

“town collected and dispatched a band of soldiers to look for them who after 20 days’  
 “march finally caught up with them forcing them to surrender and despoiled them of  
 “everything, binding them and ill-treating them, tied them together, two and two on  
 “horses, and to their great discomfort and suffering brought them back to Aleppo. Just  
 “as great as the delight of the Turks at seeing such a capture was the shame and sorrow  
 “of the Franks, especially as they were at once placed in a fort and confined in strict and  
 “very painful imprisonment. The consul for the French did not leave untried any possible  
 “way to make the Turks understand that this was a great injustice, and that they ought  
 “not thus to treat the subjects of their king; but they did not listen to him, the Turks  
 “replying that these people were not French, but spies for the Emperor and the Venetians,  
 “with whom at that time the Grand Signor was at war, and that they would not release  
 “them or let them go until the Porte, which had been notified of the matter, had decided  
 “what should be done. Both parties, in fact, wrote to Constantinople about this business:  
 “as the result of which not a long interval occurred before a *kapiji* came with orders to  
 “take the prisoners thither well pinioned, which would have been done with every rigour,  
 “had not the French community managed to win over the *kapiji* with various presents. . . .  
 “What afterwards happened at Constantinople we have not been able to learn, but we  
 “have only understood from our Fathers in Persia that in the following year” (1717)  
 “Monsieur de Gardanne arrived there with his suite and was very well received by the  
 “Shah. . . .”<sup>1</sup>

As to his mission, however, it was elsewhere alleged not to have prospered, a communication dated 14.10.1718<sup>2</sup> to the Sac. Congregation from Galata (Constantinople) reading:

“. . . Monsieur de Gardanne has not been fortunate in his mission: he had audience  
 “twice of the Shah, who treated him passably well; but ’Itimad-ud-Dauleh, the chief  
 “minister, did not do the like. He was unwilling to grant the conditions and terms that  
 “their ambassador had done in France, saying that he claimed that the treaty concluded  
 “by Monsieur Michel should be executed, after which he sent a *raqam* or order for the  
 “confirmation of the treaty without consenting to give a copy of the *raqam*. Afterwards  
 “he” (the Wazir) “sent away that gentleman to Isfahan quicker than he wished, saying  
 “that, if those merchants” (i.e. the French Company) “did not come within two years,  
 “affairs would fall out badly for him and for all the French in that country. I think Your  
 “Eminence will have already learnt that there was a rising in Isfahan against the Shah  
 “and king of Persia, who went off to another town ten days away,<sup>3</sup> where M. de Gardanne  
 “went to have audience and thence the chief Minister sent him back to Isfahan. . . .”

Not such an unfavourable aspect is put on the Persian attitude in a letter of 24.9.1718 by the Dominican Vicar Apostolic in Persia: it is evident that the French Government was doing everything possible to make for friendly relations, though the particular insistence of the powerful Minister on a French company of merchants being established in Persia in opposition to the Dutch and English interests is not easily explicable:<sup>4</sup> replying to Cardinal de la Trémoille about a request to transmit a sum to the Vicar Apostolic in Isfahan, 10.2.1712, the ‘Director Generals at Paris of the Compagnie Royale des Indes Orientales de France regretted their

<sup>1</sup> At Aleppo that year, 1716, on there being solemn exequies in the French churches there in commemoration of the death of Louis XIV, and a great crowd of Christians from the country, especially women, gathering, this offended the Turks, and caused the Carmelite mission great trouble; for on the following Sunday the Pasha sent Janissaries to all the churches of the Franks and imprisoned two or three of the Christians of each community, and made their representatives pay a heavy fine of 3 purses.

<sup>2</sup> Signed by a certain Domenico della Rocca, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 471.

<sup>3</sup> This was Tihran.

<sup>4</sup> In his edition (1740) of Fr. Krusinski’s *Memoirs*, Fr. du Cerceau claimed of Fath ’Ali Khan, ’Itimad-ud-Dauleh, that: “He liked all Europeans in general, but particularly the French, to whom he endeavoured to procure the preference in trade over the other European Factories: and this he did not only out of an inclination to them, but much more for a reason of state, having an idea that the too great privileges granted by Shah ’Abbas to those companies were prejudicial to the kingdom.”