

and, 23.12.1726, from Aleppo:¹

“ . . . I came here to go to Constantinople to ask for a permit for the House at Hamadan, “without which there is imminent danger of it being lost, because the heretics have already “tried to get the Pasha to turn us out of this town: and, though they did not obtain it on “this occasion, they will certainly do so in time. . . .”

Three years later, 20.5.1729, he wrote, from Baghdad:²

“The heretics in Hamadan, as I wrote to your Eminence, tried to eject us from that “town by accusing us before the governor of being intruders in the house of the late bishop, “and alleging that it belonged to the Treasury because that bishop had died without any “heir. By Divine providence it happened that the governor did not side with them, but “confirmed that the house was ours, and declared it juridically to be ours, forbidding “anyone else to dare to molest us. A novelty among the Turks, but God is over all things!”

As a matter of fact, Monsieur d'Andresel, ambassador of France, had done what he could, on the evidence of his letter of 10.11.1725³ to the Vicar Apostolic:

“J'ay reçu, mon révérend Père, les deux lettres que vous avez pris la peine de m'écrire “de Babylone et d'Amadan le 17 et 25 mars dernier. Le tems n'est guère favorable pour “parler de commandements” (i.e. ‘farmans’) “qui regardent la Perse. Je tenteray cepen- “dant la demande de celui dont vous dites que vous avez besoin pour n'être point inquieté “dans la possession de la Maison d'Amadan, occupée autrefois par MM. les Evêques “Picquet et Pidou de St. Olon, et qui l'est actuellement par vous en qualité de Vicaire “Apostolique de Babylone. Le second commandement que vous demandez pour deffendre “que les Francs payent le caratche(خراج) dans la Perse ainsy qu'on l'a fait payer à Kar- “mancha n'est pas peu difficile à obtenir, les Turcs prétendant que les capitulations ne “font point mention de pays conquis. Je verray néanmoins ce qui pourra se faire au sujet. “Quant au troisième commandement pour permettre d'avoir une maison à Babylone, dans “laquelle on puisse faire ses prières et où les Chretiens du pays eussent la liberté d'aller, la “demande en a esté faite par plusieurs de mes prédécesseurs, et elle a toujours esté rejetée, “aussy il ne serait pas prudent de s'exposer à un nouveau refus. Il est vrai que les Capuchins “avoient autrefois une maison dans cette ville, mais elle fut demolie par ordre de la Porte “pendant l'ambassade de M. de Fariol. . . .”

Then another change in the administration of the diocese of Baghdad is to be noted. Returning “on the road to Baghdad”, Fr. Joseph Mary of Jesus, 20.10.1727,⁴ addressed the Cardinal Prefect:

“Again and again I wrote to your Eminence (asking) that I may be released from office “as Vicar Apostolic for the diocese of Babylon. I had accepted it unwillingly, and because “Cardinal Sacripante said to me that it would be only temporarily. It is beyond my “strength. . . .”

In consequence, in a session of the Sacr. Congregation, 26.9.1728,⁵ the Secretary reported that:

“on account of Varlet, Bishop of Baghdad, being in Holland, a schismatic, refractory and “also excommunicated, but all the same not deprived of his diocese and, as this diocese

¹ *S.N.R.*, III, *post* p. 588.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 608.

² *Idem*, IV, p. 34.

⁵ *Acta* for 1728, p. 460, *vide Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 5.

³ *Idem*, III, p. 595.