

Fr. Placid himself did not return to Basra till 25.10.1734 (when he had finished making his visitation of the Persian missions), and Brother Augustine may have remained at Bandar 'Abbas only a short time, for he died at Masqat, 30.7.1737, when "coming from India to go "to Europe by sea". In any case Fr. Antoninus of S. Dionysius was sent to Bandar 'Abbas by the Vicar Provincial in September 1735, only in his turn to die of fever, 6.4.1736.

"The French, English and Dutch had citadels and soldiers there, and their ships were "continually going to India and returning, but now under the rule of the new Tyrant it "has much diminished (in importance). A few Christians are to be found"

occurs in the report of Fr. Emmanuel written when he was Procurator for the Mission in Rome, 1740.¹ Then there was probably an interval when no Carmelite was, or could be, sent from Basra, for,² 14.12.1744, there was read in the Session of the Sacra. Congregation a communication from the Dominicans of Sta Sabina regarding

"Fr. Felicissimus Barberi, O.P., (who) passed on to the life beyond in the port of Bandar "'Abbas, where he had been sent by Mgr the Bishop of Isfahan to administer the Sacra- "ments to the Catholics there, deprived for a long time past of a priest and the Sacraments."

Even of recent years Bandar 'Abbas has been called feelingly by Europeans compelled to reside there "the gate of hell" on account of its climate: in the early eighteenth century, without the hygiene and medicine and skilled doctors of today it was, as one Carmelite expressed it, "a cemetery for the Religious". According to *Cont. Basra. Chron.*, in the beginning of 1755

"Fr. Urban of S. Elisaeus by direction of the Fr. Vicar Provincial left Bandar 'Abbas, "where he had laboured several years,"

for Kharg Island. However, by 1763 it had been abandoned by the East India Company, the last of the European Factories, in favour of Bushire because of the intolerable conduct of the Persian Khans of Lar, and all motive for posting a missionary there must have ceased, as far as care of Catholics was concerned.

Next, the episcopal residence at Hamadan may be taken. In appealing to the Cardinal Prefect for financial aid in view of "the deplorable condition of the Missions in Persia, Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert, 1.10.1731,³ reported that, owing to the total defeat of the Persian force, and recapture of the town by the Turks

"for the third time this poor mission at Hamadan is ruined. Fr. John Joseph, who was there, has fled to Isfahan. . . ."

"Only the church remained intact," so Fr. Joseph Mary understood according to another letter from Baghdad, of 4.7.1732.⁴ In 1734 the pro-Vicar Apostolic posted at Hamadan Fr. Charles Raymond and in due course reported once more to Rome:⁵

". . . I have received a letter from Hamadan yesterday evening from my companion "Fr. Charles, who writes that he is living in tranquillity in the bishop's house, but that it is "uninhabitable and almost in ruins, as there are neither doors nor windows nor beams, "all having been burnt by soldiers in the wars, besides which the roofs are falling down and "the walls of the garden have already fallen, so he asks for money to repair it. To repair "it will cost at least 500 scudi. . . ."

¹ *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 577.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 216.

² *S.R.*, vol. 721, p. 256.

⁵ *S.R.*, vol. 684, p. 42.

³ *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 548.