

MILL HILL MISSIONARIES IN AFGHANISTAN AND THEIR STAY IN QUETTA-BALUCHISTAN*

By Arnulf Camps OFM

V

The Hyderabad Collection

16. *George Andrew Maria R. Browne, Miss. Apost. by the Mercy of God and the favor of the Apostolic See, Superior of the Afghan Mission, to all the faithful under his jurisdiction: health and Apostolic Benediction.*

Dearest Children in Jesus Christ.

You know, that it is one of the precepts of the Church, based upon the words of St. Paul: „He that serveth the altar, should live by the altar“, that we should contribute to the support of our Pastors. By the liberality of the Government of India you are supplied with pastors and their humble needs are provided for by the pay granted them by that Government, comparatively small though it may be.

Hence in calling your attention to the precepts of the Church, it is not our intention to ask you to contribute to the support of the good Fathers, who so zealously minister to you. But you know fully well, dear Children, that, when our Lord established his church, he chose to give her a visible Head, who should be His Vicar and Representative on earth, when He Himself had ascended to his Father, to sit at His right Hand for ever.

Though the piety of the faithful in ages gone by, this Vicar of Christ was placed in an independent position by grants of lands and gifts of treasure, kings and princes, nobles and warriors, as well as the other children of the Church vying with each other in attesting their devotion to the See of Peter.

Within our own time impious men forgetting the traditions of their pious forefathers have not hesitated to deprive him of the possessions and have reduced him to the condition of one depending entirely upon his spiritual children, not only for the means of carrying on the Government of the Church with becoming dignity, but also for the very necessities of life.

When in 1870 the saintly Pius IX was deprived of his temporal dominions, and hence of his necessary revenues, the piety of the faithful was at once aroused and Peter's Pence was collected all over the catholic world. This has been continued ever since, because the necessity that then arouse, has lasted to the present day, and God only knows, when it will end.

The saintly Pius has gone to his reward, but Peter still lives in Leo XIII, whose needs are as great, if not greater than those of his predecessor. We need not speak of him personally, for he is the worthy successor of a great saint, whom after ages will undoubtedly grace with the title of „Pius the Great“. Suffice it that he is the common Father of the Faithful, as such he is entitled to our filial love and support.

We ask you, therefore, dearest children in the Faith, to contribute your share towards the general Fund collected all over the world, for the support of our Supreme Pastor, and the maintenance of the dignity of the Church. What a

* Vgl. ZMR 51 (1967) 13—25, 132—145.

consolation it will be to his Paternal Heart, to receive a small contribution from his dear children in Afghanistan, surrounded as they are by privations and dangers! And with what fulness of heart will he not impart to you his Apostolic Benediction.

The peace of God, which surpasseth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus Our Lord. Amen.

Given at Kabul, this 4th day of June, Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, 1880, and appointed to be read in all the stations of the Mission on the Sunday following its receipt, the collection to be taken up the Sunday after.

GEORGE A. M. R. BROWNE, Miss. Apost.
Sup. Afghan Mission.

17. *To the Vicar Apostolic of Bombay, Mgr. L. MEURIN S. J.*

L. J. C.

Kabul, 15th July, 1880.

Dearest My Lord,

Pax Domini sit semper nobiscum. I have just received your very kind letter enclosing your report, for both of which my sincerest thanks. As you expected, I perfectly agree with everything you have said in it. I herewith return you the letter to Propaganda duly signed. I must however say that I hesitated to sign it, because I see from your report, that one good Bishop objected to our Mission being included in the list; hence I leave the matter entirely in your hands. If you think it right, that my signature should be forwarded, do so, if otherwise, retain it. Yet from the fact, that Propaganda, as I learn, has already christened our mission „the vicariate of upper India“, and is now considering its southern boundaries, viz. as to how much, if any, of the Punjab is to be included in it, I think that we are clearly within the pale of the Indian Missions, and so entitled to representation in the Council, and to a voice in its deliberations. However, Propaganda will no doubt decide this point.

