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## Article IV.—A short Account of the Sherley Family

Briggs

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ARTICLE IV.—*A short Account of the Sherley Family, by*  
MAJOR-GENERAL BRIGGS, F.R.S. F.G.S.

(Read 17th February, 1838.)

By the kindness of the Right Honourable Lord Western, an ancient painting is exhibited to the Society, which merits attention, if it were merely as a curious specimen of antiquity; but it will interest the Meeting more especially from the nature of its subject and the circumstances connected with its being brought into Europe at all, and with its appearance here this day.

To persons who have not travelled in the East the design may be considered almost an enigma, but which I hope I shall be able satisfactorily to solve<sup>1</sup>. The painting came into the possession of the nobleman who has had the kindness to permit its exhibition here, owing to his connection with the family of Sherley, of Wiston, in Sussex, of whom I shall proceed to give some account. All those who have read anything of the early travels in the East, prior to the establishment of our Indian empire, are aware that there were some gentlemen of this name in Persia, at the Court of Shah Abbass, in the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century; and that one of them, Sir Robert, came to England twice as Ambassador to the Court of James I. A few years ago a small work entitled *The Three Brothers*, was published in this city, which comprises much of what remains of the history of the three Sherleys, and from that work, as well as from other notices, which I have been able to pick up, I have drawn materials for the paper I now propose to read to you.

The author of *The Genealogies of the Sherley Family*, a Latin manuscript in the British Museum, with an ardent attachment to that house, traces it from the time of Edward the Confessor, in the male line, to the illustrious scions above named, and assures us that it had the honour to be allied not only to the Royal blood of England, both Saxon and Norman, but likewise to that of France, Scotland, Denmark, Arragon, Leon, Castile, the Sacred Roman Empire, and almost all the princely houses in Christendom; and amongst the English nobility to the Dukes of Norfolk and Buckingham, Earls of Arundel, Oxford, Northumberland, Shrewsbury,

<sup>1</sup> The painting is described in p. 214 of No. X. of this Society's Journal for 1838.

Kent, Derby, Worcester, Huntingdon, Pembroke, Nottingham, Suffolk, Berkshire, and the Barons of Berkley; and according to the same author, their achievements were as noble, and as various, as their alliances were illustrious. Perhaps no three persons of one family ever experienced adventures at the same time so uncommon and so interesting. Sir Thomas, Sir Anthony, and Sir Robert Sherley, were the sons of Sir Thomas Sherley, of Wisneston, or Wiston, in Sussex, by Anne, his wife, the daughter of Sir Thomas Kemp, Knight.

These three brothers, not content with gaining laurels in the military fields of Europe, were inflamed with an ardent desire to wage war against the Turks, then deemed the natural enemies of all Christendom; and this chivalrous spirit led them to undertake a series of enterprises, which, in the present day, would be condemned as absurd, though quite in character with the manners of the age in which they lived.

The interest of the narrative I am about to communicate, will be greatly enhanced by the comparison which it affords of the manners and customs of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, whether in Europe or Asia, as compared with those of our own times in many instances, and of the true picture it exhibits of Oriental customs even at the present day.

We are not informed when Sir Thomas Sherley, the eldest of the brothers, was born, but it appears that he was early instructed in the military art, and that he commanded 300 men in Holland, where he conducted himself with such credit, that in 1589, the Lord Willoughby conferred upon him the honor of Knighthood. His other brothers, after distinguishing themselves in Europe, proceeded to the East, to war against the Turks, in 1599, and Sir Thomas deeming the theatre of Christian warfare too narrow for his ambition, "left (says his biographer, Fuller) an aged father and a fair inheritance in Sussex, resolved to undertake sea voyages in foreign parts, to the great honour of his nation but small enriching of himself." A particular and very interesting account of the deeds of Sir Thomas Sherley, and of his captivity, and the miseries he endured while imprisoned at Constantinople, are to be found in the *Genealogica Historia Domus De Sherley*, a MS. in the Harleian Library, No. 4023.

