CHAPTER II

Iraq and India: from the beginning of the European Colonialism in Asia to the Beginning of Modernization of Iraq: 1498 - 1869.

The Greeks might have been the first source of information about 'Iraq' to the Europeans. The earliest Greek historian, Herodotus (born 480 B.C.), whose works are fully preserved, visited Mesopotamia. He saw in Babylon the Hanging Gardens of Nebuchadnezzar (604-561 B.C.) which were considered by the Greeks as one of the Seven Wonders of the 'ancient world'. Depending on a Greek guidebook, Antipater of Sidon listed them in the 100's B.C. as follows: (1) Pyramid of Egypt (2) Hanging Gardens of Babylon, (3) Statue of Jupiter or Zeus, at Olympia, (4) Temple of Diana at Ephesus (5) Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, (6) Colossus of Rhodes, and (7) Pharos.

Xenophon (434? - 355? B.C.) was a Greek historian and essayest, and a disciple of Socrates. He joined the "Ten Thousand" Greek mercenaries' expedition of Cyrus the Younger.

against his brother Artaxerxes II of Persia and fought the battle of Cunaxa in 401 B.C. in which Cyrus was defeated and killed. After the murder by Persians of the Greek commanders, Xenophon was chosen as one of the leaders of the heroic retreat of the "Ten Thousand" from Mesopotamia to the Black Sea. He left detailed accounts of what he had seen in the valley of the two rivers. "The episode of Xenophon and the Ten Thousand is well known..." as every schoolboy used to know from Xenophon's history...". Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.) defeated the Persian army under Darius III in the battle of Gaugamela (also called the battle of Arbela, after the town 60 mi. away,) and died in June 323 B.C. in Babylon. Seleucus, I, an able general of Alexander the Great, received Babylonia in the new partition of the empire in 312 B.C., and founded Seleucia on the Tigris below modern Baghdad. In 326 B.C. a Greek named Nearchus sailed from the Indus to the Euphrates. His voyage, which owed its conception to the genius of Alexander, has been described as 'the first event of general importance to mankind in the history of navigation'. Its significance consisted in the fact that it opened a communication between Europe and the most distant countries of Asia. It was the source and origin of the Portuguese exploration of the

   d. Columbia Encyclopedia, op. cit., p.2363

* Now : Arbil, in Iraq.


5. Ibid, p. 1924.
Indian Ocean in the fifteenth century, and so the indirect cause of British establishment in India. Furthermore, it proved once and for all the importance of the Persian Gulf in the great world-commercial system of the future.

Then came the Romans: The Parthians, who built a new capital, Ctesiphon, on the Tigris immediately below the then obscure village of Baghdad, suffered from the perpetual menace of Roman advance. The Romans aspired to succeed to the empire of Alexander. War between Romans and Parthians broke out in 53 B.C. Julius Caesar planned a campaign of revenge in the East, but his murder prevented it. Pompey the Great tried again in 36 B.C., but lost a campaign in Kurdistan. During the war of 113-7 A.D., Emperor Tarjan sailed down the Euphrates to Babylon and seized Ctesiphon. Under Marcus Aurelius another Roman Army entered Iraq in 162 A.D. Further wars between Ctesiphon and Rome were waged in 195-202, and in 216-7 A.D. And at the time of Emperor Heraclius, 610-641 A.D., the Romans attacked the Sassanian Iranians in Iraq. "Hellenism had thrown bridges between Baghdad and Constantinople at a time when they were centres of the civilized world."

Until late in the Mesolithic (Middle Stone) Age, Britain

8. Iraq Directory, The-, Published by Dangoor's Printing and Publishing House, under the supervision of the Ministry of Interior, Baghdad, 1936, p.56.
formed part of the continental landmass. The cutting off of the landbridge occurred between 6000 and 5000 B.C. What was then separated from the European continent came to be known later as the British Islands. When the inhabitants of these Islands embraced Christianity, which in the period between 500 and 1500 A.D. penetrated the Romance, Celtic, Germanic, and Slavic Peoples and established the medieval Roman Catholic culture in the West, were confronted with the history of the Old Testament which contains many references to the Valley of the Tigris and Euphrates. For instance, Adam and Eve in the Judaic-Christian tradition, and in the Islamic tradition derived therefrom, are the progenitors of the human race. Before their fall, Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden; the place that God made for them to live in, which was watered by a river came from Eden, or the plain ..., and from thence it was parted and became four heads... The last two are identified, without dissent, with the Tigris and Euphrates..." and "the garden lay somewhere in southern Mesopotamia...". The Old Testament "constantly affirms that Israel's existence and history as a nation, and her religion as a church, were wholly the result of divine revelation. God

11. Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 462
14. Ibid., p.333
had revealed Himself in covenant to Abraham, as his God...”.

Abraham, ancestor of the Israelites and neighbouring peoples,
was a citizen of Ur which was at the junction of the Tigris
and Euphrates. He journeyed westward at the call of God to
a new land and settled in Palestine. In short: “Our
understanding of the early Hebrew writings would be woefully
inadequate without a knowledge of Babylonian records.”

THE BACKGROUND : THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISCOVERIES - TRADE -
STRUGGLE - AGGRESSION - COLONIALISM :

Shah Abbas the Great invaded Iraq in 1621 and the
Persian rule lasted for 17 years (1621 - 1638). It was about
this time that a succession of well-known European travellers
began to visit Iraq, and we consequently have a fair picture
of Baghdad at one of its record low-levels. Rauwolff, Balbi,
John Newbery, Barrett and John Eldred each told his story.
Some of them, like the Pope, were not too certain even of the
correct name of Baghdad, and referred to it as 'Babilon'.
Almost all were agreed upon the traveller's liability to equal
importunities from highway robbers and customs officials. As a

15. Bible Commentary, The New-, Revised, Edited by: D.
Guthrie, et al., Inter-Varsity Press, G.B., Reprinted 1976,
p.12.
17. Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia And Fact-Index, Chicago,
19. Longrigg and Stoakes : op. cit., p.70
20. Lloyd, Seton : Twin Rivers, A Brief History of Iraq from
the Earliest Times to the Present Day, Oxford University
case of good humor about "... were not too certain even of the correct name(s)". Sir Reader Bullard mentions that an Englishman saw in India a Muharram procession where a group of Muslims were shouting, 'Hasan, Hussain- the names of the two grandsons of the Prophet', and he thought that they were calling, 'Hubson, Jubson'. In Bombay Archives the name of Basra, the sole port of Iraq, was spelt as 'Bussorah' in the (Documents of Bussorah Factory Diaries, 1763-1777) and (Documents of Bussorah Residency Diaries, 1798-1811).

From 1534 to the end of the First World War, Iraq was to form part of the Ottoman Empire for nearly four centuries. It was during this period that the keen interest of the Britishers and (British India) in the country grew gradually and steadily. Therefore, what was happening in the Persian Gulf and in the capital of the Ottoman Empire at that time, had a direct impact on Iraq. There were rivalries of Europeans - Portuguese, Dutch, British, French - for a position in the Persian Gulf, but in the long run the British dominated the scene despite the fact that when Europe recommenced trade with the East, England lagged behind other European countries. Not before the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, there was a British Ambassador to the Sublime Porte, nor was there a British Consul either in Basra or in Baghdad.

