

“memorials I have protested this to all the chief officials of the Court; but, when I had brought it to the notice of the king through the more efficacious intermediary of a very powerful eunuch called Ibrahim Agha,¹ he (the Shah) gave orders that I should be re-established in Julfa with all the losses done in the destruction of the church, which I had commenced to build, made good to us. But, by having recourse afresh to the Queen Grandmother, mistress of Julfa, and by scattering money once more among the promoters of their bad case, the schismatics had this order suppressed too and obtained from him another, which they assert to be absolutely destructive to the Catholics, threatening to be able by virtue of this to expel also all the other Catholic Fathers and missionaries and to punish all Armenians in communion with them.² . . . On this our enemies became so conceited that they celebrated another triumph. . . . So now, humanly speaking, there remains no other hope of preserving the Catholic community here except that suggested in my previous letters—either some embassy to the new king with congratulations on his accession to the throne, accompanied by complaints about the terms thus infringed, or else some resentment to be manifested against the schismatic Armenians trafficking in all parts of Christendom, in order that they themselves be obliged to arrange for the fire they have lit here to be extinguished. This last I believe could easily be effected by an order of His Holiness in discussing this business with the ambassadors resident in Rome of those Christian princes who are more zealous for the extension of the kingdom of Christ. I have written of this in particular to his Majesty the Emperor, by whose recommendation we had been enabled to establish ourselves throughout Persia; and your Eminence will better be able to decide who the more suitably can be asked to interest themselves in this business so important for the welfare of so many poor sheep abandoned to the jaws of the wolf. . . .

“. . . During my absence from Julfa the reverend Jesuit Fathers, together with Fr. Cherubin of the Third Order of S. Francis, my faithful companion, with all submissiveness to my instructions are attending to the comforting and encouragement of the Catholics, and after my expulsion Fr. Cherubin continued to gather round him the boys, for whom he had previously, along with me, run a very flourishing school. But with these new threats of driving away the Jesuit Fathers and himself he has been obliged to withdraw and join me in the City until we see the outcome of these upsets.”

The Carmelite Vicar Provincial evidently considered the second of the alternatives proposed as remedies to be the surer, for in his letter of 23.5.1695 from Hamadan he remarked:

“On account of the bad government at present all ambassadors enjoy small consideration here, being in fact much despised: a more efficacious method would be the compensation, which could easily be obtained from the Armenians in Europe, the agents of our persecutors: . . . and thus I do not doubt that in a few years the whole of this community or the greater part of it, kept back in schism by some of their chief men through intimidation, would easily return to the bosom of our holy Mother Church. . . .”

In a letter on the following day, however, he showed that such action in Europe would have obstacles to surmount:

“. . . Only I should inform you that, as our adversaries have also sent various emissaries of theirs to the Christian princes with letters and presents, claiming to justify their proceedings against me as a disturber of their community, and thinking that there too they can suborn justice with their guile, in order to remove any misconceptions I have sent off to various places by different routes narratives certified by irreproachable witnesses as to

¹ “By spending 150 scudi”—*vide* letter of 23.5.1695—‘a Georgian eunuch’, stated the *Vita*.

² The letter of 23.5.1695 adds, “contrary to the ancient custom of the Medes and Persians he (the Shah) changed what he had decreed in my favour. . . .”