2. I ought long since to have replied to good Fr. Clarke's letter of June 9th and to have acknowledged the receipt of the Holy Oils. But the latter only arrived some time after the letter, and then I was very sick. Nor am I perfectly recovered yet. For more than three months I have been more or less under the weather. First I had an attack of fever, pleurisy and throat catarrh combined; and for the last four weeks I have been suffering from fever and diarrhoea to such an extent, that I was placed on the sick list and forbidden all work, nor will the doctor yet consent to my returning to work, as, though I am now much better, God be praised, yet I am so weak, that they fear the least exertion might bring on a relapse. They even talk of the necessity of a change of air. You will please, therefore, kindly excuse me to good Father Clarke for my seeming neglect. Please tell him also that I received his receipt for Rup. 143. I shall not agree to the proposal of the doctors for a change, because it seems now settled, that we shall withdraw from Afghanistan early next month. This withdrawal is a great blow to us, for it will virtually close Afghanistan to us for the time being, whereas had the troops remained, I could have put another priest with each chaplain, whose duty it would have been to study the language and customs of the people thoroughly with a view to missionary labour among them. Well, God's holy will be done.

3. I am very sorry that poor Fr. Burke sits still at Allahabad brooding over his imagined wrong. He has written me two fearful letters, which he would

never have penned, if he were in his right mind. Besides at Allahabad, they seem to feed his morbid taste with all manner of calumnious gossip about me. According to his letters, he has been told, that I drink a bottle of brandy every day; that I am harsh and unsocial; that everybody, that has come in contact with me here, has something hard to say of me and the like. He has also written the same to others, about me, to Fr. Allen among the rest. I would not speak of this, were it not that duty to our Society requires that I should contradict these calumnious statements. They have, it is true been already met by the fact that General Roberts in his two despatches to Government, the one after Charasiab, last October and the other after the fighting in December, gives me honourable mention in each, which he certainly would not have done, if I were a drunkard, a coward, or the like. Thanks God, I do not bear the poor man the least animosity in consequence — my sins deserve worse treatment, but I must designate the statements by their proper name for the sake of our little Society.

4. I have had the happiness of a two days visit from good Fr. Allen a few weeks ago. The good man is in excellent health and as jolly as ever. He is a steady, hardworking, holy man, and if they do take him from me, I shall feel it very much and it will be a great loss to the Mission. I suppose you have seen that he was most honourably mentioned by General Stewart in his despatches. I hope to see him again shortly, as his division will soon return to the neighbourhood of Kabul.

5. Whoever is appointed to Madras will have to be a man of great prudence and sanctity of life. For, not only will it be difficult to replace good Bishop Fennelly, but there seem to be several parties there, each of which is determined to submit only to the man who suits it, and to refuse obedience to any other. Fr. Colgan³⁰, I understand refuses point blank to accept of the dignity. Some declare, that unless an Irishman is appointed, there will be a schism — others want our Telegu Mission separated from the Vicariate — some want your Society — some want our Society. So, you see, everthing seems in confusion. Let us unite our prayers, that God may reconcile them all and give the Vicariate a Prelate as the late good Bishop.

6. I have no idea that you would publish my little appeal for Peter's Pence; but if its publication has awakened any new interest in the matter, I can only return thanks to Almighty God. The collection so far returned amounted to Rs. 459.00 with two chaplains to hear from yet. According to this I expect, that it will aggregate between 6 and 700 Rupees, which I think is exceedingly good for soldiers in the field.

Hoping that your Lordship is now in the enjoyment of the best of health, and begging you to kindly remember me to all your good fathers with an earnest request for mutual mementos,

I remain Your Lordship's
most grateful servant in
the Sacred Hearts,
GEO. A. M. R. BROWNE, Miss. Apost.

³⁰ According to *The Catholic Directory of India for the Year of Our Lord 1964* (Bombay 1964) 203: JOSEPH COLGAN became Vicar Apostolic of Madras in 1882; in 1887 he was appointed as Archbishop of Madras.

18. *To the Vicar Apostolic of Bombay, Mgr. L. MEURIN S. J.*

L. J. C.

Kabul, 7th August, 1880.

Dearest My Lord,

Pax Domini sit semper nobiscum. Only a few lines today, as I am very busy with my preparations for we start for Kandahar tomorrow morning. When we get there, I shall try to write you a long letter, God willing. In the meantime, I hope you and your good fathers will not cease praying for us. Should anything happen to me on the road, Fr. Allen will be the Superior of the Mission pro tempore and until other arrangements are made.

I got the enclosed bill yesterday. Will you please pay it for me, and charge the Mission Accounts.

