

“governors”. His extravagant pretensions at control over the mission went so far as to protest at more candles being lit in church on the feast of the great saint of the Order, S. Teresa of Avila, than on that of S. Louis, king of France; so that *Cont. Basra Chron.* commented with humour on the after-effects of the protection of the French ambassador at Constantinople, sought and obtained by Fr. Angelus of S. Joseph in 1683 for the Carmelite mission at Basra, recoiling on the missionaries just as Samuel had warned the people of Israel when they asked for a king. However, that consul died a humble and Christian death at Basra in 1741. Readers, who turn to the section of this work dealing with the Carmelite Residence at Basra separately, will find much of interest about the history of the port.

Although Baghdad and its diocese lie outside the strict limits of the “Persian” mission of the Carmelites, it would be a loss of a suitable opportunity not to note here a few unpublished facts and statements regarding the early days of the Catholic community there, and its active and efficient pro-Vicar Apostolic.

Shortly after Fr. Emmanuel finished his six months’ course of learning Turkish in Hamadan, and returned to Baghdad in the summer of 1730, he sailed from Basra, 7.7.1730, for Pondicherry to obtain the protection of the French Authorities there in his dealings with the Pasha of Baghdad.

“In order to place this mission on a stable and profitable basis . . . I considered the sole “method would be for a petition to be presented to the French viceroy in the East Indies “so that a letter be addressed (by him) to the governor of Baghdad (to the effect) that “it would be convenient that the French should become established there with every “kind of liberty. . . . Having learnt the reason for my arrival, the viceroy summoned the “Council . . . my petition . . . being approved, he sent me back very courteously with “letters and gifts. . . . As the governor (Pasha) of Baghdad received me and the gifts “brought favourably, he (the Pasha) gave permission for us to found a House. . . .”¹

A French vessel brought Fr. Emmanuel back to Basra by 25.5.1731: in that year he purchased for 500 piastres a ruined house, the site of which would be ample for a house and chapel, which was dedicated to S. Thomas, Apostle of the Indies: on 1.10.1731² he was able to write to the Cardinal Prefect:

“We have re-established the mission at Baghdad lost” (i.e. by the Capuchins) “more than “twenty years ago.”

Before July 1732,³ leaving in charge his predecessor who remained with the status of an apostolic missionary, he had again quitted Baghdad, this time for Constantinople: and, owing to the hostilities between Persia and Turkey and to the road being blocked, it was about May 1734 before the pro-Vicar Apostolic was back in Baghdad, previous letters he had written to the Sacr. Congregation having been looted by robbers from Fr. John Thomas of Basra, returning to Europe. Two letters of Fr. Joseph Mary, 26.4.1735, and of Fr. Emmanuel, 9.9.1735,⁴ agree about the infant mission, the former asserting:

“Our church is a constant marvel, for among the Turks it is prohibited, and almost “unheard, to build a new and public church . . .”,

while the latter, in reporting to Rome that

“this mission in Baghdad is also in excellent order, and the missionaries can stay in it in all safety . . .”,

¹ Bishop Emmanuel, Latin report, published Rome, 1756.

² *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 548.

³ Fr. Joseph Mary, *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 226: this Religious was alone through two sieges of the city in 1733 and 1734, when it was reduced to the utmost misery, *vide* his letter 26.4.1735, *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 385.

⁴ *S.N.R.*, IV, pp. 385, 390.