

“his death, of which it is hourly expected to hear, because of the definitely certain news
 “of the dislike the chief officials have for him, principally because Karim Khan through
 “his intercourse with the Armenians and Georgians has abandoned himself to drinking
 “wine to excess—a thing the Persians cannot suffer. . . .”

Still more forcibly three months later, 10.11.1764,¹ Bishop Cornelius of Isfahan, evidently put out at the attention the Sacr. Congregation had paid to remarks from Baghdad and elsewhere on his failure to reach his diocesan capital, expostulated:

“If Persia were in that tranquillity which the Sacr. Congregation suppose,² I should
 “have no need to be urged to set out for Isfahan, but matters are very different from what
 “they think in Europe. As previously confusion reigns: there is no head, nor tail: and
 “Karim Khan, whom the newspapers³ make out to be so powerful, is not in a position to
 “make himself obeyed, because of his small forces and many adversaries: and up till now
 “he has not been able to assume the title of ‘king’. When the roads open in one direction,
 “two others are blocked in another without any remedy being effected. As soon as I
 “shall have reached Bushire I shall write to your Illustr. lordship in greater detail, as
 “I promised in my preceding letter, this being only to give you advice of the receipt of the
 “letters dispatched to me by the Sacr. Congregation in January, February and March. . . .”

From Bushire, 2.5.1765,⁴ that promised report was indited, and to the reader and student today is of real interest: it is the work of a man evidently talented in the framing of such reviews, and a man with long experience of the East and a dispassionate outlook on passing political events: it had a definite purpose:

“to acquaint the Sacr. Congregation with the present temporal and spiritual state of Persia,
 “so that your Eminence and your Eminent colleagues may be able for themselves to judge
 “whether in the present circumstances it be prudent, useful and possible for me to reside
 “in Isfahan: or whether it be more expedient that I should dwell in some other place in
 “the diocese for the greater profit of the souls committed to my care. . . .”

“Turning now to speak of the condition and temporal government of this country, this
 “is what at present Karim Khan possesses—the town and provinces of

“Isfahan	Shushtar
“Shiraz	Gilan
“Tabriz ~	Azarbaijan
“Hamadan	and part of Greater Armenia,

“together with Luristan, the province of which he is a native. All the rest of the country
 “is divided up under the control of various other usurpers,

“(a) *Khurasan*—a very vast province, from which sprang the famous Nadir Shah, known
 “in Europe by the name of Quli Khan, has as its ‘king’ the grandson of Nadir
 “Shah, called Shah Rukh (Shah in Persian means ‘king’) and he is also grandson
 “by his mother of “Shah Tahmasp,⁵ the last legitimate king of the true race of
 “the ‘Sufi’ sovereigns of Persia. He would have been by now recognized by the
 “Persians, if he had not had the misfortune to be blinded by the rebels: and now
 “it is thought by many that people are waiting for a son of his to grow up, in
 “order that that son may be proclaimed sovereign of the whole of Persia,

¹ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 286.

² As an example of the opinions directly to the contrary which were reaching the Sacr. Congregation, see Bishop Emmanuel of Baghdad, 5.1.1765 (*S.N.R.*, VII, p. 292):

“. . . It is certain that Persia continues to be very tranquil under the wise rule of Karim Khan, who is in peaceful
 “possession of that kingdom: and an unequivocal proof of it is the frequency with which rich caravans come and go
 “between Isfahan and Baghdad. . . .”

³ An early example of misrepresentation by the Press!

⁴ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 308.

⁵ Not grandson of Shah Sultan Husain, as *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 10th ed., has it.