Should you, in your great charity feel moved to write to me, please address GAMR Browne, Roman Catholic Chaplain, General Robert's Force, Kandahar.

Hoping that your Lordship is in the enjoyment of the best of health and with kindest regards to all your dear Fathers,

I am, Dearest My Lord,
Most gratefully Your's
in the Sacred Hearts,
GEO. A. M. R. BROWNE, Miss. Apost.

19. *To the Vicar Apostolic of Bombay, Mgr. L. MEURIN S. J.*

Rawal Pindi, 19th September, 1880.

My Lord,

On my way down to Madras, I must ask for one favour more from your Lordship; to invest the sum of Rupees three hundred seven, annas nine and pies seven only. My military career has come to a close and I am now on my way to Madras, and I shall either stop there or go to Borneo. I did not get as yet a decided answer from my superiors. As to my future destination, it is however very likely, that I shall have to go to Borneo. I leave Rawal Pindi this evening for Bareilly, to spend a few days with my predecessor Father Doogan. As I experienced your Lordship's hospitality on my way up to Afghanistan, I do not think it is anything in the way of imposing upon your Lordship on my way down.

Receive my kindest regards,
Yours in Christ,
J. ALLEN.

20. *To the Vicar Apostolic of Bombay, Mgr. L. MEURIN S. J.*

L. J. C.

Bibioni in the Bolan, 15th October, 1880.

Dearest My Lord,

Pax Domini sit semper nobiscum. Though I received your kind and most welcome letter by the first post after our big battle at Kandahar, viz. on September 5th, I have not answered it before for various reasons: I was waiting for definite orders as to our future; I was very busy as you can easily imagine, and when the reaction set in after the excitement of our now famous march and

our big fight, I got another attack of my old complaint. Before I had recovered from this we were ordered down country. During all this time, you may readily guess, that I did not feel much like writing. During the whole time we were at Kandahar, I wrote besides the much urgent business-letters, only one other one, and that was to my Father and Mother, who, God bless them, were naturally most anxious to get news of my safety. Even to Mill Hill I only despatched my letter two days ago. I hope, therefore, that you will in your Christian charity pardon my long delay.

When I arrived at Kandahar, I found good Father Jackson in the best of health and laus eius in ore omnium from General Primrose down to the provost private. The Kandahar officers told me, one and all, that if somebody deserved the Victoria Cross he deserved six! I left him in excellent health working hard day and night. I expect, Deo dante, to see you once more in the flesh, before the end of this year and by that time I hope to have the hero of Maiwand and De Kojah with me, for he is called by officers and men „the hero of the Bombay troops“.

From Rome I have as yet no definite information as to our future, except that we are to abandon Afghanistan. Bishop Jacobi³¹ has written to Peshawar that Madras is to be our future field, but I do not know, how far he is officially informed. Perhaps you have the latest news; as for myself, I have none.

I suppose, however, that I will be recalled to Mill Hill. God's will be done. I know that much will depend upon, who will be appointed good Bishop's Fennelly's successor. I hope, however, it may be a worthy successor to so holy a man.

How sad it is, that Afghanistan must be considered as closed for us for the present. I have had many prayers said for the conversion of this stiff-necked people in Europe and America, but God seems to delay the day. We can only bow in humble submission to his holy will. I am afraid it is in punishment of my sins.

Poor Fr. Burke is now in Madras Vicariate, but I am afraid that his mental malady has not yet forsaken him. May God in his mercy soon restore him to perfect health.

I should like to write you a long letter today, but it is utterly impossible, for we are in the march and even this I am writing with my knees for my table. If I can, I will write you from Lahore.

In the meantime believe me, as ever,

Your's most affectionately
in the Sacred Hearts,

GEO. A. M. R. BROWNE, Miss. Apost.

N.B. I forgot to mention that our collection for Peter's Pence amounts to Rs. 750; is not this glorious for the poor soldiers in the field. Should you find time to answer please direct to the care of the Postmaster at Lahore.

Salve.

³¹ Bishop MICHAEL ANGELUS JACOBI was appointed as Vicar Apostolic of Agra in 1869: cfr. EMMERICH O. F. M., *The Ecclesiastical Province of West Pakistan: Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 9 (Schöneck 1953) 55.

21. *To the Vicar Apostolic of Bombay, Mgr. L. MEURIN S. J.*

L. J. C.

Rawal Pindi, 4th December, 1881.

