

Next, this eccentric nominee by the Archbishop of Toulouse for such a see as Baghdad 'postulated'—made a request for—the title of 'patriarch' together with the imposition of the sacred pallium, in letters in elegant Latin with many quotations, engrossed in shapely handwriting.<sup>1</sup> He also argued at enormous length that Isfahan was part of the diocese of Baghdad! (He had seized on faulty drafting of the Bulls to make this last claim.) These assertions were carefully examined:<sup>2</sup>

"In the Sacr. Consistorial Congregation, on 3.7.1670, there were brought up three applications, which had been referred to it by the Sacr. Congregation de Propaganda Fide on behalf of Mgr Louis Placid du Chemin, Bishop of Baghdad, who had been directed to proceed to his place of residence:

"(a) the first was that, as the church at Babylon was a patriarchate, he (Mgr du Chemin) should be granted the pallium, and style of 'Patriarch'.

"(b) that, as he was by the Bulls no less bishop of Isfahan than of Babylon, there should be no innovation made as regards his jurisdiction as Ordinary, belonging to him in each of the dioceses.

"(c) that the limits of those dioceses be set out so that he may know how far his jurisdiction extends and within what limits he can use the facilities granted him.

"To the first application the Sacr. Consistorial Congregation replied: 'Nothing at all,' judging that the application was void for many reasons, especially for two, viz.:

"(I) the authority of the Canons in Arabic attributed to the Council of Nicaea being limited, the church of Seleucia, to which it is claimed that Babylon or Baghdad has succeeded, was never recognized as a patriarchal church, neither by the Roman church nor by any legitimate Council, nor by approved writers: and, even if Seleucia had been assigned the title of 'patriarchate', it is not proved that Babylon succeeded to Seleucia, since from the geographical maps the contrary appears to have occurred, for they uniformly show Seleucia on the banks of the Tigris and Babylon on those of the Euphrates, though not far distant the one from the other.

"(II) the application was rejected because, whatever the truth may be in this controversy, in our present case attention must be had to the intention of the Sovereign Pontiff, who had no desire for the prelate at Babylon to be a 'Patriarch', nor would it be expedient for reasons which were discreetly noticed in the Congregation, but he (the Pope) had explicitly appointed him bishop and in the apostolic enactments he (Bishop du Chemin) is given no other title except that of 'Bishop of Babylon'.

"As to the second request the Sacr. (Consistorial) Congregation has replied to his Eminence, the Prefect of the Sacr. Congregation de Prop. Fide, that the latter should notify Monsignor du Chemin that he need not attach any weight to the mistakes that were made—there had been one in issuing the decree of the Sacr. Cong. de Prop. Fide of 12.11.1657, where the see of Isfahan is stated to be 'annexed' (joined) to the church of Baghdad. From that one a graver mistake arose in the Bull of Alexander VII, in which the one diocese is confused with the other and not only were they considered as united, but as one and a single diocese, it being continually called 'of Baghdad or Isfahan', whereas it is evident that they are two distinct sees little less than 1,000 miles distant the one from the other: on 6.9.1632 they were given separate prelates . . . and they have never been considered as united; but merely in 1632 the Bishop of Baghdad was made coadjutor of Isfahan: and in 1638 the Sacr. Cong. ordered that Fr. Bernard, who had succeeded to the see of Baghdad, should be Vicar Apostolic of Isfahan. . . ."<sup>3</sup>

Bishop du Chemin must have been powerfully protected at the French Court—or perhaps

<sup>1</sup> See *S.R.*, vol. 421, p. 438 *et seq.*, and *S.R.*, vol. 422, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, vol. 424, p. 197.

<sup>3</sup> See also *Idem*, vol. 517, p. 166 *et seq.*