

“them—perhaps it will be the Dauphin of France with the Infanta of Spain: all this news was told us by that boat which left Cagliari.

“There is no talk of the king of England entering the league: I do not know whether Don Robert Sherley will go there, because the king has imprisoned his brother, who had been in slavery” [*sic* for ‘prison’] “on account of his having relations and correspondence with Don Anthony, with whom the king of England is very angry.

“When I reach land I shall inform you on more reliable sources about the above and other news: you can assure the Shah that the Emperor has not made, nor will he make peace with the Turks, and that His Holiness is busy getting together a fleet against them: thus things are well disposed for the Christians to be at peace with one another and united, so that I believe nothing will have been lost by this mission of ours, and that on my arrival in Rome I shall write Your Reverences more consoling news still. I have always in mind the state in which I left you, and shall immediately arrange for money to be remitted by way of Hurmuz, sending in duplicate via Hurmuz the letters of our lord the king, in which he will give orders to the Captain of Hurmuz. There is no safer road for remitting it: by way of Aleppo it is impossible because of the whole country being up in revolt. I am writing the enclosed to the king of Persia: you will close it and present it to him.

“In this ship there embarked (John?) Londinel [*sic*] the Englishman, who was in the Mogul’s dominions and left behind his wife and one son and one daughter in Kashmir, commended to the charge of Khwajeh Saba the Armenian: he is very ill and I doubt whether he will pull through: he has made his will, in which he leaves me guardian of his children. Should you by chance hear anything about his death, let the Superior (at Isfahan) take charge of the two said children. On account of our having touched nowhere we have only stinking water and biscuit—it is all for the love of God. Although separated from you in the body, let our hearts be one, especially of those two who are remaining in an infidel country. My dearest brethren, love one another. You will be so kind as to remember me to the Augustinian Fathers. . . . I urge on you to be diligent in writing and informing me minutely about everything—it will be very important to keep the diary which our Father (General) enjoined on you to keep, and to send copies of it by various routes, seeing that on all the roads there are many impediments” (to prevent it reaching Italy).

A few days after landing in Italy, Fr. Paul Simon was received in a lengthy audience by Pope Paul V, to whom he made a detailed report on the situation. (The new Praepositus General of the Congregation, Fr. Ferdinand of S. Mary, wrote, 18.10.1608,¹ to the two Fathers at Isfahan:

“. . . The Father” (i.e. Paul Simon) “has been very well received by His Holiness and the Cardinals, and His Holiness is sending him to Spain: and in the meanwhile Fathers Redempt and Benignus are going out to keep your Reverences company and to testify to his Majesty there how Fr. Paul has arrived and well performed the commission entrusted to him, and how His Holiness was pleased with his (the Shah’s) messages and letters, as they will tell you verbally in detail. . . . As regards the business about which the Viceroy of Naples has written to your Reverences, do what he asks, as is my desire and that of the Fathers” (here) . . .

Evidently impressed by the ability of the Carmelite Father, by the need of satisfying 'Abbas to some extent, and by the expediency of profiting by the favourable juncture owing to the general upheaval in the Ottoman dominions, the Sovereign Pontiff entrusted Fr. Paul Simon, as his envoy, with the mission of sounding the king of Spain and his ministers as to an alliance on the basis of that which had so successfully led to Lepanto in the time of S. Pius V. To

¹ O.C.D. 236 a.