

“fortress, who were inviting the Persians to come there” (and take it) “as the Fathers were well informed. Moreover, since (Portuguese) India was everywhere at war with the Mogul . . . and much harassed by other enemies from Europe, so that at that time the Portuguese stood in greater need of receiving aid than of dispatching it elsewhere: and also, as the king of Persia had disclosed to the Count some important affairs, with which he (Sherley) was to deal in the service of his Majesty and for the weal of Christians: and finally because, while the matter stood at this point, letters from the Dutch reached him (Sherley) promising him very advantageous terms if he would recommend them to the Shah and support their requests to the latter—(a development) which would be of very great harm to all (Portuguese) India. So, seeing that from his departure many results would accrue . . . and, as he was always so inclined to do anything useful in the service of his Catholic Majesty (of Spain) as is to be seen in greater detail from a paper which he has indited, always preferring it to that of foreigners, even to that of his own nation, for all these reasons and others it appeared to the Fathers very convenient that he (Sherley) should undertake this embassy and, although it seemed to him hard to have to go to a country where the people had done him so much ill as the Portuguese had done, still for all that he made up his mind to do it, trusting in God, Who, just as He had delivered him from so many trials and perils to his life, would now too do so: and so he said that, since it seemed to them” (the Carmelites) “that this journey of his was for the glory of God and” (useful for) “the service of his Catholic Majesty, he would risk all, even if it were his life: and so he sent the reply to the Shah, who was so eager to know it.

“Then, when he (‘Abbas I) learnt of his (Sherley’s) decision, his satisfaction was so great that he swore by his head that whatever he (Sherley) might ask of him, he would grant it. The first time the Count met him, he said that, though he had sent to let the king know of his decision to go on his service, still it would have to be on his granting him a favour, and unless it were granted he would not leave, even were he to cause his (Sherley’s) body to be chopped in pieces. This favour was that the Shah should give order that a Discalced Carmelite Father go with him. The king said that he would send one, as he did in fact, as will be proved by an order of his sealed with his royal seal, a copy of which will be appended below.

“This injunction caught the Fathers at a time when they were in great straits and—because at that juncture there were only two Fathers in residence to undertake such a duty, one the present prior, Fr. John Thaddeus of S. Elisaeus, the other Fr. Redempt of the Cross, who had been appointed Prior by the Chapter General in Rome, the arrival of whose letters patent was daily expected. They were greatly disturbed, seeing themselves so bound on the one hand by their duty to their Order and on the other by the Shah’s command, which had so much force behind it in view of the ambassador’s determination in no wise to leave without the company of one or the other of them. . . . And, although the Shah indicated that it should be Fr. Redempt, in order that Fr. John should remain in that country, and issued instructions accordingly, still with all that . . . and the small desire Fr. Redempt had to go, in the end (for all the Shah having issued his orders and considering his fiat accepted) as it had to be one or the other, and each had so many reasons for not leaving the Mission, it was left to the casting of lots to determine . . . and after invocation of the Holy Spirit the name of Fr. Redempt was drawn out by the ambassador himself, who on seeing it went himself to kiss his hand, full of joy: and so that business was settled. . . .”

Although when this decision was taken Fr. John Thaddeus held the position of Prior, the other Religious merely that of Superior at the convent, the letters patent, or commission, for this journey were issued by Fr. John Thaddeus after Fr. Redempt and Sherley had left Persia and when notification had been received from the Praepositus General in Rome of the former’s jurisdiction having been raised and extended to that of “Vicar General” of the