

"three years previously they had sent him to the king of Persia with a Brief from the Pope  
"and letters from the Republic of Venice—that he had been well received by the Shah  
"and took back a reply to Rome, and presented it to the Pope. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

That would have been about June 1647, in view of a letter from the Archbishop of Pisa—see *S.R.*, vol. 135, p. 224—which is dated from Venice 4.6.1650 and informs the Secretary of the Sac. Congregation that Don Ferdinand Gioerida had got back from his mission to Persia: the reply from Shah 'Abbas II mentioned, if still in existence, has not been noticed by the present compiler in the secret archives at the Vatican or in Propaganda Fide. Before that answer from 'Abbas II to the Brief of 30.1.1646 had been brought back to Rome, Pope Innocent X had pressed the need for joint hostilities again, writing on 31.8.1647:

"Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace. At the  
"beginning of the past year We sent to Your Highness a pontifical letter of Ours, by which  
"We earnestly exhorted You to move, now that the time is opportune, Your royal might  
"and conquering arms against the common enemy, the tyrant of the Turks. But since  
"We have hitherto received no reply from Your Highness to that letter, thinking that it  
"was easy for it to have been lost in the space of such a long journey, We have had another  
"copy of it made to be forwarded to You, so that, when You have perused it, You may  
"clearly understand how advantageous and beneficial it would be to Yourself and to Your  
"dominions to attack with a powerful and successful army the tyrant himself, when his  
"attention is occupied and he is engaged elsewhere. We request this the more pressing  
"of Your Highness because at this very pause and conjuncture the strength of the Turks  
"has been notably weakened and broken on land and at sea in that they are at war with  
"the Venetians, and hence for these same reasons, the flower of their forces having been  
"lost, they have not a little deteriorated in daring and in courage. Meantime, whilst the  
"Christian princes are actively throwing their might against such a most bitter enemy, it  
"will be particularly timely for Your Highness, having attacked him, to win very sweeping  
"victories over him to the immortal glory of Your name and of the Persian empire. And  
"this, with God helping us well, We both ardently desire and hope. Given at S. Mary  
"Major under the Fisherman's ring, the 31st August 1647 in the third year of Our Ponti-  
"ficate."

The nature of the reply from the young Shah or presumably his Wazirs cannot be recorded here, therefore, but, if not declining to disturb the peace with the Turks, it must have temporized, for no act of war is recorded as ensuing. The few allusions to be found in the correspondence of the Carmelites in Persia make it evident that there was no disposition on the part of 'Abbas II and his Wazirs to pick a quarrel with the Sultan and go to war with the Turks, e.g.:

"24.2.1657. The news here is that the king of Persia shows no desire to make war on  
"the Turks. The Turkish ambassador, a great favourite with the Shah, is very ill: together  
"with his suite of about 300 persons he is being well entertained. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

Yet, when it came to the point of buying off Persian neutrality so that Sultan Muhammad IV could devote himself to his plans for aggrandizement in Europe and the Mediterranean,<sup>3</sup> 'Abbas II refused to tie himself:

<sup>1</sup> *S.R.*, vol. 135, p. 261.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Cornelius of S. Cyprian, O.C.D. 237 a.

<sup>3</sup> From the time when in 1648 the fighter Muhammad IV succeeded as Sultan in Stambul, war with the Christian States dominated the scene: in 1649 the siege of Candia was renewed by the Turks, and in 1651 in the vicinity of the port there was an engagement, from which the Turks had to beat a retreat. From 1650-7 the Venetians had a run of successes, occupying the Aegean Islands, Volo in Thessaly, the islands of Tenedos and Lemnos off the Dardanelles. In this new emergency the Pope exhorted the king of Spain, 30.12.1653 (*Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 59, p. 40) to an effort:

"... Huic spei cum ex haereticorum ac Turcarum armis praesentiora quoque Catholicae religionis pericula accesserint. . . . Cum sub infidelium iugo incassum gemens prematur populus Dei servitute inulta. Christianum orbem