

the emperor, obliged him to agree to pay an annual tribute of an enormous amount, despoiled him of his treasure (which was loaded on 100 elephants) and, taking the emperor's daughter¹ for his son's bride, departed rapidly towards the Ganges, after releasing the emperor and before the Moguls could collect their forces.

His booty was immense: and, after a stay of 58 days only in Delhi, he set out on the return march to Persia, 5.5.1739, proceeding by Lahore and Peshawar to Qabul. In his pride he could style himself 'Shah-in-Shah'—'king of kings'. On the return march he sent his brother, Ibrahim, against the Uzbaks in revolt, but Ibrahim was killed. In 1740 he was at Harat on the present Afghan-Persian frontier; and from Harat he moved on the Central Asian principalities of Bukhara and Khwarazm, whence according to the abstract in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* Nadir Shah proceeded to Mashhad, which he made his chief residence, and where he spent some months in festivities. Fr. Leander's narrative has it that in 1740 he went into winter quarters in Mazandaran:

"By the grace of God, after so many years of war in Persia we are beginning to breathe
"a little, with some hope of tranquillity,"

wrote Fr. Thomas of Aquinas, then Carmelite vicar of Julfa on 25.4.1741,² after congratulating the Cardinal Prefect on the election of Pope Benedict XIV, whom he had known at the time the new pope had been created cardinal:

"Wala Na'amat, the monarch, who usurped the kingdom, has already returned victorious
"from India laden with the spoils taken from the enemy and with treasures of immense
"value, having with his shrewd might there subjugated that empire to his proud, upstart
"Persian throne. . . ."

It is perhaps during that winter of 1740, but more probably after April 1741 and before the summer of 1742, that occurred the strange incident told by Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia's book in these words:

"The Shah-in-Shah at that time was staying in Mazandaran, while he had built in
"Khurasan the city and fort of Mashhad, so celebrated in Persia. One day, when he had
"gone for a ride with his women, as he passed near a thicket, a shot from an arquebuse
"was fired at him, but instead struck his horse in the breast. Immediately a second missile
"was discharged and he was struck by it in the left hand and the thumb of it was shot
"away. He fainted from the pain and fright, and fell from his horse, or rather, I should
"say, he fell together with the horse which had been wounded by the first shot. The ladies
"at once rushed to his assistance and, when he came to himself and his wound had been
"bandaged, he was taken back with all his following to his tents and there treated for his
"wound. He and his officials made many investigations in order to discover the criminal
"responsible for this attempt on his life; but, instead of discovering who that was, some
"days after he was recovered he found underneath the tablecloth a note on which there
"was written: 'In vain thou searchest for those who discharged their guns against thee:
"learn that the sons of Hasan-Husain are twelve: two of them have attempted to take
"thy life without success; but there remain another ten of them, who have to try and hit
"the mark.' The Shah-in-Shah turned pale and trembled on reading those words: his
"spirit was filled with such fear that he no longer knew in whom he could trust. Desiring,
"however, to know who had been the guilty person, he promised large sums of money to
"whoever might disclose it and he added that, should the criminal denounce himself, on
"his oath as Shah not only would he receive the sum specified but his life as well. Not

¹ The Capuchin Fr. Damian from Lyons, physician for several years to Nadir Shah and others of his family, wrote distinctly that it was Riza Quli Mirza who was married to the Indian princess, not Nasrullah as some historians have it.

² *S.R.*, vol. 708, p. 399.