

“care the letters” (from the king of Poland and the Emperor, reciprocating the desire for amity, and asking for information as to the situation from the Persian standpoint) “were directed, together with an indication of the success they have met, I am putting off asking for my dispatch from Rome; since then with letters more suited to the present position of affairs from His Holiness and from the Emperor and the republic of Venice already promised . . . it seems it can be arranged with some hope of bringing an amelioration to the (existing) grievous state of affairs rather than with the danger of involving them in greater desperation. . . .”

Finally he returned to the subject of his personal needs:

“I shall avail myself of a more opportune occasion to represent what I consider ought to be provided for my maintenance in the bishopric in future . . .”;

meanwhile he asked for there to be supplied, as formerly promised, and dispatched an outfit of vestments, books and other necessaries for pontificals: for the satisfaction of his debts contracted on his departure from Persia and during the last  $2\frac{1}{2}$  years, and expenditure on dispatching a messenger from Vienna to Isfahan with letters for the Shah: for suitable entertainment and maintenance,<sup>1</sup> and

“for the convenience of a four-wheeled carriage or cart, which it is usual to allow bishops from abroad, for want of which so far I have been unable to visit your Eminence as well as many of my patrons and inform them about affairs, as also to be unable to visit churches out of devotion. . . .”

On the one hand Bishop Elias was evidently discontented at the reception given to his requests and arguments, on the other the Sac. Congregation displeased at so protracted an absence from his diocese and of opinion that the Shariman family should be obliged to keep to their promise to maintain a bishop appointed at their instance, and that they were rich enough to do this; for in this letter the bishop observed that on his journey the Nuncios at Warsaw, Vienna, Venice

“used to assure me . . . that I was eagerly awaited in Rome, and would be received with favour, as in truth I experienced on my first arrival. But now, I do not know because of what change in the state of affairs I am no longer regarded with the same eyes and I am questioned, as it were, here and there why have I come to eat the bread of idleness gratis. For what have I come? and why have I abandoned my flock . . .? your Eminence will overlook it if I state these matters with too great a feeling of bitterness. . . .”

To that application and *exposé* there is appended a minute by Cardinal Francesco Barberini dated 5.10.1702 and addressed to the Cardinal Prefect of the Sac. Congregation de Prop. Fide:

“The Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide having on the 26th September last left to the decision of Cardinal Fran. Barberini the petition of Mgr Elias, Bishop of Isfahan, to the effect that he should be furnished with the 100 scudi a year, claimed by him as assigned to him after he was made bishop, for the period of nine years, of which he has taken 100 from the Sac. Congregation and 200 through the Nuncio in Poland all together so that there would remain in accordance with his claim some 600 scudi only due: and, as according to the decree of the Sac. Congregation the decision is to be regulated in proportion to the sums drawn on the 30 Tumans which the Sharimans undertook to provide, and the bishop is not able to recall precisely the time and sums paid him by

<sup>1</sup> In *S.N.R.*, II, p. 328, is a request to the Secretary of the Cong. to continue the “part” of the building he was occupying for the past two months (i.e. the rent), and to remit his monthly allowance for the past three months.