

“many years previously, she had made the profession of the Roman Catholic Faith: and, on arrival in Isfahan, after having endured endless trials on the road, she received Communion as a viaticum with the utmost devoutness. But, reserving her for greater triumphs, the Lord willed that she should recover her health, and that it should come into her mind to retire to Christian lands in order to be able to live more tranquilly there. Because there is in Persia a law forbidding any woman to leave the country without first obtaining a special permit to that effect, the Carmelite Fathers tried to obtain for her this licence through the intermediary of the Khan of Shiraz, who was very willing to do her the favour, had it not been frustrated by a favourite of his, who was greatly set on marrying the Countess and for that motive suggested to the Khan that, as she had been a Muhammadan before becoming a Christian, it was not expedient that she should leave the kingdom to go to Christian countries: and thus the issue of the permit was prevented, and the former difficulties recommenced, and after a short time an order was given out for her to appear, within so many hours, in person in a mosque, where she was to be examined by a chief Mulla (who is, as it were, a senior priest of their religion).

“That appeared unsuitable to the Carmelite Fathers, and so they obtained from the Khan of Shiraz that the place for this examination, which it was proposed to hold, should be changed from the mosque to the church of the Fathers in question: when the Mulla rejected that, they came to an agreement on a third course, i.e. that it should take place in the house of a steward of the Khan of Shiraz, a great friend of the Fathers, by whom the Countess was accompanied, and there questioned for the space of a whole hour many questions were put to her, promises and threats made her, and an infinity of other devices. But she persevered, steadily confessing the Faith of Christ, and confounded the hopes of the Mulla.

“So, abandoning the undertaking for the time being to his great mortification and regret, he gave orders that she should not be allowed to leave the house in question.

“However, no attention was paid to this matter, and she was sent back to her own house with every respect and to the satisfaction of the Fathers.

“The persecution quieted down for the space of one month, and then broke out again more fiercely than before.

“It came into the head of a great friend of the Khan of Shiraz to marry the Countess and by that means make himself the master of her wealth and bring her back to the Muhammadan religion. With this in view, he sent many of his servants to the convent of the Carmelite Fathers in order to ascertain from them where the lady was, and with orders to bring her by force to his house.

“The Fathers replied that they did not know where she was, and in the meantime sent to let her know that she should take refuge in the church of (the Fathers of) S. Augustine and thence cross to Julfa, the town of the Christian Armenians, about two miles’ distance from Isfahan.

“She (thus) escaped this first encounter and withdrew into a convent of Armenian nuns, who follow the Rule of S. Basil for the government of their Order, though they regard our holy Mother, Teresa, as their patron.

“This persecution was then completely diverted and launched against the Discalced Carmelite Fathers, as it had failed to have any result with Donna Teresa: in her stead the Fathers were seized, bound, maltreated and led to the house of that favourite of the Khan of Shiraz—neither the king nor the Khan having any knowledge of this—it was demanded of them that they should declare where Donna Teresa was, and they were threatened with being tortured with pincers should they not reveal (to their interrogators) where she was, together with endless other insults: they were told among other things that the religion they professed was false and lying.

“To all this the Fathers remained fearless and firm, refusing to disclose the whereabouts of Donna Teresa and answering that their Faith was holy and good and true.

“Finally, realizing that all such insults and ill-treatment were of no use and avail