

“were celebrating the Epiphany, we also kept the Feast, there being present besides those “of the household a numerous gathering from outside, when, as if to make a declaration “of their Catholic Faith, our patrons” (i.e. the Sharimans) “decided that the name of the “Sovereign Pontiff should be proclaimed during the Mass at that part of the Canon where “there is said by the priest and sung by the choir (the words): ‘per Eucharistiam concede “‘charitatem, confirmationem, desiderabilem pacem universo mundo, Sanctae Ecclesiae “‘omnibusque orthodoxis episcopis’, by adding: ‘in primis Archipatriarchae et omnium “‘Christianorum Pontifici Innocentio XI Papae Romano’, etc.

“From the devotion for the Pope’s name increasing it seemed proper that it should be “inserted in the Divine Office, which is chanted in the hall of the house assigned to us “each morning and evening, where there are present both for the prayers as at the reading “about 12 boys and almost as many men, who are daily instructed both in letters and “Christian doctrine, as well as in the knowledge how to sing the Scriptures especially the “Psalms, besides a plentiful gathering of infants and women who collect at fixed times both “at Mass and the Office, as also at a meeting and discourse held once a week.

“The envy of the schismatics could not brook such progress in Catholicism, and first “they promulgated against the priest Basil an excommunication, which they claimed to “have received from Echmiadzin and then, having stirred up the whole people of Julfa “against our patrons,—vartapets, presbyters, traders, etc., making a tumult among the “people—the Kalantar (or prefect of this town) being the leader, for the second time they “flocked to the magistrate of the Muhammadans on the 21st of this month, urging that “Fr. Basil should be expelled. For more than five hours this matter was debated with “various arguments, the five Sarrati brothers valiantly refuting the accusation. ‘Tolle, “‘tolle!’ clamabant schismatici, ‘perturbatorem hunc publicae quietis qui fidem nostram “‘destruit’. ‘Perperam,’ respondebant nostri, ‘adversus doctorem sapientissimum com- “‘moventur ignari, qui veram inter nos fidem extruit.’ (‘Away, away with this disturber “‘of the public peace who has destroyed our religion,’ clamoured the schismatics. ‘Wrongly “‘those ignorant people are stirred up against the very learned teacher, who has built up “‘the true religion among us,’ replied our partisans.)”

Here the letter goes into theological disputes that took place at the time over S. Cyril and the anathematizing of Pope S. Leo:

“In conclusion Aqa Zaman, the Muslim magistrate, persuaded the parties to make peace, “to which our patrons agreed as far as the Kalantar and a certain Khwajeh Johannes were “concerned, but not with the vartapets as long as Stephen the arch-mover of this tumult “should be their head. . . . Our patrons are constantly working—they are worth 70,000 “Tumans, i.e. more than one million scudi, and are well in favour at the Court. . . . “One difficulty, however, confronts them—the prohibition of marriage: unless their children “form unions in the second degree of consanguinity, they are unable to find anyone of a “condition in life equal to themselves. . . . It would be a great boon, were a dispensation “for this granted. . . .”

The letter from the Emperor to Shah Sulaiman, brought by the Visitor General, Fr. Agnellus, to Isfahan, as already mentioned, was delivered at the Court on 9.8.1683: and later the Prior, Fr. Elias, returning to seek an answer, obtained that *raqam* (i.e. rescript) of which a translation has already been given, purporting to permit the Carmelites to establish themselves anywhere in the Shah’s realm, without hindrance. Armed with this *raqam*, Fr. Elias reopened the house at Julfa, given by the Shariman brothers for him to reside with the priest Basil: and, when the latter died, 20.9.1686, in the Carmelite Convent at Isfahan, Fr. Elias resigned his office as Prior in the Convent in the city, in order to remain permanently in Julfa, where his mode of life is described by Lay Brother, Francis of S. Sirus, author of the *Vita P. F. Elia a S. Alberto*:¹

¹ O.C.D. 320 e.