

"If you, Father, only knew how badly things are going in the missions for lack of "Religious . . ."

and he cited one defect which detracted from the usefulness of their work:

". . . The changing from place to place in the Missions is very prejudicial: here have "I worked very hard to learn the Persian language, and I am practised in Isfahan business "and ways: there I was known to the principal officials at the Court, and sometimes was "summoned to translate letters from Christian princes sent to the Court, so that that was "always some protection. . . ."

Two years later, 1673, the position had even grown worse: ironically Fr. Angelus wrote:¹

". . . to think that this is a *province* of 5 Religious . . . separated twenty, forty, eighty "days' journey from one another, and the Vicar Provincial away from them for 3 or 4 years "in India, getting news of them barely every two years . . .!!"

"The chief need is of missionaries who will follow the Observance: six are needed. . . ," wrote Fr. Jerome in 1675.²

"I consider it very necessary that first of all the Houses and Residences we have at "present in Syria, Arabia, Persia and India be provided with missionaries—each House "with at least three, inclusive of those already there, together with one lay brother to "look after the sacristy and domestic matters: and with sufficient money to feed them. "As the funds we have from Naples are insufficient to maintain so many persons . . . it "would be necessary for the Sacr. Congregation to augment from its own funds our yearly "grant, i.e. at least 50 scudi annually for each House and Residence . . .",

the Procurator from the Missions had represented to the Sacr. Cong. in 1671.³ These representations had some effect, for the Procurator General at Rome in 1676 named 6 Fathers and one lay brother sent out to Persia;⁴ but the position does not seem to have been always understood:

"There are only 8 Religious in Persia, and our Fr. General orders me to have five at "Isfahan and three at each of the other posts,"

exclaimed in perplexity the Visitor General and Vicar Provincial of 1678,⁵ while one of the Religious at Isfahan comments:

"The Visitor General has posted three Religious in Isfahan . . . impossible! as the "House cannot support them. Living is very dear in this country, and often there is lack "of food. We exist in great poverty here. . . ."⁶

In the provision of missionaries there was at times a conflict of views between the Sacr. Congregation and the Discalced Carmelite Order—for instance, over establishment of a mission on the Malabar coast, in which the Sacr. Congregation had taken a strong interest, since it had first dispatched as its Commissary to India in 1656 Fr. Joseph of S. Mary, a Carmelite (later Bishop of Bisignano in Italy), and from the 1660's Fr. Cornelius of S. Cyprian and Fr. Matthew and others of the Order had been stationed there.

¹ 3.1.1673, O.C.D. 236 i.

² 3.9.1675, *Idem*, 238 q.

³ Fr. Valerius, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 252.

⁴ *S.R.*, vol. 461, p. 141.

⁵ O.C.D. 242 a, 21.3.1678, Fr. John Baptist.

⁶ *Idem*, 237 k, 20.3.1679.