22. Longrigg and Stoakes : op. cit., p.73.
The most important consideration in the history of the Arab countries is the fact that geography has constituted them a corridor. The countries of Southern Asia (which we now call Persia, Pakistan, India, Burma, Thailand, Malaya), even to China and the islands of the Indonesian Archipelago—all this vast extent of territory has always used the Indian Ocean as its highway for trade, just as the Mediterranean was the Roman Channel of communication. These countries were cut off from the north by the Himalayas, the mountains of Tibet and the deserts of Mongolia. In any case, Russia and Siberia in early days were savage countries with which trade was impossible. The only other civilized and luxurious area of the world, until the last two centuries, was the Mediterranean basin and Western Europe. Obviously the products of the Indian Ocean countries differed entirely from those of the Mediterranean basin and consequently the two areas wished to exchange their commodities. The present Arabic-speaking countries and the two narrow seas—the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf—formed the natural, and indeed the only, corridor through which this trade could pass.

This natural corridor is confined to Egypt, the Fertile Crescent, the Peninsula of Arabia and the two narrow seas. On the North, it is shut in by the Taurus Mountains in what is now Turkey, and on the east by the mountains of Persia. On the West, it is closed in by the great desert of Sahara, which begins immediately west of the Nile. From the present frontier of Persia to the west bank of the Nile, the corridor is approximately
Only when the strong Tudor dynasty was firmly established did England begin to assert herself in foreign trade. Meanwhile, the greater part of the Eastern trade was in the hands of Venice, which had established depots all over the Middle East, where her merchants purchased the Oriental goods which arrived through the corridor. Such spices and Eastern commodities as were used in England reached here in Venetian galleys from the eastern Mediterranean. One reason for the backwardness of British navigation in those days was the fact that her Continental rivals were subsidized by their governments, while the English left everything to unassisted private enterprise.

In the early eighteenth century European political influence in the Middle East and India was still slight. The Ottoman, Persian and Mogul Empires were still relatively strong; and though Western Europe was now well in advance of the stagnating East in technical skill and in the quality of its manufactures, its traders still lived in these lands as clients, dependent on the goodwill of the Oriental rulers and officials. Their insecurity led them to make common cause among themselves, and even the outbreak of a general war in Europe did not greatly affect their mutual relations.

In 1696, for example, the English chaplain at Aleppo and

his companions travelling to Jerusalem met with hospitable
treatment from French merchants on their journey and at
their destination, even though their countries were at war; and
during the same war British and Dutch merchants in the
Persian Gulf made an agreement with the French merchants
for their mutual protection against the nuisance of piracy.

However, with conditions in the Oriental empires
becoming more anarchic, local Oriental rulers increasingly
courted the assistance of the European traders with their
gold, their garrisons and naval units, and it was not long
before the Europeans began to enter into the complexities
of Oriental political intrigue and turn it to their own
advantage. In this way the strategic rivalries of the
European Powers at home were at length reproduced in the
East. Since the Mogul Empire was the most advanced in decay,
it was there that the English and French trading companies
first came into conflict. As late as the outbreak in Europe
of the War of Jenkins Ear in 1739, indeed, the French Company
was still anxious that it and the British Company should
continue to observe a strict neutrality. Hostilities however
broke out between them in 1745, and there followed sixteen
years of fierce Anglo-French struggle with each company using
Indian rulers as allies. By 1761, the French hopes of empire
had been shattered and the British East India Company was on
the way to becoming the supreme authority over large parts
Ahmad Ibn Majid of Basra directed Vasco da Gama to the sea route to India. The sea route from Europe to India was discovered by the Arabs and not by the Portuguese navigator Vasco De Gama, as is widely believed. The Soviet scholar T.A. Shumovsky says Vasco De Gama managed to reach India only with the help of his Arab navigator and seafarer Ahmed Ibn-Majid. Whether it is true or not, the historical fact remains that in 1498 the Portuguese rounded the Cape of Good Hope, under Vasco de Gama, and reached the coast of India. Thereafter they explored the seas of Asia in every direction, and established themselves in the East Indies, in the Persian Gulf and on the east coast of Africa. England, under Henry VIII, found herself shut out from overseas commerce, the Pope having granted monopolies in America and the East Indies respectively to Spain and Portugal. Unable to challenge the naval power of either of these countries, the English conceived the idea of finding a northern passage to China round the north of either the American or the Asian continents. Another consideration which seemed to make these northern routes more promising was the fact that Britain's principal export was

27. Azzawi, Advocate Abbas al-: Iraq between two Occupations, Vol.4, the first Ottoman period, 1534-1638, in Arabic, Baghdad, 1949, pp. 84, 94.
woollens. There was little demand for woollen garments in the hot countries extending from North Africa and the Middle East to India. It was hoped that a route round the north of Russia to China would provide markets for woollens, and return cargoes of spices and Oriental goods. Many attempts to reach China by the north-west or the north-east passages all ended in failure.

In 1546 Anthony Jenkinson left England to explore the Levant. In 1553 he was granted an interview in Aleppo with the Turkish sultan, Suleiman the Magnificent, and procured from him a permit to trade in the Turkish dominions. The Eastern trade still came to some extent through the Arabian corridor by the old routes, either up the Euphrates valley and across the desert to Aleppo or by the Red Sea and through Egypt to Alexandria. Venetian and Genoese merchants were established on the Levant coast and in Egypt, to receive this Oriental merchandise. The Portuguese, by establishing themselves in India and the Persian Gulf, had intercepted a great part of the trade before it entered the corridor, and diverted it in their own ships round the Cape. The picture of England unable to trade with the East because a rival power was able to close the Arabian corridor is one which has haunted her ever since.

Before the accession of Queen Elizabeth the English had begun to chafe at the Portuguese monopoly of the Far Eastern trade. The population was increasing. The manufacture of woollen cloth was outstripping the demands of the home market; but not yet feeling strong enough to challenge the Portuguese by attempting the Cape Route, the English tried to by-pass it by seeking a North-East Passage round northern Europe to the Far East, and in 1553 founded the Muscovy Company for this purpose. The advocates of the scheme asserted with confidence that in Cathay (China) with its cool climate, its teeming and (it was believed) wealthy population a lucrative market for English woollens would certainly be found; while, once the dangers of the northern ice had been passed, it would be comparatively easy matter to proceed from Cathay to the Moluccas, and there lade for the return voyage the spices so much in demand in the European markets. The climatic difficulties of the North-East Passage frustrated these hopes. In 1557, an English fleet sailed to Archangel in North Russia carrying Antony Jenkinson, commander of the Muscovy Company's fleet. Proceeding by land, he reached Moscow on 6th December. He travelled from Moscow down the Volga and crossed the Caspian Sea, which he arrived at in April 1558, pushing to Bokhara where he hoped to find caravans of merchandise from China, and to establish trade-relations

* Moluccas: or Spice Islands: Island group, E Indonesia, between Celebes and W. Irian (New Guinea).
with the Persian capital at Ispahan in 1561. Jenkinson's hopes were disappointed, but the idea was then conceived of seeking for Oriental goods in Persia, and transporting them to England by the Caspian, Moscow, and Archangel. This roundabout route was, however, abandoned twenty years later owing to the founding of the Levant Company and to the anarchy which was already threatening Persia.

In 1583 four English travellers set out on an exploratory journey from Aleppo to Malacca via Baghdad and the Persian Gulf.

In 1591, the year in which the sole survivor of this expedition arrived in England, three English ships were sent via the Cape to the Far East on a voyage of reconnaissance, the Portuguese power being now in decline.

