

“Holy Sacrament, and Religious of various Orders carried a fine statue of the saint. In fulfilment of the last resolution there was written in Persian a petition addressed to the Queen Mother as ‘patron’ of Julfa: and I was to present it. But an accident caused delay in it being put forward: a certain Khwajeh Markar with considerable experience in such matters, whose directions we were to follow, became seriously ill. . . . With this delay in our moves, those of the schismatics were already so far advanced that it was judged expedient to await the outcome: and mainly because it was not to be thought that a decision would be issued without first hearing our side of the case.

“But we found ourselves mistaken in our expectations, because the Queen Mother, after receiving the petition (of the schismatics), as related, considered that her vassals were being unjustly oppressed, and then and there induced the king, who had been primed in advance by valuable presents, to order that the building we had begun should be destroyed, and that we should be expelled from our Residence there. The execution of this order was committed to the Diwan Baigi, i.e. the president of the civil court of justice: so with his retinue (“200 men” according to the *Vita P. F. Elia*) and with the Kalantar, bishop, Vartapets, priests and a great number of Julfa people on the morning of the 12th he went to our house: and as I had at once hurried there, he asked me why I had pulled down the former house, of which I had wrongfully possessed myself.

“I replied that I had paid the owner the price agreed and that he himself had put me in possession of it: that I was unable to produce the original title-deeds arose from the fact that the owner had delayed handing them to me until he sold me the other part of his house, and that he had promised me all this, but that it had not been put into effect because he had been stopped by the Kalantar and Vartapets: I said that the latter had contravened the orders of the king and the permit granted me by his Majesty, by which I was given the option of buying and building houses in all his realm without anyone being able to molest me.

“He (the Diwan Baigi) asked me for that permit, which I at once showed him¹ and which, when he had read it, he put inside the breast of his garments. Twice I asked him to give it back, and he answered that he wanted first to examine it, and that afterwards he would return it to me.” (The *Vita P. F. Elia* here adds “pointing out that it did not specify the town of Julfa”): “Having said that he ordered that the vendor of the house should appear: he questioned the latter who, although intimidated by the presence of the Kalantar and the bishop he was shuffling, nevertheless admitted having received the price of the house and having himself given me possession of it.

“Then the Kalantar produced another and ancient decree of the king, on the strength of which the people of Julfa claim that no European may reside in their town. The Diwan Baigi read that decree over to himself, and at once directed us to leave Julfa that same day and withdraw to our convent in Isfahan.” (*Vita P. F. Elia* adds here: “and thence submit a memorial to the Shah. Fr. Conrad interposed the trite, but impolitic remark that, if the Shah’s *raqams* were not to be executed, they might as well be burnt: whereat, angry and talking of cutting off the German Carmelite’s head, the Diwan Baigi gave orders to raze the church to its foundations.”) “Not satisfied with that, the schismatics pressed him to forbid us rigorously to return to Julfa and, when he had been given a meal, he did as they wished.

“The so-called bishop further requested that he (the Diwan Baigi) would compel us to give a written bond to pay 100 Tumans, should we act contrary to the prohibition—but the Diwan Baigi contemptuously rejected his importunate demands. None the less, after he had been conducted to the house of the Kalantar and presents given him, he sent off some of his principal officials who forced us to put our signatures to the fine. The Shari-mans were made liable to the same amount, if they did not denounce us, were we to appear in Julfa.

¹ This was the ‘privilege’—the *raqam*—granted by the Shah after the defeat of the Turks before Vienna (see p. 421, where a translation is given).