

"that it is expedient to take that of Aleppo. Immediately, then, that they have made a move in that direction, We shall proceed by that of Diarbakr (Mesopotamia), for the mere reason that Aleppo is very far distant from our empire. With the help of God I shall then advance on Constantinople with such a force that those cruel enemies will not be able to hold on to it, or defend it against my assault.

"The Sovereign Pontiff promised to send me men trained in war, and skilled in engines (artillery), so that in the military operations they may give either instructions" (in the use of them) "or their (active) help. Should he keep his promise, it would be a most acceptable thing to me. However, let one point be realized by you, viz. that by the grace of God, to whom be all praise for it, I have ready such an army that I am able to take action against the enemy at my convenience. Do you also attack them, as I am already in movement with it: and, even should you fail to give me assistance with your troops, with mine I am sufficiently able not only to assault and drive back the enemy, but to break, kill and destroy them.

"But as regards what the Sovereign Pontiff writes to me, I believe it, deeming it to be most true, without any doubt: and therefore when he sends me someone as his ambassador I shall appoint another to reside at his court. I now send you, in the guise of an 'ambassador extraordinary' Don Robert Sherley, an English gentleman, very dear to me for his having served me faithfully many years, a man endowed with much sagacity and worth. . . . I should have sent one of my own subjects, if the aforesaid had not been desired and asked of me by the Sovereign Pontiff and the Emperor.

"To Christians, who are my subjects and live in my dominions, I give no light demonstration of my humanity and protection. I benefit very many of them, nor do I allow anyone to be forced to become a Muslim and to profess the Muhammadan religion, that being altogether opposed to my faith. Quite to the contrary, the Captain of Hurmuz carries off the property of Muhammadan merchants who make voyages to that island, and indeed surreptitiously makes slaves of them and forces them to embrace the Christian Faith. Let the Sovereign Pontiff write to him, I beg, so that in future he shall abstain from these wrongs and outrages which he inflicts on me and my vassals.

"I have already given sanction to Fr. Paul Simon to leave as soon as possible, and repair to Rome by the shortest route. The two companions whom he leaves behind to remain here will reside in Isfahan: and, should it happen to them to need to speak to me about anything, they will be able to do so on any day they please. I have replied to all the letters, both for the Pope and for the other Christian princes, and given orders so that he may deliver them safely. If I ought to do anything else, notify me, and I shall do it."

The official reply which Fr. Paul Simon carried back to Rome is also missing from the archives in the original Persian—before 1622 and the creation of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide oriental documents, especially if works of fine penmanship, enclosed in ornamental purses, doubtless often drifted into the libraries and collections of manuscripts of individual cardinals, such as the Borghese collection, and either were sought after by the few orientalist scholars then in Europe, or destroyed as illegible. A translation or paraphrase, so called, had, however, been supplied to Rome by Fr. John Thaddeus (who became the chief translator among the Carmelites) before the original left Persia.¹ In substance it differs little from the 'Note Verbale' reply furnished by the Shah, as translated above, but is reproduced here for the sake of completeness of the correspondence:

"In the name of Allah and of the great 'Ali to the Pope of Rome.

"Most spacious majesty, and mighty and powerful ruler. May Your grandeur, O most excellent and pious prince, in all things ever increase and become a hundred times greater than it is. Your rule is ordered after the manner of the heavenly realm. Your exaltedness is placed in the greatest star of the sky. Just as the stars in their course move in succession,

¹ It is quoted in *À Persia*, vol. II, p. 129; and by Fr. Eusebius in *Hist. Miss.*