a prime mover in the plot to deprive him of the succession, but perhaps he intended it as an act of reparation for too harsh treatment at Ormuz. In his will we find him making amends for injustices by gifts to sufferers.\*

One of his first duties as Governor was to authorise, in January, 1510, a raid on Calicut in which he accompanied the Marshal, who had come with orders to destroy the city. It was at once a success and a disaster. The impetuous young Marshal bargained to lead the van, and very naturally lost his temper when he found that Albuquerque had landed first and captured and burnt the Samuri's pavilion after a stiff fight. He next made the mistake of despising "these little Moors of India," doffed his armour on account of the heat, and leading his men cane in hand, pressed on to the palace miles away, and there allowed his followers to go off and loot. The Nairs, who defended it, rallied and attacked in large numbers, and Albuquerque, who had followed in support, could not persuade him to retire in time. Some of the

\*He ordered Masses to be said for the repose of the soul of Ruy Dias, whose execution is referred to later.



plunderers left their lances at the doors of the houses they entered, and were slain with their own weapons as they emerged with booty,\* and when the main body made its way back to the sea, down a narrow road, shut in by walls, missiles of all sorts rained down from housetops and walls. Nairs, contemptuous of death, hung on the rear, the retreat developed into a rout, and if the Governor had not shown foresight in leaving a body of troops at the boats to protect the re-embarkation, few of the invaders would have escaped. The Marshal with 20 captains and *fidalgos* fell† and his banner was taken, but the enemy's loss was much heavier; 20 of their ships were burnt, as well as part of the city. Albuquerque received a wound in the left arm, which even three years later he could not lift, and another in the neck; a cannon shot felled him to the ground, and he had to be carried on board.‡ The death of the Marshal was, however, a benefit, because it enabled

\*Barros says that nobles displayed as much covetousness as common soldiers, and mentions a *fidalgo* who seized a chair which caught his fancy.

†Correa says 70.

‡In a letter to the King (*Cartas I*, 79) Albuquerque diminishes the importance of the affair. There are graphic and detailed accounts in Correa and Castanheda. The latter says that Albuquerque, when hit, called on Our Lady of Guadalupe and suffered no further injury than the fall; that in memory of this miracle he sent the ball to that shrine, with a money-offering to keep a lamp always burning before the statue; and it was there among the lamps offered by sovereigns when he wrote his history. Book III, cap. 3. According to the *Commentarios*, the miracle took place at the siege of Benastarim.





Albuquerque to use the ships he had brought from Portugal.

In a month he was again ready for action and left Cochin with 23 vessels. He gave out that it was his intention to go and complete the fortress at Ormuz, then to attempt the capture of Aden, and from there to sail up the Red Sea as far as Suez, where enemy ships were built ; but on calling at Angediva, Timoja, a Hindu pirate captain and friend of the Portuguese, urged him to attack Goa, on the ground of its strategic value, informing him that the Mohammedan ruler was absent, and that a fleet was being built there by the Rumes, whom the Viceroy had defeated. Albuquerque never undertook an important military operation without first discussing it with his captains, though he did not always take their advice ; he called them together on February 13th, and opinions varying, he decided to accept Timoja's suggestion, which fell in with his own desires.\* There are reasons for thinking that he had already designed to make Goa his capital ; we know at least that he had caused the harbour to be reconnoitred. Situated half-way up the West coast of India in the kingdom of Bijapur, Goa was an important trading centre ; its position and more excellent harbour gave it an advantage over Cochin and, as afterwards appeared, food was

\*The minutes are in *Cartas II*, 1. This volume contains also those relating to the second attack on Goa and to those on Benastarim, Aden, etc.





good, cheap and abundant, especially meat and wheaten bread.\*

We have said that Almeida relied on the command of the sea, with a few fortresses to protect the factories, but Albuquerque laid more stress on fortresses, believing that if strongly built and adequately garrisoned, they ran no risk of being taken, and events proved that he was right. Ships were useless during the south-west monsoon and for some months every year the command of the sea must be lost. Moreover, the maintenance of even a small fleet cost a lot of money, and the health of the crews suffered. On shore, he said, men found the food they were used to, while it was throwing them away to keep them always at sea, with water, rice and a little fish to eat, and then in harbour at Cochin during the winter, with rice, bad fish and women.† He wrote this in November, 1510, and the experience of two more years confirmed his opinion, for in October, 1512, he told the King: "Since India was discovered, you have always had naval forces in the East, and your designs were none the better served."‡ But though he relied mainly on fortresses for permanent dominion, he thought it dangerous and derogatory to have his headquarters in the capital of a native ruler.

\*There is a detailed description of Goa in Castanheda, Book III, cap. 8.

†*Cartas* I, 422.

‡*Cartas* I, 98.



Goa proved an easy conquest ; the fortress of Panjim was carried by assault, and the city surrendered on February 17th\* ; its Mohammedan garrison fled and the Hindu population received the Portuguese with enthusiasm. Orientals easily transfer their allegiance to the winner. The spoil was large ; according to the *Commentarios*, it included more than 100 pieces of artillery and 40 ships, but these numbers are certainly exaggerated. Albuquerque began at once to strengthen the fortifications ; he spent the next three months in arranging the details of its government and endeavoured to enlist the aid of the King of Vijayanagara in case of a counter-blow. He failed in this, and in May the King of Bijapur arrived with an army of 40,000, many of whom were Turks, forced his way over the creek which makes Goa an island, and penetrated into the city. The inhabitants had already risen against the Portuguese, and the native auxiliaries now deserted them. In revenge Albuquerque ordered some of the chief inhabitants, whom he had taken as hostages, to be slain. He attempted to hold out in the fortress until he could get reinforcements, but his captains, who hankered after Cochin, and feared, with reason as events proved, to be caught by the winter, obliged him to withdraw to the ships. It was then too late, however, for these could not be taken across the bar in the south-western monsoon ; never-

\*According to Castanheda and Barros, but Correa says March 1st.



theless Albuquerque would not accept the peace terms offered him, as he was bent on possessing Goa sooner or later.

For three months the fleet had to lie at anchor near the mouth of the harbour, exposed to artillery on the banks and fire-ships, to thirst, hunger\* and sickness, caused by the privations endured. Mutiny was staved off and desertions prevented by the commander's dominating personality, but men called him a maniac and cursed his obstinacy in having clung to Goa until escape had been cut off. Even the captains rebelled when he caused a young knight, Ruy Dias, to be tried and hanged for an intrigue with one of the Moslem maidens he had on the flagship to send to the Queen of Portugal. To their protests he justly replied that good example was needed at such a crisis; he would not commute the sentence into one of beheadal, and deprived the protestors of their ships for breach of discipline.

It was a nerve-racking experience for all and especially for him, and the loss of Goa, following the repulse at Calicut, at the beginning of his career as Governor, would have broken a smaller man, but when the weather allowed him to sail away on August 4th with 300 sick men, he went with the purpose to return with the least possible delay. It was necessary to vindicate the Portuguese

\*Castanheda says that the food at first consisted of some rice and biscuits, and that even rats and the leather coverings of trunks were eaten. Correa confirms this.





superiority in arms on which their very existence in the East depended. Fresh ships now reached him from home, but he failed to persuade most of the captains to engage in another attempt,\* because, like the circumnavigator Magellan, they wished to load their vessels and make their profit. Moreover, the idea prevailed that Goa could not be permanently held, nevertheless, collecting 1,680 men, he was back before the place in November.† On St. Catherine's Day the Portuguese attacked and carried the stockade on the river front, entered the city gate with the fleeing foe and became masters of the place after some hours of street fighting, though the garrison of 9,000 men fought with the wonted courage of Turks.

