

“the confirmation of the ‘farman’ (of privileges) “granted us by the preceding Shah, “Sulaiman . . .”,¹

added the picturesque detail:

“and, as a final ratification of all his transactions, there were bestowed on him for himself, “for me and for the Vicar of Julfa three robes of honour (*khal’at*),² consisting of a dress in “the Persian style, a girdle, and surcoat and a headdress, all of silk fringed with gold and “silver: in these accompanied by many missionaries and European Christians we made “another solemn entry into Julfa, once more as much to the rejoicing of the Catholics as to “the discomfiture of the schismatics. . . .”

The biographer and companion of the Bishop, Lay Brother Francis Mary of S. Sirus, in his *Vita P. F. Elia*, relates the scenes at that entry:

‘On the 27th February 1697 two lay brothers were sent in advance to prepare the house ‘at Julfa’ (the same which had had to be shut up and abandoned in 1694) ‘and to notify ‘the Dominican and Jesuit Fathers, and Catholic Armenians. The next day was memor- ‘able. Fr. Conrad had been summoned to the palace by the Shah. Four small cannon ‘which Fr. Conrad had brought amongst his baggage were placed on the terrace together ‘with much powder and fired several times. The concourse arrived, paraded all Julfa and ‘then went to sing a “Te Deum” to the delight of the Catholic Armenians. On a later day ‘after the departure of the Portuguese ambassador the obtaining of the *raqam* for Julfa was ‘celebrated by another procession. Clothed in *khal’at* . . . the Bishop of Isfahan, with the ‘Shah’s *raqam* placed on his hat’ (an oriental gesture of respect and authority) ‘and two ‘other Carmelites followed by all the other missionaries and Europeans on horseback, rode ‘from Isfahan to Julfa, where they made the round of the Armenian township, calling at ‘the house of the Jesuits, at the residence of the French chaplain of Mgr Pidou, and lastly ‘at the Dominican monastery. The chronicle does not omit the detail that Khwajeh ‘Gurjin now had to hand over the deed of sale which he had refused to do in 1694.’

Some of the privileges thus extracted from Shah Sultan Husain appear never to have been implemented or utilized—the partly built church for the Bishop destroyed in 1694 not to have been rebuilt, or any church made for him at all, for instance: his letter of 27.4.1697 addressed to the Cardinals mentioned that Fr. Conrad “is till now continuing to press for the execution “of the orders promised by the king. . . .” In that same letter he observed:

“What most contributed to facilitate the business was the absence from the capital of our “adversary, Stephen.”

Already in a letter of 23.2.1694 he had³ written:

“. . . The new patriarch, Nahapiet, is sorely tried by the revolt against him manu- “factured by the frenzied schismatic Bishop of Julfa, Stephen, who had expunged his name “from the Mass and Office. . . .”

That redoubtable Vartapet, according to another source of information:⁴

¹ *Vita P. F. Elia* states:

“in addition he obtained a *raqam* of particular importance—for a Residence and church to be built at Julfa, with an “injunction on Armenian owners to sell any house property, the site of which might be needed for the construction of “the church and, finally, with licence to the Armenians to attend that church for Catholic worship without molestation “from the schismatics. . . .”

² A *khal’at* of the early years of the twentieth century was not so extensive, merely a cloak, long garment with sleeves, generally of rich Kashmir material.

³ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 95.

⁴ Fr. John Bartholomew, O.P., 5.10.1696, *S.N.R.*, p. 173.