

Archbishop-elect of Goa a Brief from Pope Paul V, dated 22.6.1610,¹ commending Fr. Vincent and the Carmelites:

“ . . . Because Our beloved son, Vincent of S. Francis, of that Order was about to “return to Persia, whence some months previously he had come to Us . . . since he had “intimated to Us that you could be of great assistance to him, We have desired to recom-
“mend him and the brethren of his Order, who dwell in Persia, earnestly to You. . . .”

Similarly to the Viceroy of the Indies the same day the Pope wrote (Arm. XLV, vol. 6, No. 44) that, as the Shah of Persia had received them so well, it behoved the leading Christian faithful to promote the establishment of the Carmelites all the more keenly. In fact, not only at Hurmuz, but even more in connection with the opening of a house at Goa, the Carmelites were to encounter strong opposition from the Portuguese Augustinians (who were already piqued at the Carmelites invading their special sphere, as it seemed to them, in Persia and Hurmuz) and from the Council of Portugal and the viceroy's council in Goa. Details of those difficulties and their gradual surmounting can be read in the portion of this work dealing with the establishments separately (at Hurmuz and Goa).

After purchasing a building, in which he was permitted to make an oratory not open to the public, Fr. Vincent returned from Goa to Hurmuz, where he was back on 20.2.1613, and proceeded to construct a more substantial oratory on the ground floor, and to make plans for forming a convent independent of that at Isfahan, in which he had been encouraged by the Praepositus General writing direct, and bidding him make Hurmuz and India his special care:

“little is wanting to make it a convent, if that should seem convenient, and your Reverence “give your ‘bene placet’.”²

If this were approved, Fr. Vincent wished the Praepositus General to obtain Papal Briefs addressed to the Portuguese authorities respecting the occupation of more houses and land in Hurmuz by the Carmelites.

To the reader looking back on the troubled story of the Persian Mission as a whole it would seem arguable that this branching off into work in the Portuguese Indies and possessions was a dereliction from the original and main purpose of the Mission, i.e. the evangelization of Muslims and work in Persia itself, to be regretted in that it entailed not only much friction and discord in later years, but a squandering of man-power and divided interests. The missionary trained linguistically for Persia was to be wasted in a Portuguese environment, and vice versa. There was really no basis of training and preparation requisite for missionaries, no races among whom to work, or methods of access to them, common to Portuguese India and Persia. One is bound to conclude that it would have made for a consolidation of energy and concentration on Persian difficulties, had the two fields of work been kept entirely independent, and staffed direct from Rome as two separate entities with no common Vicar Provincial and no interchangeability of workers, cleric or lay. And more is the pity, the objects of the foundations set up in India disappeared within forty years or less—after that time neither funds nor recruits as choir brothers were being contributed by Goa to Isfahan and the other posts in Persia.

It was not only at Hurmuz and Goa that Fr. Vincent desired to have houses of the Order, but also at a place called Tatta some way up the mouth of the Indus in Sind: after Easter 1613 and his return to Hurmuz from Goa, at the request of Portuguese traders there for a priest he delegated Fr. Louis Francis with a lay brother to proceed to Tatta, where in due course a permanent mission developed.

The letters of Fr. Vincent of S. Francis, mostly dated in June 1613, after his own return

¹ Arch. Secr. Vat., Epist. ad Principes, Arm. XLV, 6, p. 18.

² *Vide* Fr. Vincent's letters, O.C.D. 239 b, No. 1 and No. 5 of 3.6.1613.