

“no news except that in November last year” (i.e. 1695) “he was in Warsaw in Poland, “on his return journey as Vicar Provincial.”¹

Now

“on Saturday, the 26th of last month” (i.e. December 1696) “to the joy of all Fr. Conrad, “the Provincial of the Carmelites in Isfahan, arrived bringing letters from the Sovereign “Pontiff, the Emperor, the king of Poland, and the Muscovite. . . . He brings fine “presents for the Shah and, though well able to style himself ‘ambassador’, does not wish “to do so. The Khan of Shamakha, through which place the Father passed, seeing that “the Father was bringing letters wanted to entertain him at the royal expense, but prudently “he would not agree to it. That caused much surprise at the Court. . . .”²

His susceptibilities salved, Fr. Elias at last had himself consecrated by the Bishop of Baghdad on the 30th December 1696, Sunday in the octave of Christmas, in the Carmelite convent church in Isfahan city, the Prior of the Augustinians and Superior of the Jesuits being assistant consecrators; the ceremony took place with much solemnity in the presence of the Portuguese ambassador, all missionaries and Europeans (except the Dutch) and the Catholic Armenians.³ In his letter addressed to the Pope, 6.9.1697, the new Bishop wrote:

“By the reverend Fr. Conrad of the Assumption, Vicar Provincial of this mission of ours “in Persia . . . I also am sending the deed of my consecration together with the prescribed “formulae of the oath and profession of Faith taken by me.”⁴

So the letter of 28.6.1697⁵ to Pope Innocent XII, quoted above, continued:

“. . . Fr. Conrad of the Assumption, Vicar Provincial of the Mission in Persia, arriving “hard upon the steps of the said envoy from Portugal, no less happily contributed to the “more thorough fulfilment of the action so well begun. For he obtained the issue of royal “rescripts (*sanads*) for the building of our church at Julfa, the confirmation also of the “‘farman’ granted us by predecessors of the king for the Residences already established “and for those to be established as we might wish and for us to exercise our functions “throughout the kingdom of Persia.

“On his request, too, the king commanded that the ruined” (part of) “our Convent in “Isfahan should be repaired at the expense of the public treasury, with regard to which “and other matters worthy of narration he himself” (Fr. Conrad) “can inform Your Holi- “ness more fully. . . .”

Bishop Elias’ letter of 15.9.1697⁶ to the Cardinal Prefect, after mentioning that Fr. Conrad had brought *other* letters from His Holiness, the Emperor, from the king of Poland, the Republic of Venice and Grand Duke of Tuscany,

“and was so adroit⁷ in making use of the authority he held that, in addition to the royal “decree for our establishment and for the erection of a church in Julfa, he further obtained

¹ Vide Fr. John Bartholomew, O.P., Julfa, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 173, 5.10.1696. ² *Idem*, 29.1.1697, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 184.

³ Mgr Pidou, 23.1.1697, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 180; Fr. John Bartholomew, O.P., 29.1.1697, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 184; Bp. Élias, 28.6.1697, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 178.

⁴ In his letter of 27.4.1697 (*S.N.R.*, II, p. 186) there is a curious reference by him to the Cardinals of Propaganda about the title of ‘archbishop’, and grant of the pallium.

⁵ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 178.

⁶ *Idem*, II, p. 198.

⁷ “He did it with the humility proper to a Religious, always clothed in the habit of the Order . . . and certainly “accomplished more than many others who exchanged their dress for some affected magnificence”: *S.N.R.*, II, letter 6.9.1697.