

"and I fear that after his death, if there be no other Catholic bishop, as that church is a dependency of the Armenian patriarch at Echmiadzin . . ."

"At *Diarbakr*, notwithstanding persecution by Armenians and Syrians there were various people coming to the church of the Capuchin Fathers: as to the Chaldaeans the absence¹ for long past of the Patriarch, or Archbishop, Joseph is very prejudicial to religion especially in Mausil, where many men who formerly were Catholics are so no longer, and I have heard it said that there is a single priest with one Catholic deacon there; the latter being procurator for the archbishop has kept Catholic a large village, but they fear that, if the archbishop does not soon come back, that little will be lost too and, as for 12 years past the Capuchins have been gone, the people here are in great need of spiritual assistance . . ."

Some seven years passed and then it would seem the Sac. Congregation had suggested to the Bishop of Baghdad that pioneer work should be done in Kirkuk, for he wrote:²

". . . As to the town of Kirkuk, where you desire that I should send some Religious . . . I had already some time before written to Baghdad for the purpose and a few days back received a letter of 7.5.1743 from Fr. Benedict, Vicar of that mission, who told me that he was leaving at daybreak to give a mission in Kirkuk, a town about eight days' distance from Baghdad, where there are a large number of Nestorians very ignorant of religion . . ."

and, 20.4.1746, he wrote again to Rome:

"Twelve days ago I dispatched two Religious to Kirkuk and to Mausil to missionize there: at Kirkuk there is great difficulty and little profit, but at Mausil it would be most easy to establish a mission and, if the Sac. Cong. would provide a grant, two Religious might be planted there immediately. There are already many good Catholics there, and good hope of soon making many others, besides a number of villages deprived of any" (spiritual) "assistance. The two Religious I have sent will remain there two months and then return to Baghdad. I have had a chalice made and everything needed for Mausil. . . . It is more than twenty years since the Capuchin Fathers abandoned that mission. . . ."

Then in 1747 the Sac. Congregation decided³ to send back Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia (who had returned to Rome from Baghdad in 1746) with two other Carmelites, Frs. Ferdinand of Jesus Mary and Eugenius of S. Macarius, on a special mission to upper Mesopotamia, independent to all intents and purposes of the Carmelite mission at Baghdad and of the bishop of that diocese. The 'Instructions' for Fr. Leander, dated 10.7.1747,⁴ were thus worded:

"Immediately after he has arrived in Mesopotamia the first duty of Fr. Leander will be to transmit to the Sac. Congregation an exact report of the present conditions of the missions there and results that can be expected therefrom: and to enquire mainly what are the rites observed by the Chaldaean Catholics and Nestorians in the administration of the Sacraments, and to send a copy of the breviary and liturgy of which each make use in celebrating the Divine mysteries. It is further desired to know what may be the present discipline with regard to the feasts and fasts, what is the standard and the education of the bishops and priests. As it is asserted by various historians and travellers that Nestorianism is one of the most docile in the East, he is to inform himself about any disposition they may have for embracing the Catholic Faith, and what are the causes that

¹ He had gone to Rome, and was permitted to return to Diarbakr only in 1741—see farther on.

² 30.6.1743, *S.N.R.*, V, p. 86.

³ Perhaps influenced by a memorandum by Fr. Leander, dated 25.6.1747 (*S.R.*, vol. 733, p. 429) on the Chaldaean missions, in which he pointed out that in 1665 Mausil had been assigned to the French Capuchins to maintain 3 priests for 60 scudi annual allowance: in 1667 Diarbakr similarly, and in 1691 Mardin: he asserted that the Capuchins had never worked in Mardin, nor for years past in Mausil.

⁴ *S.N.R.*, V, p. 186.