The substance of that account is as follows:—Being determined to do something by which he might gain renown, and having resolved many schemes in his head, he at length resolved to make war against the Infidels (the Turks) for the honour of the religion of

peace. England was at this time at peace with Turkey, and had a Consul at Patras, and an Ambassador at Constantinople, yet did this chivalrous knight, disregarding these circumstances, fit out, at his own expense, three large vessels manned by 500 soldiers, with which squadron he sailed in 1601, on this religious crusade. With this fleet he proceeded first to Italy, and thence towards Turkey. On the route he engaged a large Turkish vessel for eight hours, and eventually took her, having lost in the action one hundred men. No mention is made of the slaughtered Turks ; but it seems likely they were all put to the sword. The prize disappointed the expectations of his followers, who mutinied, and seized one of his own vessels. Shortly after, Peacock, one of his captains, carried off another, and the crew of the vessel in which he himself sailed became unruly, and in order to conciliate them, he made an attack on the small island of Milo, on the 15th of January, 1602. He landed on it before day-light, and entered the place with the intent of giving up to plunder (as he states) the property of the Mahomedans only ; but as about half the population were Christian Greeks, the sack must have been indiscriminate. The inhabitants at first fled from the town, but subsequently came down in great numbers. His crew retreated before the enemy to the shore. Sir Thomas Sherley remained to bring up the rear, which kept off the pursuers, many of whom were slain in the attack, and the crew enabled to arrive safely on board ; but Sir Thomas and two of his followers fell into the hands of the enemy. They were immediately thrown into prison, and sent to Negropont, from whence they were conveyed to Constantinople, where Sir Thomas was disowned by the English Ambassador, and after being twice condemned to death for piracy, was most marvellously preserved by the Minister of the Grand Senior, under the conviction that he could obtain from him a large ransom. Sir Thomas Sherley endured the severest confinement and cruel treatment for nearly four years, when he was at length liberated at the intercession of James I., on the 6th of December, 1605. The narrative concludes in these words : " Sir Thomas staid in Constantinople (a free man) from the time of his delivery, which was the 6th of December, until the 15th of February following, 1606, during which time he took pleasure to solace himself there, where, before, he had endured so much sorrow and misery, taking a view and survey of the seat and situation of the city, observing their laws, customs, and ceremonies ; beholding their courts, synagogues, and temples ; with other things not unworthy a stranger's observation. And upon the 15th of February, he departed from Constantinople in a Ragusian ship, called the

‘Maria de la Rosaria,’ and landed at Gallipoli, the 19th of the same month; from thence to Naples, and so, at last, to England, where being joyfully received of his father and friends, he now lives by the benefit of His Majesty’s favour.”

The history of Sir Anthony and Sir Robert, the second and third sons, who travelled into Persia, is more particularly the object of our attention. The former was born A.D. 1565, matriculated at Oxford, in 1579, was admitted Bachelor of Arts in 1581, and in November of the same year was elected Probationer of All Souls’ College. He printed his life and adventures after his return from the East in 1613, in which he says, on entering into life he took the Earl of Essex as his model, and observes, “that nobleman’s true love for him did transform him from many imperfections; that he never spared him his council and advice; and that he assisted him with his fortune.” The following event which happened to him on his first entering life, is characteristic of the jealousy of Queen Elizabeth, in respect to honours accepted by any of her subjects from foreign princes; and affords a good specimen of the manners of that sovereign’s court.

Sir Anthony first embarked in the wars in the Low Countries, where he had a command, and was present at the battle of Zutphen, in 1586. He appears also to have been engaged in the war in France, and probably accompanied the Earl of Essex when he was sent with a body of four thousand men to the assistance of the King of France against the Confederates of the League. As a reward for his services, Henry IV. bestowed the order of St. Michael upon him, to the great displeasure of Queen Elizabeth, who said, that as a virtuous woman ought to look on none but her husband, so a subject ought not to cast his eyes on any other sovereign than him God had set over him. “I will not,” said she, “have my sheep marked with a strange brand; nor suffer them to follow the pipe of a strange shepherd.” She immediately commanded Sir John Puckering and Lord Buckhurst to inquire into the circumstances of the alleged breach of allegiance.