Many years, much money and some English lives were wasted during the reign of Queen Mary and the early part of that of Queen Elizabeth I, in endeavours to find the north-east and the north-west passages, or to trade across Russia and Persia overland from Archangel. Eventually, in 1580, Sir Francis Drake passed through the Straits of Magellan, crossed the Pacific Ocean to the Moluccas, and reached England by the Cape route, after circumnavigating the globe.

Such adventurers as Sir Francis Drake were not the most

* Malacca : SW Malaya (Malaysia), near the southern tip of Malay Peninsula.
29. a. Glubb : Ibid., p.25
suitable agents for the merchants of London. The latter
decided to make an effort to establish English merchants in
Turkey and the Middle East, the trade of which had hitherto
been monopolized by the Venetians, the Genoese and the
French.

After the death of Suleiman the Magnificent, the permit
secured by Jenkinson to trade in the Turkish dominions was
revoked, and a new permit had to be procured because the
effect of any permit ends with the end of reign of the Sultan
who granted it. This event urged a group of London's merchants
to send an envoy to Istanbul in order to pave the way for
dispatching an official commercial mission. The first English
Envoy, William Horborne, to the Sublime Porte left England
in 1578, and in October 1578, obtained a grant of trade
privileges from Sultan Murad III in Constantinople. He
returned back with a letter from the Sultan to Queen Elizabeth
which contained sufficient assurances that the English
merchants shall be allowed to enter the Ottoman dominions
and trade with their peoples in accordance with the same
conditions enjoyed by the French, Venetians, and others. On
the basis of the Sultan's letter to Queen Elizabeth, a
charter was granted by Her to the Levant Company in 1581,
"The Governor and Company of Merchants of the Levant".
The grant included the right to trade "by lande, through
the countries of the sayde Grand Signor, into and from the
East Indies". With the naval command of the Indian Ocean

* The Grand Signor: The Sultan of Turkey.
still in the hands of the Portuguese, the English hoped to be able to trade overland through Persia to India. The Levant Company continued to be into existence till 1825, but in its last days it became a shadow of the original. In 1605 the Company was faced with fierce opposition when it sought the extension of its charter, and expansion of its activities' scope to include some political acts. One of the reasons on which the Company based its demands was that it could convince the Sublime Porte to reject a Spanish suggestion of a non-aggression pact between Turkey and Spain, so that the latter can withdraw its army stationed on the borders of the former, and deploy it against the British in the War of Armada in 1588.

Doubtless, there was no definite demarcation between the commercial and political activities of the Company. The Ambassador was to supervise the Consuls' performance of their commercial and administrative tasks. Although he was officially the diplomatic representative of the Crown to the Sublime Porte, the Company was responsible for his emoluments, and for the salaries to be paid to the Consuls whom he appoints. The opposition to the aforementioned demands of the Company resulted in considering the Ambassador as a diplomatic incumbent and, therefore, the Government has to appoint him and bear the expenditure of his office. As for the Consuls,
they remained as employees of the Company. The members of this Levant Company laid down later on the foundation of the British East India Company which enabled the English trade to penetrate the Middle East via the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf.

The Levant Company exports to the Middle East consisted of broad-cloth, kerseys, rabbit skins, tin, quick-silver and amber, while return cargoes were made up of spices, pepper, drugs, galls, indigo, silk, cotton and linens. The policy of the Levant Company, which was content to secure a high rate of profit on a comparatively small volume of sales, was partly responsible for the sharp decline in English trade in favour of France. French trade with the Levant increased with extraordinary rapidity, and on the eve of the French Revolution was three times as great as the volume of English trade to those countries. Between 1778 and 1791 the British Levant Company was compelled to close down its four factories in Syria, leaving the French in full possession of the trade. Politically also France was acknowledged by the Sultan as protector of all the Catholics within his Empire.

It was only when England decided to challenge her rivals by using the Cape route that she embarked upon the venture which was to lead to the Indian Empire. The Charter

31. a. Glubb : Ibid., p.25
of the East India Company - "The Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East Indies" - was drawn up in December 1600. A long struggle with Portugal, and then Holland, was to ensue before Britain eventually secured the lion's share of the Eastern trade. It may be noted that all these troubles were due to the fact that the Spaniards and the Portuguese sought monopolies, and endeavoured to prevent any European rival from trading with the East.

After the British East India Company established its first factory on the mainland of India at Surat, the greater part of the Eastern trade was to be carried in its fleets for more than two hundred and fifty years. But even if the bulk of the trade now went round the Cape, the Arab corridor remained of considerable importance. Particularly during the Napoleonic wars and throughout the nineteenth century, the East India Company employed the overland route through Egypt for the carriage of its mail, and to a lesser extent for the transfer of officials and officers, whether on posting or on leave. The Company maintained an agent in Baghdad who, at one time, was responsible for a trans-desert camel mail between Baghdad and Damascus, whereby the Indian mails passed to and returned from London.

The Dutch had in 1581 wrested their independence from Spain, and were now ready to embark on the commercial

35. Loc. Cit.
enterprise which the dense population of their small country forced upon them. In 1599, they had sent successful expeditions to the East Indies. In 1602, the Dutch Companies were federated into 'United East India Company', practically a department of state with a permanently subscribed capital of the then immense sum of over half-a-million pounds. Soon it was covering the Indian Ocean with its fleets, threatening to displace the loose Portuguese monopoly in favour of one far more complete and aggressive, and making the effort of the British Company seem puny. The British East India Company undertook, in its infancy, a voyage only once every two or three years, each being separately financed by subscriptions and levies from its members. It was for the first fifty years of its existence chaotically financed and administered, and it was obstructed rather than helped by the early Stuart governments.

The English brothers Sir Antony and Sir Robert Sherley had in 1598 received a warm welcome from the illustrious and enterprising Shah Abbas the Great of Persia (1587-1629), who was seeking the most favourable market for Persia's raw silk, her main commodity for export and largely a royal monopoly. The Persian Gulf was still dominated from Hormuz by the Portuguese, who were everywhere hated by the native populations on account of the savage cruelty which they had constantly used to mask their deficiency in real force; the

route to the Levant coast was controlled by the Shah's enemy, the Ottoman Sultan and the Caspian route was impossibly roundabout. The Shah accordingly sent first Antony and then Robert as his ambassador to the capitals of Europe to seek alliance against the Ottoman empire, and trade-relations. The British East India Company, which had already opened a factory (trading-station) at Surat north of Bombay in 1612, accepted the Shah's proposals and sent ships in 1616 to the Persian Gulf to trade with his capital at Isfahan. The Portuguese at Hormuz made a determined attempt to intercept the Company's merchant ships, in return for which a joint Anglo-Persian expedition in 1622 expelled them from Hormuz and the Persians drove them out of Bahrain also. Their decline was accelerated by their loss of Muscat in 1650 and the closing of their factory at Basra.

The British East India Company, now, had factories at the Shah's new port of Bandar Abbas, with branches at Isfahan and Shiraz; at Mokha for the Yemen coffee-trade; and soon afterwards at Basra for trade by river-boat with Baghdad. However, the reorganization of the Company in 1661 was followed by a change of policy and the abandoning of all these factories. Experience had shown that it was not profitable for the Company to operate the local coastal trade, which was the natural business of the highly efficient Asiatic shipping. The Company accordingly concentrated its staffs at a few central factories, but without losing the
local trade.

The successful development of the Cape Route had largely diverted the trade in East Indian products from the Overland Route.

