

“the love of God and a soul. He was for a long time ill from it and hardly was he recovering than he had a violent attack of pain from gravel, to which he was subject, suffering cruelly. But he did not put off his departure which he had for long past projected for the spring of 1642. He had schemes for which it was necessary that he should return to France. . . .”

He appointed the Prior of the Augustinians Vicar General for diocesan affairs and handed over charge of the ‘cathedral’ church and his residence to that Order in Isfahan. An inventory was made, 13.3.1642, by the Augustinian Fathers, Joseph of the Rosary and Raphael of the Ascension. There were a number of paintings: of Christ and the Virgin: an ‘Ecce Homo’: a ‘Flagellation’: a ‘S. Teresa’: a ‘S. Francis de Sales’.¹ Shortly after 1.4.1642 Bishop Bernard left via Baghdad and Aleppo (where he is stated to have held the first confirmation for 100 years): in the latter town he laid the seeds of the planting ten years later of the Jesuits in Julfa—see a letter of Fr. Amieu, S.J., to his General quoted in *Hierarchia Carmelitana*:

“. . . He (Bishop Bernard) wants on his return to take with him into Persia Fr. Amatus Chezaud and another of ours . . . that he hoped to do wonders with two of our Society.”

It is stated that among the plans he had in view was to obtain financial support in France for a seminary in which to train missionaries for Persia—French, presumably; but on his arrival in Paris he found his patron, Cardinal de Richelieu, dead and no one to support his plans for his diocese. So he remained in Paris until in 1645, in a general session of the Sacra. Congregation, 13.3.1645, it was reported:

“the Bishop of Baghdad, who has returned to France from his residence in Isfahan, Persia, is not troubling to return to it: the Sacra. Congregation directed that a letter be written to the Nuncio to admonish him to betake himself to his residence as soon as possible. . . .”²

The result of the admonition can be seen in a decree of the Sacra. Congregation dated 7.8.1645:³

“Cardinal Spada referred” (to the meeting) “letters of Fr. Bernard, Bishop of Babylon, and at the same time certificates of doctors in Paris regarding the infirmities of the said bishop, i.e. headaches, pain in his hair, deafness, eye-trouble, on account of which the doctors in question in accordance with the rules of medicine judge that the bishop cannot undertake so lengthy a journey, i.e. to Persia, without manifest risk for his life, nor, too, remain in that country, both because he needs constantly being treated with medicines, and because in Persia there are neither doctors nor the medicines required for his maladies, to render them milder and more tolerable: the Sacra. Congregation decreed as follows: (a) it considered that, because of the said maladies, the bishop should be held and obliged either to resign his bishopric, or to take for himself a coadjutor or suffragan, so that the said diocese may not suffer by being without a shepherd: (b) if in the view of the Nuncio to France the reasons alleged are proven, they would suffice to incline His Holiness to allow him (Bishop Bernard) the favour of remaining with a quiet conscience at Paris and of devoting himself to the pious task of” (forming) “a college for sending workers to Persia, but still on condition of (his providing) a coadjutor or suffragan. . . .”

The rest of the account of the career of Bishop Bernard Duval may be read, *en resumé*, in the biographical section of this present compilation. Though the Papal decrees reconstituting the diocese, and various Briefs denominate it as ‘Baghdad or Babylon’ (modern scientists

¹ Vide M. Leon Mirot's publications, cited.

² *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 10, by late Fr. L. Lemmens.

³ S.R., vol. 210, p. 9 *et seq.*