

“enemy the Turk, who with unbearable pride and insatiable desire to rule longs most eagerly to oppress all kingdoms and all territories, and to lay them under the yoke of a most hard slavery.

“But We hope that God’s mercy will humble the proud man and his arm, and that He will break his teeth in his mouth and shatter the grinding teeth of the lion, of which event clear tokens have these last years been given by God in Hungary, showing that that most monstrous lion can be vanquished.

“We, however, in accord with Our pastoral office over and above the aids We have supplied and shall supply to the Emperor-elect Rudolph, Our very dear son, for opposing that foulest foe, are especially engaged in stirring up the kings and Catholic princes, Our dear sons in Christ, by means of Our office to meet the common enemy by efforts in common: and We are in great hopes of gaining this by God’s mercy.

“Now if You also, moved by righteous indignation, at last resolve to avenge so many grave wrongs inflicted on You by the Turks, and mindful of the ancestral glory of the Persians and of Your own valour take up with all Your strength and zeal a war no less glorious for You than necessary, assuredly that wild and fierce beast will be laid low, slain by wounds from all quarters.

“This consummation We may so much the more hope and promise because We seem to see in Your heart the force of God’s moving when We hear you are so well disposed towards the name of Christ and the Christian religion. So may God and the Father of mercies Himself perfect His work which He has begun in You, that You may be made with Us and the Christian princes one body. With You in closest conjunction may they consider all Your interests their own and so be the more strongly inflamed against the common enemy for the forwarding of the common safety and glory. Now We beg with all Our heart the God of armies, in Whose hand are victories and triumphs, that even as once before Cyrus so before You too He may march and shatter the gates of brass and break in sunder the bars of iron and, all difficulties overcome, may make You a triumphant victor.

“Be then of brave and lofty spirit, and as befits You ponder great things and make great emprises so that You may not only uphold by valour and greatheartedness the glory of Your forebears but may even increase and enlarge it.

“Given at Rome at S. Peter’s under the Fisherman’s Ring, 24th February, 1601, in the tenth year of Our Pontificate.”

But on the same day, 24.2.1601, another Brief was issued (*vide* Arch. Vat. Arm. XLIV, vol. 45, p. 49 (58), No. 62), and is probably unique in being addressed by a Pope to a consort of a Shah in Persia as his “dearest daughter in Christ” with the Apostolic benediction (which was not given to her husband or other non-Christians): it was intended doubtless for the Georgian mother of Safi Mirza, i.e. for an inmate of a Muslim ‘haram’. It is stated therein as a known fact that also the mother of ‘Abbas I, the wife of Shah Muhammad Khudabandeh, had been a Christian, a double relationship sufficient to explain some of the knowledge, and interest in matters, of Christian dogma, differences of creed and ritual observances displayed by ‘Abbas I, as narrated later in these annals. Equally long as the other Brief, then, it took up the position that it was providential for there to be such means to hand to complete in the Safawi king the working of the leaven of inclination towards Christianity already manifest in him—as S. Paul had written “that an infidel husband be sanctified by a wife who is a believer”: and so the Brief commended Fr. de Costa and Miranda to the Baigum’s interest. However much instruction in the Christian Faith, practice of the Georgian rite, this particular wife of ‘Abbas I may have had in her earlier life—and a number of Georgian and Circassian princelings and chieftains at that period were Muslim-born or renegades—it is probable that, once in the ‘andarun’, she had had to conform to Shiah worship: even if this Brief were given into her hands one may doubt whether an interpreter for the Latin could be found in her forced seclusion. It ran: