

“the Divine office, administer the Sacraments, preach the word of God and everywhere
 “spread it and sow the light and seed of the Gospel of Christ for salvation to every
 “believer.

“Nothing can befall more pleasing to Us than these things, nothing more acceptable to
 “God, nothing more salutary to Yourself and bringing You greater fame: for, when truly
 “and with all Your heart You render service for the glory of God, He also, by whom alone
 “kings reign, will make You glorious and the conqueror of Your enemies, the Turks,
 “triumphing over them.

“So in a short time We shall dispatch to You priests, doctors of the truth and teachers
 “of salvation, as We have promised by other letters of Ours, which We had given to the
 “above-named Francisco and Didacus to carry to You. Again and many times We com-
 “mend them to You, and We beg that You will receive them graciously and that You will
 “send them back to Us, just as We have esteemed Your representatives and return them
 “to You again with much expression of Our regard and with Our letters. We have spoken
 “to them abundantly of those very matters, about which We write to You, and they have
 “been able to perceive from even Our countenance and Our eyes Our exceptional goodwill
 “for You and desire for Your glory.

“May God Almighty, who placed You on the throne of the great Cyrus the king, give
 “You a wise heart and strengthen You from on high with valour and fortitude so that You
 “may overcome Your enemies the Turks and restore the light of the Gospel of Christ in
 “the country of the Persians, where formerly it shone far and wide, and may You so surpass
 “all kings who were before You in that kingdom in the magnitude and glory of Your feats,
 “that no other age and no posterity be ignorant of Your fame, nor ever become silent in
 “Your praises. Given at the Holy Apostles, Rome, under the (seal of the) Fisherman’s
 “Ring, 2nd May 1601, in the tenth year of Our Pontificate.”

When brought to 'Abbas I, such an answer must have afforded him no satisfaction, and indeed have caused irritation, for it advanced matters not a step towards the desired common action: he already knew of the Emperor Rudolph's operations in Hungary and had explained that these were insufficient for the purpose: of any intention, or ability, to get Spain and Venice, France, Tuscany, Malta, Poland to send military or naval forces there was no word. Even the 'bona fides' of his envoys, Sherley and Husain 'Ali Baig, was cast in doubt.

The Brief, to which Pope Clement VIII alluded as having been already dispatched to Shah 'Abbas by Fr. Francisco Costa and Diego Miranda, had been written some two months earlier, namely on 24.2.1601. It is of no brevity (*vide* the Latin text in the appendix: or Arch. Vat. Arm. XLIV, vol. 45, p. 45 (No. 61), but of interest in its entirety because, not only does it reveal that an idea of dispatching Jesuits to Persia had first been in Pope Clement's mind, but that Rome had been led by the said Francis Costa and other travellers to hope much from alleged indications of 'Abbas I's personal inclination towards the Christian religion, tales woven round activities and talk of the monarch wrongly understood, or greatly exaggerated by those irresponsible observers. So this particular Brief of Pope Clement VIII is based altogether on the conception that 'Abbas I would be ready to undergo instruction in the Catholic Faith, and so desirous of priests being sent to him, and of building churches for the Christians: it is an exhortation to the Persian sovereign to persevere on the road to baptism and so, welded by one common faith with the princes of Christendom, to be the readier to conduct joint operations against the Turk.

It reads in translation.

“Pope Clement VIII to the illustrious king, the most puissant prince of the Persians.

“Most puissant and illustrious king, greeting and the acceptance with Your whole heart
 “of the light of Divine grace which God offers. Great is the force of virtue and great its
 “efficacy; its beauty stirs in us a great love towards those even whom we have never seen.
 “This is Our feeling in fact in liking You, for even though We be separated from You by