

“On the other hand he is very negligent and thoughtless in his pastoral office: not once in eight days did I see him seriously occupied in any thing which immediately concerned him, except that he attended in the morning and evening at their customary prayers.

“As to its habitat his community is divided: one part lives subject (in temporals) to the king of Persia, the other part—except for some few lands belonging to them near the towns of — and Van subject to the Sultan of Turkey—is in the province of Zain . . . in the country of Kurdistan, and is subject to a prince, also a Muhammadan, named Taj-ud-Din [*? sic*]. The latter makes use of them for warfare, and can put up to 12,000 under arms. They are a very bellicose race, and in particular so great is their innate hatred for the Muhammadans that they consider nothing a greater festival than to find an opportunity for putting them to the sword. In Persia the greater part of them live around the town of Urmieh, and there are about 100 hamlets or settlements of land: and there will be some settlements with 200 families, so that between large and small hamlets they would come to a total of some 5,000 families (so they told me). In the province of Maragha some 5 or 6 hamlets, almost as many near the town of Solduz: and so on for the others. They subsist usually from agriculture, and are very poor on account of the great and constant oppression they suffer from the Muhammadans.

“Next as to the language, the whole race uses a Chaldaean vernacular as the channel of communication among themselves: in addition to that tongue, that portion of them living in Kurdistan, or rather Zain . . . speaks the Kurdish language<sup>1</sup> and that portion living in Persia speaks Turkish, and many of them also know Armenian because of their proximity to Armenia. But what I much bewail is that that portion residing in Kurdistan cannot be helped by European missionaries, because these Muhammadan Kurds are evil men, robbers and . . . so savage that no foreigner can take even a single step in their country.

“With regard to their errors and abuses, it is true that these are great and numerous, but they arise more out of ignorance than obstinacy, so that they do not display stubborn resistance to the truth. I hope that the grace of God will free them from these. First, they have remained Nestorian: and every evening at public prayer commemoration of Theodore and Nestorius is made by a deacon; although indeed, as the people are little read, they know little of what the dogma of Nestorius consists. I was once questioned by the interpreter in the presence of the patriarch as to what we thought about Nestorius: and I replied that, as Nestorius had been condemned by the General Council of Ephesus, he could not be followed or accepted, and that we ought to believe that Christ our Lord from the first moment of His conception, in which the union of the two natures was made in the person of the Word, was very God and very Man. They did not show themselves antagonistic to this doctrine.

“Two days after that there happened something which caused me much surprise. The patriarch was writing the above letter to His Holiness: and I was present, but in order that everything might go forth with greater frankness and sincerity I determined not to say anything, and to allow them to act, whether for good or for evil. When they had finished they begged me to say whether what they had written was well said. They had written ‘Vobis et Nobis est una Fides, et unus synodus’” (You and we have one and the same faith and synod). “I merely took notice of it, and asked them of which synod they meant to speak, seeing that there were four General Councils—Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus and Chalcedon. They enquired of me whether all those four were recognized by the see of S. Peter, and when I answered ‘Yes’—after the patriarch had reflected for a little regarding that of Ephesus—they then added that they held all four councils to be true, and they accepted all that the see of Peter and Paul accepted.

“The amenableness of this poor folk is great, so that I hope . . . that it will not be difficult to persuade them of the truth. I took it also as a sign of this amenableness that, while they were writing the letter, I said to them that that day was the feast of S. Peter

<sup>1</sup> Generally known as ‘Kirmanji’.