

“solely” in fact intent on deserving well of Your people, in the desire to show the sure way “to eternal happiness to whom they thus expose themselves to dangers, and do not spare “their toil, than which charity there is nothing more potent to procure the favour of a “magnanimous prince.

“If You will carefully turn Your mind to these matters We do not doubt but that You “will graciously discharge the Capuchins themselves their hospices, which they have at “Tiflis, Gori and Ganjeh, acquitted and free from every tax. . . . Given at Rome, 30th “June 1742.”

If under Persian despotism it was thus suppressed for the time being, in Turkey the malice of the schismatics was rampant in 1742. The pro-Vicar Apostolic of Baghdad was at Aleppo, 5.3.1742,¹ when he informed Rome:

“About twenty days ago I had the honour to give you the news that persecution of the “Catholics grows from day to day in this town of Aleppo, and by my last letter to inform “you that by a ‘Khat-i-Sharif’, i.e. an order written by the Sultan’s hand it was forbidden “to any Christian to profess the religion of the ‘Franks’, whether secretly or publicly, or “to enter their churches, and all that under pain of confiscation of property and the most “grievous punishments. Only in the last few days the heretic Armenians, (armed) with “an order from the Grand Vizir, seized the two churches which the good Armenian “Catholics possessed. The heretic bishop, who is a brother of the patriarch of Sis, the “organizer of this oppressive measure, also presented an order to the Pasha from the Grand “Vizir to have the Catholic bishop Jacob, some priests and the leaders of the community “exiled. . . . The bishop with some of the priests ran away to his convent which is near “Sidon. . . . At present this impious bishop” (i.e. the brother of the patriarch of Sis) “insists on professions of faith which are horrible and in which he hurls anathemas against “our holy Father Pope S. Leo and the Council of Chalcedon. Yesterday I went to our “consul’s with the missionaries to complain of this violence. . . .”

However, three months later, 30.6.1743,² Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert had better news to impart about Aleppo: after referring to the much greater mortality from plague among the schismatic than Catholic Armenians, and the belief current that this was a punishment for the persecution, he went on:

“We have learnt that the heretical patriarch of Sis is in prison in Constantinople, and “yesterday there arrived in Aleppo an official from the Grand Vizir, bringing with him “an order from the Grand Signor, revoking the former one which exiled the Catholic “bishop of Aleppo and 11 persons, priests and laymen, leaders of the Catholic community. “These good Catholics, having recovered their liberty, can work and in a short time they “will recover, with the help of God I hope, the two churches. Their zeal is such that they “will make no difficulty about selling everything to gain this. . . .”

From Julfa, 29.5.1745,³ while Bishop Philip Mary was still absent on his visitation of the northern provinces, Fr. Sebastian of S. Margaret informed the Cardinal Prefect:

“. . . Yesterday I received sure news that the patriarch⁴ of these waspish heretics, that “same man who some years ago gave us such great trouble, asserting that he would drink “(our) blood, recently went to the Shah with some intention of opposing us; but God “willed it that he did not have much success, since the Shah said to him: ‘Now I know “‘you to be a rogue, a liar, a deceiver, and a thief.’ Then he had his (the patriarch’s)

¹ *S.N.R.*, V, p. 76.

² *Idem*, p. 86.

³ *S.R.*, vol. 729.

⁴ This was the supreme patriarch or Katholikos of the schismatic Armenians, Lazarus, at Echmiadzin.