

“Christian doctrine, to read, write and languages. As there is no other Order except ours
“we have constantly to give hospitality to Religious, to priests and laymen . . .”

and the Procurator Fr. Valerius¹ on his way to Isfahan and Rome in August 1669 observed that at Shiraz, besides a few moribund children baptized and heretic Europeans converted, “more could be done with the Armenians, of whom more than 25 came to our church on “feast-days. . . .” In 1675 there was persecution for some cause unexplained, Fr. Celsus writing of ²

“the turmoil, through which we are passing, and how they put me in prison, making me “pay 2 Tumans, and how to escape chains and the rest two Tumans were spent: the “persecution is more and more fanatical, the Khan having sentenced Ismi Khan to pay “50 Tumans . . . we are at our last gasp, to the great ignominy of the name of ‘Franks’.”

In 1678 there was

“great penury reigning in Shiraz, things costing four and five times as much as previously,”³

while in 1688

“this town, so delightful in former times . . . was reduced to such a deplorable condition “by the extraordinary, continual rain, that not only a great part of the buildings, but also “a large proportion of the populace was ruined,”

this being followed by an epidemic when “thousands died in a day”.⁴

Next it may be noticed that from this period, and more especially from the time of the establishment by the French ‘Royal Company of the East Indies’, Bandar ‘Abbas,⁵ the modern site of the old Gāmbnun, began to receive visits from the Carmelites of longer or shorter duration: the first appears to have been that of 1667, Fr. Matthew of S. Joseph ‘baptizing children’⁶ —“he baptized 17 Muslims in seven months”.⁷ In 1669 the Vicar Provincial staying there “was altogether maintained by the director of the French company, M. Nicolas Mariage”. This chaplaincy “was useful”,⁸ he wrote, “but to be served only from December to March: “from June to October there was nothing to be done because of the climate.” In September 1670 Fr. Athanasius was stated to have been for the third year at Bandar ‘Abbas; but these visits had to be interrupted by the winter of 1670–1 owing to insufficiency of numbers of Religious.⁹ Fr. Celsus was a chaplain there in 1678, and others are cited up till 1684.

The working of a mission in Malabar, already mentioned above as an innovation from 1668, had four Carmelites sent out for it in 1676, and in 1679 four others: although entirely separate from the missionary ‘province’ of Persia, it came to replace those establishments of the Carmelites in India which had together formed the ‘Mission of Persia and the Indies’; for Tatta in Sind, which lost its former importance when Europeans ceased to reside there, was abandoned by 1672; the Residence at Diu was closed (for a time) by a rising in 1669, and is hardly mentioned during the rest of the century in letters preserved: while from the end of the period now under review nothing more will be heard of the convent at Goa. Even if the report which reached the vicar provincial in Isfahan in 1689¹⁰ were not accurate—

¹ *S.N.R.*, I, p. 252, 26.3.1671, Rome.

³ Fr. John Baptist, 11.9.1678, O.C.D. 238 k.

⁵ “Graveyard of the Franks”, was Fr. Angelus’ description, 3.1.1673.

⁶ O.C.D. 238 s, 3.5.1668.

⁸ O.C.D. 237 d, 28.2.1669: He must have been hard in his personal asceticism to complain of the Visitor General, Fr. Francis of Jesus, ‘relaxing discipline’ by allowing Carmelites to wear linen habits and do without some articles of clothing on account of the climate at Bandar ‘Abbas, O.C.D. 236 i, Fr. Angelus, 2.9.1670.

⁹ O.C.D. 236 i, 14.1.1671.

² O.C.D. 238 i, 15.12.1675.

⁴ and ¹⁰ Fr. Elias, 18.6.1689, O.C.D. 237 h.

⁷ *S.N.R.*, I, p. 252, Fr. Valerius.