

“they exhorted him himself to do the same, as he in fact has done:¹ to many of the Franks, “who had gone to his country, having committed a great many follies:² and, more recently “still, to the Emperor having agreed to treat of peace between himself and the Turks,³ “without giving him” (‘Abbas) “notice, the more so as he at that time had ambassadors “with the Emperor, of whom he” (‘Abbas) “had no news, but believed that the Emperor “had had them killed. Certain it is that the Mullas—this the name they give in their “tongue to the learned men of their belief—went to the Shah, and told him to reflect on “what he was doing—that he knew very well that the Sultan was the head of the Muslim “belief: if he” (‘Abbas I) “should bring about the destruction of the latter in this warfare, “the Christians would do the same to him, and to all of their belief. For they observed “what poor sort of friends they were, when even their kings did not keep their word to “him” (‘Abbas), “while, the Franks who came to his country, what scant respect they paid “him. It would be better to make peace with the Turkish Sultan, and then both of them “together to attack the Christians. . . .”

The incidents on Hurmuz, to which reference was made above as so prejudicing ‘Abbas I against the Portuguese, are recounted in another portion of Fr. Paul Simon’s report preserved in the Vatican:⁴

“The Captains of Hurmuz in the presence of the vassals of the Shah of Persia speak very “insultingly of him, saying infamous things, which for decency I omit. They force the “Persian traders who go to buy merchandize at Hurmuz to take other goods, which they “do not want, at a price of 60 per cent above what these are worth in the market: for “example, a man goes to Hurmuz with 1,000 scudi to buy cloth. The Captain takes his “money, and gives him cloves or other merchandize of his own, which afterwards the “traders are unable to sell in their countries: and they force them to take these (goods) “at much more than they are worth in the market. Unable to stomach such tyranny, one “trader burnt in front of the fortress the goods which the Captain had forced on him. “They take away forcibly the horses, which traders bring down from Persia,⁵ and pay “them what they (the Portuguese) choose—very much less than the prices at which they “want to sell. This is what they do in Hurmuz to Persian traders: it is nothing in com- “parison with what they do to the Armenians, who also are subjects of the king of Persia, “and who many times have complained to me, saying that the Portuguese are not Chris- “tians, but Jews, because they rob them (the Armenians) openly and shamelessly. “When I was coming away from Persia to Aleppo many Muhammadans, without knowing “who I was, made complaints to me of the same thing, to the great shame of our holy “Faith, saying that in Hurmuz the Captain had ‘killed and ruined’ them, because the “goods he had obliged them to take, e.g. for 6,000 scudi, they had not sold for 3,000. To “such an extent these impositions grew that the traders ceased to go to Hurmuz to make “purchases, but waited for the shipments in Basra, or caravans to arrive in Shiraz, and there “they would make purchases, although at higher prices, preferring to pay that much more

¹ In another of Fr. Paul Simon’s reports on his return to Rome, 1608, preserved in the Carmelite archives, O.C.D. 234 b., these words are used:

“He” (i.e. the Shah) “complains that . . . the Pope, Emperor and king of Spain have incited him with various “embassies to declare war against the Sultan, promising to aid him by doing the same. At their request he had done “so, and had not ceased from that hour. Yet in so many years the Christian princes had not made a move: on the “contrary, with two of his (Persian) envoys at his Court the Emperor had allowed peace to be negotiated between “himself and the Sultan, and concluded it without giving him (‘Abbas) any news of it. Thus, says the Shah, the Christian “princes have cheated, and made a mock of him. . . . This French king sent him an ambassador with letters in which “he adjured him (‘Abbas) to continue the war against the Turkish Sultan, and promised to do the same. When the “Shah returned the gesture by sending an envoy to France, the King of France did not give him audience, they say, “and would not even receive him. . . .”

² This refers to Da Costa, Miranda, and the like up to the Augustinians.

³ This was the peace at Sitevorsk in 1606 when the Turks waived the former annual tribute by Austria.

⁴ Fondo Borghese, Ser. II, n. 20, p. 163.

⁵ Interesting to note that the export of Persian ponies from the Gulf Ports existed already in 1600, as it flourished still in 1910 (for polo in India) but not much later.