

“learnt that I was leaving, came round. He begged me to wait, he would have horses fetched for all. I thanked him, saying that he could see very well how indisposed I was, and that I was obliged to get to Isfahan as speedily as possible in order to be cured, that the Fathers my companions would join me soon: and so I set out. The following day he at once sent horses for the Fathers, and in the evening they joined me. On the third day at night we reached a hamlet 12 miles from Isfahan. They made difficulties there about giving us a house, so we lodged at the public hospice. One of the Persians accompanying us set off for Isfahan forthwith in order to inform of our arrival the Shah, who two or three days before had arrived from a pilgrimage. That Persian returned before dinner-time and told us that the Wazir of the king had been annoyed and regretted that they had not given us lodging the night before: and that he gave instructions for us to go to the village and wait there till the following day, when they would send for us: and the Englishman wrote similarly to me. On the morning of the 2nd Decem̄ber they notified us that we should ride towards the city: one mile later we met the Mihmandar¹ of the king—thus they call in their language one who has charge of ambassadors and of persons of some quality, because he is always with the Shah—he came together with some gentlemen from that Englishman to meet us. He greeted us, and after the customary ceremonies we continued on the road, he leading the way. The office of the Mihmandar is to see that no offence is offered to ambassadors, to refer to the Shah what they desire, and to accompany them when they go out of doors: the rest of the time he stands at the king's gate and goes with him to see whether he gives instructions about anything. After two or three miles we found the Prior of the Augustinian Fathers with three other Fathers and two Italian laymen, who were waiting to conduct us to the city. The meeting with them was a great comfort to us, as it was such a long time since we had seen any Religious. A little while afterwards there met us the governor of the city² together with some 50 nobles who saluted us and bade us welcome in the name of his Majesty. In this style we rode on, I at the side of the governor, the Persians in front, the Augustinians and our Fathers behind. The governor accompanied us up to the door of the house which they had got ready for us inside the city, and then he left. The Augustinian Fathers stayed for a while with us: that evening they paid me the attention of lending me a bed and sent supper for me: and they sent us an invitation, in case we wished to stay with them; the house that had been given to us not being very good, but chiefly in order that we might live in unity with them (as Your Reverences so many times bade us to arrange to do, and so do away with many matters for discord which the Devil might stir up between them and ourselves) I accepted the offer. The Mihmandar returned that evening and brought us a supply of food. The following day I went to stay with the Augustinian Fathers: the two (Carmelite) Fathers and the laymen who had come with us remained in the house that the king had given us. The Mihmandar came to visit me on behalf of the Shah. That day they did not provide our Fathers with provisions, nor afterwards, it being the habit, after one has reached the place where the Shah is, not to give them except for the first day.

“The Patriarch of the Armenians, the bishops and many Armenians whom the king transplanted to Isfahan, when he captured Armenia, asked permission of the Shah to (be allowed) to come and meet us; but, as the annoyance which the king felt over the (project for) union . . . was still fresh, he did not wish them to come. The Shah had gone off hunting, where he remained for four or six days. Now the Patriarch and some of the bishops came to visit us: he asked to be excused for not having done so previously, nor having come to meet us at our entry, out of fear of the Shah. He complained to me of the harm that the Augustinians had done in giving to the Shah that written document in which obedience was made to the Sovereign Pontiff, because the king was wanting to have another patriarch appointed, and already many of his flock no longer obeyed him out of fear of the Shah. He came a second time to visit us, and we went to see him.

¹ Literally in Persian, the 'guest-haver', or 'holder', i.e. the 'guest-master'.

² Doubtless the *daruga*.