

“quit Persia. . . . Tahmasp . . . gave the command to Delimant [? sic], a brave Karamanian, who pursued and overtook the Turks near Bitlis, on the left side of lake Van on 13.10.1535, when surprising them in the disorder of retreat . . . he cut them to pieces, and gained one of the most complete victories over them that the Persian ever had over the Turks. Though Sulaiman had taken Assyria and Mesopotamia from Persia, these conquests cost him so dear that he repented he ever undertook them, and at his return to Constantinople put to death Ibrahim Pasha, his favourite, who had been the instigator of that war. It is reckoned that out of 500,000 men who passed the Euphrates to attack Persia not 80,000 returned to Constantinople.

“. . . Peace till 1548” (when one brother of Shah Tahmasp had rebelled and allying himself with the Turks caused open warfare to break out afresh). . . . “Sulaiman took the field with an army of 200,000 men. Tahmasp, who had above 100,000, having obtained from the Portuguese . . . a body of 10,000 men of their race with 20 pieces of cannon, met the Turks on the bank of the Euphrates, whom he attacked in person and by the valour of the Portuguese entirely defeated. Sulaiman himself, who was wounded in this battle, lost 130,000 there. . . . This battle was fought in 1549. . . .”

Then in 1553 came a fresh expedition to Georgia, which Isma'il I after the death of Sultan Selim I in 1519 had overrun and subdued.

In the second half of the fifteenth century several representatives of the republic of Venice wrote accounts of what they witnessed and recent history in Turkey and Persia, which are of much interest. Some extracts from copies in the Vatican archives will help the reader to realize somewhat conditions in those Muslim countries, the despotic rule, and constant warfare: and, firstly, in exposition of the cleavage and enmity enduring between Ottoman Turks and Persians, the scene will be surveyed from the Turkish angle. The ambassador Domenico Trevisiano, who returned from Constantinople in 1554, thus describes<sup>1</sup> the Sultan and his sons: Sulaiman, surnamed the “Magnificent”, and by the Turks “Lawgiver” or “Legislator”, who had succeeded in 1520 at the age of about 20 years, was:

“. . . in stature tall rather than of medium height . . . he was of grave mien. He had been considered to be humane and benign in character, but now there are many who think the contrary on account of his having put to death his own son and grandson. His Majesty has had five male children and one daughter. One was Sultan Mustafa, who was born in the year 1516 of a Circassian woman. . . . The other four were borne to him by the present Sultana, who is from Russia, whom his Majesty has so greatly loved in that not only did he wish her to be his legitimate wife and retain her as such in his saraglio, but according to rumour he has never since wished to have another—a thing never known of any of his predecessors. . . . Of these sons the first was Sultan Muhammad, a youth very graceful and beloved by his father and mother and all those who knew him, both because of his handsomeness and for his habits, since he was of a humane and liberal nature, who . . . in the year 1542, when he was about 20 years old, departed this life in his *sanjakate*” (governorship) “where he had been sent by his father, and he was buried in Constantinople, his tomb being honoured by his father and mother with a very sumptuous mosque built in his name, a thing which had not happened before, it being customary for all sons of the emperor to be buried at Brusa.

“The second son is Sultan Selim, aged about 30, who was some years ago sent to govern the *sanjakate* of Magnesia, and who at present is in the saraglio with his Majesty. The third is Sultan Bayazid, aged 28, who was sent to the *sanjak* of Catai (?) in Caramania . . . and now by his Majesty’s order is governing Adrianople. Both of these have sons. Sultan Selim is corpulent, and given over to wine and women: Sultan Bayazid is of delicate frame, and studious; but neither the one nor the other has the name of being a

<sup>1</sup> Fondo Pio, 134, *Relazione del Gran Turco, 1554-1583*, p. 1 (235), Vat. Arch.