In Persia and Iraq, the British met with success in the eighteenth century; the French East India Company was ill-organized and ill-supported from Paris; and consequently the decline of the Dutch left the English to enjoy the bulk of the Persian Gulf trade through the prosperous factories which it reopened at Bandar Abbas and Basra. As a result of the internal anarchy in Persia which followed on the Afghan invasion of 1722 most of the European factories in that country had eventually to be closed, and in 1761 the main seat of British trade was shifted to Basra, where the British East India Company’s resident was raised to the rank of consul. In 1766, the Company lent the Pasha of Baghdad six ships to deal with unruly tribesmen in Lower Iraq, and in 1780 it helped Sulaiman Pasha the Great to secure his succession to the pashalik of Baghdad and so won his friendship. Britain’s commercial position in the Gulf was now preeminent, and she was acquiring through it a growing political influence also. In 1798 the Company’s Resident at Bushihr (Bushehr), which had become the principal station on the Persian coast after the closing of Bandar Abbas, was asked to arbitrate in a dispute between the Pasha of Baghdad and the Sultan of Oman.  

* Pashaship

37. Ibid, pp. 67 ff.
A GLIMPS OF IRAQ IN THOSE DAYS

"The glory of Islam as a world power did in fact flicker dangerously with the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate, and burnt very low during the two centuries which followed. When its final renaissance occurred under the Ottoman Sultans, the tenuous cord which still bound it to Arabia had become no more than a religious symbol. As for Baghdad, its erstwhile unassailable claim to be the focal point of the Muslim world was already a fading memory.

"Few lands of ancient renown have faded before the eyes of the later world to more obscurity than that spread over the Tigris and Euphrates valleys in the early sixteenth century. Successive inundations from the further East, with the rise and fall of a score of dynasties, had swept the old glories of the land into legend. The new things of the Renaissance, the new world of Columbus, the policies of brilliant monarchs in Europe wielding new powers of concentrated nations, left to the Iraq but a feeble claim on the interest of the West. Few thought of Babylon, Nineveh, and Baghdad as sites in a living land; fewer had heard of the rare exchanges of diplomacy between the viceroys of Iraq and the courts of Europe. The talks of travellers were scanty and unreal. Only the seafaring states of southern Europe cared for countries east of the Levant as the source, or routes to the source, of the silks and spices exchanged in Syria and Egypt. For them

already the voyages of Diaz and da Gama had quickened interest in the Indies. The fleets of Portugal had sailed Indian seas before the fifteenth century was out, and settled in the Gulf the great fortress-mart of Hormuz in 1507. Merchants of Venice and Genoa used, little but persistently, the land-bridge joining Mediterranean to Persian waters, had slept in Khans of "Bagdad" or "Babylon", seen Najaf, and halted at Zubair.

Thus meagre was the place of Iraq in the world before the growing fame of the Persian "Sophy", the eastern conquests of the Sultan, and the expansion in trade and venture of the western Powers (cause and effect of a wide increase in knowledge) served to bring it again—still humbly enough—into general observation. "The Basrah of the time was enclosed, with garden and waste land, in mud walls ill repaired. Its suburb on the Shatt ul Arab had but a few houses. Itself was a decayed but not idle port of some ten thousand houses, many of these mere reed huts whose owners were but lightly tied to city-life. A few pretentious buildings faced the creek, two miles inland. Some years later an Englishman (almost the first to visit it) saw it as 'a town of great trade of spices and drugges which come from Ormus. Also there is a great store of wheat, rice and dates growing thereabout wherewith they serve Babylon and all the country, Ormus, and all the parts of India.'

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* Baghdad
** Najaf
*** Sufi; hence, Sufism, The Persian Sufi : The then Shah of Iran.
**** Hormuz
39. London: Stephen Hemsley : Four Centuries of Modern
Here; in Basra, groups of Indians lived at that time, and the British East India Company established in 1640 a factory, but before the lapse of twenty years this English enterprise met with complete failure due to the weakness of English trade in Iraq.

THE ARABIAN CORRIDOR (1) : THE SUEZ CANAL -

The Suez Canal was opened to traffic on 17th November, 1869. Thereafter the eastern trade switched back once more to the Arabian corridor, through which it had been channelled before the discovery of the Cape Route in 1498.

When the French government showed itself ready to sponsor the cutting of the Isthmus of Suez, Palmerston commented that however great the commercial advantages might be, this 'second Bosporus' (Bosphorus) might be a source of grave political embarrassment to Britain. In the declining years of the aged Mohammed Ali the project was not pressed, and nothing could be done under his anti-European successor Abbas I. But the murder of Abbas brought to the throne in 1854 the easy-going Sa'id, who had as a boy been friendly with Ferdinand de Lesseps, the young son of the French political Agent. On his friend's accession de Lesseps, who had subsequently been the French Consul at Alexandria for seven years, sent him a letter of congratulation and was invited to revisit Egypt. These were the go-getting days of

40. Ibid., p. 8
41. Bullard : op.cit., p.23
Napoleon III: within ten days of his arrival de Lesseps had presented the Khedive with a detailed scheme for the cutting of a Suez Canal which Sa'id accepted; and a fortnight later the Khedive signed the concession for the 'Compagnie Universelle', subject to the approval of his Ottoman suzerain.

De Lesseps took the opportunity of the Franco-Ottoman friendship during the Crimean War to go to Istanbul to obtain the Sultan's approval for the concession. He found himself vigorously opposed by the British Ambassador, who represented to the Ottoman government that such a concession would eventually lead to a French protectorate over Egypt. In 1858 the British government warned the Turks that if the Sultan gave his consent he could no longer count on Britain to maintain the integrity of his Empire. When work on the alignment of the Canal began in 1859, Sa'id replied to British protests that under the Capitulations he had no control over what French subjects did in Egypt. The French won the support of Russia and Austria for the scheme. When Palmerston, its arch-opponent, died in 1865, the British opposition died with him. The Sultan finally approved the undertaking in 1866 and the Canal was opened to the shipping of the world by the Empress Eugenie in 1869.

Britain's statesmen had not however been content merely with obstructing the Canal project. They had also taken active steps to strengthen her defences along the short
sea-route to India in case the Canal became an accomplished fact. In 1863, the harbours and docks of Malta were extended, and its fortifications strengthened. In 1854 Britain had acquired from the Sultan of Oman for use as a cable-station the Kuria Muria Island, which the French also had made several attempts to acquire. In 1857 Britain re-occupied Perim. In 1862 they reached a mutual agreement with France to respect the independence of Oman, which was in fact already under strong influence from the Government of India. By 1870 British influence was being extended from Aden along the southern coast of Arabia to the ports of Mukalla and Suhar, whose trade with East Africa passed largely through Aden and whose ruling sultan usually resided in India. Britain thus established here a protectorate in fact, if not yet in name; and in 1876 she took Socotra under her formal protection.

Britain in 1875 purchased the Khedive's shares for the sum of £3,976,582 at the instance of Lord Beaconsfield. The Company obtained a concession to operate the canal for ninety-nine years, a period which was due to expire on 17th November 1968. From the opening of the Suez Canal until the First World War, the Eastern trade was almost entirely confined to it.

42. a. Kirk: op. cit., pp. 82 f.
   b. Glubb: Britain And The Arabs, op. cit., p. 27
On 26th July 1956, the Egyptian government, under President Nasir, nationalized the Suez Canal, about thirteen years before the date of its concession's expiry. Heavy compensations due to nationalization had to be paid.

