

- “(a) that at Rasht, the chief town of Gilan . . . so as to assist the Catholic traders there,
“a good number of whom every year come from Moscow, Armenia and Georgia,
“because of the great mart for silk there . . .
- “(b) the second mission to be provided is that in Julfa . . .
- “(c) the third to try” (and restore) “should be that at Shiraz, a town which now may be
“accounted one of the chief in the country, because Karim Khan, the ruler, has
“established his ‘royal’ Court there. Our Fathers had, years ago, a fine hospice,
“but in the narrowing of the periphery of the town which was later effected
“our house was razed to the foundations. . . .
- “(d) the fourth would be that which I myself opened in Bushire . . . to assist the
“Christians, who come from Basra and by ships from India, on board of which
“there are always to be found Christian sailors and Catholic passengers, and
“often too Indian heathens to be baptized. . . . Besides it would be easy for
“the missionary there to take refuge at Basra in case of need and sickness, and
“to obtain quickly from our Discalced Carmelite Fathers there a companion to
“assist him, because of the proximity and constant communication between
“those two towns.

“Then, in order to facilitate the introduction, and stabilize the residence in Persia of the
“new missionaries, it would be opportune (should the Sacr. Congregation so judge) to
“commission them to deliver some Brief from His Holiness, recommending them to the
“Regent Karim Khan, on the same lines as those written formerly by Roman Pontiffs to
“the Safawi Shahs . . . and I am sure, from what I know of the character of the reigning
“prince and of the very great insistence he shows in winning for Persia its former prestige,
“that the missionaries will be favourably received and obtain confirmation of the privileges
“granted them by the Shahs of old for the free exercise of their mission, especially should
“two at least be sent with some knowledge of medicine, one for Rasht, the other for Shiraz.”

The Bishop of Isfahan passed on to an important point which had been too often overlooked in the past and which was one of the main reasons for the Orders being unable to maintain sufficient Religious in Persia during the eighteenth century.

“Above all the Sacr. Congregation must be watchful that the missionaries receive
“punctually their annual allowances, lack of which has been one of the pretexts for leaving
“these missions deserted. Permit me also to add that besides their journey expenses and
“annual subsidy there should be assigned to the missionaries there some extraordinary
“grant in aid at the beginning, in order that they may put in a state of repair the ruined
“Residences or those threatening to collapse, and they should be provided with the sacred
“vestments, necessary books, etc. . . .”

Lastly, as to the see:

“. . . For the present dispatch of a bishop to Persia should be held in suspense, at least
“until the return to that country of some European Resident or Minister, who would protect
“him against unjust claims by those Persian or Armenian creditors that the bishop be con-
“sidered surety and answerable for debtors who have fled to Venice or other parts of Europe,
“on the false supposition that the bishop has power to compel them to make payment.
“Meanwhile the Bishop of Baghdad as Administrator of the diocese of Isfahan, instituted
“by decree of the Sacr. Congregation, can provide those working in Persia with the Holy
“Oils. . . .”

Nothing came of all this sage advice, the product of more than thirty years' experience in the mission field, and a mind of real prescience: had the Sacr. Congregation and the Orders bridged over the next thirty years by keeping alive a nucleus of Catholic posts, and above all by keeping in repair and Catholic occupation the valuable and historic Residences and their