

"the administration of our missions is no longer in the hands of our Order—and from that time we have received not a line from them. . . . Though it is two years since the Pope's Brief was issued up till now no letter from the Sac. Congregation has come. . . ."1

Two main considerations troubled their minds and consciences. The first was only natural—the fatherly relationship between their General and each of them, the brotherhood and sympathy in needs between those in Europe and those on the mission, the letters of sympathetic understanding² which passed between Persia and the Order in Rome, particularly when the Praepositus General happened himself to be a former missionary, in fine the reliance they could place on their spiritual and material wants receiving attention—how different it would be when they were cut off from all that, and had to deal with impersonal, unknown dignitaries and secretaries, who would have no personal interest in their work, their troubles!:

"The missionaries have all written to our General pressing to be allowed to return, as they do not wish to live separated from obedience to their superiors. . . ."3

"J'ay supplié nostre Père General de m'envoyer mes patentes . . . et m'ayder à me remettre entre les bras de ma bonne mère, la Religion, et m'oster de ceux d'une marastre."⁴

"We here do not know how we are to live, and whose subjects we are to be. As to myself, rather than serve directly under the Sac. Congregation I should prefer to return. . . ."5

are examples of their sentiments, and there are others extant.

The second point concerned in part the bequest of Baron Cimini di Cacurri, by which the Mission to Persia was endowed, the income from which, however, seems to have reached the missionaries irregularly, and to have never sufficed for annual expenditure: and quite untrustfully they anticipated that they might be left without funds:

"I think it certain that, if these revenues of ours are placed in the hands of priests, our Fathers will die of starvation, and we shall have to abandon the Mission. . . ."6

"We are sure that the Sac. Congregation will never look after us with the same solicitude love and liberality, as up till now we have always been cared for by our superiors . . . with the taking away of that of which we have hitherto been possessed so legitimately and had distributed to us so wisely our ruin will ensue . . . to depend in material matters as well as in spiritual matters on the Sac. Congregation de Propaganda Fide, that cannot be, because we know that we should soon die of hunger. . . ."7

Before 25.2.1658 reassuring news had evidently reached the Carmelites in Persia, for the same Religious was writing to a Definitor General:

"I shall hope they will continue to improve: we do not believe that our lord Pope Alexander VII . . . will take away from a very poor Order a revenue possessed so legitimately for so many years, and so piously distributed in supplying with victuals seven Residences in an infidel country. . . ."

Finally, by June of that year instructions had come from the Order of such a tenor that all remained tranquilly at their posts.

In the section of this work summarizing the data regarding the financing of the Mission throughout its history more will be found as to the change of control, which does not, to the

¹ Fr. Felix, 12.5.1657, O.C.D. 238 p.

² True that at times the missionaries complained of being neglected: e.g. "It is just on 2 years that there has been no letter from the Order: no reply from the Praepositus General except two or three from the Procurator" (Fr. Stephen, 26.11.1651).

³ Fr. Dionysius, 20.11.1656.

⁵ Fr. Cornelius, 24.2.1657, O.C.D. 237 a.

⁴ Fr. Casimir Joseph, 16.10.1650, O.C.D. 241 h.

⁶ Fr. Barnabas, 20.7.1656, O.C.D. 241 f.

⁷ *Idem*, 16.12.1656.