

“them Christians: and, although it be not all true, the Augustinian Fathers in Persia and other Portuguese worthy of credence have told me that there are failings in this respect because of the too indiscreet zeal of some Religious among those charged with looking after them. The king of Persia has got to know of this and told us that Father So-and-so beats such-and-such a child, because it did not want to become a Christian, and other trifles of all of which the king gets to know through the many spies he has in Hurmuz. Some of these children—I do not know whether out of the fear they had of the Fathers, or because of their unwillingness to become Christians—threw themselves down out of the windows of the convent and were killed, others after being baptized apostatized. This and the other (matters) mentioned above greatly irritate the king, who by temperament is haughty, but all the more so now with the many victories he has won, and rightly resents that a private nobleman (such as are the Captains of Hurmuz) should want to cross swords with him, and in public boast of causing him annoyance.

“The good treatment and favouritism afforded the Franks by the king of Persia is the more marked because, notwithstanding what the Christian princes have said to him, and (notwithstanding) the injuries inflicted on his people in Hurmuz, he has never allowed the slightest injustice to be done to our merchants on their way overland to India, nor has he lost the respect he used to pay to Franks who came to his country, where some of them, and Italians too, have caused no small scandal, and committed many follies, such as to get drunk and when drunk to dash about the main square (Maidān) at a gallop, striking this and that Persian, and killing one or other of them, of which the city of Isfahan made complaint to the king—all the same the king did not wish them to be condemned (to death) because they were Franks, although he is very severe with his own people, even when they be governors and nobles of the realm. . . .”

“The respect, which on account of Your Holiness the king shows to Christians in his country is so great that they can do whatsoever they like without even the great governors laying hands on them: when it concerns Franks all remain silent, unless they” (the Franks) “force the harams, where they (the Persians) keep their women, when in such case they would not spare even the king himself, in Persia the saraglio being revered as if it were sacred. Everything else the Persians will suffer at the hands of Franks, because his Majesty so wills it. Now, when the king of Persia sees Christians in Hurmuz treating his subjects so differently, the wrongs they do him rankle the more. . . . I have not myself witnessed such conduct, but have heard of it, partly from the king of Persia (who has bidden me to recount it and write of it to Your Holiness, begging you to put an end to it), partly from the Augustinian Fathers in Persia, the Portuguese and Franks worthy of credence, who have testified of it to me as eyewitnesses, partly from Muhammadans and Armenians, who have suffered the injuries indicated and complained of them to me. . . .”

Here, then, lies much of the incentive which led, sixteen years later, to the successful attack on Hurmuz island, of which 'Abbas I reaped the fruits though it was foreign naval assistance which made it successful.

The preceding pages should have served to give the reader an accurate idea of the confused state of affairs when the Carmelite mission was launched into Persia.

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The tale of the disastrous journey through Muscovy of the pioneer band of Discalced Carmelites has been told briefly in *Histoire de l'Établissement de la Mission de Perse par les Pères Carmes Déchaussés, 1604-12*, by Fr. Berthold-Ignace de Ste. Therese (Bruxelles, 1885), and at greater length—for it takes 60 out of the 150 pages of the second volume—in the sprightly