

“Mgr Pidou left for Hamadan with one of his clerics. Two of the priests from the Seminary in Paris have remained behind, and will shortly sell their house and then go back, I do not know whether to Hamadan or to Europe . . .”,

as stated in a passage in a letter of 29.1.1697.<sup>1</sup>

“Seeing that the house at Julfa was useless to me and a great expense and outside the diocese, I had agreed with the gentlemen from the Seminary to sell it to pay off debts contracted here; but these orders of mine were not executed after my departure from Isfahan, 6.6.1697 . . .”

wrote Mgr Pidou himself, 11.8.1699.<sup>2</sup> At Hamadan he remained until Bishop Elias had departed for Rome, and in the words of Mgr Pidou himself he received a communication dated 14.10.1699 from the Archbishop of Ancyra (then in Isfahan) to this effect:

“I see now that, unless I am mistaken, the presence of your Illust. lordship would be useful here (in Isfahan) in order that the work begun may be continued, and to make up for the absence of Mgr Elias,”

and lower down was added:

“It would be no less necessary for your Illust. lordship to come to Isfahan, at least for some time, in order to adjust these interests, duties and disputes, which, I see, are very involved. . . .”

So the Bishop of Baghdad continued, in reporting this to the Sacr. Congregation:

“. . . Your Illustr. lordship will see that it is not I who have chosen to be here in the midst of many hardships and in straits, burdened by poverty in this city, where there is a shortage of food; but after mature deliberation and after I had taken the opinion of persons of sense. I arrived here 2.11.(1699). . . . My faculties having almost expired, I beg your lordship to obtain for me confirmation of them, and in addition the Briefs necessary to permit of my exercising pontifical privileges outside my diocese, without which I shall be unable to provide for the spiritual needs of my suffering flock; and in fact all the missionaries and Catholics of Persia, who have at present no other Catholic prelate than the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, who resides in Greater Armenia, will suffer without them. . . .”<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, soon after his arrival in Isfahan, Bishop Pidou had, 10.11.1699, put the position in another light:<sup>4</sup>

“. . . I was on the point of leaving (Hamadan) for Baghdad, hoping to find some security in view of the peace concluded with the Turks. From several sides I have been so effectually dissuaded from it by persons with knowledge: and as, too, I lack the money for such a journey, I determined to come here with the help of Indian merchants, who lent me money at 24 per cent. . . . The Armenian schismatics exhibit pleasure at my residing here. . . . I still think of going hence to Basra as I greatly desire; but, hearing that that town is constantly in a state of upheaval and disorder, . . . I think I shall be obliged to give way to the wishes of the people and remain in this commercial city, not isolated and out of the way as at Hamadan. . . .”

<sup>1</sup> Fr. John Bartholomew, O.P., *S.N.R.*, II, p. 184; and see Mgr Pidou's own letter of 23.1.1697, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 180.

<sup>2</sup> *S.N.R.* II, p. 279.

<sup>3</sup> *S.R.*, vol. 536, p. 121, letter of 23.11.1699.

<sup>4</sup> *S.N.R.*, II, p. 287.