This investigation does not appear to have been satisfactory, and a further examination took place, the result of which is communicated by Mr. Carew, in a letter dated the 14th of March, 1593, of which the following is an extract:—

“Being sent from the Lord Keeper and the Lord Buckhurst, unto Mr. Sherley, in the Fleet, to understand what oath he took at the receiving of the order of St. Michael, and the manner thereof; at the first I willed him to set down in writing as much of it as he

could call to his remembrance; and thereupon he wrote a side of a leaf of paper, containing in effect these things :—

“That oath he took none, for he only made answer to the king's demands, and had no book presented him to swear by.

“That the king's demands were two. First, That he would promise never to bear arms against him for the service of any prince Christian, but only his sovereign, or by her commandment. Second, That he should never spot himself with any infamy unworthy of so high an order. Both which he promised to perform.

“This, upon his life and reputation, he affirmeth to be all, being so short a matter to be remembered, that he doth assure the truth of the report thereof.’

“But, supposing that so short a report would give little satisfaction, I desired him that I might set down from his mouth by my writing some circumstances and peculiarities, the which he granted: and then upon my questions unto him (which I framed from a copy of the manner of receiving of that order, by the Duke of Norfolk and Earl of Leicester, in Anno 1566, that I had of Mr. Garter, by my Lord Keeper's direction), he answered as follows :—

“That the king, at ten of the clock in the night, sent for him into his cabinet by le Première Secrétaire de Navarre, and at his coming thither, he found with the king the Lord Chancellor, who is also Chancellor of the Order, the Bishop of Bourges, that is, Prelate of the Order, Le Sieur de Beaulieu, that is, Secretary of the Order and of estate, Le Sieur de Saney, Mons. Le Grand, and sundry other gentlemen, the Notary of the Order (that afterwards entered his name into the register), and the four Ushers of the same.

“That being come into that presence, the king, before them all, declared the good opinion His Majesty held of him, the love he had towards him, and the good service he had done unto his Highness; for requital thereof, when he came to be peaceable King of France, he should receive further recompense. In the mean time His Majesty would bestow an honour upon him, by the receiving whereof, the king assured him he should be tied to use no ceremony.

“Thirdly, That the form of giving the said Order was in this sort: First, his spurs and sword were taken from about him, then he kneeled down, and putting his hands within the king's, Mons. Beaulieu, the Secretary of the Order, made unto him, in the king's name, the two demands aforementioned in his own declaration. Then the king himself asked him, ‘*Promettez-vous cela ?*’ His answer was, ‘*Oui, Sire, je le promets.*’ Then the king drew out his sword, and laid it on Mr. Sherley's shoulder, saying, ‘*Soyez Chevalier de St.*

*Michael au nomme de St. George, car vous l'avez bien merité.*' And while he was yet kneeling, the king put on his sword about him himself; but his spurs were put on by the *Sieur Rocolour, Première Gentilhomme de la Gardrobe*. That done, the king kissed him on both his cheeks, and at his rising again, put on about his neck the lace and collar of St. Michael, that he wore himself. And these things, besides the paying of the fees were all the ceremonies.'

"This is as much as I could learn of him, and to testify the truth thereof, I have his own hand to two blotted papers, the substance of both of which I have contained in this.

"*Mr. J. Pickering.*"

"GEORGE CAREW."

