

“Then Fr. John (Thaddeus) observed that, if his Majesty said that hitherto he had seen “no sign of friendship on the part of the Christians, the latter might equally well say that “of his Majesty, seeing that in all the time they had stayed in his realm he had given “neither a site nor a church, a thing which the Turks did grant, enemies though they were.

“At once the Shah replied that, were the Christian Princes to make war and capture a “single goat from the Turks, he would then give them both site and church, and would “accommodate them, even if it were in his own house and above his own head, but that, if “they did not go to war, as he had already indicated, within the next four months, he was “determined to give no further credit to their words: and so not only he would not give them “a church, but he would make worse provision for them still, adding that the Turks pos- “sessed the Sepulchre of Jesus Christ and little we did for the Christians to recover a place “like that, where we should lack neither church nor sites, and might cease splitting his “head so frequently over the church with pretexts, not one of which in so lengthy a period “had he yet seen put into execution.

“To that Fr. John rejoined that the present Pontiff so recently elected had not had yet “the time to show his Majesty in deeds what he promised in his letters; that the promises “made to the Shah by his predecessor were not binding on His Holiness, in regard to whom “however it might be recognized how much he was minded to give pleasure to his Majesty “from the gesture so markedly rare of His Holiness desiring to send him an ambassador “of distinction, a thing which neither this Pope nor any of his predecessors had ever yet done “as regards any Muhammadan sovereign. But, the Father went on, he and we felt ex- “ceedingly pained when we thought how Fr. Paul (Simon) had extolled both to the Frank “sovereigns and in Rome to the Pope himself the munificence of his Majesty the Shah, and “enlarged on the favours which he ('Abbas I) was continually showing to our Christians “and to our Religious in particular—pained that they would now have to learn so much to “the contrary, and that there in Europe it would have to be said that his Majesty had had “the house, which he himself had assigned for them, taken away from our Fathers, and “moreover permitted that inside the place, which these Fathers had fitted up as an oratory “and church, horses should be put and his Majesty's servants make a stable of it and thus “display a marked contempt for the Christian religion, and further, after all this, should “not even cause us to be given another place in which we could conveniently stay and “perform those exercises to carry out which we were under an obligation towards our “Order.

“Beginning with the first argument—the matter of the ambassador—the king answered “that the compliment of dispatching an ambassador, which the Pontiff wished to pay him, “was not so important as we said, since he (the Pope) did the same to the Sultan of Turkey, “with whom he permanently had an ambassador resident: and, when without permitting “the Shah to proceed, Fr. John had promptly denied this assertion, he called up a ‘Turk’ of “high position, his chief chamberlain, of whom he angrily demanded whether the Pope “had an ambassador at the Sultan's Court. This official and others replied in the affirma- “tive, not daring to contradict the king. When Fr. John firmly and bravely retorted that “it was not true, and all those persons were telling lies, the Shah insisted that they should “speak the truth: and then all unanimously affirmed that the Pope had never sent an am- “bassador to the Turkish Sultan. So the Shah passed to the second point, viz. that of the “house, and said that much had been the twaddle and many the lies which for so many “years the Christian Princes had written, but, without any deeds accompanying them: and “that, were the Christians to proceed to deeds, then he too would follow suit, adding that “the Christian Princes stood at their ease waiting for the plum to drop ripe into their mouths, “i.e. that, when the Turks had been thoroughly shattered by His Majesty, then they, the “sovereigns of Christendom, would promptly come on the scene in order to benefit by his “labours. That was not the way to treat himself, as, if he had not during so many years “warred with the Sultan of Turkey and killed so many of his people, the soldiers the Sultan “had were so brave that, having crushed the Christian might, they would have already