He reported his achievement to the King in the following terms :—

“In the capture of Goa, destruction of their trenches and entry into the fortress, Our Lord did much for us, because He willed that we should complete the great deed and do it better than we could have asked. More than 300 Turks perished there, and from that place to the strait of Benastary and Gondaly, many dead men lay on the roads who had escaped with wounds and fell there, and many others were drowned crossing the river, and many horses. Afterwards I burnt the city and put all to the sword, and for four days on end your

\**Cartas* II, 6.

†*Cartas* I, 36.





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men bled them. Whenever we could find them, no Moor was spared, and they filled the mosques with them and set them on fire. I ordered the farmers and Brahmins to be spared. We counted and found that 6,000 souls of Moorish men and women had been slain and many of their archers died. Sir, it was a great deed, well fought and well finished, and besides Goa being so important a thing, this is the first time that vengeance has been taken in India for the treachery and villany the Moors have done to your Highness and your people. It will resound everywhere and the fear of it will bring great places to your obedience, without your having to conquer and take possession of them. They will do no more villany, being aware that they will have to pay for it promptly. Some Hindoo chiefs who had been robbed of their lands by the Turks, learning of the destruction of Goa, came down from the mountains where they had taken refuge and helped me and seized the fords and ways, and put to the sword all the Moors who escaped from the city and spared the life of none. I am not leaving a single Moorish tomb or building standing, and the men taken alive I have roasted. They caught a renegade here and I had him burnt.

“We took here some Moorish women, white and well looking, and some proper fellows wished to marry them and remain in the country, and asked me for the allowance. I married them to those and gave them the wedding allowance your Highness





ordered, and to each a horse and house and lands and cattle, as seemed to me in reason; they will be 450 souls. These captive women who marry are returning home and digging up their jewels or goods, and I am letting them and their husbands keep them. I am handing over the property and lands of the Mosque to the Church of St. Catherine, on whose day Our Lord gave us the victory on account of her merits, and I am building this Church in the large enclosure of the fortress.”\*

This conquest destroyed the league that had been formed by the rulers of Cambay, Goa, Calicut and the Turks to cast the Portuguese out of India, and convinced the native princes that they intended to stay as a ruling power and could not easily be expelled. Castanheda states that a Cochin Moor, on hearing the news, put his finger into his mouth, which they do when much astonished and said: “The Governor has now turned the key of India in his King’s favour.”† Goa became the seat of the Governors and Viceroys, the chief emporium of the Malabar coast, and for a century deserved its name of Golden.

After providing for the security and governance of the city and island and issuing a new coinage,‡ Albuquerque, in the spring of 1511, resolved to go

\**Cartas* I, 26.

†Book III, cap. 45.

‡For the coins of Albuquerque v. Teixeira de Aragão *Descrição das Moedas*, etc., III, 112, and Whiteway, p. 67.



in search of a Turkish fleet supposed to have reached Aden on its way to attack him. An offensive is often the best defence, but the winds did not favour a voyage to the Red Sea. He chose, therefore, to proceed instead to Malacca, the Singapore of that time, a rich Mohammedan city commanding the straits by which the products of the Far East reached the West; he had already put a stranglehold on the trade between India and the Red Sea, but aspired to secure an even richer commerce. Diogo Lopes de Sequeira had visited the place in 1509 and established a factory, but the jealousy of the Moslem merchants led to its destruction and the arrest of its occupants. In February, 1510, the factor, Ruy de Araujo, wrote\* to tell Albuquerque of the ill-treatment they had received, sent a description of the country from the military and commercial points of view and urged him to come with all his power; he decided to do so, though it involved a conflict with a colleague, disobedience to royal orders, and therefore a serious stretch of authority.†

In the same year Diogo Mendes de Vasconcellos had arrived in India with orders from King Manoel to conquer Malacca and govern it independently of Albuquerque, but as his small squadron was evidently

\* *Alguns Documentos da Torre do Tombo*, p. 220.

† As early as 1506 the King had ordered D. Francisco de Almeida to go to Malacca and build a fort, because there was talk of a Spanish fleet proceeding there, on the ground that it was not in the Portuguese sphere.



unequal to the task, the latter induced him to help in the recapture of Goa on the promise that he would be supplied with larger forces, when the monsoon served for the voyage to the Straits. Early in 1511, however, Albuquerque received news of the coming of the Rumes, and as he could spare no vessels for other expeditions, he offered Diogo Mendes certain advantageous alternatives. The latter refused them, saying he would go to Malacca with the ships he had, nor would he be convinced, when told that he would return with a "broken head" like Sequeira. A council of captains decided that he should hand over his vessels to Albuquerque, including those belonging to merchants,\* but he set sail, whereupon the Governor compelled him to return by force and hanged two of the pilots, who had played him the same trick at Ormuz, while Cernighi, the Florentine owner of one of the ships, only escaped with his life because he was a foreigner. Though he could, and did justify his treatment of Diogo Mendes by the plea of necessity, it greatly prejudiced him with the King and probably contributed to his subsequent recall.† Mendes might well think himself ill-used, and we cannot be surprised that the enemies of Albuquerque said

\*The India fleets consisted of King's ships and usually of others belonging to private traders. Albuquerque had sometimes to take and use these for his expeditions, which caused the owners loss and led to disputes.

†Lendas II. 171.





that he had never intended to allow another to win the honour of taking Malacca. Quite a different criticism might have fairly been levelled against him, for in going on such a distant journey, he assumed risks which only success could justify. Even when he found that the report of the coming of the Rumes lacked foundation, it was most imprudent to leave Goa so soon after its conquest, and incapacitate himself from returning for many months, that is to say, while the unfavourable monsoon lasted; but though the capital was nearly lost a second time, the maxim '*fortes fortuna juvat*' proved to be true in this case.

He left India on April 20th, 1511, with 18 ships carrying 800 white soldiers and 200 Malabar auxiliaries, and reaching Malacca on July 1st, demanded the release of his countrymen, and the restoration of the property seized, but the Sultan refused, until a treaty of peace had been signed; Albuquerque therefore sent word to the captives that they must bear their sufferings with patience. Araujo replied nobly that he would not wish the fleet to suffer an affront to secure his life, for he was bound to die for the service of God and the King. He advised, however, that if an attack was decided upon, it should be made at once, without wasting time in negotiations. After waiting a few days, Albuquerque burnt some vessels in the harbour belonging to Cambay merchants who were preventing a peace, and the captives were released.





He next demanded compensation for the stolen goods and a site for a fort, arguing that after what had happened to Sequeira, he dared not leave a factory unprotected. He soon found, however, that the Sultan only sought to temporise until the change of monsoon prevented his return to India.\* Therefore on July 24th, St. James's Day, he seized the bridge which united the two parts of the city, and formed the key of the situation, but evacuated it at nightfall because his men were too tired to fortify themselves there and had no food. Afterwards, as the Sultan remained obdurate, he called his captains together to obtain their consent to a fresh attack. Though the Portuguese already controlled the trade of Malabar, they had not been able to hinder the Arabs from carrying spices from Malacca direct to the Red Sea; but if the city could be taken, he argued that Cairo would be ruined and that no spices would reach Venice, except what her merchants bought in Portugal. Injury to the secular foe and profit for themselves were the arguments by which Albuquerque persuaded his subordinates, and on August 15th, after a hard struggle, the bridge was again taken and fortified, the neighbouring streets cleared and guns mounted on the principal mosque and on housetops. Intermittent fighting lasted for several days, but eventually the last defenders fled and the sack began. The plunder was enormous. Castanheda

\**Cartas* I, 79.



says that the share of King Manoel alone amounted to £95,000.

