

“This is Our command, which all Our subjects must obey. As the ambassador from “the Emperor of France has represented to us how that formerly there had been granted “a *raqam* by which, wherever there should be need of repairs in the House of the “Fathers of Maidan-i-Amir, which is in Our city of Isfahan, these should be executed “with money from Our treasury and that the water which runs through their garden “shall be given them without any hindrance, at the request of the ambassador We “have commanded that a *raqam* should be issued in confirmation of what is stated “above: and it is Our wish that every time the House of the Fathers may have need “of repairs these should be done at the expense of Our treasury and that the water “should be allowed to flow into their garden without any hindrance. . . .”

Writing, 29.6.1706,¹ the Bishop of Baghdad notified the Sacr. Congregation that in accordance with the Bulls received he had the previous Sunday consecrated in his chapel at Hamadan as titular Bishop of Nicopolis the Carmelite Father Peter of Alcantara of S. Teresa, who had been selected in Rome as vicar apostolic for the dominions of the Mogul, etc.; but the new prelate did not even reach his destination, dying “on an English ship before reaching “Surat”, as reported in a letter of 28.7.1707.²

To succeed him was appointed Fr. Maurice of S. Teresa, titular Bishop of Anastasiopolis, who arrived in Persia, in company with another Carmelite, Fr. Joseph Mary of S. Mary, and addressed letters from Tabriz to the Pope and to the Cardinal Prefect, dated 16th and 17th January 1711:³

“They had been robbed and imprisoned for six successive days after arrival in Erzerum. “The Pasha demanded 10,000 piastres for their release, but the amount was settled at ‘3,000 piastres, loaned by local Catholics. On the Persian frontier also they were deprived ‘of what money they had left, and put in prison for a day. Before they quitted Erzerum ‘the Pasha was arming a force for a war against Persia; while in Tabriz at the time there ‘was internecine strife among the citizens, 3,000 of whom had been killed up till then in ‘the city, and the governor’s palace was being attacked. . . .’

This Carmelite Vicar Apostolic for the Mogul’s dominions it was who on account of a monetary claim for 270 rupees against the mission in Persia detained in India the money and effects willed by Bishop Elias to his Residence in Julfa, so that that needy post was not relieved financially, as it might have been;⁴ but he is of note as the subject of a most extraordinary step on the part of the East India Company, which, although not directly concerned with the mission in Persia, yet testifies once more to the good relations which so generally subsisted between the Catholic friars of this Order and the Protestant merchants from England in this region, and to the good opinion the latter had of the former.

Early in the 1700’s those Carmelites of the convent in Goa (technically still part of the Persian mission) who were not Portuguese were summoned to take an oath of obedience to the Portuguese government or to quit Goa. They were not ready to take such an oath and were expelled from the Portuguese dominions (1709), transferring themselves to Sunkara, and so they became merged with those working on the Malabar coast: and in due course some of them found work to hand in the island of Bombay, which had been ceded to the British Crown by Portugal as part of the dowry of Queen Catharine, but were still pursued by the exclusiveness of the Portuguese ecclesiastical authorities in Goa. To Mgr Maurice, the Vicar Apostolic mentioned, the Sacr. Congregation of Prop. Fide is found writing, 4.4.1718:⁵

“It has much displeased the Sacr. Congregation to learn that your lordship continues to “experience molestation and trouble through the unjust attacks made against you and “your missionaries by him who ought more than anyone else to assist and favour you in

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 483.

² *S.R.*, vol. 561, p. 258.

³ *Idem*, vol. 579, p. 38.

⁴ See letters O.C.D. 238 u of 26.1.1716 and O.C.D. 242 m of 1.12.1726.

⁵ *S.R.*, vol. 107, p. 46.