THE ARABIAN CORRIDOR (II) : THE GULF

In antiquity the Mediterranean had been the main focus of European civilization and commerce; and though the importance of that sea as a channel of cultural contacts had been diminished when the Muslims overran and conquered its southern shores, the Crusades had done much to restore its former commerce. Even after the expulsion of the (Franks) from the Levant, the Mediterranean trading-cities, especially Venice and Genoa, had continued to enjoy a lively commerce with the Muslim East. In the meantime, Portugal, Seamen under the inspiration of Prince Henry the Navigator (1394-1460), began to explore the Atlantic coast of Africa southwards. Henry's general motive was evidently to carry on the Crusades by an attempt to outflank the Dar ul-Islam both strategically and commercially; to divert the trade in the gold and other products of West Africa from Muslim hands; to make contact south of the Sahara with the Negus of Ethiopia and jointly assail the Muslims from the south; and he may also have planned in his later life to win control for Portugal of the Indian

trade, which was now the main source of wealth of the Muslim world. The progress of Portuguese exploration was naturally slow at first, and by the time of Henry's death had gone no further south than Sierra Leone; but in the following generation their seamen pushed onwards, until in 1488 Bartholomew Diaz at last rounded the Cape of Good Hope. Ten years later Vasco da Gama went on to reach the Muslim coastal towns of East Africa, where he is said to have secured an Indian pilot who conducted him on to Southern India. The King of Portugal now adopted the grandiose title of 'Lord of the Conquest, Navigation, and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia, and India', and in spite of Muslim resistance further trading expeditions were sent to their station at Calicut, bringing home cargoes of spices.

The Mamluks of Egypt and the Republic of Venice were equally alarmed at this by-passing of their extremely profitable joint monopoly of the Indian trade with Europe. The Venetians even went so far as to supply timber to the Mamluks to build warships in an attempt to sweep the Portuguese from the Indian Ocean. But the Portuguese ocean-going ships and mariners were more than a match for the Muslim vessels and sailors, accustomed in the main to the more sheltered seas of the Levant and the Middle East. They occupied the strategically-placed islands of Socotra and Hormuz in an attempt to blockade the Muslim fleets within the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf respectively, and repelled a
Mamluk attack on their Indian ports. Lisbon rapidly took the place of Venice as the European clearing-house for Indian goods, and the Cape Route began to supersede the old sea and land-routes to the Mediterranean.

In the Persian Gulf the Portuguese had occupied by 1515 the strategic and trading posts of Muscat, Hormuz, and Baharian; but they were never able to seize permanent bases in the Red Sea, since the opposition of the Mamluk and subsequently the Ottoman navies held them in check. Though they enjoyed for the moment a monopoly of the Cape Route, they had by no means diverted all the traffic from the Overland Route. Throughout the sixteenth century Arab traders were still bringing the silks, spices, dyes and drugs of the East and the coffee of the Yemen up the Red Sea and across the desert to Cairo and Alexandria, and trade also continued to follow the route from the Persian Gulf via the Syrian steppe to the Levant ports.

In 1521 Venice obtained from the Sultan a commercial concession of the form which was to become common, granting her traders freedom from customs-duties or other taxation beyond a stated limit, and judicial extraterritoriality under the authority of their own consuls. These were the so-called Capitulations modelled on precedents of the Crusader and Mamluk periods. Commercial pre-eminence in the Mediterranean was now passing from Venice to France, to whom
capitulations were granted in 1536. By the time Elizabethan England entered upon the Levantine commercial scene, founding in 1581 the Levant Company of Merchants to trade her good woollen cloth and tin for eastern products, the French were already well established; and though they could not prevent the English from opening a consulate in Aleppo, they did successfully obstruct the opening of an English consulate at Alexandria.

Since 1580, the paramount position of the Portuguese had started to decline. At home, Portugal was for sixty years to be subject to the government of Spain. In the Gulf their cruelty and rapacity made them everywhere disliked; and, as fewer reinforcements reached their garrisons, Persian and Arab seamen could again venture on their voyages and dare to close their ports to the Portuguese. And other European eyes had now looked eastward. England, before the Armada, had sent Eldred, Newberrie, and Fitch to explore the Euphrates route; and, after it, formed in 1600 the first East India Company. The Dutch, in the last years of the century, had ventured into Indian but not Persian waters. The first twenty years of the seventeenth century saw the Portuguese still dominant but weakening. The strong monarch of Persia never acquiesced in their occupation and oppression of his ports and subjects. In 1602 his forces expelled them from

Bahrain, in 1608 he could bring formidable pressure upon the great market-fortress of Hormuz. Four years later the Portuguese occupied Bandar Abbas, a station founded by the Shâh as a counterpoise to Hormuz; but in 1614 Persian forces reft the place from the Portuguese, who never recovered it.

The death blow to their power was not to come from local rivals, but from Europe. The year 1616 saw an event which was to weaken the power of Hormuz more than any obstruction by Persian or Omani. The East India Company's ship (James) cast anchor at Jashak. Now established at Surat and in touch through embassies with the Shah, they had come to try their luck in the silk trade; and this mission to the Gulf achieved important results. A (farman)* with every accommodating clause rewarded the efforts of Mr. Edward Connock, the envoy of the Company. A second Company's ship reached Jashak late in 1617. Negotiations with the Shah continued. Ground was gained in the share of the silk-trade diverted to British ships, in ceremonious correspondence between the Kings of England and Persia, and in the greater popularity which British methods acquired than Portuguese. Jashak, from 1618 to 1620, was used by increasing numbers of English trading-ships.

Hormuz was now doomed. The Shah was at his strongest. The trade rivalry had provided constant friction with the

* A Turkish Royal Ordinance. There are two other forms of the word: Ferman and firman. The latter has mainly been used in English publications about the Moghul Empire in India.
Portuguese, and the island-market was an old thorn in his side. But he lacked a fleet. Upon conditions carefully formulated, the Company was willing to supply it. At a meeting of the British East India Company's Agent with the Governor of Fars, present and future privileges were settled. In January 1622 the strong Portuguese fort of Qishim fell to the British fleet, and early in February the assault on Hormuz began. A Persian force easily occupied the town, and began the blockade and mining of the fortress; but the defence was stout. In the harbour Portuguese ships were sunk one by one. Landing parties from the Company's ships assisted the land-besiegers. Though the siege continued far into April, it could have but one result. The Portuguese capitulated, marched out, and were shipped to Muscat.

The Dutch had by now penetrated from the Indian Ocean into these narrower seas. They settled at Bandar Abbas at the same time as the British, building there a massive Factory, and joined their ships to the Company's in action against the Portuguese. These, now based on Muscat and still strong enough for pirate-raids, were led by an Admiral of exceptional dash. Actions took place off Bandar Abbas in February 1625. All three combatants Dutch, English and Portuguese lost heavily. A peace between Portugal and Persia was concluded in the same year, the former renouncing all claims to their old settlements on the Persian soil.
With Afrasiyab; the governor of Basrah, the connexions of the Portuguese were slight until the fall of Hormuz in April 1622. Thereafter they used it increasingly; and the shelter offered them by the Basrah ruler at last brought upon him the displeasure of the Shah.

THE GULF FROM 1622 TO 1700

For three generations following the fall of Hormuz, sea-power in the Persian Gulf was divided, suspicious, and mutually offensive. The elements concerned were the Dutch, the English, the Portuguese, and the Arabs of Oman. No Turkish shipping issued from Basrah, and the Persians had no marine.