His imprisonment was probably of no long duration: but he was deprived of the offensive order. Sir Anthony did not remain long in a state of inactivity; he projected an expedition to the island of St. Thome, under the patronage of the Earl of Essex, who undertook to procure him a commission from the queen for the purpose. And on the 9th April,\* authority was sent to Sir Anthony from the two generals, the Earl of Essex and the Lord Admiral, empowering him to levy, arm, &c., men, not exceeding the number of one thousand five hundred, and appointing him captain and commander of all such ships and vessels, as were set forth, at the charge of Sir Thomas Sherley, Her Majesty's Treasurer at War, and Sir Anthony Sherley, in the designed expedition.

This expedition sailed from England on the 21st of May, 1596, and proceeded, first to the Canaries, and thence to Jamaica, of which he took possession on the 29th January following.

He returned from this voyage in June, 1597, and proceeded to London, attended by a numerous train of followers. When Essex was appointed Lord Lieutenant, Sir Anthony accompanied him to Ireland, and there, according to Wood, received the honour of Knighthood from his patron.

In the winter of 1598-9, Sir Anthony, "accompanied with divers soldiers of approved valour," was sent by the Earl of Essex to assist Don Cesare D'Este (the illegitimate son of the Duke of Ferrara, then lately dead) against the Pope, who laid claim to the principality, but before he arrived, the submission of the Duke to the Pope had put an end to the war. "Which," says Sir Anthony, "when I had advertised the Earl of, he proposed unto me (after a small relation which I made unto him from Venice), the voyage of Persia, grounding it upon two points; first, to endeavour to prevail upon the King of Persia to unite with the Christian Princes against the Turks; and

secondly, to establish a commercial intercourse between this country and the East." "Having, with these advertisements," says Sir Anthony, "received strength to my own mind, large means, and letters of favour and credit to the company of merchants at Aleppo, I embarked myself at Venice in a Venetian ship, called the *Morizell*, the 24th of May, 1599," accompanied with twenty-five followers, most of them gentlemen.

Of this expedition a brief account was published by William Parry, one of his followers, another by himself, a third by an anonymous author, and a fourth was written by George Manwaring, also one of his attendants. From the narrative of the latter the following extracts have been collected.

"So we left Venice, and went to Malamoco, some five miles from Venice, where we found divers ships; amongst the rest there was an argosy bound for Scanderoon, where we did embark ourselves, paying a large price for our passage; but the wind was contrary, that we were twenty-four days in sailing to Zante, which was not half the way, where, if the wind had served us, we might have been in Scanderoon at that time. But, in the way, before we came to Zante, there was a passenger in the ship who used some disgraceful words against our late queen, whereupon Sir Anthony caused one of his meanest sort of men to give him the bastinado, which he did very soundly; whereupon he made such a terrible cry that the captain of the ship, with the passengers and the seafaring-men, rose up in arms against us, they being to the number of two hundred and fifty, and all our company not above twenty-six; yet we did withstand, neither was there any hurt done, by reason of three Armenian merchants which did stand between us, and entreated peace, which the Italians did first consent unto. In the end we arrived at Zante, where Sir Anthony, and all we of his company, went ashore for victuals, in regard all our provision was spent. When we were departed forth of the ship, they sent after us those things we had left behind, and mounted their ordnance against us, swearing if we did offer to come aboard the ship any more, they would sink us. Whereupon Sir Anthony complained to the governor of the place, but could have no remedy; so we lost our passage, and were constrained to stay in Zante ten days for shipping, with great hindrance to our voyage, and expenses, but that the English merchants did use us somewhat kindly. So after we had passed away the time for ten days' space, we embarked in a small ship, and so took our leave of Zante, where, the next day after, we being not well stored with fresh water, we did



put into an island to fill our vessels with water, because, in the island of Zante, water was very scarce."

From Zante they proceeded to Candia, thence to Cyprus, and thence to Tripoli. Here they unfortunately found the vessel out of which they had been rejected at Zante; and Sir Anthony and his party being branded by that ship's crew as pirates, it was with great difficulty, and not without the payment of a large sum of money, that he was permitted to proceed to Scanderoon in a boat which he hired for the purpose. This fragile bark encountered a gale of wind which kept them at sea for six days, when their provisions were reduced to a small quantity of fresh water and some tobacco. They eventually made the coast, and ran up the river Orontes, where they landed. Thence they proceeded to Antioch in two days, and from Antioch to Aleppo in six days more. The following occurrence is characteristic of the people at the present time, and is thus related by Manwaring:—"On the road to Aleppo, the leader of the caravan with whom we travelled, told Sir Anthony one day that he should require an escort of sixteen men from the village to protect them from the bauditti which might be expected to infest the road. To this Sir Anthony assented, and it was agreed that they should receive six crowns. After advancing the money, the leader of the caravan brought back one man only, and on being asked where the other fifteen were, 'Why,' quoth the Turk, 'they be all in this one; for this man hath fought with sixteen men all at one time, and hath given them the overthrow; therefore, ever since he hath had sixteen men's payment.'"

At Aleppo the Sherleys were kindly received by Mr. Colthurst, the British Consul, but no European Christian could walk the streets without the attendance of a janisary or police officer. The following two incidents exhibit the state of society under the Turkish government in Asia Minor in those days, and which does not differ essentially from that in modern times. Mr. Manwaring says:—"One day it was my hap to walk alone in the streets, where, to my hard fortune, I met with a Turk, a gallant man he seemed to be by his habit; and saluting me, took me fast by one of the ears with his hand, and so did lead me up and down the streets; and if I did chance to look sour upon him, he would give me such a ring that I did think verily he would have pulled off my ear; and this he continued with me for the space of one hour, with much company following me, some throwing stones at me, and some spitting on me; so at the last he let me go, and because I would not laugh at my

departure from him, he gave me such a blow with a staff, that did strike me to the ground. So, returning home to the consul's house, the consul's janisary seeing me all bloody, asked me how I came hurt.—I told him the manner of it; he presently, in a rage, did take his staff in his hand, and bade me go with him, and show him the Turk that had used me so. In a small time we found him sitting with his father and other gentlemen; so I did show the janisary which was he, who ran fiercely to him, and threw him on his back, giving him twenty blows on his legs and his feet, so that he was not able to go or stand. He was clothed in a cloth of gold undercoat, and a crimson velvet gown, but his gay clothes could not save him from the fierceness of the janisary's fury." Again he states:

"I will now write something of the fashions of the Turks, although it be known usually to our merchants, yet it is not commonly known to all men. First, concerning the liberty and freedom the Great Turk doth give his soldiers, called janisaries, which is, they have free liberty to take victuals for themselves or their horses, without paying ever a penny for it, in what town soever they come into under the Turkish government; and if they (the inhabitants) will not serve them to their content, they will beat them like dogs, which, if they chance to resist, then do they forfeit all their goods to the Great Turk. Six of the janisaries travelling through the country, came to a town, and began to use themselves in a most vile fashion with the women; the men of the town, seeing their abuses, did withstand them, so that, in the end, one of the janisaries was slain, the other five left the town presently, and came to Aleppo, being but twenty miles from the place, and told the janisaries of the castle what had happened, there living always in the castle three hundred. The next day there went forth of the castle two hundred of them to the town where the janisary was slain, and coming thither, they did kill man, woman, and child, pulling down their houses, and carrying away the spoil of all their goods. The town I saw myself within eight days after this happened, where I did behold a pitiful sight."

Coffee, it seems, had not at that time been introduced into England, as Manwaring appears to have been quite ignorant of its use, and the place of its production. He says, "They have a certain kind of drink, which they call coffee—it is made of an Italian seed; they drink it extreme hot. It is nothing toothsome (*i. e.* palatable), nor hath any good smell, but it is very wholesome. As in England we used to go to the tavern to pass away the time in friendly meeting, so they have very fair houses where this coffee is sold; thither gallants and gentlemen resort daily."