Dearest My Lord,

Humbly must I apologize for my long delay in answering your very kind and most welcome note of November 4th; but there were several causes at work; first laziness after the fatigues of the campaign; secondly occasional fits of sickness; thirdly work of some sort.

I am still at Pindi, as you will perceive and shall remain now untill something is definitely settled. Thank God, I have been able to do a little work here. I gave popular mission at the end of November and God be praised, some who had not been to their duties for years, were by the help of his holy Grace brought back to the feet of the priest. Nor has the spirit died out for increased attendance at the services of the Church is one of the results that has so far lasted.

Many thanks for your kind attention to our Fathers Allen and Rodger, when they visited Bombay. You have thereby added some more links to the chain of gratitude, which binds our Society to your Lordship.

I have not yet received a single copy of the Examiner for a long time. I suppose, it was because they did not know where to send it to.

I have been exceedingly ill with fever and terrible cold for about ten days, but am now, thanks be to God, in a state of convalescence.

Hoping that your Lordship is in the enjoyment of the best of health and asking your blessing, as well as with the kindest regards to all your good Fathers,

I am, Your Lordship's
most obedient servant
GEO. A. M. R. BROWNE Miss. Apost.
Sup. Afghan Mission.

22. *To the Vicar Apostolic of Bombay, Mgr. L. MEURIN S. J.*

L. J. C.

Murree, 4th March, 1881.

Dearest My Lord,

Pax Domini sit semper nobiscum. My sincere thanks for your very kind and most welcome letter of 15th February, which I ought to have answered sooner. But I have been so weak and nervous, that I could scarcely hold a pen. I was advised to come up here for a change. So I came up with Bishop Tosi³². While here I gave the retreat to the convent children, which God be praised, was attended with happy results. But the weather has been so bad and is still here (it is snowing all the time) that as yet I have experienced no beneficial results.

I shall remain here about ten days more and then I shall return to Rawal Pindi. So should your Lordship have leisure to answer this, please address to that place, unless Madras should be settled by that time. Because in that event, I shall probably be on my way down country, as I have been officially informed that as soon as Madras would be settled, I should either have to go there, or

³² Bishop PAUL TOSSI was appointed as Vicar Apostolic of the Punjab on 18. 9. 1880: *ibid*.

back to Mill Hill. I do hope and pray, that the present state of uncertainty will soon be over. But God's holy will be done.

Frs. Allen and Rodgers and another will be sent to Borneo as soon as Madras is settled. I doubt very much, whether Kandahar will be kept or not. However, Quetta, I am sure, will not again be given up, in which case a chaplain will be needed there. Of course we cannot leave one so isolated from the rest, as he would there be. Hence it will be a question to be settled between your Lordship and the Vicar Apostolic of the Punjab, who does not seem inclined to take it. As it is adjoining your Vicariate and now of easy access by rail via Jacobabad, he seems to think that you ought to undertake it.

I do hope that your suspicions as to the name of the future Vicar Apostolic of Madras will prove unfounded; for I can assure you that that man Browne would never receive my vote, for he is not fit for it, though, no doubt, his vanity would be so flattered that I fear he would jump at the chance. But seriously, I hope, such responsibility will never be placed upon my shoulders. For I know, I am in no way fit to compose the deranged conditions of Madras, or the discordant elements there at work. As to the „Examiner“ though I did not get it myself, yet I have seen every number except those of the last two weeks, which I suppose, you have already had dispatched. I cannot tell just now whether I got the „Pastoral“ for January or not. I know I have seen it, but I think it was the one belonging to the Chaplain in Rawal Pindi.

In conclusion, My Lord, please give my kindest regards to all your good Fathers, and believe me, as ever,

Yours most gratefully
in the Sacred Hearts,
GEO. A. M. R. BROWNE, Miss. Apost.

23. *To the Vicar Apostolic of Bombay, Mgr. L. MEURIN S. J.*

L. J. C.

Murree, 13th March, 1881.

Dearest My Lord,

Pax Domini sit semper nobiscum. When I received your welcome note of March 9th, I was so unwell, that it was utterly impossible for me to reply to it, though I should have liked to have done so at once. After I had somewhat recovered, I was so weak and nervous that I could not make a decent letter and could scarcely hold the pen. I could not eat, and nothing the doctors could give, would provoke an appetite. It was already getting very hot at Rawal Pindi, so they ordered me up here, where I have now been twelve days. My short stay has already done me a great deal of good, in as much as I am daily gaining strength and my appetite is slowly, but surely returning. So you see, my Lord, my delay in answering is not due either to laziness or to carelessness.

