Apprehending objections by 'Abbas I Don Garcia by this messenger gave his authority to Fr. John Thaddeus to give way in regard to the two clauses last mentioned, on condition that Spain were allotted a free port in the Persian Empire for Spanish (and Portuguese) vessels, from which ships of other nations, particularly those of the English, would be rigorously excluded. Shah 'Abbas was, however, disgusted by these proposals,

> 'asserting that the Portuguese have nothing in hand to offer him,[1] for as regards the silk 'export that would be allotted to the highest bidder—the Armenian traders of Julfa had 'indeed offered to pay him more than the English themselves. . . .'

It is doubtless to the above terms from Madrid, modified still further by Don Garcia, that della Valle's letter of 21.10.1619 (IV, p. 81) refers:

> "On 17.9.1619 the king ordered a 'Diwan', or council, should sit in public to fix the price "of the silk, and summoned to it the Armenians from Julfa, the English and also the Fr. "Vicar (Provincial) of the Discalced Carmelites, because of the letters recently received "from Spain. The Fr. Vicar (Provincial) spoke first and replied that he had no orders "from Spain to offer any price, but merely to discuss the business on certain conditions, "which he had in writing. . . . On 3.10.1619 they summoned to the palace Fr. John "Thaddeus, saying that the Shah wished to send an answer to the letters which had come "from Spain. But, although the Father went and waited there all day, nothing was done, "because the king had been engaged in something else. On the following day the Shah "had the letters translated by the Fr. Vicar (Provincial) brought and read to him, without "the Father going there: only he instructed the Mihmandar to dispatch a reply to the "ambassador, Don Garcia, and inform him that the king of Spain was aware of his ('Abbas "I) having sent Fr. Redempt (to Madrid) with regard to this business, and therefore he "('Abbas I) "proposed to await the return of Fr. Redempt, when having heard the latter's "report he would decide what to do. . . ."

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With the interesting note[2] that on 23.10.1619 one of the Dominican Fathers from the Armenian Uniat district of Nakhchiwan ('Alingia' so called by della Valle and others), who had gone to Europe two years before and just arrived in Isfahan, presented to Shah 'Abbas in the presence of the Vicar Provincial of the Carmelites a letter from the king of France and a "complimentary one of credence" from Fr. Joseph the Capuchin of Paris—(Cardinal Richelieu's 'Eminence Grise'?)—who in the name of a French princess of the blood sent the Persian king one picture of a saint and another of S. John, as well as a Brief from the Pope,[3] we pass to the year 1620 which opened with "a little trouble the Carmelite Fathers had on the 5th "January"[4]—its nature is not stated—and then the 16th January, the Armenian Epiphany by the old calendar, provides one of those baffling scenes of 'Abbas I in his inquisitive mood. He had announced his intention of attending the ceremonies known as 'Khatchaturan', when

[1] One curious offer made by Don Garcia de Silva on behalf of the king of Spain was to close the Red Sea to pilgrims from India and Egypt which, according to MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. XXVII, the Shah spurned, as in October 1618 his forces had beaten off the Turks, who had sued for peace.

[2] della Valle's letter of 4.4.1620, p. 88.

[3] This must have been that of 28.4.1618 (Arch. Secr. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 15, p. 320, also vol. 34, p. 215) recommending the poor Catholics harried by the wars and Archbishop Matthew of Nakhchiwan (see appendix for text of Brief). On the same day the Pope sent a Brief (see appendix for text) to the king of Spain asking him to write to the Shah of Persia and to his own officials in the Indies and Hurmuz to assist these Dominicans. There is also a Brief dated 29.5.1618 to Archbishop Matthew, sympathizing with the afflictions of the diocese.

[4] della Valle, p. 108.