

The request for the appointment of a Latin bishop to Echmiadzin is surprising in the light of the fact that only a few months before Sherley left Persia the Shah was so suspicious of the Carmelite missionaries having designs on the Armenians and of their bringing up in discussion submission of the Armenian church to the Roman obedience, that for long he would not receive them in audience, and Sherley himself had warned them not to mention the Armenians. The latter part of the eighth clause increases suspicion—that Sherley was not the *porte-voix* of his master in this matter: it does not ring true.

However, Pope Paul V immediately acknowledged the making of that offer, as can be read from his Brief to Shah 'Abbas I (Arch. Secr. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 5, p. 57, formerly 49), beginning:

“POPE PAUL V

“To the illustrious and most puissant Shah 'Abbas, King of the Persians.

“Illustrious and most puissant Shah 'Abbas King of the Persians, greetings and the
 “light of divine grace. There had departed a few days previously the honoured and
 “high-born 'Ali Quli Baig, ambassador of Your Highness, when Our dear son the noble
 “Robert Sherley the Englishman, Your other ambassador, reached Us; and assuredly his
 “arrival was the more welcome to Us as We had the more longed to see him that We
 “might more conveniently learn from himself what it was You had intimated to Us by
 “Your letters long ago dispatched that You would give him for the common service. When
 “he had entered this lovely city of Ours with a great throng of people and to the immense
 “joy of all and on the second day had been escorted to Us, in order to honour him even
 “as We had also done to Your former ambassador We received him kindly in the presence
 “of some of Our venerable brethren the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church. He
 “delivered to Us Your most welcome letter and in a clear speech in elegant style set forth
 “the reason of his embassy. Returning afterwards, in a private conversation with all
 “witnesses sent away, he made plain to Us with more care and detail Your kindness and
 “zealous goodwill towards Us; he laid bare plans for waging war against Our mutual enemy
 “the tyrant of the Ottomans; he pointed out what You think We must do; he stirred Us
 “up to send a Nuncio of Ours to Your Highness, laying before Us the seriousness of the
 “matter and Your kind feelings towards Our people. So to all this We reply (as that
 “same ambassador of Yours will write back to You) in such a way that You can easily
 “understand that Our longing especially harmonizes with the will of Your conscience just
 “as Our affection for You does with Your kindly feelings towards Us. Consequently We
 “shall again perform the duties of Our pastoral care among Our sons the most dear Catholic
 “Kings and princes of the Christian commonwealth, and shall take pains to urge them
 “with minds and arms united to shoulder a war as much glorious as necessary against our
 “unconscionable enemies, the Turks, even as We have hitherto perpetually done; but
 “particularly indeed We shall, as You desire, urge hereto Our most dear son in Christ,
 “Philip the most puissant Catholic King and those princes who from their convenient
 “situation can more readily assail the Ottoman despotism. In fine we shall leave naught
 “undone that the enemy in Your district suffer greater loss and annoyance. Regarding
 “moreover those things which Your same ambassador promised Us in Your name in order
 “to promote the rank to be enjoyed by and the honours to be paid to the Nuncio We are
 “to send to you, and regarding the setting up of a Catholic archbishop in Greater Armenia,
 “We give your Highness very great thanks, and we shall deliberate about both topics and
 “shall decide only on one worthy of so great an office and one who can satisfy You and
 “his post, even as We shall also take pains that of such kind too shall be the rest of the
 “Religious whom We shall send into Persia. For We desire nothing more than by patterns
 “of Christian devoutness long suffering steadfastness and of love the perfection of all virtues
 “always to kindle Your Highness and the people subject to You more strongly with the
 “love of Jesus Christ the only-begotten Son of God Our Saviour, that the joy which We
 “are given on earth be as a result of Your friendship and kindness increased, nay rather