

"This ambassador had appeared with eight other men on horseback very sumptuously clothed. As a gift they brought the Turkish Sultan a very fine camp tent, superbly worked in gold and silk, with the pole that held it up worked in gold studded with jewels, and together with it a store of carpets and cushions of gold ornamented with jewels that these Turks employ to furnish their rooms.

"That same morning that he entered the town he went to pay his respects to Sulaiman and kiss his hand, and afterwards he was conducted by the Pashas to a lodging prepared for him, outside which neither he nor the others went once until their departure. Two days later peace was concluded with the terms as stated above, i.e. that each remained in possession of what he held, and the subjects and tributaries and confederates of each party were included in the peace. Two days later the ambassador left, very richly clothed, with all his men; another two days had not passed before Sulaiman set out for Constantinople, but so slowly that he arrived there on their festival, which was celebrated at the beginning of the moon of the month of August.

"And this is the end of the vast warlike expedition that Sulaiman made in the year of our salvation 1554, to free himself either from the claims that his subjects made on him because of the losses inflicted on them by the Persians, or else to free himself from the suspicion conceived by such as might have it that it was a less difficult matter to deprive him of his empire than any other: and, as far as can be reasoned with sound judgment, *this affair has been a work allowed by our Lord God for the rescue of Christianity from final ruin, which was menacing it in the near future: and perhaps, too, in order to discourage those Turks so terrible to our men whom for so many years past up till now they have always defeated in battle and put to flight through fear, in such wise that the name of Turk has become so formidable that at the sound of it all the West is appalled.* . . .

". . . It remains, however, for the West not to stay hesitating and thinking of its local affairs, but to take thought for its future, because the temper of Sulaiman is such that now through the discord between two of the greatest princes of Christendom he sees the opportunity suitable for carrying out his plans, he is not one to fail himself in his aim, the more so as he is now freed of the suspicion that his own people had about him, and from warfare with races of his own religion. . . ."

The portrait of Sulaiman in the preceding narrative is far from flattering as to his military leadership: and not for the man who watches while his son is murdered in his presence, and who suppresses a grandchild is the epithet "magnificent" allowable in modern estimates. But the reader will have derived from what otherwise may seem unrelated with the Persia, to which the first Carmelites came, some impression of the menace to the peace of Europe constituted by such a relentless war-machine as this Sultan typified, and also of the deep-seated hostility between the two bordering countries already existing by 1550 apart from European profit by it.

Some twenty years passed, and then war flared up again between the two Muslim states: and there are three reports by Venetian envoys—early war correspondents and official observers from the Republic—which give much insight into conditions prevailing on the Persian side of the frontier. Shah Tahmasp I was even less attractive in his qualities than Sulaiman, Sultan of the Turks. Together with *The narrative by Vincenzo degl' Alessandri to his Highness the Doge and Signory of Venice of the things observed by him in the kingdom of Persia, 1574*,¹ which was written while Shah Tahmasp I was still alive (indicated by the letter A) there is hereunder combined (with a different marginal spacing and under the letter B) and appended an account, author's name not given, in Arch. Secr. Vat., Misc. Arm. II, vol. 74, p. 271, for it provides the sequel to the story during the reign of Isma'il II and the opening of that of Muhammad Khudabandeh, being written in 1578-9. The Perso-Turkish war of 1578-2 is the subject of yet another lengthy report (indicated by the letter C), *Description of the War between the Turk and the Persian*, also without the writer's name being

¹ See in Arch. Secr. Vat., Polit Var. Misc. Arm. 74, p. 1; also Fondo Chigi, No. II, 48, p. 301.