

"I have decided to dispatch that gentleman, both because he is from the same country (? sic, 'paese') as Your Holiness, but also because he is very well informed about all our affairs as having seen everything with his own eyes. From him Your Holiness will be able to understand all My position, so far as concerns war and peace. The Fathers mentioned above" (i.e. the Carmelites) "have told me that Your Holiness desires to know in what direction it would be well to attack the Turk, our common enemy, in those regions. With regard to this I cannot tell You anything more except that on My side I have in the past exerted all my might and shall not fail to do so in the future: still, in fact, I have ready a large army. On Your side You can now judge better where it would be well to begin warfare, seeing that Your Holiness is more acquainted with the country. Anyhow, to give My opinion, I should consider it would be good to march on Aleppo with one army and dispatch another wheresoever Your Holiness may think best. On Our part I am going to proceed with two forces, with the one I shall harass the region round Diarbakr, with the other the Anatolian area. With the aid of the Creator of all I trust that the Turks, thrown into confusion and harassed on all sides, will be finished and exterminated. With their removal from our midst there will then be greater neighbourliness between us, and then as neighbours we shall be able to display the amity and alliance there is between us. Because the English gentleman named, during the time he has been here in my service, has always conducted himself well and has lived as it behoved according to his creed, for that reason I have acquired confidence in him, and all that he will represent regarding Our concord and friendship You should hold as absolutely true, because he is Our trusted" (man). "I shall not commend to You this Englishman because I know that Your Holiness will not fail to cherish him and hold him recommended to You, as is fitting, so that this amity and friendship between us be maintained, which is effected by the frequent coming and going of persons and communications between one and the other. You will do me a favour by informing Me of any matter in which I can be of service to Your Holiness, or to any other of the Christian Princes whatsoever, for I shall not fail to do You the service, as befits our sentiments and friendship. In order not to make this more diffuse and tedious I pray God—may He be blessed—that Your end be most happy and fortunate. . . ."

The Latin text of Pope Paul's reply to the above missive, after Sherley's return from Spain, is available:¹ and it is evident from it that Sherley returned to Rome at the end of his stay in Spain.

"POPE PAUL THE FIFTH.

"To the illustrious and most puissant Shah 'Abbas,² king of the Persians.

"O! illustrious and most puissant Shah 'Abbas, king of the Persians, greeting and the light of the Divine grace. Our dear son, the English gentleman Robert Sherley, the mouthpiece of Your Highness, has done in Spain all those things which You had given him to do by your instructions, and now is preparing himself for the journey, so that as soon as possible he may return to Persia and Your Highness. But in that You had instructed him to betake himself to the king of England; this he had been unable to do without risk to his soul, for that king is separated from communion with the Holy Catholic Church. He has asked Us to be pleased to make excuses for him to Your Highness, if for the sake of religion he refrained from proceeding on that mission. But since he has so just, so manifest an excuse, to wit that of the salvation of his soul, We ask once and again of You to accept it for Our sake, for it will certainly be most agreeable to Us, who in the meantime will pray God that He will enlighten You with the light of His holy grace, so that You come to know the path of salvation, and along it arrive at perfect and incorruptible felicity.

¹ Arm. XLV, 6, *Epistolae ad Principes, Pauli V, LXXXVIII*, p. 33, Arch. Sec. Vat.

² Spelt "Abbahas" in the original Latin.