From 1630 the efforts of the Portuguese were confined to maintaining themselves in Oman and endeavouring to regain a footing at Hormuz. In the former they succeeded for only twenty years. With a station at Basrah - where they had looked after the fall of Hormuz - and their post at Kung, Muscat with Suwar was now their only centre for Gulf enterprise. Their flag grew rarer, less respected and disliked. In 1643 they lost Suwar to an Omani force. In 1650 Muscat itself capitulated. Kung was dying, Basrah - always an outpost rather than a base - too distant and unsupported, and anyhow useless for Persian trade. Portuguese interests after 1650 were confined to Kung and to the half-piratical voyages of Goan fleets. With the Persians, their relations were as
constantly estranged. With the coasters and pirates of Oman, every contact was a scuffle. With the English, formal peace was indeed made in 1634, confirmed at Goa in 1636; but rivalry at Basrah and counter-intrigues with the Dutch remained. They professed to believe that the raids of Arabian pirates were British-inspired, if not British-led; and could point, in 1689, to looting of their Kung Factory by a British privateer. Thus died the sea-power of Portugal in the Gulf.

Convoys of the British Company between the Gulf and Surat were frequent if small in scale. The demand for silk in England varied, and the supply in Persia was affected by the amounts exported through Tabriz or the Mosul route.

The Dutch showed greater commercial skill than the Portuguese. They risked immediate losses for remote privileges. Their consignments were on a greater scale, their ships larger and better found than the British Company's. At Bandar Abbas there were ceaseless causes of friction. In 1645 so dangerous was the atmosphere there that the British Factor* dispatched his goods to Basrah, while the Dutch attacked Qishim and extorted fresh concessions from the Shah. In the years following their supremacy became more marked. Their convoys to Basrah captured the import trade of the Shatt ul Arab, and the expulsion of the Portuguese from Muscat in 1650 gave them a still greater ascendancy. Not until the end of 1690

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* Factor: Trading-Agent; Agent: Person who buys and sells on commission; in the East India Company's parlance; Manager of a Factory (trading station) established in the east by a European Country.
is it possible to trace a fall in Dutch and a rise in British prosperity.

At Basrah the Portuguese had hastened after 1622 to found a Carmelite convent and to assist the Pasha in his defence against Persian attacks. The first appearance of British trade there was that of a "pinace" with a small cargo in 1635, when Portuguese rivalry did not present moderate sales. Five years later, however, this competition proved too much for their second venture; a Portuguese fleet fresh from Muscat had filled the bazaars just before a Company's ship came in. In 1643 a small stationary Factory was founded, and it enjoyed a short term of prosperity before the Dutch reached up the Shatt. In 1645, the British Factor at Bandar Abbas removed his stocks to Basrah; but later in the same year, open commercial war being now declared, a Dutch fleet of eight vessels appeared at Minawi, ruining British credit in a day. In 1657 the Company's Factory was closed by the Pasha, due to stories of its insolvency. Occasional British ships still appeared from Bandar Abbas and from Surat; but the Factory was not refounded in the present century.

After the succession of Husain Pasha, governor of Basra, upon the death of his father in about 1650, the city was described by a European eye-witness, Tavernier, as follows,

"The Prince of Balsara has entered into leagues with several strange nations, so that whencesoever you come you may be welcome. There is so much liberty and so good order in the city, that you may walk all night long in the streets without molestation. The Hollanders bring spices thither every year. The English carry Pepper and some few cloves; but the Portugals have no trade at all thither. The Indians bring Calicuts, indigo, and all sorts of merchandise. In short there are merchants of all countries from Constantinople, Smyrna, Aleppo, Damascus, Cairo and Other parts of Turkie, to buy such merchandizes as come from the Indies, with which they lade the young camels which they buy in that place: for thither the Arabians bring them to put them to sale. They that come from Diarbequir, Moussul, Bagdat, Mesopotamia, and Assyria send their Merchandizes up the Tigris by water, but with great trouble and expense..."

THE ARABIAN CORRIDOR (III) : IRAQ -

Until about 1770 Britain had been content to be represented in the Middle East by trader-consuls humbly asking for nothing but capitulations. From 1770 onwards, in their dealings with a Mohammed Ali of Egypt or a Sulaiman

* Basra. It was an important city in Asia at that time, (Desai, Bombay Archives).

** Calicos.

*** Baghdad.

**** Al-Jazira, in Iraq

46. Ibid., p.110
Pasha of Iraq, her representatives were attaining the status of equals in power and authority. But, just as it had been the bid to create a French empire in India which turned the British East India Company from trade to the tasks of empire, so it was Napoleon's threat to that growing empire in India which first constrained Britain to increase her political influence in the Middle East.

In the Southern Red Sea Britain immediately countered Napoleon's thrust towards India by occupying Perim, in the narrowest part of the Straits of Bab al Mandab. But soon, when living conditions on this torrid rock had proved intolerable, the occupying force was moved to Aden, by agreement with its ruler, the Sultan of Lahaj. A treaty was made with him in 1802, and six years later Lord Valentia commented prophetically, 'Aden is the Gibraltar of the East'. In 1799 Napoleon had made overtures from Egypt to the Sultan of Oman, who by his possession of harbours on either side of the Straits of Hormuz could control the entrance to the Persian Gulf. The Sultan was, however, persuaded to conclude with the British East India Company, a treaty excluding from his territories French and Dutch subjects (Holland was under French domination) for the duration of the war; and in 1800 the Company established a permanent Resident at Muscat.

Both at Basra and Baghdad French consuls had been established earlier than those of the British East India Company; but since they were ill-paid, ill-provided, often
ill-chosen, and no great volume of French trade passed through their hands, they failed to impress the ruling Pashas. In 1798 the French consuls were arrested, their papers confiscated, and their premises occupied. It is not clear whether this was done entirely on the initiative of Sulaiman Pasha on account of the Ottoman declaration of war on France following the invasion of Egypt, or whether perhaps it may have been suggested to him by the British East India Company’s Resident, now permanently established in Baghdad and on friendly terms with him. The French consuls were eventually released, but the Pasha rejected with little ceremony their claim to formal precedence over the British representatives. In 1802 the Resident at Baghdad was promoted to the rank of Consul with a guard of Sepoys, and Britain’s position in Iraq grew in prestige and prosperity to the jealous indignation of the French.

The Agents of the British East India Company revisited the city of Basra in the first three decades of 1700, and opened a factory there as a permanent station. At present the Documents of this Factory are available in Bombay Archives under the title, "Bombay Government Records, Bussorah Factory Diaries, 1763-1777". In 1977 Dr. Mustafa A. Al-Najjar, Director of the Centre for Arab Gulf Studies

47. Kirk: op. cit., pp. 74 f.
48. Longrigg: Four Centuries..., op. cit., p. 157

at the University of Basra, and Dr. Abdul-Amir M. Amin, Professor of Modern History at the University of Baghdad, visited India in search for British Documents related to Iraq, the Gulf, and the Peninsula of Arabia. Finally they have decided to microfilm the "Bussorah Diaries" which are consisted of (1) The Factory Diaries, and (2) The Residency Diaries 1798-1811, because these Diaries are not available in any British Archives, including the India Office Library in London, other than that of Bombay. The microfilmed Diaries are being kept now in Iraq.