The capture by less than 1,000 men of a city of 100,000 inhabitants, defended by 30,000 Malays, a warrior race, and some thousands of guns, was an extraordinary feat of arms,\* but Albuquerque never recoiled before odds when he considered that the interests of his country were at stake, though he would not disembark his men, unless in a place he meant to hold with a fortress; he had always too few to waste one, and where honour was not at stake, he evinced a fatherly care for their lives. While building the fortress, which flew the Portuguese flag until its capture by the Dutch in 1641, he organised a native administration for the city, issued a new coinage and opened up relations with Java, Siam, Pegu and Cochin China. He also sent an exploring expedition to the Moluccas, in which Magellan, the circumnavigator, took part.

Leaving a strong squadron and an adequate garrison to guard the new conquest, he started for India in December on an old and leaky vessel, the *Flor de la Mar*.† It struck a shoal and sank, carrying with it the spoils of Malacca, including some bronze lions which he had reserved to adorn his tomb. Barros says that the Governor was bringing

\*The war elephants gave the Portuguese little trouble. It was enough to wound them in their trunks, to make them turn upon and overthrow their masters.

†It was so unseaworthy that no one would have embarked on it, had the Governor not set the example.





some diamond and ruby rings for the chronicler, Ruy de Pina, in the hope of obtaining a flattering mention of his achievements; the historian seems to regret that no one had remembered him in like manner. According to the *Commentarios*, the only articles saved were the presents from the King of Siam, a gold sword and crown and a ruby ring. To these Barros adds a little girl, daughter of one of his slaves, whom Albuquerque carried to the raft before his vessel went down.

On reaching Cochin in February, 1512, he found that his absence and reports of his death had given occasion to many disorders and abuses, practised or fomented by a clique of his enemies; moreover, Goa had been besieged and almost taken by the forces of Bijapur owing to the treason of some of the married men, who had been won over to the enemy through their native wives. There were even Portuguese officials who desired the abandonment of Goa in the interests of their pockets, and they had the support of the rulers of Cochin and Cananor, out of fear that trade would be diverted to the new capital. Lack of soldiers prevented Albuquerque from going north for months, but his return silenced his opponents, and he set to work to reform the administration.

The danger at Goa had passed, but the enemy was still established at Benastarim, on the westerly side of the island, in a strong fortress garrisoned by 6,000 Turks, defended by powerful artillery and



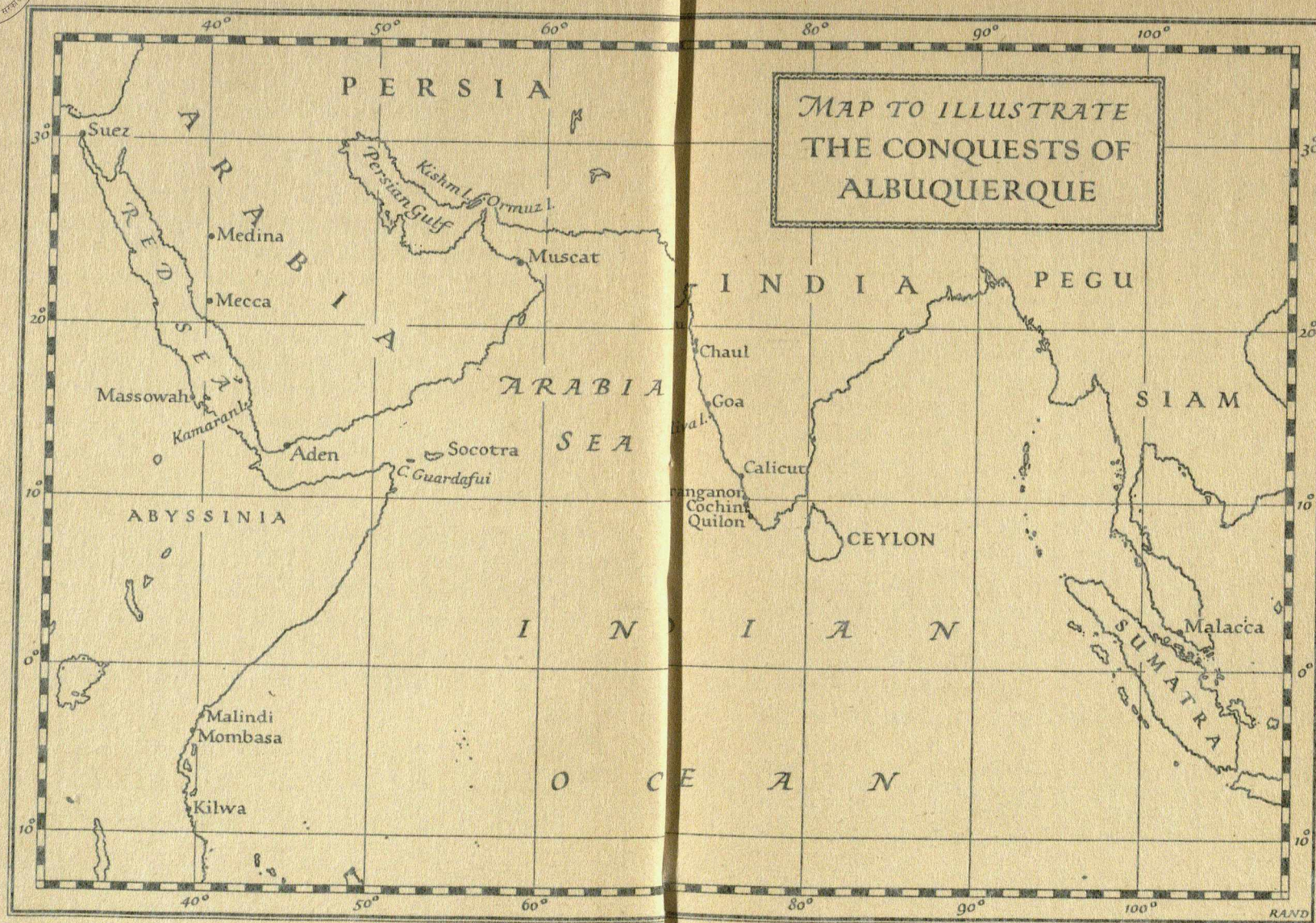


by two lines of beams crossing the river, which protected it from boat attack and secured communication with the mainland. In October, when large reinforcements had arrived from Portugal, Albuquerque proceeded there to reduce it. Assaults had to be made by water, to isolate the fort, and then by land, and in these both sides fought with conspicuous bravery. Ever ready to expose himself, Albuquerque nearly lost his life while directing the work of breaking down the stockade, and throughout the operations he gave proof of sound generalship and described them in a very detailed and graphic letter.\* Notwithstanding the protests of his captains, he granted the enemy easy terms of surrender to avoid further bloodshed, and was rewarded by the accusation that he had been bribed. This did him credit, but the mutilation of the renegades handed over forms a blot on his fame,† though he ordered it to mark “the treason and wickedness they had committed against God and the King.” The numbers he was able to bring into the field contributed to the success; he had with him 4,000 Portuguese, the largest force until then collected in India, including the trained bands he had organised that very autumn.

\**Cartas* I, 101.

†One of them, Fernão Lopes, became the first inhabitant of St. Helena, where, accompanied by a slave, he lived like a Robinson Crusoe. He went to Rome to obtain absolution from the Pope for his misdeeds, and returned to the island and was there when Barros wrote his history. He supplied passing ships with the poultry and vegetables he raised.







