

“great soldier. They have not yet gained the love and confidence of the people, or of the Janissaries, as Sultan Mustafa has done. The fourth son was Sultan Jahangir, aged 24, who last year in the month of November departed this life in the town of Aleppo, where he had gone with his father on the expedition against the Sufi” (i.e. the king of Persia): “he was of a pleasant nature and with it of poor health, besides being hunchbacked and “by his looks unworthy to have charge of the government. . . .”

Then there is another account<sup>1</sup>—the name of the writer was not copied, but it is likely to have been Daniele Barbaro, who was in Aleppo throughout the campaign of 1553–4:<sup>2</sup> and the fact that the “Grand Signor” himself had made that city his headquarters, together with large numbers of his troops, gave this Venetian observer special access to the facts. At that date the frontier between Persia and Turkey was as follows:

“From the Amanus mountains to the Persian Gulf the river Tigris is the boundary, all “to the west being in the Turkish empire, to the east in the Persian, with the exception of “certain castles in the mountains dividing Mesopotamia from Greater Armenia held by “the Kurds. . . . The town of Van had been taken by the Turks from the Persians in the “expedition of 1548. . . . Shirwan was subject to the Persian king, and for the most part “the Georgians or Iberians were tributary to, or allied with him. The Turks had three “frontier towns of great importance: Ersinjan, Van and Baghdad: the chief position of “importance in the hands of the Persians was Tabriz, where the Safawi king had his “capital. . . .

“ . . . Eight days’ distance to the north of Nakhchiwan was the district of Shirwan, and “on the banks of the Araxes there was the fortress of Kars, which had been destroyed and “pulled down by the Persians, the stones being even carried a long distance away, so that “the Turks should not fortify the place with artillery. . . . After taking Van in another “expedition, 1548, Sultan Sulaiman had decided to abandon any further operations in “this direction, in order to deal with the situation in Transylvania and Hungary which “was troubling him; but, in order not to leave the country without a strong guard, and to “safeguard his conquests in the East, he placed one Baiglarbaigi<sup>3</sup> in Van, with a company “of soldiers to defend the town, another Baiglarbaigi he stationed in Karkamish near the “Antitaurus mountains between Van and the river Euphrates, and a third in Erzerum “with a larger garrison than the other two: and because this place was of greater importance “to his position, and more harassed by the Persians he posted there a man of standing, “named Iskandar Agha, who had had charge of the provisioning of the army . . . putting “under him eight sanjaks. . . . When the Grand Signor had left (for his capital), this “Baiglarbaigi left at Erzerum, desirous of adding some territory by conquest to his master’s “dominions, began to raid the borderlands of Persia so that for a considerable distance “there was not a house to be found, all the inhabitants having been either massacred or “carried off in slavery, or having fled into the interior. This Baiglarbaigi proceeded to erect “a fort to dominate and keep in subjection the territory won (in order to push his cavalry “farther on to raid, thinking thus to occupy the enemy’s country); but Shah Tahmasp “penetrating his design and determining not to permit this fort to be begun by the Turks, “gave his second son, who has the name of his grandfather, Isma’il, and who is very coura- “geous, an army of some 20,000 picked mounted men, instructing him what to do. Isma’il “went and, as directed by his father, suddenly assaulted those who were at work on the “fort begun, and destroyed it all. The greater part of the Turkish force guarding it were

<sup>1</sup> Pol. Var. Misc. Arm. II, 75 (74), p. 1, *Relazione delle cose del Turco col Sofi di Persia*, Vat. Arch.

<sup>2</sup> Though from another manuscript account at the Vatican (Fondo Chigi, II, No. 48, p. 335: “Report regarding the King of Persia of the year 1553, transcribed from an original of the late Sigr Fulvio Ruggieri, of Bologna, by Giovan Francesco Scardova of Bologna on the 24th November 1597, in Rome”) the identical wording of a section relating to the boundaries between the Turkish and Persian empires might make it seem that Fulvio Ruggieri were the author of the narrative in Pol. Var. Arm. II, 75; the latter was presumably a Venetian, not a Bolognese, however.

<sup>3</sup> In Persian pronunciation, *Beylerbey* in Turkish.