

"Qazwin, the former capital. The Spanish ambassador was some 27 days on the road before halting, 15.6.1618, in a village two leagues south of Qazwin, where Shah 'Abbas was awaiting him.

"On the following day" (16.6.1618) "as it grew light, he began to send off his camels, very many in number, and the rest of his gear and effects, which were considerable, so that all the caravan of various quadrupeds numbered more than 500, and up to nightfall these were still entering the town, but by a different road and gate from that about to be followed by Don Garcia.

"At two in the afternoon of that day the ambassador quitted that village, after having given to all his servants two very rich liveries, the one of mulberry-coloured velvet with silver and gold embroidery in which they entered the town that day: the other for the day when the gifts were to be presented of green velvet worked with very rich embroidery, which made a very pleasant sight.

"He gave them all gold chains of great value, without a single man lacking one, and very rich plumes. . . . He took with him 8 pages, 8 lackeys, a master of the horse, steward, a chaplain and one Augustinian Father, together with all the other attendants—a Grandee (of Spain) can have—all mounted, with a litter going in front after the Spanish fashion, borne between two camels and very richly appointed, in which the ambassador journeyed at night, and a palanquin, too, in the Indian style carried on the shoulders of men.

"There were 500 mounted men. The ambassador rode a splendid horse, and was very richly attired in a suit of faded rose colour, with a gold chain and the band of his hat made of diamonds, which seemed like stars among the plume.

"Half a league before the town was reached by order of the Shah all the nobles of his Court and his chief Mihmandar, all mounted . . . with plumes in the Persian fashion . . . accompanied by other mounted men of the Court, in all some 400, without counting a very large number of people on horseback and on foot, who went outside the town to see the ambassador. . . . The governor of the town had commanded by public crier that all those who were not busy should go out to the *istiqbal*, and thus there was such a concourse. The nobles saluted the ambassador, and the Mihmandar gave him welcome on behalf of the Shah who, he said, was expecting him with great pleasure and longing for his arrival. He was lodged in the largest house in the town" (of Qazwin) "which belonged to an agent of the Shah. . . . On the morrow, at 8 in the morning the Mihmandar came from the Shah to say that the latter was awaiting him, and so he went to the palace with all his servants in their rich liveries, he himself being richly clothed and having the letter of credence from our lord the king" (of Spain) "inserted in the hat-band of his hat.

"The ambassador arrived with all his people and servants at the king's palace, and entered by a gilded gate . . . into a large garden: on the one side and the other an avenue of white poplars and plane-trees, water flowing on either hand; and, after he had reached the beginning of this avenue, the ambassador dismounted from his horse with all his company and, having followed up an alley on one side for some forty paces, saw 50 paces away from him and issuing from a fine arbour<sup>1</sup> the Shah, who came towards the ambassador alone, dressed in a coloured *qaba*<sup>2</sup>, a green turban, with plumes in the Persian fashion, which ordinarily are two or three of the best feathers of the crane mounted in a gold brooch and ornamented with some stone, beautiful to behold.

"The Shah continued to come on more than 35 paces before reaching the ambassador. The latter bent his knee and kissed his Majesty's hand: the Shah raised him, embraced him and, putting his face near that of the ambassador, with a pleasing expression said: "Welcome a thousand times!" And, saying this, he placed him on his right hand and

<sup>1</sup> *Zenadero*—a word not to be found in the dictionary.

<sup>2</sup> *Cabava* is the Spanish form here given: it is the outer long garment folding in front and fastened with the girdle or shawl.