I have no news yet either about Madras or about my own future. I have only been told, — that when Madras will be settled I will have to go either there or back to Mill Hill. Have you any information?

As regards Sibi, I take it for granted that it now belongs to Bishop Tosi, certainly not to Bishop Jacobi. Sibi is in Afghanistan, close to the borders of Baluchistan; now Afghanistan, I understand, and Cashmere as well as Baluchistan have been taken on to the Punjab. I am led to this conclusion from the fact that General of the Capuchins has asked our Superior General to take Baluchistan

off his hands. But I am sure that Bishop Tosi would be very glad, if your chaplain at Sukkur would visit Sibi also.

Now I must beg of you, to kindly send the Holy Oils to Fr. Jackson, who is still with the southern Afghanistan Field Force and will remain until all is settled. His address would be as follows: „Rev. Fr. Jackson, Miss. Apost., Roman Catholic Chaplain, Southern Afghanistan Field Force Kandahar or elsewhere.“ In conclusion, believe me, as ever Dearest My Lord,

Your humble servant
in the Sacred Hearts,
GEO. A. M. R. BROWNE, Miss. Ap.

24. *To the Vicar Apostolic of Bombay, Mgr. L. MEURIN S. J.*

L. J. C.

Murree, 23 April, 1881.

Right Reverend and Dearest My Lord,

Pax Domini sit semper nobiscum. Your very kind invitation to come to Kurra-chee³³ for the dedication of the new church reached me only on Easter Sunday. Many thanks for your kindly thinking of me, but though there would have been ample time, my health would not permit me to avail myself of it. As I told you in my letter of 13th instant which I hope you have received, I was so completely prostrated, that the physicians ordered me to the hills. I have indeed improved wonderfully with God's help, but the Doctors told me that to undertake the journey, or even to return to the plains just now, would inevitably cause a relapse. So I had to submit.

In my letter of the 13th I gave you all the data, as far as known to me, concerning Sibi etc. Perhaps you will have been able to talk with Bishop Tosi about it and to make a mutually satisfactory arrangement. Until ordered to do otherwise, I shall leave Fr. Jackson with the troops at Quetta and in the Pishin. But how long this may last, I cannot at present say, as everything is still unsettled. If only that blessed Madras business were once disposed of! But as yet there seems nothing done, at least to my knowledge.

Asking you for a special blessing and hoping that you are in the enjoyment of the best of health, and with kindest regards to all the Fathers,

I remain, Dearest My Lord,
Your most affectionately
and gratefully in the Sacred Hearts,
GEO. A. M. R. BROWNE, Miss Apost.

25. *To the Vicar Apostolic of Bombay, Mgr. L. MEURIN S. J.*

Quetta, May 22nd, 1881.

My Lord,

I have been ordered as soon as relieved here by Fr. Browne, or by some priest sent by him, to make the best of my way to Singapore, and on to Borneo.

As I do not know the address of my friends in Bombay, I have taken the liberty of having letters intended for me, addressed to your care, as I intend

³³ This is Karachi.

doing myself the honour of calling on Your Lordship when I pass through Bombay.

With profound veneration
I am Your Lordship's
humble servant,
THOMAS JACKSON
(late R. C. Chaplain at Kandahar)

26. *INDIAN TELEGRAPH*

To BOMBAY

from MADRAS

To *Bishop MEURIN*

from *Reverend DESILVA*

GOOSSENS NOW AT SINGAPORE WANTS JACKSON'S ADDRESS
IMMEDIATELY TELEGRAPH TO HIM DIRECTLY

Date: Bombay 5. 6. 81.

27. *(REPLY)*

To *REVEREND JACKSON BROWNE R. C. CHAPLAIN QUETTA*
TELEGRAPH IMMEDIATELY JACKSON'S ADDRESS SINGAPORE
GOOSSENS.

28. *To the Right Reverend Archbishop MEURIN.*

Bishop's House, Salford

August 23, 1881.

My dear Lord,

I have heard a distressing report as to father Geo Browne, who was the Superior of my Afghanistan missionaries.

