The prisoners reached Farrahabad, near the shore of the Caspian, where the Shah then was, on Holy Saturday—that year the 18th April. On the previous day there had got back from Spain the Augustinian Fr. Melchior of the Angels, who had been commissioned by the persistent merchant-Shah to impress on the Spanish Court that the value of the silk had been assigned by him for a pious use, viz. the endowment of a house of Sufi darwish-es. This Portuguese Religious brought to Isfahan news of having left in Lisbon Don Garcia de Silva y Figueroa, the ambassador designate, who was to bring with him a sumptuous present. Once more 'Abbas I gave full credence to that announcement and as an expression of satisfaction accorded the prisoners a benevolent reception, to their surprise, for they anticipated being put to death. He had drink, food and a commodious lodging provided for them.

On the Nativity of S. John Baptist (i.e. June 24, 1615) the Shah ordered illuminations at Farrahabad, and gave 212 Tumans for distribution among them, as well as some other pieces of gold and silver, velvet, damask and silk—'killing them with kindness', as the saying goes. Still to demonstrate their misery, perhaps, or out of neglect by their guards, the Portuguese prisoners continued with tousled hair and beards, so that one day, in one of his caprices, 'Abbas I, remarking that this denoted that they were despising his favours, himself took a pair of scissors and put out his hand to cut off the mane of one hidalgo who, mortified, asked for a respite to comply voluntarily. The prisoners had squandered all the money given them, when three months later, 5.8.1615, the Shah brought them in his train on his return to his capital: the rations given them were inadequate, so that the Carmelites had to nourish them, besides providing six beds for the sick.[1]

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In his ship from England, in or about September 1613, Sir Robert Sherley and his wife Teresa had reached Tatta in Sind, but the Portuguese in that town instigated the natives against him, so that they attempted to blow up his house with gunpowder. On resistance offered one or two of Sherley's retinue were slain, himself maltreated:[2] as soon as he had landed at Tatta, he had dispatched his own ship to Bantam, unaware that any English were settled at Surat. About the end of September 1614 he went to Agra—he had meantime been hospitably entertained by a petty Rajah: at Agra he stayed only ten days, during which the Jesuit Fathers there used to visit his house daily and say Mass, their church being locked up at the time. According to his statement, about the beginning of August 1615[3] he finally got back to Isfahan after an absence of more than six years, thoroughly weary of travelling and desirous of settling down to home life, even in Persia. 'Abbas I is stated to have marked his satisfaction with his envoy in a singular way—by making Sherley share his bedroom the first night after his arrival. But he dumbfounded Sherley and dashed all his hopes by insisting on the latter returning forthwith to Europe on a second embassy. In vain the Englishman strove to decline for the sake of his wife, as well as his own. The story is told by the Carmelite Fr. Redempt:[4] although he had captured the fort of the king of (Spain and) Portugal at Gāmbrun and killed his garrison, with the prisoners the Shah took the line that they were vassals of the king of Spain, his brother and friend, and so he would treat them handsomely and he projected restoring them to their countrymen by sending a Persian envoy with them to Hurmuz and Goa and thence to Spain, in order to give the king of Spain satisfaction for the past hostilities and settle other business. A Persian magnate had first been in view for this and was to go with the Augustinian Fr. Melchior; but this hung fire for some three months:

"At the end of it there arrived Count Robert Sherley . . . with the replies from the

[1] See MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. XVII, book 2, part 2.
[2] See *English Factory Records*, India Office archives.
[3] On 5.8.1615 he reached Farrahabad [? *sic*], states *Hist. Miss.*
[4] O.C.D. 234 e. *Relación breve del viaie que hizo el Fr. Redento de la Cruz in compañía del Conde Don Roberto Serleo, ambasre del Rey de Persia á Su Majestad Catolica desde Aspahan corte de aquel rey hasta Lisboa.*