

release of Fr. Emmanuel an epidemic<sup>1</sup> started, and he caught it while attending spiritually to local Christians and was ill for a whole year as the result. From the season of the year this contagion is unlikely to have been plague and may have been cholera, unless typhoid fever. *Cont. Basra Chron.* records it as a "malignus influxus . . . nos detulit diuturnis cruciavit infirmitatibus ita ut taederet vivere". There the Carmelites lost from it Fr. Charles Balthasar, 4.11.1737, and Frs. Cyril of the Holy Spirit and Placid were both kept in bed with it: Mr. Peter French, the English 'Resident', died at the end of the epidemic.

In March 1739 Fr. Emmanuel set out for Rome, for one reason as Procurator for the Carmelite missions to attend the Chapter General, for another he needed to apply personally to the Sac. Congregation for more assistance in money and men for the growing work and wide limits of his sphere: and away from Baghdad he remained till 5.7.1746 from a variety of causes. On 14.5.1742 the contumacious Jansenist, Mgr Varlet, died in Holland: the bishopric of Baghdad thus became vacant and in the Session of the Congregation, 25.6.1742, Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert was nominated to succeed him, the approval of the Pope being given, 30.6.1742, and the Bull of Pope Benedict XIV is dated 26.11.1742:<sup>2</sup> he was promoted in the Consistory of that day. He was already in Aleppo when the news was brought to him, turned back to Malta for consecration<sup>3</sup> and monetary troubles kept him in that island till June 1744 in correspondence with the Sac. Congregation. It is a contrast to place his letter to the Cardinal Prefect of 26.1.1743 with its "sentiments of liveliest gratitude" for his nomination alongside those of Fr. Dimas and Fr. Dionysius with their horror, and vehement refusal of similar episcopal appointments a hundred years previously.

In forwarding the certificate of his consecration, which took place on 21.12.1743 in the cathedral at Valletta, and in a memorial to the Pope at the same time (8.2.1744)<sup>4</sup>, as also in

<sup>1</sup> It may interest medical men and others to have other evidence from the Carmelites regarding occurrences of epidemics in Mesopotamia and Syria. The diary of their mission at Aleppo (*vide Études Carmelitaines*, January 1925, p. 162) gives under 1719:

"Towards the end of February plague appeared in this city, of which account all began to be greatly afraid, because it was already many years since there had (last) been any: so they had great apprehension that it would be very severe, particularly as it had begun in February—a very bad sign. Contrary to their wont the Turks themselves became very anxious at the danger, and to avoid it many of them went off elsewhere on the pretext of selling their wares: others shut themselves up in their houses on other pretexts, but never saying that they were running away or shutting themselves up out of fear of the plague, for that in their eyes would have been a sort of apostasy.

"Of the Christians of the country a large proportion went off travelling: others withdrew to villages and neighbouring towns: others locked themselves in their houses after the fashion of the Franks. Many, however, did not pay much attention to this scourge and, unable to do otherwise, continued their business as usual.

"The Jews went away, all of them, with their families: and the Franks according to their wont locked themselves in their houses, except for some English merchants who withdrew to the mountains. The first to shut himself up was the French consul in the middle of March: after him the English consul: then the merchants: and last of all the Religious. . . . The plague began to do its work vigorously, so that in the city alone it came to there dying every day 2,000 to 3,000 persons, apart from those who were dying outside the gates. . . . Of the Christians it came to their dying at the rate of 130 to 140 daily. Of the Turks it is reckoned that 150,000 died of it: of the Christians about 12,000. Of the Jews 500 to 600 died at the beginning, then they all went away, as mentioned. What, however, is astonishing is that, after so heavy a mortality no diminution" (of inhabitants) "was to be noted in the city: the various quarters are as full as previously . . . and from this it can be judged what the size of the population is in this city. . . ." Then, "in 1733 there was plague in this city of Aleppo. . . . The mortality in this city has not been so great in comparison to other epidemics of plague: it is thought that 40,000 to 50,000 persons in all died. . . ."

Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert wrote from Sidon, 12.7.1733 (*S.N.R.*, IV, p. 274):

"In this town the plague is almost finished: letters from Tripoli report that it is raging there now . . ."; and then from Aleppo, 24.9.1733 (*S.N.R.*, IV, p. 278) he continued: "I arrived in Aleppo 17.9.1733: plague had entirely ceased after having done tremendous carnage: upwards of 60,000 dead is the number calculated: among them no European except one Father of ours (Fr. Jerome) who had exposed himself for the sake of those infected."

During his next, protracted stay in Aleppo another epidemic broke out. Writing thence, 30.6.1743 (*S.N.R.*, V, p. 86) he mentioned:

"Here in Aleppo we are shut up in our houses, as well as all the Franks, on account of a great plague, and during the two months and some days we have been shut up in our houses already about 20,000 people have died. The severe heat begins to master this epidemic. Of the Christians about 1,500 are dead, but few Catholics among them: and, what makes everyone marvel is that the plague seems to have been sent as a punishment of the heretic Armenians on account of the great persecution stirred up by them against the Catholics. Plague did not allow me to approach Constantinople and other places," he remarked in another letter of 13.11.1743: so he went to Malta, where "for eight days I was in quarantine", he remarked in another letter of 15.11.1749.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide Acta* for 1742, p. 250, quoted by Fr. Lemmens in *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 10.

<sup>3</sup> "I shall have to wait too long in Aleppo, if I wait till the end of this war" (letter of 30.6.1743).

<sup>4</sup> *S.N.R.*, V, pp. 106-14.