I have heard that he has become a protestant — it is a MERE REPORT, so far, WITHOUT PROOF. But he does not answer letters or discharge his duties.

Can you give me any information? If you should hold any money, which he may have placed in your keeping, please do not let him have it back, but hold it for me.

Next we have a Missioner at Quetta. I desire to concentrate upon Madras and Borneo, and withdraw from an isolated station like Quetta. Could your Lordship undertake Quetta at least temporarily? If so, I will communicate with the Holy See and withdraw from that station.

Let me take this opportunity of thanking you for your kindness to my fathers upon several occasions.

I hope your Roman affairs on jurisdiction — will not be again aroused. I naturally heard a good deal about them during the time I have been in Rome.

The Bull Romanos Pontifices as the Pope has said, is to be common Law and he is already applying it in the east.

Believe me to be
My dear Lord
Your devoted brother
HUBERT, Bishop of Salford.

Bombay, 15. 9. 1881.

My dear Lord,

When this reaches you I suppose Fr. Geo Browne will have arrived and be teaching theology at Mill Hill.

He arrived here from Quetta on the 10th August and embarked on the 16th for England via Rome, as he said. I cannot believe that he turned a Protestant for he said Mass here, and left a sum of £ 467 in my hands to be drawn by him from my Procurator, the Reverend Fr. Sidgreaves, 111 Mount Street, London W. If Your Lordship wishes to ground that sum, then you are at liberty to do so. The capuchin Missioners of the Lahore Vicariate spoke rather unfavourably of him, but I have nothing particular to state against him, except some liking for spirits, a habit that was visibly unnerving him.

Your Lordship desires me to say whether I could take charge of Quetta. I can only answer that, if the Holy See expresses a desire to that effect, I shall do so. On my part I cannot wish to take it because it will be nothing but a burden on my mission.

Believe me, My dear Lord,
Your devoted brother in Christ,
L. MEURIN

30. To the Vicar Apostolic of Bombay, Mgr. L. MEURIN S. J.

St. Joseph's College of the Sacred Heart
for Foreign Missions

Mill Hill, London N. W.
October 9, 1881.

Very Rev. P. Benoit
Rector.

My dear Lord,

Father Prenger the bearer is on his way to Quetta to act as companion to Father Temme, till your Lordship and the Bishop of Salford shall have settled who will permanently take care of the Military Station.

A doubt arises in our mind whether Quetta, being in Baluchistan, can in any way be held as belonging to Afghan mission. However we think Your Lordship can settle the doubt by granting Faculties to Father Prenger and as a matter of greater security also to Father John Temme, who succeeds Father Browne for the present, since Baluchistan is, I presume, in Your Lordship's Vicariate.

Before this reaches Bombay I hope the Bishop of Salford shall have received a reply from Your Lordship, both as to Quetta and to Browne.

I avail myself of this opportunity to thank your Lordship most cordially for the many kindnesses Your Lordship has bestowed on various occasions on our men.

I have the honour to remian
Your Lordship's servant in Christ
fr. BENOIT.

31. *To the Vicar Apostolic of Bombay, Mgr. L. MEURIN S. J.*

Laudetur Jesus Christus.

St. Joseph's College,
Mill Hill, October

Right Reverend and Dearest My Lord,

At last I am back sound and safe in old St. Joseph's heartily glad I am. I was longing for a retired life with plenty of work and here I have it.

We had a very stormy passage as far as Aden and strong headwinds all the way to Marseilles, where we arrived September 11th having been at sea 25 full days. From Marseille I proceeded to Rome, where I had the inexpressable happiness of a private audience of the Holy Father on Sunday, the 18th September. He received me most kindly and deigned to converse with me most affably for fully twenty minutes. I placed at his feet the 1500 francs Peter's Pence, we had collected among the soldiers in Afghanistan. He deigned to express the greatest gratification at the offering. He commissioned me specially to make known to the donors the great pleasure it had afforded him and to inform them that he had given each his special blessing. As the various regiments that contributed are now scattered, I know of no other way of informing them, than through the medium of the Bombay Catholic Examiner. Will you kindly ask Fr. Cooke³⁴ to insert the enclosed few lines. From Rome I proceeded to Germany, where I spent a few pleasant days among my relatives, who were all rejoiced to see me once more. I finally reached Mill Hill on Friday last, the 14th instand and received a most hearty welcome.