During the next few months the arrival of numerous envoys from Eastern rulers showed the prestige which the conquest and relief of Goa had conferred on the Portuguese, and preparations went on for the expedition to the Red Sea, planned years before by Albuquerque and often urged on him from home. In February, 1513, he left Goa with 24 vessels carrying 1,700 European and 1,000 native troops, and on March 25th arrived before Aden. To avoid the Portuguese patrol, Moslem merchants now used it in place of Jeddah to transship Indian goods. He proposed to stop this traffic, and when his terms were refused, endeavoured to take the town by escalade on Holy Saturday, but failed. After burning the ships in port, he abandoned the enterprise for the moment because the monsoon was ending,\* and he was anxious to get to Suez and attack the Egyptian fleet, or at least to Massowah and open up communications with Abyssinia, on whose help he counted in his crusade. But though he entered the Red Sea, contrary winds prevented him from doing either of these things, and he had to pass the summer heats at the barren island of Kamaran, and lost hundreds of men from sickness, caused by bad and insufficient food; nevertheless, the knowledge he acquired of

\**Cartas* I, 212 and cf. Castanheda, Book III, cap. 107. Sir Denison Ross, in the articles referred to, prints accounts of the attack on Aden, from the Arab historians, Hajji ad-Dabir and ad-Daybā. Albuquerque describes the expedition in great detail in his letter of December 4th, 1513. He discusses (inter alia) the reasons for the colour of the Red Sea.



the coasts and shoals proved useful to his successors ; moreover he put such fear into the Sultan of Egypt, who had never seen a hostile fleet in his waters, that he remained for many years on the defensive. It was, Albuquerque said, " the greatest blow in the house of Mohammed for a century,"\* and if he made no prizes there, this proved the vigilance of the Portuguese patrol of the Indian Ocean,† but on the way back to Goa, which was reached in September, he seized a large number of westward-bound Moslem ships which were held up by the monsoon.

Calicut had been a centre of opposition to the Portuguese since their arrival in India, and it had never been possible to come to an agreement with the Samuri ; his death now enabled Albuquerque to settle the dispute on his own terms. He felt no scruple in applying Eastern methods ; he had more than once advised the heir to obtain the throne by poison ; the suggestion was accepted and he was able to make a treaty with the new ruler and‡ erect a fortress, the strongest in India, on a site commanding the harbour, thus completing his commercial and military control of the Malabar coast. In his opinion, peace with Calicut had been hindered for fifteen years by the Rajas of Cochin

\**Cartas* I, 237.

†*Cartas* I, 242.

‡Negotiated and signed in his name by his nephew, D. Garcia de Noronha.



and Cananor through commercial rivalry and by the Portuguese factors in these places, who were in league with them.\* In a letter of November 30th, 1513, he advised D. Manoel to get out of this war; it was Calicut that called the Rumes to India, but with peace and a fortress there he would dominate it and obtain all the drugs and ginger and precious stones he wanted to load his ships.† In another letter to the King of the same date, he remarked : “ It is hard to suffer your officials and the persons you give credit to, who do all they can against your service.”‡ Their ignorance of trading matters amazed him,§ they were courtiers, he said, not men of business.\* Their letters which influenced and were even encouraged by the King, exasperated him, and he wrote bitterly to his master : “ If you look at your regulations and orders, you will find one contradicting another. Each year you change them.” This unstable policy helped the designs of Indian rulers who wished to get rid of the Portuguese, and it was due to men who only looked to their own profit.† “ They never take up arms to serve you ; dressed in Moorish shirts, they condemn honourable deeds, and at

\**Cartas* I, 128, and IV, 184.

†*Cartas* I, 130, 131.

‡*Cartas* I, 134.

§*Cartas* I, 154.

\**Cartas* I, 274.

†Castanheda confirms this.



their ease decide on military achievements and the governance of India.” . . . “They always begin their letters about your revenue, showing themselves full of grief at your expenses; they care not if they tell the truth or no, for they think you will attend to this matter with more energy than to any other, and by this dissimulation they help themselves to your property and rob and grow rich . . . and you put the blame on me and tell me not to interfere with your factories. . . . If you ask me why I do not punish them as they deserve, it is because I am never on shore or in command of your factories. Moreover, what can I say against Lourenço Moreno, who came with so much credit and authority from you ? ”\* Later on, referring to this man and others like him, he says : “ If I were not afraid of you, I would send home a dozen of these critics in a cage.”† It was a frank letter for a so-called absolute ruler to receive, but the Portuguese spoke plainly to their Kings until the time of Pombal, when safety consisted in subservience.

During his absence at Malacca, the officials who were opposed to the retention of Goa had urged its evacuation upon D. Manoel and Albuquerque was now instructed to ask for the written opinions of the leading men on the matter. It was a strange course for the King to take, since it proved his

\**Cartas* I, 157, 158.

†*Cartas* I, 188.



lack of confidence in the Governor, and the latter felt keenly the doubtless well-meant remark that he was not to allow his labours in the conquest to prejudice consideration of the matter. While obeying, he protested warmly and with truth that he was not a man to allow vanity to warp his judgment, for he had many other achievements to his credit. He was astonished at the order to discuss the abandonment of the city in a public council and told the King so, adding, "When I saw the letters on which you had founded your instructions, I was still more astonished that you had not burnt them."\*

Nevertheless, he submitted to the assembly the articles sent by the King containing the opposition view†; this was that the place was unhealthy and would be a burden, because its revenues, on which the Governor relied, could only be collected at great expense. Moreover, it would lead to continual war with the King of Bijapur whose chief port it was, while if it were restored, he would pay a tribute. By Albuquerque's influence the assembly voted that Goa should be held, and he embodied his views in a dispatch home.‡ He said that he

\**Carias* I, 260.

†In *Commentarios*, Part III, cap. 56.

‡In this letter, which is undated, Albuquerque says that the Marshal had orders to take Goa, so that the idea of its capture did not seemingly originate with him, as is generally supposed. As the letter is printed by his son, there is a presumption in favour of its authenticity, though it does not seem to be known from other sources.



took the city on royal instructions, and because it was the headquarters of a league to drive the Portuguese out of India. If the fleet from Egypt had come as expected, to join that which the Turks had ready there, he (the Governor) would have been vanquished, but its conquest had done more for the prestige of Portugal than all the fleets she had sent to India. The fortresses at Cochin and Cananor were not sufficient, for if a reverse happened at sea, they could not hold out against the native rulers in whose territory they were; a dominion founded on a navy alone was not lasting. If the revenues of Goa were properly farmed, they would cover a great part of the expense,\* while its surrender would be a blow to Portuguese credit and delight Mohammedans. When the result was in doubt, he wrote to his friend at Court, D. Martinho de Castello Branco : "If the King orders Goa to be given up, I will be the first to put a barrel of powder under the principal tower . . . but the man who leaves it, does not wish to stay in India nor to see peace there."†

The King accepted the decision of the captains, but Albuquerque's very frank language to D. Manoel and criticism of his opponents was used to discredit him in Lisbon. They had condemned

\*Castanheda says that the rents and duties on the horses imported covered the expenditure.

†*Cartas* I. 414.



his lofty ideas and extravagance, as they termed it accused him of peculation and immorality, and even suggested that he aspired to make himself an independent ruler at Goa, and, as we have seen, he did not spare them in his replies.

These calumnies and Albuquerque's angry protests probably led to his supersession, though as late as December, 1514, he received marks of royal favour and considered that his position had been strengthened thereby.\*

For nearly a year and a half after his return from the Red Sea, he had no fighting to do and could attend to matters of administration, but he neither rested nor let others rest, a sufficient reason, if there were no other, to make him disliked by officials. His days were so fully occupied with supervision and dispatch, which he often gave on horseback, that he had to dictate his reports at night, and the dawn often found him thus engaged.† These were not only addressed to D. Manoel, for he wrote also to the members of the Royal Council and the leading nobles. He received ambassadors from Pegu and Siam, who came to ask for confirmation of amity; he attempted at the King's order, but in vain, to induce the Raja of Cochin to embrace Christianity‡; he had galleys and caravels

\**Cartas* I, 361. At this time he had resolved to finish his life in India, notwithstanding the claim of relations and friends and his own inclination, which he counted as a great service to the King.

†*Cartas* I, 292.

‡*Cartas* I, 367. On this occasion Duarte Barbosa acted as interpreter.





constructed for service in the Straits, artillery founded and muskets made, and he declared that these last were turned out better than in Germany ; he supervised the exercises of his trained bands and himself carried a pike and gave prizes for the best shots among his matchlockmen. As the kingdoms of Vijayanagara and the Deccan depended on Arabian and Persian horses for their wars, he had already diverted this trade through Goa, on account of the duties it brought in and in the hope to compel the rulers of those states to seek his friendship ; we have a graphic account in his letters of the arrival of the horses and the entertainment of the merchants.\*

In February, 1515, he set out with 27 ships, 1,500 Portuguese and some native auxiliaries on what proved his last expedition. He had two failures to repair, two objects to accomplish ; the completion of the fortress at Ormuz begun in 1507, and the capture of Aden, the latter to be followed by a fresh invasion of the Red Sea, and crowned, perhaps, by the destruction of Mecca.

In a letter to the King he stated the reasons that drove him to make for Ormuz. Owing to the factor's carelessness there was no money in the treasury to pay his men, and as peace prevailed everywhere, nothing came in from prizes.† Since his disappointment in 1508, the old King of Ormuz

\**Cartas* I, 199.

†*Cartas* I, 345.



and Khwaja Atar had died, and the new monarch was a puppet in the hands of a Persian, Rais Hamid. In the hope of avoiding a conflict with Persia over the island, Albuquerque had previously sent an embassy to Shah Ismael, which was favourably received, but he was afraid to lose the place and decided on action. He demanded that the arrears of tribute should be paid and the half-finished fortress handed over to him; and this was agreed to. The King then asked to be delivered from his bondage, and as Albuquerque knew that Rais Hamid was working with the Shah against him, he had a double motive for extreme measures. He invited him to a meeting and at a sign his captains despatched the intriguer with their daggers, wounding each other in their haste.\* He next exacted a loan of £40,000 from the King† and the surrender of the artillery in the city, on the pretext that he needed guns to fight the Rumes. By these means he secured his hold on Ormuz, which the Portuguese maintained until 1621, when the English assisted the Persians to recapture it.‡

\*The body was at once stripped, and Correa tells us that he took the dead man's embroidered scarf and sold it for 20 *xerafins*, about £7.

†*Cartas I*, 371.

‡“The participation of the English in the attack upon Hormuz was clearly without diplomatic justification, for England and Spain were at peace when the pact with the Persians was made.”—*The Persian Gulf*, by Sir Arnold Wilson, p. 149, London, 1928. The chief excuse of the English for their action was that the Shah threatened to place an embargo on their trade, if they refused to join in the enterprise.





He supervised work on the fortress\* during the terrible summer heat in which hundreds of his men sickened† and died; he received embassies from the Shah and neighbouring rulers, so that his house seemed the court of a great king; men came from afar to see him and painters were sent to make his portrait; he was at the height of his fame, for he had defeated or cowed all enemies and peace reigned throughout the East. His countrymen were able to travel all over India by sea and land, and carry on their trade. But the hard work, exposure and anxieties of the last few years had reduced his strength, dysentery set in, and, realising that he could not live long, he made arrangements for the event of his death. On November 8th, after a touching farewell to his comrades, who loved him, he set out for Goa, and on the way heard that he had been superseded by an opponent and that the officials he had sent home to be punished had returned to occupy high posts. His anger rose against D. Manoel, and he cried: "Since I am in bad odour with the King for the sake of men and with men because of the King, let me take refuge in the Church," but he soon calmed

\*It still exists, with others, in the East and in Morocco, to show the excellence of Portuguese military architects and masons in the 15th and 16th centuries.

†The doctors called in to treat them persisted in charging for their work, though ordered not to do so, whereupon Albuquerque gave them a day's labour in carrying stones for the fortress and cured them of disobedience. This is what Correa says.





down and thanked God for the coming of a new Governor because he was near his end, though he left a request that his goods should not be put up to auction. "I do not wish my ragged old breeches to be seen," he said, but the petition was ignored by his successor. To D. Manoel he directed a last letter, full of dignity.

"Sire,

I am not writing to Your Highness with my own hand, because when I send this, I have a great rattle, which is a sign of death. Sire, I leave here my son in memory of me and leave him all my substance, which is little enough, but I leave him the bond of my services, which is very great; the affairs of India will speak for me and for themselves. I leave India with the chief places taken in your power, and nothing remaining to do there, except to close very well the mouth of the Strait; this is what Your Highness charged me with. Sire, I always advised you to go on freeing yourself from expenses, that you might preserve India from there. I beg Your Highness as a favour to remember all this, and to make my son great, and give him full satisfaction for my services. I put all my trust in the hands of Your Highness and the Queen. To both I recommend myself that you may make my affairs great, since I am ending in those of your service; and as for my pensions, which for the most part I bought, as Your Highness knows, I





will kiss your hands to confer them to my son.

Written at sea on the 6th day of December, 1515.

Creature and servant of Your Highness,

Afomso d alboquerque.”\*

He caused himself to be dressed in the habit of a Knight of St. James, and when the vessel reached Goa bar on December 15th, he stood up with a great effort, to look for the last time on the place he had won and made his capital. He then sent for his confessor and doctor, who brought him fresh red wine from Portugal. Early the next morning, having asked God to pardon his sins, he passed away while the Passion of Our Lord, for which he had great devotion, was being read to him. It was fitting that he should have died on shipboard where most of his six years as Governor had been spent. Men of all creeds mourned him, not excepting Moslems, and we read of no attempt on his life by them in retaliation for what they had suffered, though a Portuguese tried to poison him†; as for the Hindus, whom he had favoured, when they saw him brought on shore in a sitting posture, with his long beard reaching to the waist, and his eyes half open, they declared that he could not be dead, but that God, having need for him for some war, had sent for him.

\**Cartas* I, 380.

†*Correa, Lendas* II, 395.



Albuquerque was a man of medium stature, slight frame and fair complexion, with a long face and prominent nose. Gaspar Correa supplies the most authentic portrait, and there is a similar one, a rough woodcut, in Faria e Sousa, where he also has the points of his beard tied in a knot. The portrait in Barreto de Resende's MS. reproduced by Lord Stanley, is a variation of Correa's.

His temperament will have appeared in the foregoing pages. Imperious and irritable, he was a stern disciplinarian badly needed in India, but cruel and over-hasty in punishment; yet when his fits of anger passed, he at once sought to repair any injustice he had committed in deed or word. After assuming office he became more tolerant, and there are instances of his bearing personal insults even from common soldiers, when they had the excuse that their pay was in arrear; in one such case, having no money with him, he plucked some hairs from his beard for a native to pawn, and in due course redeemed the pledge. He responded to friendship and wrote to Duarte Galvão: "I like much your letters and sometimes let fall half a dozen tears on them."† Caring little for money, he disliked cupidity in others, and fearing prophetically its ill-effects on Portuguese rule, he did his best to prevent officials engaging in trade, and he forbade gambling, which he called certain perdition for the player. He was very liberal to the poor, and in

†*Cartas* I, 195.





language witty and sententious, and according to his son, he never swore; the latter also says that he was strict in his morals, and though the other historians are silent as to this, we know from Barros that he expelled the public sodomists from Ormuz.

