

But more serious than the disputes between them had been a matter on which they were apparently united—the proposals they were bringing to the Emperor and other princes of Christendom had been divulged, and openly bruited at the Imperial Court before their arrival. So Sir Anthony and Husain 'Ali Baig had made a joint protest to the Emperor:<sup>1</sup>

“The reply that 6 months previous to their arrival there had been talk about the terms of their mission having been given to the complaints made by the ambassadors from Persia over the divulging of the answer, the ambassadors made rejoinder:

“. . . . 5. That the king of Persia has sent to offer his friendship, and receive in return that of the Christian princes.

“6. That in Turkey the king of Persia has an incalculable number of merchants and in Constantinople an Agent.

“7. This disclosure of his treaty will afford an opportunity to the Turks to seize their goods and persons.

“8. That the king of Persia, betrayed in his trust in the Christians, out of spite will be obliged to seek peace and in the interest of his subjects,

“9. And not only to make peace, but to avenge himself on the Christians, who have treated him so very evilly in this fashion.

“10. The lands of the king of Spain are near him” (i.e. Shah 'Abbas—doubtless Hurmuz, Masqat, etc., are meant).

“11. This deed” (i.e. the disclosure of the matter of their mission) “is therefore a misfeasance to princes in general.

“12. And in particular most risky for the king of Spain,

“13. It is contrary to the Imperial dignity, and

“15. Contrary to the etiquette ordinarily observed in all negotiations.

“16. And, finally, they inquired . . . why, if for so long a time their arrival had been known and the object of it, they” (the Christian princes) “had not got ready their decision, in part or on all points.” !!

From Prague to Rome, turning from the Emperor to the Sovereign Pontiff, Clement VIII, offering on dull markets the proffered military co-operation of the autocrat of Persia came in the spring of 1601 Sir Anthony Sherley with his “Instructions” of which a copy is on record,<sup>2</sup>

“Holy Father. The negotiations on behalf of the king of Persia are confined in all to two heads—the one touching affairs of state, that is a Confederation with the Christian

<sup>1</sup> *Lettere di Principi* (1596–1605), No. 54, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> Fondo Borghese, *Avvisi di Diversi Parti del Mondo, 1607–10*, Ser. IV, n. 52, p. 334. This document is inserted at this particular chronological point solely because it is headed:

“Instruzione a Don Antonio Sirlei Inglese, uno degl'ambasciari del Re di Persia a Papa Clemente VIII.”

But (a) it occurs in a volume of Fondo Borghese Ser. IV, n. 52, which is indexed as *Avvisi di diverse parti del mondo, 1607–10*, i.e. later than Anthony Sherley's embassy of 1600–1, and precisely covers the year 1609 of Robert Sherley's first mission; and (b) there exists in Fondo Chigi II, 48, p. 327 a “Memoriale dato alla Santità di N<sup>ro</sup> Signore Papa Paolo V da Don Roberto Sirlei, ambasciatore del Rè di Persia,” whole sentences and phrases of which are identical with those of the “Instructions” said to be Anthony Sherley's, and in this occur the words:

“. . . the king dispatched . . . as his ambassadors to Pope Clement VIII Anthony Sherley my brother . . . and afterwards to Your Holiness . . . me, too, Robert Sherley. . . .”

thus forcing the reader to the conclusion that the attribution of the first document to Anthony Sherley and Pope Clement's time has been mistakenly done by some copyist or index-writer, and that both this document and (b), which is longer and differs in parts, belong to 1609 and Robert Sherley's first mission and visit to Rome. The confusion is, however, complicated by yet another version in Misc. Arm. II, 151, headed:

“Relatione fatta dal Conte Sirlei Inglese ambasciario del Rè di Persia alla Stà di Nostro Signore Papa Greg XV nel mese d'Agosto 1622 intorno la lega che si tratta di fare col detto Rè et Principi Xriani, et il modo di poter ottenere la vittoria con il Turco comune Nemico,”

professing to be Sherley's representations of 1622 to Pope Gregory XV: yet the wording is identical with that of (b) of 1609 to Pope Paul V. It is a fact that Robert Sherley was again in Italy in that year; but in 1622 there was no point in Shah 'Abbas seeking an alliance with the King of Spain, with whom he was at war over Hurmuz, against the Turks, whom he was not then fighting, nor likelihood of his making offers about the oriental Christians, whom he was persecuting.