After spending five weeks at Aleppo with the English merchants, Sir Anthony purchased several pieces of good cloth, and twelve emerald cups, and jewels of great worth, which he intended for the King of Persia, and departed to proceed to Babylon by water, from Beer, on the Euphrates.

Before the party could proceed, it became necessary to collect a fleet for self-defence, till at length eleven other boats, laden with merchandise, and guarded by soldiers, dropped down the stream. On the passage they daily saw bands of Arabs, varying from one hundred to two hundred, who frequently assailed them with stones from slings, which did them little injury, as they were repelled by musketry from the boats. In the vicinity of the town of Anna, the boat soldiery, as usual, saluted the camp of an Arabian chief, by firing off their pieces, on which occasion an Arab soldier was killed. This caused the detention of the fleet for some days, and afforded the author of the journey an opportunity of giving the following characteristic account of the Arabian customs and dress, which, with the exception of the felt cap of those days, since changed into a loose handkerchief thrown carelessly over the head, exhibits the costume of a Bedouin of the present time.

“Sir Anthony went first, attended with three other gentlemen that were with him, and myself. This I may boldly speak of: at the first entry into his camp, it was a full quarter of an English mile before we came to the king’s presence, which was guarded on either side with shot and pikes. So, when we came before him, he did stand up, taking Sir Anthony by the hand; Sir Anthony offering to kiss his hand, but he would not suffer him, but we did. Then he demanded of Sir Anthony what he was; he told him the truth of all our voyage, which the king did greatly commend, and caused a banquet to be brought of such fruits as the country did afford. There is small store of bread in the country, but they live commonly on musk melons, radishes, and rice. Their apparel is very slender, for they wear commonly one robe, made like a surplice, with great sleeves, of a kind of blue cloth, made of bumbaso; their sleeves they tie on their back by one corner of the sleeve, and leave all their arms naked. About their middle they wear a girdle, made of a horse-hide, some five fingers broad, and a dagger sticking under their girdle, with a wooden haft. They wear over their heads a cap of felt, made like unto a morion or head-piece, tied under their chin with a black kind of stuff.

“The king himself was in this sort attired, save only he had a satin coat without sleeves. He was a man of a goodly personage, exceed-

ing black, and very grim of visage; his queen was a blackamoor. His company that followed him was to the number of twenty thousand men; he had about ten thousand camels to attend him. In the summer-time he did abide always by the river Euphrates, and in the winter up in the desert. When Sir Anthony saw the manner of his apparel, he sent for a piece of cloth of gold which he had in the boat, and did present it unto the king, to make himself an upper coat, which the king esteemed highly of, and gave him great thanks for it, giving him a passport under his own hand, to pass quietly through his dominions without any further let, which passport did us great good in our passage; but the Turks he made pay soundly for the death of his servant. Thus, after one day and a night, we departed, and came in a few days after to a place worth the noting, which did burn with brimstone and pitch, making such a smoke that it did darken the place extremely, the pitch rising up in great flakes as big as a house, making a terrible noise; and that place the Jews did tell us was Sodom and Gomorrah, but called by the Turks 'Hell's Mouth'. From thence we passed a fair town, called Racca, a very ancient place, inhabited by Turks and Arabians. The river Euphrates doth run through it. They have neither bridge nor boat to pass from one town to the other, but the skins of goats blown like a bladder, and so they cast themselves upon them and swim over; you shall see them pass to and fro as thick as boats upon the Thames." This practice prevailed as early as the time of Alexander the Great, whose historians—Arrian, Q. Curtius, and others—mention it, and has been witnessed by all our modern travellers.