For recreation he had little time, but when he could, he liked to witness dancing and hear music. He kept a generous table for his captains and many others, and ate to the sound of trumpets and kettledrums. On Sundays the native troops were marched up and played their musical instruments at dinner; nautch girls danced and sang, and the elephants, who worked in the city, were paraded and did their reverence. Like a true Portuguese, he valued ceremony and fine clothes. He had his guard of 60 halberdiers and dressed richly in black damask with a velvet cap; both Correa and Castanheda describe his habiliments with evident gusto. In some of his public acts he seems to have followed the maxim, unfairly attributed to the Jesuits, that the end justifies the means, but he was sincere when he told the King: "India is governed with truth and justice in your name in my time, and though the people here speak little truth to us, we must not treat them in this manner"\*; and he could honestly say, "Our enemies trust me so much, that without a safe conduct, they know that if they come where I am,

\**Cartas* I, 189.



I will keep it, as if it were signed by me. My word is greatly esteemed in India . . . they know I never did a base thing, nor broke my word nor safe conduct.”\*

In the brief space of six years he realised his great designs of conquest, except the erection of a fortress at Diu and the capture of Aden, which, in his expressive words was “to lock close the gate of the Red Sea”; and he was a true prophet when in a letter to D. Martinho de Castello Branco he said : “The King will not know me until he has another governor here.”† In fact D. Manoel realised his worth when too late, and on March 20th, 1516, before hearing of his death, wrote to instruct him to stay on, if he had taken Aden, or if the Sultan’s fleet had come to the Indian seas. He gave as his reason Albuquerque’s past victories and experience.‡ There was a general belief that as long as his bones rested in Goa, Portuguese dominion was safe, and half a century elapsed before they were allowed to be taken home.

The first empire built up by Europeans in the East in modern times was that of Portugal, and it has more importance in world history than its successors, because the Portuguese broke through that fear of unknown seas which kept Europe apart

\**Cartas* I, 172.

†*Cartas* I, 406.

‡*Cartas* III, 238. Correa gives a different version from hearsay.





from Asia, and set up a model which the others copied with some differences. They had in the beginning no idea of establishing a political dominion; it was forced upon them, when in the pursuit of legitimate trade, by the opposition they encountered, as happened afterwards to the Dutch and English. These nations, however, had only commercial objects in view, but the Portuguese were also crusaders; they sought to continue in the East that war against the Infidel which they had waged for centuries in the West and to spread the Gospel. Under the banner of the Quinas, which displayed the symbol of Redemption, they founded native Christian communities which still exist, like that in the territory of Goa, famous for its religious zeal, and in Japan a church, which, though destroyed by persecution, gave martyrs not inferior in heroism to those who adorned Rome under the Caesars. But this work of evangelisation, associated with the name of St. Francis Xavier,\* began only in the reign of John III; the time of King Manoel was one of empire building and trade, of which Albuquerque was the great instrument. His first task was to drive Mohammedans from enemy states off the Indian ocean, and next to regulate its commercial traffic for the benefit of his countrymen, an undertaking new to history.

\*Father G. Schurhammer, S.J., author of an erudite study on Mendes Pinto, is preparing a work on the Apostle of the Indies, which will be more complete than any of its predecessors.



His predecessors had required that every native vessel should carry a Portuguese passport ; he enforced this, but would give none for the Red Sea. On the land he rested his dominion on four bases :

1. Direct rule over the chief trading centres, Ormuz, Malacca and Goa, the last being the pivot of the whole.

2. Fortresses at strategic points on the East coast of Africa and in India, as naval bases, and to protect the factories.

3. Where fortresses were impracticable, suzerainty over native rulers, who paid tribute to the King of Portugal.

4. The colonisation of the territory of Goa, by means of marriages between Portuguese and native women.

He hoped by this measure\* to induce his countrymen to settle down and form a loyal population. As it was impossible to get white women to go to India, his scheme of mixed marriages seemed the only solution, and it was made practicable by the fact that the Portuguese had no objection to mixing their blood ; they had already done so at home with Africans brought home by the early navigators. He could not keep his officers in the East, but he was anxious to maintain there a body of artisans,

\*Professor Fortunato de Almeida thinks that the idea was not his, as has usually been supposed, and he cites the following words of Albuquerque in a letter to the King, of April 1st, 1512 : " Speaking to your Highness of the people here you order to marry, it seems to me a very great service to God and you." *Cartas* I, 56.





soldiers and especially gunners, for his power depended, next to personal valour, on artillery. After his final conquest of Goa, he married some hundreds of his men to natives, mostly widows of slain Moslems; he presided at the weddings and is said to have conducted the ceremony himself, and he gave dowries. There were many candidates for these unions, but according to his own statement he chose them carefully, only granting leave to men of good character and services. It seems, however, that at first they were convicts, which made the fidalgos laugh at him. They said that the Christian community he aimed at could never be established by such means; but they were wrong, as Barros points out, for in his day the first settlers of S. Thomé and later, we may add, those of Australia, belonged to the same class. Albuquerque had previously obtained the royal authority for these marriages, but he encountered considerable opposition from some of the clergy, and told the King in April, 1512, that this was the greatest persecution he had then to suffer. It was God's doing, he declared, that the Portuguese should want so much to marry and live in India, but the devil stirred up men to prevent it. "No one will recommend you to do anything but load pepper and rob right and left; . . . few will counsel you to make Christians, or do the things you order for God's service."\* Albuquerque did

\**Cartas* I, 56 and 57.





not live to see the triumph of his policy in this matter, but after his death, King Manoel by a decree of March 15th, 1518, ordered the vacant lands in the colony of Goa to be divided up among the married men and granted them freedom from all taxation, except church tithes.

The half-caste population which came into being tended to degenerate, and had not the virility of Europeans; the children, being spoiled by their parents, grew up with bad habits, and according to Correa, Albuquerque suggested that they should be sent to Portugal at the age of 12, and only return at 25. Yet some of these half-breeds were to distinguish themselves both in military and civil posts, and in view of the scanty population of Portugal and the calls on it from settlements in almost every quarter of the globe, her Eastern dominion could scarcely have been supported so long as it was in any other way.

The district of Goa contained a large native population, which could not be displaced and had to be governed. Albuquerque kept the city under his own authority, establishing a senate modelled on that of Lisbon, the first in the East, but he entrusted the administration of justice and finance to native officials. He respected Eastern customs, except in the case of the cruel practice of *sati*, which he abolished at once; it is worthy of remark that the English tolerated it for long after they had established an effective rule. He maintained the





ancient village communities, an integral part of Indian life, and after his death a register was compiled which served as a guide to future administrators. He made use of Hindu clerks, not only in the revenue department, but also in the factories, and established schools to educate native children and teach them Portuguese. In 1512 there were nearly 100 in the one at Cochin; "they are very sharp and take in well and quickly what they are taught, and they are all Christians."\* He also founded hospitals at Goa, Cochin and Cananor, and showed a paternal care for the sick, both European and Indian. The language of the conquerors became in time a *lingua franca* throughout the East, and though much corrupted, it is still spoken in many parts, especially in Ceylon and Malaya; their names are found everywhere. The Dutch who ruled for about as long as the Portuguese, left no such traces behind them.

Few men of his age were more disinterested in money matters than Albuquerque; for instance, he offered to the Royal family the rich presents he received from Oriental potentates, but he had a master who was a keen business man. King Manoel sought to obtain the riches of the East as cheaply as possible. He knew that they could not be had except by fighting for them, yet he continually pressed a policy of peace on Albuquerque,† probably because

\**Cartas* I, 45.

