

“separated from the Romans and the Pope. The Fr. Visitor told him ‘70 or 80 years’.
 “The Agent of the English said that *they* were the primitive Christians. The Fathers asked
 “him whether previous to those 70 or 80 years the English and Romans were all one and
 “whether all England paid obedience to the Roman Pontiff. The English answered ‘yes:
 “‘it was the truth that formerly they yielded obedience to the Pope’. When this had been
 “admitted and translated to the Shah by the interpreter of the English themselves, his
 “Highness remarked that, just as the Sunnis and Turkish heretics will not ascribe the
 “primacy to Husain, son of Amir-ul-Mu’minin” (i.e. ‘Ali), “but instead to ‘Umar, so the
 “English do not obey the vicar of Jesus, who is the Pope of Rome: and for this they are
 “heretics.

“The sun was entering through a window and troubled the king: so he got up and
 “made a sign to the Fathers to follow him. Together with his Highness they entered a
 “smaller, but cooler apartment, and all sat down in this order: on the right hand he caused
 “the minister (clergyman) to sit and on the left near himself the Fathers (the Persians
 “consider the left-hand a more honoured seat, because, they say, it is on the side where
 “the heart is, and the sword is worn). Then ‘Ali Quli Khan, governor of — and the
 “chief judge of the court of crimes; next the Georgians, and in another apartment, but
 “very near by, so that they could see and converse with the Shah, were his other gentlemen.
 “Below the minister, and beside him were the Tatars from Caffa, and last of all the rest
 “of the English, near whom in a little closet were the king’s minstrels playing on musical
 “instruments and singing.

“The English wanted to discuss the business of the silk and to ask for it to be finished
 “and for the Shah’s mandate for them to go and purchase it in Gilan and Shirwan.
 “The Shah made signs to one of his officials, who then told the interpreter that by no
 “manner of means was their business to be discussed, because it was not the time for
 “it, giving it to be understood that it was not suitable to talk of business in front of the
 “Fathers.

“The Shah returned once more to talk about the nails” (in the cross) “of Christ, asking
 “whether they were three or four. The answer was given him that some Saints said there
 “were four, but that the majority conclude that there were three. This opinion pleased
 “the Shah: and he crossed his legs, saying that with a single nail they had nailed both
 “feet, and that was how he had seen it in pictures. Here the English Agent wanted to
 “cast ridicule on the Catholics and asked the Fathers how many wounds Christ had in
 “His body. The Fr. Visitor answered him that there were five. He” (the English Agent—
 “Monox) “laughed a great deal and said: ‘No: there were four.’ The Fr. Visitor enquired
 “which they were. He (the English Agent) replied: ‘one wound only in the two feet,
 “‘because a single nail had transfixed them, and the rest in the two hands and the side.’
 “The Fr. Visitor, remarking that he (the Agent) was a layman and would know little
 “about philosophy, turned to the minister, and asked whether he too held that opinion:
 “to which the minister said ‘yes’. So then the Fr. Visitor enquired once more of the
 “minister whether the wounds in the feet were continuous or contiguous: the latter answered
 “that they were continuous and for that reason were one wound. Our Religious remarked
 “that that was contrary to philosophy, because something ‘continuous’ is that which is
 “joined by a common end. But the wounds in Christ’s feet were not coupled by a common
 “end: therefore they were not continuous, and in consequence they were two wounds,
 “and not one. The minister did not know what to answer. The Shah and the grandees
 “wanted to understand the point in dispute: it was explained to them, and they laughed
 “at the English for saying that in the two wounded feet there was only one wound because
 “a single nail pierced them.

“From time to time the musicians were playing and singing: and the Shah, paying heed
 “to the music, asked the Fathers whether music were lawful. They replied that immodest
 “or lascivious songs were not lawful, but songs and the Divine praises, as in the Psalms of
 “David and hymns of the Saints and others of that sort were lawful, and to sing them