

“house, whom, he says, he has given to become a Religious: in three months he will know our tongue. . . .”

On 25.11.1629¹ Fr. Dimas, by then Vicar Provincial, wrote to Cardinal Ludovisi, Prefect of Propaganda:

“. . . Last March I replied to the letter of Your Illustrious² Lordship, informing you that when Moses, the new patriarch and Vartapet of the Armenians, who was then shortly expected, arrived I should have a discussion with him (as far as you have instructed me to do) as regards the points concerning our holy Faith.

“Now that the patriarch has arrived” (in Julfa) “I have several times discussed this matter with him and, although he has told me that he does not wish there to be any difference between us but only charity, notwithstanding, when I questioned him about acceptance of the Council of Chalcedon, he showed himself stubborn in this by reason of the hatred this (Armenian) race have for the Emperor Marcian, in the time of whom and by whose order, they say, this Council was held, when he imposed this on them, for he twice threw the book of the Gospels into the fire and made great slaughter among the Armenians. As to the two natures he endorses that we are speaking correctly in saying there are two natures: and (claims) that it is the same as they say, when they speak of one nature without destruction or annihilation of the other (nature). He adds that they do not consider S. Leo a heretic: for that reason I suggested to him that they should remove from their book of hymns and other prayers of theirs those words which they say: ‘Saint Dioscurus who excommunicated Leo and his filthy dogma’. Both to that and to other points he answered that he would communicate with his other Vartapets on the whole question, when he returned to Erivan, where is the patriarchal see, and that he would write to me whenever it was time, so that I might be present whenever this business was discussed, as by himself he could decide nothing.

“Meanwhile with the opportunity of teaching our language to the Armenian boys we are finding a way of instructing them in our holy Catholic Faith and in our customs, and we shall go on obtaining those results with the boys which we cannot do with the older men. . . .”

To these negotiations the Visitor General, Fr. Epiphanius of S. John Baptist, referred in a letter of 10.9.1629³ to the Sac. Congregation:

“In execution of the orders given me by your Lordships before I left Rome, directly on my arrival in this kingdom of Persia I tried to discuss with the Vartapet Moses,⁴ now patriarch of the Armenians, and to represent to him in name of His Holiness and your Illustrious Lordships that, should he wish to proceed with this union and conciliation, which from both sides we have so much desired, there was wanting nothing else but a more explicit confession of the two natures, wills and operations in Christ Jesus our Lord, acceptance of the Council of Chalcedon and consent in other various matters of less importance, in which they are at variance with our holy Catholic Faith.

¹ S.R., vol. 73, p. 238.

² ‘Eminence’ as a style of address was made general later.

³ S.R., vol. 115 (VI), ‘Lettere di Levante’, p. 367.

⁴ As to the Katholikos Moses III (of Tathev), 1629–32, the *Dictionnaire d’Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastique*, vol. IV, Paris, 1930, states:

“This Vartapet had been appointed patriarch by ‘Abbas I for having taught the royal slaves the art of whitening wax. But he had other merits of a higher order. Industrious, a good administrator, he wished to consolidate the relations knitted again with Rome by his predecessors, and entrusted Piromalli the Dominican with taking his profession of Catholic faith to Urban VIII. . . .”

Fr. Philip in his *Voyages*, referring to his own arrival in August 1629, mentioned:

“Some days had scarcely passed when the venerable Patriarch of the Armenians, named Moses, came to pay us a visit and express the great joy he felt at our safe arrival. We recognized clearly the real regard he bore us in the course of a longish conversation. . . .”