†*Cartas* I, 435, and letter of April 1st, 1512, *passim*.





war meant expense. The latter was too much of a statesman to desire war for its own sake, as witness his efforts to come to a settlement with Calicut ; yet he was obliged to reiterate that India could only be held by force,\* that the Portuguese would only be respected and esteemed, the King only get his profits, if strong fortresses were built and sufficient men and arms sent out to maintain them, but he had to humour D. Manoel, to set out the commercial advantages of his conquests, and to devote much of his attention to developing trade. Though himself a crusader and empire builder, commercial considerations chiefly dictated his seizures of Malacca and Ormuz, and he opened up relations with Ceylon to buy its cinnamon on the spot, instead of in India, to which it was shipped for sale and distribution. To avoid the export of coin from Portugal, he arranged with the Samuri that the produce of his territories should be exchanged for merchandise sent from Lisbon, and he advised the King to pay his soldiers in goods and not in cash. He said they would prefer it, and added that they wished to dress as well in India as at home. The Portuguese have always attached great importance to outward appearances, and the poor fidalgo who starved at home, but walked out with the appearance of a man of means, attended by servants whom he omitted to pay, was a national type.

\*Letters of November 4th, 1510, and April 1st, 1512.





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The King drew a net revenue of a million *cruzados* from the East,\* yet Albuquerque had to remind him more than once that the factories were empty of merchandise for sale,† that salaries could not be paid unless he received money or goods, that the number of soldiers was very inadequate to the demands on them.

In November, 1510, he informed the King that lack of soldiers had so far prevented him from carrying out his orders. If he held the fortresses with sailors, he reduced the crews of the ships, which did not carry a third of the number they should. There were then only 2,000 Portuguese in India; of these 300 were in Cochin and Cananor and 1,600 in the fleet‡; 400 men lacked swords, lances and armour. Three years later there had been a small increase in the effectives, but he said he wished they numbered 2,500; if he had 5,000, he could take the best things in India, though the enemy's arms and artillery had improved and were equal to those of the Portuguese.

In April, 1512, he said that if the King had supplied him with more men, he would not have

\**Cartas* I, 92.

†In a letter of Duarte Barbosa to the King, dated January 12th, 1513, he reported that as there was no merchandise or money to pay for ginger, the cargo for that year's vessels was supplied by the Rajah of Cananor, and it was to be paid for little by little. The letter contains a protest against the expenses incurred at Goa on men-at-arms and ships, and the writer considers that it would be better to stop enemy vessels leaving Calicut with spices for Mecca and Aden, and says that 12 or 13 left the previous year.

‡*Cartas* I, 421.





sent his soldiers into action twice at Malacca and Goa; he probably did not know, or remember, that a shortage of man power was already being felt at home. As early as 1506 there had been great difficulty in making up the crews of Tristão da Cunha's fleet, and the King had to release prisoners condemned to banishment elsewhere. In 1510 privileges were granted to those who would undertake to embark on the next year's fleet; in 1553, Camoens, who was in gaol for wounding a palace servant, was let out on his undertaking to go on service to India. Albuquerque's demands were very moderate considering his needs; in the same letter he asked for only 3,000 well-armed men, the instruments to construct forts and plenty of weapons. He estimated that the pay of this number would cost 120,000 *cruzados*; not much, in comparison to the million above mentioned. "See if the tree which gives this fruit yearly deserves to be well watered"; but how to do it was the problem D. Manoel had to face.

In the autumn of 1512 he obtained, after no undue delay, the needed ships and arms, and also the Swiss officers he had asked for in October, 1510; it took often two years to get a reply from home. They organised and drilled a body of 300 pikemen, 200 crossbowmen and as many matchlockmen.\* Albuquerque could rely on these, and no longer feared that military operations would be

\**Cartas* I, 202.





jeopardised by indiscipline, but drill was resented, and his successor abolished it. In the matter of goods, as he had stopped their transit from the Red Sea, the Indian markets required a supply from elsewhere, and he sent a list of his requirements. He explained how cloths should be packed to prevent damage on board, and on what part of the ship they ought to be loaded ; all merchandise came damaged, he said.\* He found it difficult to obtain such necessities as nails ; as soon as one came out of the forge, it was driven into the hull of a ship, and he never obtained all the articles he wanted, because there was not money to buy them. King Manoel was conducting a great commercial enterprise with insufficient capital ; indeed, Portugal was already in financial straits when she undertook the Indian adventure.† The enormous expense of fitting out the annual fleets, of substituting vessels sunk, and of the fortresses in Morocco, account for the King's embarrassments ;‡ in addition, he spent royally on buildings, embassies and pensions. Hence we find him urging Albuquerque to send him gold and make him rich, as though something could be had for nothing, ordering him to stop marriage allowances and cut off the increases of salary given

\**Cartas* I, 169.

†See the article of Fortunato de Almeida already referred to. The Portuguese public debt began in this reign, in 1500, by the sale of *padrões* (bonds) at 7 p.c.

‡Goes says that King Manoel had 300 ships for the service of the colonies in Asia, Africa and America.





by the Viceroy, and remarking that he wishes his men well paid, but at the cost of others.\*

We need not assume that the supplies Albuquerque required were withheld from ill-will, though he had enemies at Court who combated all he did. In India it was the same, but he was often noble enough not to name them, lest they should fall into disfavour; he contented himself with mentioning instances of their obstruction. He affirmed that he often withheld chastisement lest he should be reported as hard, and in one instance at least received the reply to punish, and that the King thought him very forbearing†; but the truth was that he had to close his eyes to many misdeeds because he required the services of their authors. His persistent foes in India were Gaspar Pereira,‡ the Secretary General, Antonio Real, *alcaide* and captain of Cochin, a veteran of the Italian wars, and Lourenço Moreno the factor, all of whom wrote their grievances to the King, who listened to them. The first, a vain fellow and a mischief maker, complained that the Governor did not confide in him, called him a liar and instructed his friends to steal and say nothing about it. He added that he kept a harem of 30 slave girls in Cochin with a eunuch to guard them.§ These

\**Cartas* I, 191, 193, 197, 273, and III, 215. Details of the pay of the men are given in *Cartas* I, 245-246, and in Whiteway, p. 72.

†*Cartas* I, 442.

‡Albuquerque's view of him is given in *Cartas* I, pp. 284-291.

§*Cartas* V, 283.



were young women whom the Governor housed, until he could marry them off, or send them home as presents to the Queen and other ladies. Antonio Real also spoke of this harem, observing that Mohammed did not lead such a life, and he repeated the charge of robbery, to which he added ill-treatment of the soldiers.\* Lourenço Moreno joined in the chorus, for the three, though they occasionally fell out, could combine against their master and they sought to justify all they said by a declared regard for the royal service.† The anger of Real and Moreno is easy to explain; they hated Albuquerque for his sternness in enforcing the King's orders; moreover, the profits of the captain and factor of Cochin diminished when Goa became the capital. They dared not betray themselves by alluding to this, but their colleague, Pereira, was not afraid to say that if business was moved from Cochin, and the Governor remained, India would be lost.‡

In view of the calumnies of which he was the victim, Albuquerque might well declare that the nature of the Portuguese was to be envious and

\*In view of the King's trust in Real, Albuquerque sarcastically remarked to D. Manoel that he ought to recommend him to Real, rather than Real to him. *Cartas* I, 310. This is one more instance of his frankness. Elsewhere, Albuquerque complains that the King never writes to soldiers, nor does he tell them to write to him. All his favours are for the civilians of Cochin and Cananor, Real, Moreno and Pereira and others of low condition. The rewards are also for them and not for the fighters. *Cartas* I, 407.

†*Cartas* III, 337 and 380, and V, 282.

‡*Cartas* V 282.





detractors, one of the other. An incident at Malacca is worth quoting in this connection. Albuquerque had ordered a stone to be engraved with a list of those who had distinguished themselves in the capture of the city, and built into the fort. Those whose names did not appear, murmured and declared that they would not allow him to make more of some than of others; whereupon he caused the stone to be placed with the names inward, and on the side facing outwards he inscribed the verse of David : "Lapidem quem reprovaverunt edificantes."

