

To Monsieur Michel is ascribed the obtaining of those *raqams* dated in the month Rajab 1120 A.H., i.e. early in 1708, already noted in their specific connections—one for the repair of the convent of the Carmelites, another for the punishment of the Armenians who had molested the Capuchins at Tiflis, the third for an enquiry into similar offences by Armenians at Tabriz.

The new coadjutor bishop, Mgr de Galiczen, who for most of the year 1710 had been waiting at Marseilles for a ship, at Smyrna in February 1711,<sup>1</sup> reached Erivan in the Caucasus before 21.9.1711, for on that day he wrote to the French ambassador at Constantinople, the Comte des Alleurs:<sup>2</sup> and he was in Isfahan before April 1712, for there is on record<sup>3</sup> an

“Extract from the Decree of the king of Persia issued at the instances of M. Gratien de Galiczen, Bishop of Agathopolis, coadjutor of Babylon, for the peace and quiet of the Missions and the re-establishment of the articles of the treaty and those of the ‘Farman’ given in 1708 out of consideration for the ‘Emperor’ of France in favour of the Missions, which since have been disturbed by many acts of molestation and by a ‘farman’ obtained in 1710 by a stratagem by the patriarch and principal schismatic Armenians:

“We order and command all the Baiglarbaigis, governors, officials and magistrates of our empire to recognize the said treaty, its ordinances and instructions in every thing—in fact to pay respect to all the Fathers and other persons whatsoever who live in all our empire under the protection of the “Emperor” of France, and not to permit anyone among the Muhammadans or Armenians or of any other nation to cause them the slightest annoyance or injury.

“And you, O lieutenant of the province of Azarbaijan, are to have escorted by some person under your direction to Hamadan, the Father,<sup>4</sup> whom the ambassador has left in the city of Tabriz. And you, O governor of the town of Hamadan, when the said Father has reached Hamadan, are to have immediately escorted to Isfahan by some Mihmandar among your subordinates Mgr Pidou the Bishop, so that things may be done in the way the “Emperor” of France has given instructions, and there is no departure from his orders. Given on the 30th of the month of Rabi’ I 1124,” = 29th April 1712. (Seal of ’Itimad-ud-Dauleh.)

But, tragically enough for those who had counted on his efforts to improve the situation, Mgr de Galiczen died 22.9.1712:<sup>5</sup>

“There had already died in the month of September Monsignor the Bishop of Agathopolis, who had played here the part of ambassador<sup>6</sup> to the very great advantage and profit of the missions”;

and the unfortunate Bishop of Baghdad, who had so many years pleaded for a coadjutor and at last obtained an energetic man chosen by himself, did not even see him alive: he had travelled from Hamadan to welcome Mgr de Galiczen only to arrive at Julfa the day after the burial. Mgr Pidou de St. Olon had another motive for undertaking the journey from Hamadan to Isfahan: he had been appointed “consul for France” (though possibly the ‘commission’ was that reversionary appointment and nomination brought by the envoy Fabre in 1707). The letter quoted continued:

<sup>1</sup> *S.R.*, vol. 573, pp. 333–353, and *S.N.R.*, III, p. 381.

<sup>2</sup> *S.R.*, vol. 581.

<sup>3</sup> *S.N.R.*, III, p. 389: no Persian original is filed of this in the Archives of Prop. Fide, but only the Italian version.

<sup>4</sup> His name was Abbé Rebusat, evidently the priest Bishop Galiczen wished to bring.

<sup>5</sup> *S.R.*, vol. 589, letter of 23.10.1712, Fr. Barnabas, O.P.

<sup>6</sup> However, the Comte des Alleurs took umbrage at this role played by the Bishop, writing to the Sac. Congregation, 23.7.1713 (*S.R.*, vol. 589):

“From Persia . . . I am informed that the grand patriarch of the Armenians leaves nothing undone to persecute the missionaries and Latins: I wrote several times on this subject to ’Itimad-ud-Dauleh, chief Minister of the Sufi: my first letters were suppressed by the late Bishop of Agathopolis, who without authority” (‘lightly’) “had assumed the character of ambassador from the King to that Court.”