When the Company opened its Factory in Basra, there was already in the city the Dutch Factory which lasted until 1752. From the establishment of their Factory onward the British became, in the process of time, so influential in the Ottoman Empire, and in Iraq, that they could do, and refrain from doing, many things; in autumn 1763, the governor of Baghdad visited Basra and found that the strong tribe of Bani Ka'ab under Shaikh Sulaiman Al-Uthman is still independent and belligerent. He sought the help of the Company to cripple the fleet of Bani Ka'ab, and, in return, he promised the special favours of the Sultan to the British Resident who sent two ships, and the Pasha advanced with his army. The Shaikh, finding himself unable to resist,
sought terms without further fighting. In 1765, the Shaikh captured three British ships, and the Bombay Government sent out in January 1766 a fleet of six ships to teach him a lesson. In winter 1775, the Iranians attacked Basra. Before the assault, the Company sided with the 'Authority' of the city, but at the night of the attack the British joined the Persian fleet which was ascending Shatt-al-Arab from Bushehr...". After so complete an identification of the Company with the Turkish defenders, the stealthy embarkation of the Englishmen during the night attack was a sorry end." After the occupation of Basra by Iranians, they imposed upon the population a levy of a large sum. The Company extended its help, and "More and more looked to the (British) Agent (Mr. Latouche) as their protector; the previous sorry exploits of the Company were forgotten". In 1779 the British Agent; Mr. Latouche, effectively helped Sulaiman Agha (Sulaiman Pasha the Great, later) to become the Pasha (Viceroy) of Iraq at the rank of Mir Miran (Price of Princes). Mr. Latouche was his friend and money-lender, in addition to being his mediator in remitting illegally big amounts of money to Istanbul. The Pasha received a lot of help from the British and was confessing this to the last moment of his life.

51. a. Ibid., p. 173
52. Longrigg: Four Centuries..., op. cit., p. 175
53. Ibid., p. 191
54. Ibid., p. 193
55. Ibid., pp. 195 f.
"In the position of the Honourable Company great improvement had been made since 1780. It has earned the personal gratitude of Sulaiman Pasha for its aid at his accession, and he repaid the debt by twenty years of complete favour and by frank utilization of its services. In 1782 he placed orders through it for arms and ammunition from Bombay, in 1798 and 1799 demanded a further consignment of munitions with European instructors from India. In 1802 another such shipment lay on the Tigris by Ctesiphon just as the struggles for the Pashaliq were at their height. The mediation of the Resident was more than once gratefully employed: on the rumoured appointment of the Shawi to the Pashaliq in 1787 the Pasha begged instant communication through him with the Ambassador in Istanbul; and in 1798 it was through Mr. Manesty at the Basrah Agency that accounts with the Sultan of Muscat were to be settled. To the gradual but open increase of the Resident's influence in tribe and town the Mamluk government offered no objection, though moments of its most striking favour might be preceded by, and never for long precluded, acute differences with the local authority."

The Mamluk rule endured from 1750 to 1831. It was in

* Among the Mamluk rulers there were two Pashas bearing the same name: Sulaiman. The first one was nicknamed in Turkish (Buyuk Sulaiman); Sulaiman the Great (under review here), the second (Kuchuk Sulaiman); Sulaiman the Little (The Junior).
56. Ibid., p. 254.
this period particularly that the growing influence of the British in the country was clearly tangible. There were in this period only two examples of anti-British policy. Horace Sebastiani; the French Ambassador to the Sublime Porte, supported the accession of Kuchuk (Little) Sulaiman in 1808 to the Pashaship of Baghdad, and it was only natural that this Pasha cherished a pro-French tendency. But development in international politics conduced to the increase of British diplomatic influence in Iraq, and, consequently, to the decrease of its French counterpart. The conclusion of Tilsit Agreement in July 1807 between Russia and France invoked the fear of the Sultan from Franco-Russian rapprochement, and tilted in Istanbul the scale favourably to the British interests. The second exception to siding with the British was that of the last and greatest Mamluk rulers in Baghdad; Dawood Pasha (1817-1831). But even this stubborn Pasha was compelled by necessity to seek British military help:

"Advice was given also by Major Taylor, the Resident, whose son was undertaking in 1830 to raise cavalry regiments on the same model. As early as 1824 the Pasha had asked Bombay for a British doctor and equipment for a thousand men". When Dawood Pasha came to know in 1830

58. Nawras, Dr. Ala's Moosa Kadhim; Ra'uf, Dr. Imad Abdul-Salam in (IRAQ IN HISTORY); (a book written in Arabic by a number of specialized Iraqi Professors of History from various Iraqi universities, under the chairmanship of Dr. Salih Ahmad Al-Ali, the Chairman of the Iraqi Academy), Baghdad, 1983, Era of Conquerors, Chapter 4, pp. 616 ff.

the decision of Istanbul to punish him for murdering Sadiq Al-Daftari; the envoy of the Ottoman government to him, he thought of sending his money and precious belongings to India through the mediation of the British Consul in Baghdad, and residing, later on, in India.

In 1798 the British opened their Residency in Baghdad and Harford Jones (Sir, later on) was appointed as the Resident there. In 1802 the British Ambassador to Istanbul succeeded in securing from the Sublime Porte for Jones the status of a British Consul in Baghdad with diplomatic immunity.

"Since 1751, conditions at the port of Basra had been generally peaceful. Accepting as natural the insecurity of all inland routes and the common piracies of Shatt-al-Arab, both populace and foreign merchants were content with urban security. Complaints of exaction, petty injustice, extorted presents, are indeed frequent in the dispatches of the time; but even these, less irksome under some governors than others, were subject to appeal to the Court of Baghdad. Year by year profitable trade was done. The French agent - first a priest, later a layman - kept permanent house in Basrah after 1755. The Portuguese had gone for ever. The Dutch moved to Kharaq.

60. Azzawi: op.cit., Vol.6, pp.301-310
61. Najjar; Amin; Khan: Bussorah Diaries, op.cit., Vol.II, Documents of Bussorah Residency Diaries 1798-1811, in an Introduction written in Arabic, p.4
Island in 1752. Several Italians had business at the port, Armenian and Jew bargained with Persian and Indian, Arab traders brought Yaman coffee and returned with dates, The Honourable Company imported metal-ware and woollens, and bartered these for cash and for Persian silk. Its representative, promoted from Resident to Agent in 1763, was in 1764 strengthened by the grant of consular status - a step of great moment, long since taken by the French. After the terrible Plague of 1773, there were in Basra a reduced garrison, neglected buildings, increasing crime, cessation of trade, few and feeble surviving citizens; these were the legacy of the disease found by the Company's Agent on his return in October from Bombay, whither he had retired with his Factory in April."

The connections of Iraq with the powers of western Europe had increased since the later eighteenth century in scale and closeness. We have the memories of thirty travellers, and these were but a fraction of Iraq's visitors from Europe and India. By 1800 French Carmelites and a Greek banker and sometimes a Venetian merchant at Mosul entertained subalterns of the East India Company passing to and from furlough. Tartar riders carried to the Bosphorus the dispatches of European consuls with those of the Pasha. From Baghdad to Aleppo, by the desert

route, ran the regular camel-mail of the Company. The labouring river-craft from Basrah brought the satins and velvets of France, English cloth, metal goods from Germany, glass of Vienna and Bohemia, sugar of America. French and Italian religious orders had settlements. The chosen instructor of Dawood's troops was a Frenchman, as had been the physician of Buyuk Sulaiman; and the French consul at Basrah had some acquaintances among the notables of tribe and city; but the superior consequence and prosperity of the British Company's staff was ever a source of jealous indignation.