From Anna they proceeded down the Euphrates to a place called Felengo, whence they passed over in a day and night to Babylon, lying on both banks of the Tigris, and over which was a bridge of boats<sup>2</sup>. Here Sir Anthony's property was searched, and the Viceroy, as he is called, kept the emerald cups, and other goods, to the value of six thousand crowns. Sir Anthony had been warned of the probability of such an event by a Turkish chieftain, who was deputed from the Turkish Court at Constantinople to the Viceroy or Pasha, and had accompanied the party from Beer. This honest Turk persuaded Sir Anthony to make over to his custody part of his jewels and goods, which he afterwards faithfully restored. After a residence of a month at Babylon (Bagdad), during which Sir Anthony was prevented proceeding by the Viceroy, he contrived to quit it with a caravan of Persian merchants proceeding towards Persia. The

<sup>1</sup> In this description we recognise the petroleum pits spoken of by Colonel Chesney in his first survey of the Euphrates.

<sup>2</sup> Bagdad was frequently called Babylon by the travellers of those days.

insecurity of the road, from the Arabian tribes, is well described:—  
 “For you must understand (says Manwaring) that the merchants do travel in those parts exceeding strong, to the number of two thousand, sometimes more; because there are many thieves who lie in the way very strong, and the company of merchants is called by the name of a caravan<sup>1</sup>.”

The progress of Sir Anthony's party had nearly been stopped by an order from Constantinople, which directed he should be seized and sent thither. A band of two hundred horsemen was actually sent by the Viceroy or Pasha, to overtake and bring him back; but they were purposely misled by an Armenian merchant, who had greatly assisted Sir Anthony, at Bagdad, by acts of true friendship and kindness, which extended to the loan of 8000 crowns. This enabled Sir Anthony to escape safely into the dominions of the king of Persia, where he arrived without the loss of one of his party.

The favourable reception of Sir Anthony Sherley and his company in Persia, may be accounted for by the great toleration of Shah Abbass towards Christians, owing, perhaps, to the influence possessed by the ladies of the court over that monarch. Sir Thomas Herbert thus quaintly describes this circumstance; and no greater proof of their influence could be afforded than that of Georgians receiving the title of Khan and Mirza at the king's hands—titles which are now strictly confined to Moslems.

“Abbass had several wives, who had several children, for whose education neither cost nor care was spared. Of the most promising he loved were Ismael, Tophy Mirza, Kodabunda Sultan, and Iman Kooly. The two first by Gordina, daughter of Simon Khan, and the two latter by Martha, daughter of Scanda Mirza, both Georgians, both Christians; and so dear to Abbass ‘that it seemed he had then got the elixir of earthly happiness.’”

Manwaring thus describes the reception of the party in Persia:—  
 “The first town we came to was very strongly situated, and in it were a hundred soldiers, for the king hath a guard round about his country at every entrance; they are all horsemen, and are clothed in red, with red turbans on their heads<sup>2</sup>, and red feathers, with bows and arrows, sword and target, and short pieces. These soldiers used us very respectfully, and told us their king would be overcome with joy when he did hear of our coming; so after we had rested there one day and a night, we did hold on our journey towards Casbin, a famous city, and of great antiquity. We passed by many towns, but none of any account; and the further we went, the more kind the

<sup>1</sup> One would suppose he was writing of the present day.

<sup>2</sup> Hence the appellation of Kazil-bash.

people were. In every village where we did lodge, the chief men would come, and present us with one commodity or other every night, and happy was he that could procure the best house to lodge us in. Their women came out to welcome us, which we thought a great wonder, in regard we had not the speech of any woman for a long time before.

