

“(11) In the churches the Blessed Sacrament was (always) reserved with a lighted lamp.

“(14) On workdays almost all the population used to come to church at dawn to hear Mass, and those who could not come at dawn would come during the last two hours before noon. Ordinarily every first Sunday in the month they would make their confessions and receive Communion: on the Feast-days the holy Rosary was said, sung aloud at the time of the first Mass.

“(15) Processions took place in public without any interference or signs of contempt from the Muslims, or heretics, such as on Corpus Domini, on the feast of the holy Rosary, Rogation days. . . . The Viaticum was carried to the dying with cross and litanies, and with the same publicity the dead were accompanied to the cemetery appointed for Catholic Christians. N.B.—The villages of Karna, where there is a fine church, Santak and Kazzuk more than a century ago became altogether Muslim, except for one family. They call themselves under the jurisdiction of the Latin Archbishop because they are named in the farmans and privileges granted by the kings of Persia as a favour on the recommendation of sovereign Pontiffs, emperors and kings of France in the past.”

(Report of 1758: “. . . The Religious . . . have always kept and preserved registers of baptisms, confirmations, marriages and deaths, as prescribed by the Roman ritual. . . .”)

The Vicar Apostolic of Smyrna district in a letter to the Sacr. Congregation of 12.5.1754¹ remarked that:

“After the revolutions in Persia the greater part, almost all, of the Catholics of the province of Nakhchiwan fled . . . the majority of them have come and settled in Smyrna and its outskirts. For, besides a large number who have stopped in the city” (Smyrna), “there are at present almost 100 souls in the ancient town of Thyatira, two days by road on horseback from Smyrna; another like number in Adamish, another and new town two days’ distance: a few less in Chanir [*sic*], a large village three days away, and others scattered over the surrounding villages. . . . They have settled with the intention of never returning to Persia,² even should the disorders there be stilled. So they will become subject to this vicariate by surrender on the part of Mgr Salvini who . . . replies that they no longer belong to the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, but to the Vicar of Smyrna. So far I have employed two Dominicans of the same community in the three places mentioned above; but one of them has recently died . . . and one of the other two is old and in very bad health, incapable, as it were. . . .”

Four years later Mgr Dominic Salvini was still in Smyrna when a minute was made in the Sacr. Congregation, 21.8.1758:³

“Archbishop Salvini represents that he will not leave the city of Smyrna without express orders from the Cardinals of the Sacr. Congregation: as he is 68 years old, and extenuated in strength, he petitions them for their clemency and permission to retire to his convent at Santa Sabina. . . .”

(On 18.5.1750 already, when he had been 3½ years in Smyrna, Mgr Salvini had asked to be allowed to resign: in their session of 11.8.1750 the Cardinals did not approve of his resigning, and considered that he should remain at Smyrna looking after his flock there.) Now, in consequence of the decision taken, i.e. instructions of 2.9.1758,⁴ the Archbishop wrote to the Cardinal Prefect, 12.1.1759:⁵

¹ S.R., vol. 747, p. 302.

² Many of the Armenian race found round Smyrna—at any rate before 1914 and 1922—may therefore have been of Persian (Nakhchiwan district) origin.

³ S.R., vol. 778.

⁴ The Pope’s consent was granted, 21.8.1758.

⁵ S.N.R., VI, p. 489.