

“So in the year 1757 our tolerably large House there was finished, the building of which “swallowed more than 2,000 rupees¹ (40 Tumans of which Fr. Cornelius of S. Joseph “repaid, and the rest Divine providence supplied) in ironwork, in beams and such-like, “though reckoned at minimum prices which, it will be only fair for all time to recognize, “was due to the liberality of the praiseworthy Baron Kniphausen: and in order to forestall “and eliminate utterly any future disputes he deigned to secure and stabilize that house of “ours by a deed in favour of the Company to the following effect:

“In the name of the honourable Company of the East Indies we permit the reverend “Fr. Angel Felix of the Holy Spirit, Discalced Carmelite, to construct on this island a “house, garden and church, and to perform the Divine Office according to the Roman “Catholic rite for the Christian inhabitants or foreigners, on condition, however, that “a Religious of the Discalced Carmelites and of no other Order reside here.
“Given in the island of Kharg at Moselstein Fort, 1st May 1757, Kniphausen.’”

In 1760 the Dutch at Kharg made Fr. Clement their attorney and agent in Basra for their mails: the English consul and French vice-agent both objected to the appointment, complained to the Turkish governor and had Fr. Clement arrested by Turkish soldiers and deported to Baghdad: so that the Bishop had to protest, and this Religious was then appointed to Kharg.² Elsewhere, in the first portion of this chapter, the sudden and dramatic ending to that Dutch occupation of the island (which might well in time in their hands have proved a second Hurmuz, had years consolidated their hold) has been described: with the expulsion of the Dutch went all the Armenian Catholics: the Carmelite hospice and church were looted; their mission came to an equally sudden end.

Repelled from Kharg the Bishop of Isfahan, as he explained in his letter of 2.5.1765 from Bushire to the Cardinal Prefect:³

“obliged to return to Basra, I dwelt there about one year awaiting some favourable opening “for re-entering Persia. It was offered me by the establishment which the English Company “has set up in this port of Bushire,⁴ and eagerly I came here by the first opportunity, so “that of the three years permitted me to reside in Basra I stayed there only one year and “some months. . . .”

Mgr Cornelius had received news in private letters from Rome that the Cardinal Prefect and Secretary of the Sac. Congregation had

‘taken it ill that he had stayed for some time at Basra. He therefore found it necessary ‘to point out that, whereas the decree of the Sac. Congregation of 17.3.1760, approved ‘by the Holy Father, permitted his residence for three consecutive years and the use of ‘pontificals in Basra, in respect of which the Congregation had itself written to the diocesan ‘Bishop of Baghdad, he’ (Bishop Cornelius) ‘had abstained from profiting by those ‘faculties, despite requests from Julfa Armenians, in order to avoid hurting the susceptibilities ‘of the diocesan prelate. . . .’

After giving in detail the numbers of Catholics in all provinces of Persia, and the political situation (reproduced in another portion of this chapter) the Bishop of Isfahan thought that

‘their Eminences would be able to judge whether it would be feasible for him to reside ‘with profit in Isfahan. . . . He did not claim to exempt himself altogether from going

¹ Much at variance with Fr. Hyacinth's letter of 23.8.1757 (*S.R.*, vol. 773). To finish this “new house . . . the expenditure incurred by me amounts to 600 scudi, and more, all of it alms given voluntarily by our Armenian Christians, excellent Catholics, and all flock of the Bishop of Isfahan. . . .”

² Bp. Emmanuel, 19.6.1760, *S.N.R.*, I, p. 281.

³ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 308.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 219. The Bishop in 1763 anticipated that “many families of Armenian Persians now in Basra or “scattered in the neighbourhood would cross over to Bushire in order to dwell under the protection of the English flag, at “this time the most respected in the Indies and adjoining countries. . . .”