

“prior to my departure from Basra, the necessary rescripts from the Sacr. Cong. . . . as
“also the reply of His Holiness to the petition I made to him to be allowed to retire as a
“simple Religious to some convent of the Order, and there quietly end the *rest of my days* . . .”

and presumably it was the spring of 1771¹ before he quitted the region of the Persian Gulf, where he had laboured so long, seeing that

“before my departure from Basra I had received the letter written me by the Sacr. Congregation under date 11.8.1770 . . .”,

and he wrote from Baghdad, 30.6.1771,² to the Cardinal Prefect:

“In consequence of the permission graciously given me to retire to a convent of my Order I have come to Baghdad, where through the lack of an early caravan³ I see that, contrary to my wish, I am compelled to stay until after the broiling heat of summer has passed.”

While in Baghdad he was to take part in a ceremony which made a small piece of church history, viz. the reunion of the Nestorian patriarch Elias to the Holy See:⁴

“. . . The bishop deputed by the patriarch Elias to make his profession of Faith in the formula of Urban VIII . . . which he and his suite made to me publicly in our church and in the presence of Mgr Cornelius and of the missionaries, 22.11.1771 . . .”;

and when

(“despite plague already epidemic round Baghdad, the activities of 'Ali Baig in Syria, and disorders committed by troops on march, all reasons that rendered the rare caravans far from safe,”)⁵

he at last departed from Baghdad for Aleppo, 17.12.1771, he was the bearer to Rome of the documents of reunion:⁶ and from Aleppo Mgr Cornelius wrote on the subject to the Cardinal Prefect, 16.2.1772.⁷ By 25.4.1772 he had reached Naples,⁸ whence he wrote warning the Sacr. Congregation that

“all letters coming by sea from countries suspected of contagion” (i.e. from plague) “pass through the lazaretto and quarantine posts, and are unsealed and fumigated as a precaution . . .”—

evidence that at Naples 160 years ago they were thorough in their quarantine precautions,

¹ Vide a letter from Basra of 18.2.1771, *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 604: “our illustr. reverend Mgr leaves here with the greatest displeasure. . . .”

² and ⁵ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 631.
³ What a caravan journey meant in those years may be read from Mgr Charles of S. Conrad's letter, 13.6.1774 (*S.R.*, *nei Congressi*, 34):

“. . . after a few days a caravan will leave” (Basra) “for Aleppo, to the number of 200 loaded camels only but with 150 soldiers as a guard for fear of the various Arab tribes, so the cost of forwarding will be nearly 200 piastres a load. “I do not grumble at paying 55 for a riding camel, and 70 for the camel with the trunks when coming here.”

⁴ Bishop Emmanuel, *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 669, 2.12.1771.

⁶ Bishop Emmanuel, 18.1.1772, *S.N.R.*, VIII, p. 18.

⁷ Bishop Cornelius, *S.N.R.*, VIII, p. 24.

⁸ *S.N.R.*, VIII, p. 26.