

“greatly esteemed by all. We assuredly shall be in Your debt for whatever favours and kindnesses You do them, not otherwise than if these had been conferred on Ourselves. But We beg that You will grant them most ample letters of protection, which are called among you ‘Farmans’, by which they may be able safely to dwell anywhere in Your dominions and pass to and fro without any risk or inconvenience.

“For the rest, be never reluctant to have confidence in those things which in Our name they shall publish concerning the unique esteem, with which We regard Your Majesty, and as to the especial longing for Your eternal salvation which We retain in Our mind. Just as We shall never cease to solicit from God Your safety, so We have laid an injunction on both of them to persevere continually with their pious prayers and sacrifice in their Masses on that behalf: and We added not a few admonitions and, if these are observed, We trust that they” (the bishops) “will be very submissive to You and of service to Your empire.

“We ask of You besides that You will give orders, as soon as possible, that the temple, which Your grandfather had pledged himself that he would build spacious and fine for the use of Christians in that royal city of Yours, a promise which he had openly confirmed by a decree of which We have spoken, be erected worthy of Your magnanimity and Your beneficence. In this matter You will imitate the most famous Cyrus and Darius, who of olden time wielded the government of that Your very vast empire and who, as is related in the sacred books of Esdras, liberally furnished the cost, and expenses of priests and sacrifices, for the building of the Temple at Jerusalem; nor ought You to doubt that You will receive a very great reward for the merit of having done this from God the dispenser of all good things.

“Finally, We desire that the Christians who at present inhabit the borders of Your dominions and those who may do so in after-times be very heartily commended to You: and We earnestly beg of You that You will afford them Your patronage and shield them from every harm and molestation, and prevent anyone from being an obstacle to the functions which they perform according to Christian rites.

“We especially request You, however, to protect Our venerable brother Timothy, Bishop of Baghdad, with Your royal interest and clemency and by Your authority procure him the favour of the viceroy in Baghdad, so that supplied” (by the latter) “as expeditiously as possible with the helpful Farmans of which he” (i.e. Bishop Perez) “will have need he may be able to dwell everywhere unrestrictedly and attend to the duties of his office without hindrance from anyone. Should You do all this at Our request, You will have Us for ever devoted to You on account of so many and such great boons, and We shall constantly pray God the father of lights to enlighten Your mind with the splendour of His Divine grace, and that He will bestow on You eternal blessedness in Heaven after a career of very many years passed happily among mortal men.

“Given at S. Peter’s, Rome, the 9th January 1633, the 10th year of Our Pontificate.”

On 30.3.1633 also a Bull was issued,¹ addressed to Bishop John Thaddeus, granting him faculties with regard to reserved cases (reconciliation of schismatics, heretics, apostates, etc.), with regard to irregular marriages, the consecration of the Holy Oils, conferment of Holy Orders, conditions for plenary absolution, appointment of vicars, his rights and authority *vis-a-vis* the position of Regular clergy: and also permitting him to make his ten-yearly visit *ad limina* by proxy, and specifying the territorial limits of his diocese. It is not translated at length here, because it does not differ from the usual grant of faculties in the case of bishops *in partibus infidelium*.

While still in Rome on 20.3.1633, Bishop John Thaddeus commissioned the painter, Albertus de’ Rossi, to make a painting, 18 by 12 palms² in dimensions, to represent S. Gregory,³

¹ *Vide Jur, Pont.*, vol. I, p. 146, O.C.D.

² A Roman palm equalled about 25 centimetres, making the dimensions some 4½ by 3 metres, O.C.D. 237 m.

³ It is to be remembered that, later, the first church at Basra also had a painting of S. Gregory the Illuminator.