I hope that your Lordship continues to enjoy the best of health and that you will kindly my fondest regards to all your good Fathers. Thanking you once more with all my heart for your great kindness to all our Fathers and to myself in particular and hoping that you will favour me with a line occasionally, I ask your Lordship's blessing and a continued interest in your good prayers, and remain,

over most gratefully yours
in the Sacred Hearts
GEO. A. M. R. BROWNE, Miss. Apost.

32. *To the Vicar Apostolic of Bombay, Mgr. L. MEURIN S. J.*

Quetta, 14 December, 1881.

Illustrissime ac Reverendissime Domine,

I am leading the life of a prince now, however a little like baron von Habenichts. Since 29th November Paradise opened its gates for me. I do not know for how long. Different rumours circulate; one telling that the European troops are going in the beginning of next month or at least in March; another telling that we stop here till October: — and then the last, that we are only going to be relieved (viz. the soldiers). We have orders to proceed immediately

³⁴ A. VÄTH *op. cit.*, 241: Father CHARLES COOKE S. J. was born 12. 9. 1823; arrived in India 1858 and died 23. 5. 1892; concerning his activities in India, see especially 141—142.

to Borneo in case the evacuation of the English troops takes place. I wished we had some certainty about the matter, one way or the other. Had we to stay here, I could try to study the language, but now in this unsettled affair, it would be time lost.

At Kurrachee I was most kindly received and entertained by the Fathers: I saw the new church, and must admit the skill of Fr. Belz³⁵. He has really a claim to the title of Master of Arts: he knows his profession well, I mean begging. I left there again on Friday, the 18th and arrived on the 20th at Sibi. I could not visit Fr. Peters while I got a letter at Kurrachee from Fr. Temme telling me to start immediately for Sibi, because I would be able there to join an ammunition convoy. At Sibi I went to Colonel Follower, who got two cards for me from the Transport, and gave me a sepoy along for the night, till I reached first, where the convoy (400 cards and 250 soldiers) was, viz. it had left already that morning. I bought food and kettle etc. and left Sibi at 5 p. m. At 1½ at night I reached the station. I got there a soldier as servant and cook. With them I marched up: generally we left the station about 4 in the morning and arrived at 1 p. m. I walked always along with my cards and had in the afternoon, on account of the dust, more to look of millowner than of a clergyman. I slept either in a tent or in a bungalow, and knew generally very well in the morning on what side I had slept. One night somebody tried to rob me: whilst I was sitting during the night on my box enjoying a cigar: I did not feel well a few times, on account of having eaten too fat boiled mutton. I saw at once a leg coming through one of the holes (without glass) which served for windows. I shouted at him in Dutch — it had a good effect. He seemed to be frightened by it. He tried however a second time — my sepoy saw him and ran with his gun to him. My last march was one of 24 miles — the convoy stopped at a distance of 6 miles from Quetta. I went on and found Father Temme after having sought and looked about for more than an hour. He did not send me back. He sends his kind regards and thanks (as I myself do hereby once more) His Lordship and the Fathers for their kindness.

I remain

His Lordship's humble servant
A. PRENGER.

33. *To the Vicar Apostolic of Bombay, Mgr. L. MEURIN S. J.*

Bishop's House, Salford

December 24, 1881.

My dear Lord,

I thank you for your kind letter. I am glad to say that fr. Browne is conducting himself very well. I hope the reports which reached me were devoid of foundation — the report I mean as to his faith.

I should be glad, if you would now remit the money you hold and if you would give Fr. Benoit at Mill Hill, or me notice of the time at which you remit it.

With many thanks believe me to be,
My dear Lord,
Your devoted brother,
HUBERT, Bishop of Salford.

³⁵ Father BELZ S. J. was born 27. 8. 1838; arrived in the Bombay Mission in 1876 and died on 1. 8. 1906; he erected St. Patrick's Cathedral at Karachi: VATH, *op. cit.*, 244 and 108.

Bombay, 18. 1. 1882.

My dear Lord,

Herewith the accounts of the transactions I had with your Afghan Missioners together with a draft with which they close.

If I have been able to serve them by keeping their savings, I am glad to have done what I could for their best.

