

“pleased, but none the less on the eve I sent to make sure of it and to make sure of the officials; but one, the chief and secretary of the king, began to hesitate and find excuses, saying that it was necessary to present a memorial to ’Itimad-ud-Dauleh. At night my interpreter returned with such a reply, and your Eminence can imagine how taken aback I was at such unexpected news. All the same I did not lose courage and, after commending myself to the Holy Kings, early the next morning I sent the interpreter to the official in question and to another, whom I knew to be greedy for money, an intimation that I would give so many sequins if the business were finished that day. The officials in question were more obedient to the sequins than they had previously been obedient to the repeated orders of the Shah and of ’Itimad-ud-Dauleh, so that in three or four hours everything was settled all right. After dinner I was informed that I should go to receive the replies. A little later they brought the *khal’at*, i.e. the Persian robe, which the king is wont to give on similar occasions, as I wrote to your Eminence two years ago: and towards evening I betook myself to the Palace. Brought into the Shah’s presence I received politely from him the replies desired. How much we have had to wait and endure, not only through the evasions of minor officials, how much from the shuffling of our good enemies or bad friends, God knows. But, if the Polish Jesuit Father who has been my ‘sole Fidus Achates’ can arrive in Rome with the replies,<sup>1</sup> as I and he much desire, your Eminences will hear what I am humbly laying before them, the tale of all that has passed in these 14 months, and they will remain greatly astonished at it.

“But in the end that Lord, Who is a helper for the suppliant, has so disposed it that there should come to the capital the French consul who is (stationed) at Shiraz: and he, having learnt the justice of our claim, has spoken in favour of it to ’Itimad-ud-Dauleh and the chief secretary of the Shah, so that little by little our business has taken on a turn for the better, and finally, thanks to God, is well ended. . . .”

All this effort was merely to obtain answers—which implied orders or edicts (*raqams*) for redressing grievances—to requests by the Pope and Emperor and king of France for justice and compensation in respect of damage done to the Capuchin missions at Tiflis and Ganjeh, as already recorded elsewhere; but it gives a graphic picture of the sloth and extreme venality and indiscipline of administration to which Persia had come by 1722: and, after so much effort and expense the scepticism of that remark in the Bishop’s other letter of 22.2.1722<sup>2</sup> bears repetition here:

“How long these *raqams*, or edicts, will last and how they will be executed, God alone knows, because here it can truly be said: ‘Nihil permanet sub sole’. . . .”

Of another letter<sup>3</sup> to Shah Sultan Husain from Louis XV of France there is a copy in the archives; but from its date, 24.3.1722, it is evident that it could never have been delivered to that Shah, and whether to Shah Mahmud Afghan is doubtful: Archbishop Peter Martyr of Nakhchiwan had died there, 25.2.1721, and Fr. Archangelus Ferri from Brescia chosen in the

<sup>1</sup> Actually—on account of the Afghan invasion—Fr. Krusinski did not leave Persia till 1725, and had not reached Leghorn by 10.5.1727 (*vide S.N.R.*, III, p. 509). These letters of 1722 were presumably not delayed so long, and were not those mentioned by the Capuchin Fr. Felix on behalf of a Capuchin at Tiflis (*S.N.R.*, III, p. 571):

“In 1724 three letters from the king of Persia, then at Tabriz (?), for His Holiness, for the Emperor and for the king of France, sent via Astrakhan, as the way via Turkey was ‘suspect’, were given a pass by the Muscovites, but near Moscow by orders of the Senate the messenger was arrested and the letters taken away. . . .”

As to Fr. Krusinski, a letter from the Vicar Patriarchal at Pera (Constantinople) 10.12.1728 (*S.N.R.*, IV, p. 529) mentioned:

“Fr. Thaddeus, the Polish Jesuit, who was here in order to cross to Persia, observing that the roads were unsafe, left days ago to return to Poland.”

which is confirmed by Bishop Barnabas in his letter of 6.5.1730:

“From a Jesuit Lay Brother recently arrived I learn that Fr. Thaddeus, also a Jesuit, to whom my letters were entrusted, had gone off to Poland. . . .” He did not, in fact, return to Persia.

<sup>2</sup> *S.N.R.*, III, p. 530.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, p. 514.