

Spanish account, which follows closely the reports of the missionaries but does not go beyond 1622, by Fr. Florencio del Niño Jesus in *A Persia* (Pamplona, 1929): here therefore only the main incidents will be noticed.

Once Clement VIII had determined on the dispatch of Carmelite Fathers, there was little delay in the selection of the components of the mission and, perhaps logically, those who had been foremost in influencing the Congregation of Italy to embark on such enterprise were included. They were: Fr. Paul of Jesus Mary and Fr. John of S. Elisaeus, already named, Fr. Vincent of S. Francis, a second Spaniard but from Valencia who had made his profession in Rome, and Lay Brother John of the Assumption from Umbria. A fifth and lay member of the party was the Aragonese, Francisco Riodolid de Peralta,<sup>1</sup> a soldier by profession, described variously as "Ensign" and "Sergeant-Major", who had served for many years with the Spanish forces in Flanders: in the words of the leader of the mission:

"... this Spanish gentleman was being sent by the Pope to see whether it would be expedient to send military engineers, and other men-at-arms, for whom the king was asking his Holiness, with the object of their aiding him against the Turks by training good soldiers, and in order that, in case it should be expedient to send them, Riodolid should see what class of engineers and men-at-arms he (the king of Persia) needed..."<sup>2</sup>

Funds for the journey were partly furnished by the Baron de Cacurri. They were given letters of recommendation from the Pope for the Emperor, for Sigismund III, king of Poland, for the Grand Duke Feodor of Muscovy, and for Shah 'Abbas I (as already noted in the registers of the Vatican archives). The Latin of the last-mentioned Brief is provided in the appendix: a translation runs:

"Pope Clement VIII to the king of the Persians,

"Most puissant and illustrious king, greeting and the light of the Divine grace. The warlike valour of Your Highness is so renowned in the mouths of all, in public and in private, that though the rascally Turk, Your enemy no less than Ours, may have closed all approaches, it is the subject of the talk of all. These are the gifts of God, granted to Your Highness for some hidden reason by the Author of all good things. And We consider that You are given to the world for the sake both of the State and of some great advantage that the dignity and extent of Your most powerful kingdom may be restored to its ancient condition by Your valour.

"We indeed are separated by a very great distance of space from You; but in accordance with that honour which is due to Your distinguished valour We have for You a friendly and benevolent regard and wish for You those results of the war that may duly hand down to the memory of men Your glory already known and witnessed by all. Since We greatly desire to have tried men worthy of confidence with You as an earnest of this Our favourable goodwill towards You, We have chosen from the Carmelite Order three pious and learned priests, whom We send to You together with their companions, namely Paul Simon, John Thaddeus and Vincent.

"These Our letters they will hand to Your Highness and congratulate You in Our name on Your royal city that You have regained,<sup>3</sup> on so many and so great victories, on Your illustrious renown which carries Your name in triumph throughout the whole world to the applause and admiration of all. If this mark of this Our benevolent goodwill towards Your Highness be, as We hope, agreeable to You, You will learn from these men of Ours also other matters, which in time will be even more agreeable to You and We ask that You will have confidence, in still greater fashion, in all matters which they will

<sup>1</sup> On p. 43 of the first volume of the registers of professions of Religious at S. Maria della Scala, Rome, as one witness to the state of the novice, the Spaniard Leander of the Annunciation, himself a former captain in the army, appears the signature of Francisco Riodolid de Peralta, 16.3.1604.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* p. 18, *A Persia*, cited.

<sup>3</sup> Probably Tabriz is intended.