

with the latter object, and most of them perished from weather conditions; 24,000 families in Mazandaran where only a quarter survived, the rest died from the bad climate; "a large number", unspecified, were distributed in the district round Isfahan, and little by little became Muslims for the most part: the most active and well-to-do were established in the site which became known as the new Julfa, which grew rapidly within 10 years, for many came from Armenia seeking a better lot, while the Shah sent there communities of other Christian rites, Nestorians, Jacobite Syrians who enlarged the place with their quarters. (*Vide MSS. Hist. Miss.*, Chap. 34, bk. 3, part 2.) To the Carmelites, after they arrived in 1608, the Armenians of the new Julfa constantly asserted that 400,000 of their families had been transplanted by 'Abbas I during the course of the war, and that 10,000 of those families were "Frankish", i.e. Latin, Catholics from the district of Nakhchiwan. They said that in the first overrunning and driving off into captivity by the Persians some 10,000 children and girls had been carried off into Muslim households and the practices of Islam: although the Shah gave orders that the Armenian patriarch and bishops as well as the parents should be permitted to buy back and ransom those Armenian slaves he did not do much to facilitate such a measure, and was suspected of impeding its adoption.

"When he captured the town of Shamakha, and the prisoners captured in it were led before him, 'Abbas I selected some for himself, among them being a handsome Armenian boy. Two or three times the Shah said to him that he must become a Muslim and, the boy refusing, the Shah got angry and drew his sword and gave him a great cut on the neck, and others came up and finished him off, as I learnt from several who had been present. They showed me the place where the holy martyr was buried outside the town, and the Persians said that for many nights they used to see a bright light issuing from the tomb."<sup>1</sup>

So, coming back to the Augustinian Fathers and their proceedings and clash with 'Abbas I,

"The Armenian Patriarch related<sup>2</sup> that, when the Augustinian Fathers as representatives of the king of Spain, arrived in the capital" (i.e. in or about 1604) "the Armenians surpassed the rest in manifesting affection, rejoicing, and courtesies. The Shah took this amiss, and used it as a pretext for harassing the more the Armenians. . . . The Prior of the Augustinians wanted to build a church in Isfahan, with the object of drawing the Armenians into unity with the Holy See, as the Patriarch and other bishops of that rite had already made a serious promise to that effect in letters which the Prior himself, when he went to Rome, had handed to His Holiness."<sup>3</sup>

Fr. John Thaddeus, in a report to Rome,<sup>4</sup> gave further details:

"The Prior<sup>5</sup> of these Fathers came to Persia with *letters from the Archbishop of Goa* for the king of Persia, in which the latter was begged to allow the Armenians in his country to make obedience to the Sovereign Pontiff, and to that end to give permission for a bishop or bishops to go to Rome via India about this business. When the Father (the Prior) reached Persia, the king was on the campaign in Shirwan, in the field before Shamakha."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fr. Paul Simon, narrative, 1608, O.C.D. 234 b.: and Fr. John Thaddeus, report, O.C.D. 237 m., 30.1.1609.

<sup>2</sup> See *En Persia*, vol. II, p. 107.

<sup>3</sup> See on the subject *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastiques*, vol. III, Paris, 1930, under "Arménie": ". . . Le Catholikos David IV (1587-1629), prélat ignorant et sans prestige, fut à moitié converti par la charité et les instances des Augustins. Il écrivit au Pape Paul V qu'il reconnaissait sa suprême autorité, et l'infalibilité de l'Eglise Catholique. Avec 6 évêques, 109 prêtres, de nombreux diacres il prononça aussi solennellement une profession de foi Catholique (12 mai 1607). Mais comme les opposants l'accusaient de se mettre sous la domination des princes Latins, il déclara que sa soumission au Pape était subordonnée à l'approbation par Rome de tous les usages Arméniens"—quoted from the French translation of Fr. A. da Gouvea's book cited.

<sup>4</sup> O.C.D. 236 a., undated, but from its contents written between May 1608 and January 1609.

<sup>5</sup> Diego de S. Anna was his name in religion.

<sup>6</sup> This dates the incident to May-June 1607.