

“and, what is the chief thing, to vouchsafe to lead You by His heavenly light into the way
“of the true, eternal salvation.

“Given at Rome, the third of January 1719.”

In the following month the Pope wrote again to obtain redress for the Capuchins in Georgia, and to emphasize importance of the matter by pointing to the interest the Emperor and other sovereigns were taking. Dated 18.2.1719 (Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 94, p. 81), it began:

“Illustrious and most puissant king of the Persians, greeting and the light of Divine
“grace. Being beyond measure anxious that the letter which We wrote to You in the
“similar form of a Brief on the 3rd of the month of January last past should be brought to
“You safely, We took the course of forwarding it to Our venerable brother Barnabas,
“Bishop of Isfahan, by whom it will be delivered to You.

“With this same purpose in view We also send to that prelate three other letters, the
“first of which Our very dear son in Christ, Charles the Emperor-elect of the Romans,
“the second Our well-beloved sons the Doge and Republic of Venice, and the third Our
“likewise well-beloved son, the noble Cosimo Grand Duke of Etruria, have considered
“should be written to You, their piety urging them.

“From all the above-mentioned letters You will abundantly perceive how greatly not
“only We but also the exalted princes of the Christian commonwealth have it at heart
“that the very serious harm recently wreaked on the Catholic Armenians and the missionary
“Religious of the Order of Friars Minor of S. Francis called Capuchins at Tiflis in the
“province of Georgia shall be made good, its authors namely the schismatic Armenian
“patriarch at Echmiadzin and a certain Minas, a Vartapet, suitably punished, and finally
“the Armenian Catholics and missionaries so rejoice in the protection of Your benignity
“that for the rest they cannot be injured by any violence from anyone and, as is just, get
“freedom and tranquillity. . . . We ask You insistently to be so good as to lend favourable
“and kindly ears to the aforesaid Bishop Barnabas when he treats about these matters,
“while We shall not cease with earnest desires to beseech the Divine goodness that It will
“long preserve Your Highness unharmed and flourishing with every happiness. Given at
“Rome, the 18th February 1719.”

Evidently Shah Sultan Husain or his Wazirs did issue some orders to bring the patriarch (presumably Astvadzatur of Hamadan, 1715–29) to book, but bribery and corruption, those scourges of the East in particular, saved him from making the amends due; for, 22.3.1720, (Arch. Vat., *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 94, p. 510) Pope Clement XI was once more pressing the Shah on the point, so as to secure better conditions for the Uniates:

“Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace. By the latest
“letters brought here from the province of Georgia We are notified that the schismatic
“Armenian patriarch of Echmiadzin, of whom We have at other times strongly complained
“to Your Highness, since he was the principal author of that violent persecution, which
“grievously afflicted the Catholics living in the town of Tiflis, and indeed brought the
“utmost ruin to the Apostolic missionaries and to the whole mission established there from
“olden times, after he had by Your Highness’s command been compelled to submit to
“judgment by the governor of Erivan, having bribed the governor himself and the other
“senior officials with money, escaped the punishment which he was deservedly dreading
“owing to consciousness of his wicked action. From this it has come about that the
“adherents of the patriarch, puffed up with pride, do not hesitate openly and most impu-
“dently to threaten the orthodox religion with final destruction. How greatly not only We
“but also the exalted princes of the Christian commonwealth have been aroused by the
“enormity of this action, and how earnestly they seek of and adjure Your well-known fair-
“mindedness that You check the temerity of the aforesaid patriarch and his supporters by