L. MEURIN.

35. *To the Vicar Apostolic of Bombay, Mgr. L. MEURIN S. J.*
St. Joseph's College of the Sacred Heart
for Foreign Missions

Mill Hill, London, N. W.
March 10, 1882.

Very Reverend P. Benoit

My dear Lord,

The Bishop of Salford begins to doubt whether he has acknowledged the receipt of £ 400 odd, which Your Lordship kindly remitted to him some time in January. In order to set all doubts aside and in order to present our humble apology in case we have not written to Your Lordship on receipt of your remittance, I beg to state that the sum reached us quite safe.

I avail myself again of this opportunity to thank Your Lordship for extraordinary kindness which our Fathers met at your hands and your fathers; and for such kindness as your Lordship has done by taking care of the savings of Fr. Browne and Fr. Jackson.

I cannot say how much comfort we derive from the fact that our inexperienced men find at all times such a guide in your Lordship.

We are expecting at any time to hear that the troops are being withdrawn from Quetta. If they are not withdrawn soon the Bishop of Salford intends to ask Propaganda to transfer the chaplaincy to your Lordship, as you kindly said that you are willing to undertake this duty.

I have the honour to remain,

Your Lordship's servant in Christ,
P. BENOIT.

36. *R. D. Leoni MEURIN, Vicario Apostolico Bombayensi.*

Illustrissime ac Reverendissime Domine,

R. D. Benoit Rector Collegii S. Josephi vulgo Mill Hill mihi nuper scripsit se in eo esse ut duos missionarios sui Collegii alumnos ex statione militari Quetta revocet, et unum Vicariatui Apostolico Madraspatano, alterum Missioni Borneocensi addicat. Addidit vero Amplitudinem Tuam facile posse praedictae stationis Quetta curam suscipere, et eo duos e suis missionariis religiosos mittere. Si hoc verum est, ut ipse autumnat, nihil ex parte mea est contra hoc consilium, immo gratum mihi perfeceris si necessitati istius stationis satisfacere poteris. Romae ex Aedibus S. C. de Propaganda Fide, die 5 Augusti 1882,

Uti Frater addictissimus
JOANNES CARD. SIMEONI, Praefectus.

Bombay, 5 Septembris, 1882.

Eminentissime ac Reverendissime Domine,

Ad litteras Eminentiae Tuae die 5 Augusti datas respondere cogor, me nonnisi in fine huius anni stationem Quetta in Afghanistan suscipere posse, quia febris maligna in Collegio nostro S. Francisci Xaverii erupta tres e praecipuis Professoribus eousque prostravit, ut solum post aliquos menses plenam reconvalescentiam viresque ad resumendum opus suum sperare valeant, alii vero Missionarii a cura animarum et conversione paganorum ad tempus avocari, in eorumque locum suffici coacti fuerunt. Quando vero in fine anni officiis suis restituti fuerint, et expectatus numerus novorum missionariorum huc appulerit, non dubito quin tunc aliquem missionarium stationi Quetta adsignare, et sic Missionariis Collegii Mill Hill inde abeundi facultatem facere valeam. Inde hodie Reverendo Domino Benoit, Rectori eiusdem Collegii, necnon Missionariis in Quetta laborantibus communicavi.

Eminentiae Tuae amplissimas Dei gratias adprecans,

Eminentiae Tuae

Humilis et obsequens in Domino servus

L. MEURIN

Episcopus Titularis Ascalonensis,

Vicarius Apostolicus Bombayensis

38. No. 2484 of 1882

From: the Roman Catholic Bishop

To: The Secretary to Government, Military Department.

Bombay, 13th December, 1882.

Sir,

Referring to my letter dated 1st April 1880, in which I informed Government of the establishment of a new Vicariate Apostolic for Afghanistan, I have the honour to report that, in consequence for the altered circumstances, it has been deemed advisable to place the country for the present under my jurisdiction.

I request therefore, the authorization of Government for transferring the Reverend Ferdinand now Military Chaplain at Poona, to Quetta, and for appointing the Reverend Charles Cooke to Poona³⁶.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

L. MEURIN

R. C. Bishop.

³⁶ Father Ferdinand is Father FERDINAND HILLENKAMP S. J.; he was born 28. 9. 1844, arrived in India 1868 and was ordained a priest in 1874; in 1920 he was still alive: Vāth, *op. cit.*, 242 and 108. As far as Father CHARLES COOKE is concerned, cfr. note 34.