

"except in the province of Nakhchiwan, which has its own Dominican bishop, and, finally" (he can use them) "in all Georgia . . .",

a vast bishopric, which extended from the Black Sea coast to the head of the Persian Gulf, and across into modern Afghanistan at Kandahar. In the case of the first Bishop of Baghdad the decree of the same date was worded:

". . . That the Bishop of Baghdad has the right to use the faculties to be granted him "in all Assyria and Mesopotamia, in Basra, Mausil and Amid. But in the kingdom of 'Persia he may not" (use them) "except with the permission given in writing of the Bishop "of Isfahan, whose helper" (coadjutor) "he is. . . ."

They had been consecrated together on the 18th September, and on 4.10.1632 a letter was written by Bishop John Thaddeus—the only one known to the compiler to be signed by him 'Bishop of Isfahan'—to the prefect or secretary of the Sac. Congregation, saying that together with Mgr Perez he would have called, but was prevented by the want of a carriage.<sup>1</sup> At Christmas 1632 Bishop John Thaddeus exercised episcopal functions for the first time, conferring the tonsure on the young professed at the Carmelite convent of La Scala.<sup>2</sup>

Pope Urban VIII proceeded to explain the position and to commend the new bishops to Shah Safi in a Brief of 9.1.1633:<sup>3</sup>

"Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace. From what "Fr. John Thaddeus, the Carmelite, has set forth to Us, both from the letters of the king, "Your most glorious grandfather, which he brought to Rome,<sup>4</sup> and from the very polite "letters of Your Majesty,<sup>5</sup> which You wrote us after the receipt of Ours sent to Your "grandfather by Fathers Dominic and Matthew,<sup>6</sup> We plainly perceived with what great "predilection by aiding the Carmelites and Capuchins You are encouraging the Christian "cause, and how much zeal You are showing towards this object when You have promised "that benefits greater day by day shall accrue to them from Your liberality. For this "reason We are prodigiously obliged to You and promise that the remembrance of such "merit will not be erased ever from Our mind by any long lapse of time. This mark of "Your affection for Us and benevolence towards Christians induces Us to see after those "things, which the ordinances of Our most holy religion direct for their use, namely so "that those who have joined the Faith of Christ may not lack a shepherd and governor "to teach them, no less by his example than by his exhortations, piety towards God, "reverence and obedience to princes, kindness, gentleness, honesty towards all, and one "such as will constantly in the Sacrifices he offers implore of the Divine clemency Your "own safety and the prosperity of Your empire.

"For that reason We, following in the footsteps of Christ the Lord and of the apostles, "have raised this Fr. John Thaddeus to the episcopal dignity, that in those matters which "concern the salvation of the soul he may act as governor and director of those in Your "royal city who have already been, and of those who in future shall be enrolled as soldiers "of Christ.

"But, because it is much to be feared lest a man nearly worn out by old age should "soon quit this life, and in order that, if he should cease to live, proper provision be made "for a pastor for the Christians, We have created Father Timotheus, his companion, bishop

<sup>1</sup> S.R., vol. 209, p. 207.

<sup>2</sup> See MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. 7, book 5.

<sup>3</sup> S.R., vol. 209, p. 216, and Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, 47, p. 65, No. 73.

<sup>4</sup> No trace of the originals of these letters of 1628 of Shah 'Abbas, or translations (though they safely arrived) have been observed by the present compiler in the Vatican or Carmelite archives.

<sup>5</sup> Perhaps the first occasion on which a Pope gave a Shah the style of 'Majesty'—usually it was 'Highness'. Indeed, in the draft of one Brief 'Majesty' was crossed out, and 'Highness' substituted.

<sup>6</sup> Frs. Dominic of Christ, Matthew of the Cross arrived at Isfahan before the end of December 1628, see the former's letter from the 'Desert of Arabia', 6.12.1628, O.C.D. 237 e.