

Evidently after the earlier reports the Sacr. Congregation required additional information from the Bishop-elect of Isfahan, whose letter, 21.11.1734,¹ began:

“On the 9th instant I received Your Eminence’s letter of 21.1.1733, in which you communicate to me that the Sacr. Congregation desires from me a detailed, exact and confidential statement regarding the state in which the church and house at Hamadan of the bishopric of Baghdad are at present:

“(a) details as to the actual conditions of the church and house; (b) at what cost the repairs to each can be done, (lastly) what precisely are the numbers and kinds of articles for furnishing, with which the church might be provided, and to what amount such expenses might come.

“To which I reply that at the same time as your Eminence’s letter was received there was in our House at Julfa the servant of the House at Hamadan, whom I had known when I passed by there on my first coming out to the mission” (1717) “and who had always continued to be the servant there and to live in it with his family, and left it about two months ago. After interrogating him I gathered that: ‘the church, sacristy and refectory and some other rooms are in their former condition with doors and windows: that all the rest, which with those just mentioned come to twenty in number approximately, lack doors, windows, water-conduits, etc. In addition, in some of the rooms the ceilings had fallen, or the roofs, which being made of mud in the rains are liable to such accidents unless repaired; (a) the total cost of repairs to roofs, windows, doors and all the damage done by soldiers would amount to 3 Tumans, if greater damage be not caused by the coming winter season through those repairs not having been effected; (b) there was one closed room with various books in it. In 1737 the Father dwelling at Hamadan left for fear of the wars and took away with him the ornaments of the church. . . .’”

It must have been Fr. Charles Raymond, whom the former Vicar Apostolic Fr. Joseph Mary (still in Mesopotamia) designated, when he wrote² to the Sacr. Congregation about the house:

“For four years or more it was without anyone to look after it, so that it lay open to all, and almost was a den of thieves . . . my companion . . . went and wrote that he had found it empty of all furniture but full of ‘Turks’ whom he could not turn out. . . .”

However, by later in that year, 9.9.1735,³ something had been done according to Fr. Emmanuel:

“The bishop’s House at Hamadan . . . is now in excellent condition. I sent there a Religious almost a year ago . . . I gave him sufficient money for his maintenance and the repairs needed . . . last week I received a further letter telling me how the house was very well restored, and that he had finished the walls of the garden and enclosure, and the doors and windows of the house and church, but there still remain the roofs to be made. . . .”

Writing again, 8.3.1736,⁴ Fr. Emmanuel alluded to the receipt from Rome of 200 scudi specially for repairs and explained:

“in place of Fr. Charles, a missionary from Persia, who was serving me as companion while I was awaiting the one from Rome, I sent, 13.1.(1736), Fr. Leander . . . who came with your Eminence’s letter . . .”

¹ *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 353.

² *Idem*, p. 385.

³ *Idem*, p. 390.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 375.