Perhaps the greatest difficulty he had to contend with was in finance. He was compelled to live from hand to mouth, for contrary to his expectations and assurances to the King, Portuguese dominion was not self-supporting, though it might have become so, had he lived and governed longer, for on September 22nd, 1515, three months before his death, he wrote that Ormuz would meet its expenses, and give a surplus for other places, Goa would do the same and Malacca had already helped Cochin.\* The fault did not lie with him, but if with persons and not with the system, or lack of system, the officials deserved blame; nearly all were incompetent and many dishonest.

Conditions were not sufficiently settled to allow missionary enterprise to enter into the policy of Albuquerque, nor was he supplied with priests

\**Carias* I, 378.





sufficient for the work; the Franciscan friars who came from Portugal could do little more than attend to the spiritual needs of Europeans, yet something was accomplished. In December, 1514, the native Christian community at Cochin numbered 1,864 persons with 6,000 in the neighbourhood. The Governor was a fervent Christian, like his master, who founded the Jeronymos\* on the banks of the Tagus as a thanksgiving for the discovery of India, and gave splendid editions of religious books to the Negus of Abyssinia, then known as Prester John, and other African rulers. He encouraged or rewarded conversions, which were usually of humble folk†, by gifts of wearing apparel and money, built churches at Goa and Malacca, gave the property of mosques for their support, and saw that they were supplied with the necessities for divine worship. We find him asking for a picture of the Annunciation for Malacca, and some new missals to supply those that were torn; he even suggested that an organ should be sent out. He did not overlook small matters. "If I do not go into details myself," he declared, "nothing goes ahead."‡ About two thousand signed orders, printed in the *Cartas*, show

\*D. Manoel was a great builder; at the end of his chronicle of the King, Goes sets down a list of his foundations. His personal piety appeared in external acts. He fasted on bread and water every Friday, and on the last three days of Holy Week did not go to bed, but slept on the floor of the Royal Chapel. This tradition continued into the 17th century.

†*Cartas*, Vols. 4, 5, 6 *passim*.

‡*Cartas* I, 271.





that he kept his secretaries very busy and attended to the most diverse matters. We have *mandados* : to provide flags for a galley, the cloth for which was to be cut in the factor's presence, material to bind up the wounded feet of an elephant and food for one of these animals and for a panther on their voyage to Portugal ; to reward two native gatekeepers at Goa who had refused to admit a Portuguese at night, to remit a fine imposed on a man who had omitted to teach his slave the *Pater noster* and *Ave Maria* and to send a pipe of very good wine to the ambassador of the King of Ormuz. Most of the orders refer to payments in money and kind for services rendered, and the recipients include niggers who had carried oyster shells to make mortar and Indians who brought in the heads of Moors they had slain.

When we read of the naval and military successes achieved under his leadership by a few small ships and usually less than 2,000 Europeans, against forces many times that number, it is natural to enquire how they could have been obtained, especially as some of his foes, like the Turks were first-rate soldiers.\* The answer is to be found

\*Whiteway belittles the foes the Portuguese had to meet, and therefore diminishes the credit they deserve for their victories. He says (op cit p. 12), "The Portuguese were never opposed to any of the races who now furnish the recruits for the Indian fighting army," and (p. 35) "None of the battles, however, described by the Portuguese historians . . . sound much more than magnified street brawls." In reply to the first observation, it is enough to say that the Portuguese had to meet Turks in the service of native rulers, to the second that the capture of Malacca and the relief of Benastarim were big military operations, and the former a very complicated and difficult one.



in the moral superiority of the white man over the brown, the self-confidence and reckless valour of the *conquistadores*, in their armour, stouter vessels and better, though not so numerous, artillery. In a sea fight the odds were certainly in favour of the Portuguese. Their ships, as Morse Stephens remarks, were built for the long and perilous voyage round the Cape, while those their enemies employed had generally been designed for crossing the Indian Ocean with a favourable wind, and for navigating the placid waters of the Red Sea and Persian Gulf. Moreover, to quote Longworth Dames, the Portuguese were better sailors than the Turks; they felt at home in a storm in the Indian Ocean, while the Turks, who had been trained in the Mediterranean, and relied more on galleys than on sailing ships, often suffered severely during the monsoons. As a rule, too, the Portuguese guns were skilfully served. On land, though the combatants were more evenly matched, the matchlock and cross-bow, when the fighting was at long range, did more execution than the bow, and at close quarters a few Portuguese knights, especially if mounted, by their élan, the fear they caused, and their sword work and protective armour, could rout large bodies of native foot soldiers. The reverses Albuquerque met with were due to lack of numbers, or to lack of discipline and mutual jealousies, always Portuguese defects. The first led to the loss of Goa, the second to the disaster at Calicut,





and the failure before Aden. In this case the scaling ladders were too few and too short, and they broke owing to the quantity of men who used them, each wishing to be first ; while, according to Castanheda, rivalries between the captains converted a probable victory into a defeat. Albuquerque had much trouble on the score of indiscipline. The men would follow their officers, but the latter often took their own course, and the bravest were the most difficult to deal with.\*

Lastly and chiefly, Albuquerque's success must be attributed to his own personality. When he became Governor of India, he was relatively an old man for that time and those climates, but his lofty vision was accompanied by a commanding character and by a tenacity of purpose which few leaders have possessed ; he had a genius for civil administration as well as for war, while in diplomacy he could meet Orientals with their own weapons. In the first he devised methods which were copied by his successors and are still employed in British India. In the second, his achievements recorded here speak for themselves ; while in the third, he cunningly turned the rivalries of native rulers to his own advantage and acted on the maxim : *divide et impera*. If he had lived a few years longer, he would probably have

\*Zin-ud Din (op. cit, p. 48) however, considers that notwithstanding their great distance from their rulers, the Portuguese did not disobey their captains, and says though there were dissensions among them, it was never heard that one of their captains had been assassinated through envy of power. Hence in his opinion, their military successes, in spite of their small numbers.





realised his ambition to capture Aden and build a fortress at Diu. The last was accomplished after his death, and the island still flies the Portuguese flag. But in his enthusiasm he dreamt of even greater things, and in the struggle with Islam he urged on the King a combined attack on the Turks, in the Mediterranean and the Red Sea at the same time.\* He proposed, with the help of the Abyssinians to raid and burn Meccat; and lastly, he talked, as men had talked before, of destroying the fertility of Egypt, and therefore the power of its Sultan, by diverting the Nile into the Red Sea.†

The empire he founded consisted of the overlordship of the ocean, the shores of which were dotted with fortresses in a huge semi-circle of 15,000 miles from the coast of Natal to the Moluccas. His successors did but develop the policy he had laid down. In a century-and-a-half this dominion crumbled.§ Portugal had not the resources to maintain her monopoly against the attack of other European powers with larger populations and fleets, but that she should have held it as long against the Mohammedan world is, in the words of Sir William Hunter, “a lasting glory to her and Christendom,” and

\**Cartas* I, 196.

†*Cartas* I, 282 and 401.

‡*Cartas* I, 401.

§What is left to Portugal in Asia consists of the territory of Goa containing 1,089 square miles, the much smaller one of Damaun, the island of Diu, all in India, Macau in South China and half the island of Timor in Australasia.





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with Admiral Ballard\* we may say that the name of Albuquerque is still the greatest, not only in the history of the Portuguese in the East, but in the annals of the Indian Ocean.

And while we pay him our homage, let us not forget his captains and men. To quote again from Hunter: "The achievements of the Portuguese in the East would have done credit to a great power. When carried out by a small kingdom they read like a romance." We all know, however, that truth is stranger than fiction.

\*There are unfortunately many mistakes of fact in his *Rulers of the Indian Ocean*.

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