Baghdad had become the permanent station of a native Agent of the Company in 1783. Thereafter it was frequently visited by the Resident from Basrah; and in 1798 - an inevitable development, but designed especially to meet supposed Napoleonic intrigues in the Middle East - a permanent British Resident was appointed there also. The powers of a Consulate were conferred in 1802 as mentioned above. Thereafter Baghdad became the chief centre of British influence. The increase in British prestige up to the reign of Dawood Pasha and after his fall was very marked. The Pashas became aware of India as a great neighbour with whom to exchange courtly messages and occasional protests. Military stores continued to be ordered thence. The state visits to Iraq of General Malcolm (journeying from missions in Persia to Bombay)
showed to all the pomp and wealth of the British. The Establishments of the Residents both at Baghdad and Basrah—the large premises, prosperous staff, uniformed flunkeys, stables, river-craft, and guard of sepoys—were those of a specially favoured nation. From 1807 to 1809, though war had broken out in Europe between Great Britain and Turkey, the British representatives in Iraq continued honoured and unmolested, and the Pasha correspond amicably with Calcutta. More and more, since the first intimacy of Harford Jones with Buyuk Sulaiman (Sulaiman the Great), the "Baleös" became a figure of importance in the Pashaliq. The appointment of Claudius James Rich to the Residency in 1808 was an important milestone. In thirteen years he added immensely to the dignity of his Residency, which became an acknowledged centre of the best local society, the rendezvous of the highest officials and notables, an open guest-house, and a home of antiquarian research. Rich maintained himself through the stormy last days of Sulaiman the Little (Kuchuk Sulaiman).

Rich was charged with the tasks of rendering Iraq an open field for the British colonialist penetration, and of opposing the activities of the French. He was also made responsible for watching their movements and

* An Italian word meaning, 'The Consul', as the British Consul was called by the Baghdadis of those days.

64. Ibid., pp. 253. ff.
plans. In order to enhance his position, the Residency of Basra was put in 1810 under his direct supervision. Two years later he was given the title of 'The Political Agent of Turkish Arabia' (in the British Political circles of that time, the term 'Turkish Arabia' meant Iraq only). Perhaps the most prominent of his achievements in promoting the British influence in Iraq was the settlement which he concluded with the Pasha of Baghdad on 25 January 1810. This settlement included six articles stating that the Pasha must abandon his right to issue orders to the British Resident, has no right to interfere into the Resident's affairs under any pretention whatsoever, and should have no objection at all to visits exchanged between the Resident and the highest office-bearers of the government of Baghdad. Consequently the Resident became only second to the Pasha himself, and in times even stronger than him because the Baghdadis realized that while the Pashas are in constant change and they may kill each other, Mr. Rich remains in his office invariable. The natives were not attaching importance to the promises of their Pashas and notables unless guaranteed by Mr. Rich. He realized that, in a backward society like that of Baghdad in those days, position of one is measured according to one's pompous appearance. He impressed the Baghdadis by his imposing procession while going outside the Residency. His Pageant composed of horsemen putting on ornamented uniforms and having
their own particular drums and trumpets, was a source of citizens' surprise who were observing it from both sides of the roads. He wanted to impress Dawood also by the same pomp when he went to congratulate him on his accession to Pashaliq, but his attempt fell short of its aim, and it was not long before he discovered his mistake.

According to Longrigg, Rich's relations with Dawood Pasha, "after a first period of cordiality, were those inevitable between a vigorous, disinterested, and scrupulous Englishman and an Oriental despot surrounded by ignorant and fanatical counsellors. Daud and his ministers could not but be nettled constant criticism of their invasions of European rights, their inflation and deflation of coinage-values, their perverse hindrance of European trade. In 1820 the Pasha did not scruple to declare that "no European rights existed in Baghdad". This preposterous verdict - contrary to reason, to history and to the specific orders of the Sultan - was accompanied by a customs duty doubled against British goods, and by

65. a. Nawras and Ra'uf; op.cit., pp. 617 ff.
b. Wardi, Dr. Ali (Professor of Sociology, University of Baghdad); Social Aspects of Iraqi Modern History, in Arabic, Baghdad, 1969, Vol. 1 pp. 240 ff.

* Brigadier Longrigg is a British authority on the history of Iraq, where he lived for nearly thirty years, working first as a Political Officer in the administration of the country after the First World War, and then with the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC).

** Dawood Pasha.

*** Capitulations.
every description of incivility and obstruction. Rich determined to leave Baghdad for Bombay; the Pasha forbade it. The operations which followed are unique in the history of diplomacy. Rich, supported by his 'Sepoy guard, the Residency servants, and some chance visitors, determined to resist arrest. The building was surrounded by infantry, camel-men, and artillery, whom barricades and rifle-muzzles confronted. Cowardice, however, extricated the Pasha from the absurd position to which avarice and folly had brought him. His officers were deterred by their respect for the Baleos and by the gravity of the position, while many quarters of Baghdad were prepared to rise against a hated ruler. The troops were called off, but Rich remained a prisoner. Not until the Governor of Bombay had addressed strong missives both to Baghdad and to Istanbul was Daud finally (in May 1821) induced to permit Rich's departure to India. Good relations were restored between the Pasha and the incoming Resident, nor were they subsequently broken to the same extent. 

According to the Iraqis: The coming of a strong Ruler such as Dawood Pasha to power had an adverse effect on the British activities in Iraq. Dawood could not accept Rich's influence which was dangerous to the

political future of the country, and, therefore, the
relations between the Pasha and Rich strained and
resulted in the scuffle narrated above. In 1823, an
agreement was concluded with Dawood according to which
the supreme status of Britain in Iraq was secured, and
the European Rights (Capitulations) were recognized
(as they were defined in the past and recent Ottoman
Agreements, and in Farnans of the Sultan).

"Thus British diplomatic annals in Mamluk Iraq...
demonstrate ... that the government of the dynasty
founded by Hasan Pasha in 1704, and now in moral though
not material decline under Daud, was an offensive
anachronism and as such condemned. A nation of Europe,
which in two centuries has built up its trade and attained
patiently a legitimate (but not less remarkable) social
and diplomatic position, could not see these advantages
demolished at the capricious word of the venal and
backward Government of Baghdad. The Resident in Iraq
was proportionately a more eminent figure than the
Ambassador at Istanbul: insults to the one must attract
the grave notice of the other and through him of the
Government of Turkey. In permitting the British Resident
to become... the second man in Iraq, the Mamluk Pashas
had shown some recognition of the means of progress, some
willingness to be guided, some lightening of prejudice,

occasional friendship and courtesy; but they had thereby admitted to their midst standards to which they could not conform, a phase of modernity wholly discrepant with their methods, and simultaneously critics at close quarters whose reports would reach the Capital. The Sultan could not but learn that the Government of Baghdad, which had failed to protect the province from Wahhabi raiders and failed to keep peace with Persia, was even providing cause of estrangement with the Powers of Europe."

The main exports of Iraq to India during this period were dates and Arabian horses. Though the Sublime Porte issued a farman prohibiting the export of Arabian horses due to their importance in wars, Iraq exported in 1816 to Bombay, Madras and Calcutta 1500 horses. The customs duty on Indian goods at Basra was 3% of the sale price, whereas it was 7.5% on goods imported from other countries. In 1815, reached Basra (15) ships from Bombay and Bengal. The average tonnage of the ship was between 300 and 400 tons. Iraq imported from Bengal silk and other Indian textiles, pepper, drugs, rice, sugar, indigo and other dyes; and from Surat manufactured goods, shawls, Chinese garments and papers, dyes, coffee, gum, silver, lead, steel, tin, and re-exported European goods.

68. Longrigg : Four Centuries ...., op. cit., pp. 255 ff.