

As to the main objective of the journey to Rome of Fr. Vincent, the Definitory General of the Order decided to approve of the suggested establishment on Hurmuz island, and appointed Fr. Leander of the Annunciation, another Spaniard, to return with Fr. Vincent. This new recruit, the son of a gentleman at the court of the Spanish king, till not long before his leaving all to enter the Religious life had been a captain in the military forces at Naples: he was further a writer of verse of no mean merit, it is considered. After further discussion with the Sovereign Pontiff, and after the Briefs had been handed over at a final audience the two Fathers left Venice, 28.8.1610, sailing via Crete, Cyprus, Tripoli in Syria to reach Aleppo, 30.11.1610. But it was 20.2.1611 before they were at Baghdad, where they found that city in consternation at a recent victory of Shah 'Abbas, who however failed to pursue it to advantage: with a caravan that departed from Baghdad, 28.3.1611, they entered Isfahan on Whit-Sunday, 21.5.1611. The Shah was presumably out on campaign, and the Brief from the Pope<sup>1</sup> undelivered at the time: its wording may thus be rendered:

“To the King of the Persians,

“POPE PAUL V.

“Most illustrious and puissant Shah 'Abbas,<sup>2</sup> king of the Persians, greeting and the light of the Divine grace. We rejoice exceedingly as often as We receive the letters of Your Highness, or news is brought to Us of You, by which We are informed of Your successful advance against the common enemy, the Ottoman tyrant, and of Your uninterrupted affection for Us and Our sons. For that reason We read with the greatest delight both the letters, which that religious and devout man and priest of God, Our beloved son Vincent of S. Francis, Discalced Carmelite friar, brought Us from Your Highness. For We have learnt fully from them alone not only that all which the Turks, the accursed enemies of God and man, had previously taken from You, had been recovered by You bravely and nobly, but also that You had entered their territory and were daily advancing. We were glad too for the reason that We have understood what kindness You are showing to Our very greatly beloved sons, the Discalced Carmelite friars whom We sent into Persia.

“But that You say that You have received no reply to those letters which You had sent Us by Your own envoys and Ours is very little surprising, for when You wrote these last letters it is probable that those persons, whose duty it was to deliver to You Our letters, were still on the road. For to Your former letters, which Our beloved son Paul Simon, Discalced Carmelite friar, handed to Us, We replied twenty months ago. To the others which 'Ali Quli Baig, the Persian nobleman and shortly afterwards Our beloved son Robert Sherley, the English gentleman, Your ambassadors, brought, We sent an answer last year. We wish to convince You that, just as We think much of Your Highness, so the business about which You wished to treat with Us is very dear to Us, both because its importance and seriousness so require and because We desire to show You, as far as We can with God's help, how well disposed Our mind is and most affectionate towards You. Would that the condition of the present times, altogether contrary to Our desire, did not prevent Us, or We would already indeed have shown Your Highness how much We long to assist Your victorious arms by attacking the common enemy from this side. But since We are unable to do anything else at least We do continually strive with Our fervent prayers to God to accomplish that, never relaxing zeal and diligence, whereby We may win over the minds of the Christian princes, so that We may the more easily be able to push them on to so holy and so necessary a war. This, We believe, Your ambassadors have recounted to You by now, if indeed, as We greatly hope, they have reached You safe and sound: and this beloved son of Ours, Vincent of S. Francis, will also describe to Your

kindness, and to stir them to arms against the Turks; and in Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 6, there are three Briefs, Nos. 80, 81, 82, recommending to the Emperor Rudolph, to Philip king of Spain, and to Cosmo Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, 28.7.1610, 'Safar Azaria, the Armenian, who has come to deal with the business of the king of Persia'—regarding sales of silk possibly, as well as hostilities against the Turks.

<sup>1</sup> Arch. Secr. Vat. Arm. XLV, 6. For Latin original text see appendix to this compilation.

<sup>2</sup> Spelt Abbahas.