

the Carmelite Fr. Basil of S. Charles dated Julfa 20.1.1708,<sup>1</sup> in which he warmly espoused the request of the Georgian 'patriarch', who wished to become a Catholic *secretly*: another signed by the Carmelite Vicar Provincial Fr. Joseph Mary of Jesus, dated Isfahan, 22.8.1709;<sup>2</sup> and a third by the Jesuit, Fr. Jacques Villotte in Rome, 18.8.1710,<sup>3</sup> with regard to the Georgian prince 'Leon' (Khusru Mirza), brother of Gurji Khan who went to Kandahar as commander-in-chief being himself 'chief judge' of Persia, and to the overtures of the 'patriarch' of Georgia and Khusru Mirza his brother to the Pope, desiring to be allowed to profess the Faith *in secret*. (The applications were disallowed by the Sac. Congregation—the minute being "not allowed by the decrees".)

To the Cardinal Prefect, 29.1.1710, Fr. Basil of S. Charles, then at the Residence, Shiraz, wrote the following letter in Latin:<sup>4</sup>

"From Aleppo on the 13th September last I was informed by Fr. Ferdinand that your Eminence had honoured me with a letter, which up till now has not reached me: it would be great joy and a singular consolation to me to receive and read it. I conjecture that it was about the conversion of that prince who is persevering in all sincerity in his intentions, and who from a motive of devoutness and reverence asked to have the Apostolic blessing.

"But, as to his having proposed to hide his intention, it is of course understood that legally, when neither asked nor questioned, he is not obliged to betray himself: he is, however, prepared to reply explicitly and affirmatively, if he were to be interrogated, even if he had to die for it. The king (Shah) himself knows that he is pretending" (i.e. to be a Muslim), "but because he is a prince and he" (the Shah) "has need of him, he" (Shah Sultan Husain) "dissembles" (i.e. keeps the matter secret, says nothing) "and does not force him.

"Now this person is on his way to Kandahar as commander-in-chief, in order to recover for the Shah that province which the Baluchis, rebels of old against Persia, have subjugated.

"When, in accordance with orders, I came to Shiraz, he received the Holy Sacraments from me in his house with devoutness and veneration; at the end he said to me: 'Good-bye, when you are free, come to me, wherever I may be, for I do not want to be without you, in whom alone I trust.'

"Besides there are others with him, who have made their confessions and abjured" (their schism), "and your Eminence may believe that, when there be occasion for it, I neither give absolution nor do I overlook. For here I seek nothing beside the glory of Him to Whom glory and honour essentially belong, and the salvation of souls. Your Eminence will perhaps deign to give orders for a duplicate of your letter to be written to me. We know your Eminence to be kindly disposed towards us, and for that return you our best thanks: I am proud to be under your protection, with which and blessed by your holy hands and aided by your regard I remain

"the humble devoted and most obedient servant of

"your Eminence, fr. Basil of S. Charles Dis. Car."

In that connection Bishop de Galiczen wrote from Erivan to the Comte des Alleurs, French ambassador in Constantinople, 21.9.1711:<sup>5</sup>

"Fr. — did not find at Isfahan Fr. Basil the Discalced Carmelite, to whom I had addressed some letters from Constantinople for Mgr the Bishop of Baghdad, as—according to what I heard in Tiflis—for a long time past he has been with the Georgian prince, commander-in-chief of the army of the king of Persia which has recovered Kandahar and seized the water of the fortress, where the rebel had retired. . . ."

<sup>1</sup> S.R., vol. 563, p. 415.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, vol. 575, p. 208.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, p. 210.

<sup>4</sup> S.N.R., III, p. 369.

<sup>5</sup> S.R., vol. 587.