

“ . . . I have next the pleasure to inform your lordship that His Holiness, relaxing with fatherly indulgence the decrees already notified to you, deigns to allow you to continue to wear episcopal dress and to celebrate Mass in vestments (but not to pontificate) while you may go on living among your Religious.”<sup>1</sup>

Before that resignation, however, on 20.11.1717, Fr. Jerome, Prior of the Carmelites, wrote to the Cardinal Prefect<sup>2</sup>

“to give the news of the death of the illust. and most reverend Mgr Louis Marie Pidou, Bishop of Baghdad, which occurred yesterday in our convent at Isfahan. When Monsieur Jean Richard, the missionary from Paris, came here with the letters from the Pope to the king of Persia, the deceased prelate had devised to him in his will his house at Hamadan with all its effects; but after the departure of M. Richard, he cancelled that testamentary arrangement by another deed and left both his house at Hamadan and his other property to the person, whom the Sac. Congregation should designate either as his coadjutor or as his successor in the bishopric of Baghdad. As the bishop was in great need, we assisted him as much as we could and, besides the 20 Tumans formerly given him on loan from our allowances we have lent him up to now 14 Tumans: so we humbly beg your Eminence that . . . the Sac. Congregation will repay that sum. . . .”

The venerable prelate was over 81 years of age and for some 25 years had been a bishop during the whole of which period he did not leave Persia: with him, save for an interlude of a few days shortly to be recorded, finished that long residence in Persia of successive bishops consecrated to govern the distant diocese of Mesopotamia: another quarter of a century was to pass before there was again consecrated a bishop of Baghdad.<sup>3</sup>

As to the interests of France in Persia, of which Bishop Pidou de St. Olon had been an exponent, it may be of interest to quote the following translation from the Italian of a letter written by king Louis Quatorze, 25.9.1714, not long before his death, to Pope Clement XI<sup>4</sup>—the Nuncio in Paris reported in several communications his representations to the ‘Grand Monarque’ on behalf of the missionaries in Persia:

“Holy Father, We have received the Brief which Your Holiness had written to us on the 28th July, and We have had much pleasure from it, since it contains the testimony that You give to Our zeal for the propagation of the Faith. We shall still not leave anything undone to contribute, as far as it depends on Us, to the maintenance and establishment of the missions in the kingdom of Persia, and You should be convinced that We shall continue to be animated by the same sentiments of association with Your pious intention for the greatest glory of God, and the weal of our religion.

<sup>1</sup> His pension was also continued him.

<sup>2</sup> *S.N.R.*, III, p. 463.

<sup>3</sup> For any help that it may be to anyone writing a life of Bishop Pidou (as has been done in the case of two of his predecessors) the following references of letters in the archives of Propaganda Fide—not by any means exhaustive—are given: Letters of Mgr Louis M. Pidou de St. Olon: 28.7.1673, Rome, *S.R.*, vol. 441, p. 92; 20.10.1684, Diarbakr, *S.N.R.*, I, p. 439; 11.12.1684, Baghdad, *S.N.R.*, I, p. (?); 13.12.1686, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, I, p. 479; 10.10.1687, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, I, p. (?); 19.2.1688, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, I, p. (?); 31.1.1689, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, I, *post* p. 509; 24.7.1689, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, I, *post* p. 509; 14.4.1690, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, I, *post* p. 509; 30.6.1690, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, I, *post* p. 509; 16.11.1690, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, I, *post*, p. 509; 23.12.1690, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, I, *post* p. 509; 24.1.1691, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, I, p. (?); 28.3.1691, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 1; 21.4.1691, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 3; 22.9.1691, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 11; 9.10.1691, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. (?); 26.9.1692, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. (?); 1.10.1692, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 70; 8.3.1694, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 97; 29.6.1694, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 104; 6.8.1694, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 106; 23.4.1695, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 129; 25.10.1695, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 219; 23.1.1697, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 180; 30.11.1697, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 205; 11.8.1699, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 279; 10.11.1699, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 287; 24.11.1699, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. (?); 27.11.1699, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 389; 27.7.1700, Isfahan, *S.R.*, vol. 539, p. 255; 15.9.1700, Isfahan, *S.R.*, vol. 539, p. 256; 19.7.1702, Isfahan, *S.R.*, vol. 545, p. 413; 29.6.1706, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 483; 21.7.1706, Isfahan, *S.R.*, vol. 559; 9.7.1707, Erivan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 510; 12.4.1708, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 1; 3.5.1709, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, III, p. (?); 23.10.1711, Hamadan, *S.R.*, vol. 587, p. 28; 11.1.1713, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 402; 11.3.1713, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, III, p. 408; 12.3.1713, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 410; 25.9.1714, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, III, p. 75.

<sup>4</sup> *S.N.R.*, III, p. 448.