

“ . . . Your last letters received on 18.1.1725 were of the 18th November and 20th December 1724: since then nothing received. . . . I will tell you that we in particular are in great distress, not knowing where to have recourse for some money for our ordinary expenses, and here foodstuffs are very scarce and exceedingly dear . . . so I am obliged to go off (if I find a convenient opportunity) to Bandar 'Abbas to find money. . . .”

What exactly happened, and when, to the Carmelite Residence at Shiraz the documents examined do not reveal; but of the other Religious there, Fr. Antony Francis, the 'Necrology' of his province of Lombardy records, ambiguously:

“Having been intrepid and constant in the midst of the frightful, bloody revolutions in the kingdom of Persia, at the age of 52, in the month of December 1728, to his great glory and merit he remained buried beneath the ruins of his Residence. . . .”

That may refer to the walls and roofs of the Residence collapsing, and to this Religious being fatally injured; but there may be an error of date, and November–December 1729 be intended when the following events occurred according to the diary written in Gāmburun by the Agents of the East India Company:

“Wednesday, 3.12.1729. . . . Our linguist” (= munshi or interpreter) “. . . received a letter from his wakil at Shyrash . . . that, on hearing of the Persian victory at Spahaun, those of that nation in Shyrash attackt the Afghans and the engagement lasted from Sunday noon, 9.11.1729, till the next day week, when the Afghans, getting the better, cut off all the Persians, plunder'd and burnt that city and retired into the castle, and two days afterwards on receipt of some news from Spahaun kill'd all the Bannians (= Hindus) also. Dilawar Baig, the deputy governor, an Afghan, came to our house, beat the linguist's agent, threatened to murder him, kill'd two of his servants and plunder'd the house of some sugar and tea belonging to the Chief and 400 Tumans. . . . On their leaving the house our people and the remaining Armenians who were not murdered retired to the hills stark naked, having been stript by the Afghans, and in the night-time came down to the adjacent villages to get victuals. . . .”

“Friday, 16.1.1730. . . . An Armenian, who was made prisoner by the Afghans in Shiraz and ran away from there, arrived this morning and confirmed . . . the massacre committed in that city. . . .”

But two days after occupying Isfahan 'Tahmasp' Quli Khan the Afshar set out with some 26,000 men after the Afghans:<sup>1</sup> and so the diary from Gāmburun for 16.2.1730 gives the news:

“Thomas Cooly Caun beat the Afghans near Shyrash and killed 2,000.”

Bishop Barnabas Fedeli in a letter of 6.6.1730<sup>2</sup> wrote of this Residence:

“ . . . Since the coming of the Afghans, and still more so since the return of the Persians this mission has been totally destroyed both materially and spiritually, because there are no more than two or three Catholics passing through, and the church, as in fact the whole house, is in ruins, so that it can be truly said—*non remansit lapis super lapidem*—not one stone remained standing on another: because all that is to be seen is a heap of mud turned to dust, and it is the greatest pain to behold it. . . .”

Fr. Philip Mary's letter of 17.11.1724 refers to the earlier part of the stay of the Afghans when he speaks of:

<sup>1</sup> From Fr. Leander's *Secondo Viaggio*.

<sup>2</sup> *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 539.