“ So, passing along the country, and being in safety, Sir Anthony sent Angelo, our guide, accompanied with an English gentleman, whose name was John Ward, some four days’ journey before us, to Casbin, to provide us a lodging, and to attend our coming two or three miles from the city, somewhat late in the evening, so as to convey us to our lodgings without the knowledge of the citizens, in regard we were unprovided with fit apparel and other necessaries. But it was made known, both to the lord steward of the king’s house, and also to the governor of the city, who sent for them both, to know what he was that was coming to see their king. They told them the truth, but did not acquaint them the certain day of our coming, which made both them and the citizens greatly discontented, in regard they made great preparation to receive us with great triumphs; but, according to our intention, we came in by night, and so disappointed them. The next day the lord steward came to our house, with a great train following him of gallant gentlemen, and did salute Sir Anthony in this sort:—‘ In my king’s behalf, who now is in the Tartarian wars, this small kindness I would entreat you to accept, in regard to your long and weary travels; and that you being strangers here in our country, it may be your supplies cannot be so suddenly accomplished, therefore I would request you to pardon me if I do amiss in my offer.’ And, laying twenty pounds in gold at Sir Anthony’s feet, told him,—‘ This much you shall receive every day for your provision, besides other commodities; this do I of myself, until we hear from our king, who, I am sure, will treble it at his return.’ Sir Anthony, according to his princely mind, turning the money over with his foot, returned this answer: ‘ Know this, brave Persian, I come not a begging to the king; but, hearing of his great fame and worthiness, thought I could not spend my time better than come to see him, and kiss his hand, with the adventure of my body to second him in his princely wars.’ The Persian, hearing this answer, stept back very suddenly, and, making a low congé, replied thus: ‘ Pardon me, brave stranger, for now I see thou art a prince thyself, for so it seemeth by thy princely answer.’ Sir Anthony replying, said,—‘ No, I am the second son to an English knight, but I have been trained up in martial affairs, and well esteemed of in

my prince's court; and for this cause do I come to do thy king the best office I can, if it please his Highness to accept of me.' 'I know my king,' said the Persian, 'will highly esteem of thy coming, and think himself a happy man to receive so worthy a person into his court;' and so, saluting all, one after another, did take his leave. So soon as he was gone, the governor of the city came with a gallant train of gentlemen, very well horsed, to attend him, being a man of gallant personage, well spoken, and of good carriage; and gave Sir Anthony and all of us a very kind welcome, offering Sir Anthony all that he was worth to be at his service."

Sir Anthony and his party were sumptuously entertained by the king's steward and the Governor of Casbin, at their houses, on which occasions, contrary to the practice of Persia in modern times, bands of music and dancing women attended, as is now the custom in India.

The narrator proceeds:—"In the end there came a post from the king, forth of Tartaria, with a proclamation written with the king's own hand, which proclamation was made by a nobleman in Casbin, and we were all sent to hear it; this was the effect of it, that we should command horse and man to be at our service, upon pain of death to those that should not obey; moreover, if any man did hold up his hand to offer the worst in our company wrong, he should lose his head; which proclamation the citizens did all embrace very willingly; and thus I leave awhile to treat of our entertainment."

On his return from the war on the frontier, Shah Abbass returned to Casbin; and the description of the reception of Sir Anthony on the king's approach to the city, is graphic and characteristic. The Sherleys and their party wore turbans and rich Persian dresses.

"The king, some two days before he entered into Casbin, sent a courier or post before him to his lord steward, to furnish us with the best horses he could get and directed that we should meet him four miles forth of Casbin, accompanied with the governor and himself, which was very handsomely performed by them both." "So after we were half a mile forth of the city, we saw such a prospect as is not usually seen; which was, twelve hundred soldiers, horsemen, carrying twelve hundred heads of men on their lances, and some having the ears of men put on strings, and hanged about their necks'. Next after these came the trumpeters, making a wonderful noise, because these instruments, contrary to our English trumpets, are two yards and a-half in length, with the great end big, and

<sup>1</sup> This is quite consistent with the triumphal return from war of Persian Monarchs of more modern times.

as of great compass as a hat<sup>1</sup>. Next after them came the drummers, their drums being made of brass, and carried upon camels; then after them came his six standard bearers, and after came twelve pages, bearing every one a lance in his hand; then a good distance after them came the king, riding alone with a lance in his hand, his bow and arrows, sword and target, hanging by his side, being a man of low stature, but very strongly made, and swarthy of complexion. Now, after the king, came his lieutenant-general of the field, and all his bow-men in rank, like a half moon<sup>2</sup>; after them came his officers in the wars, to the number twenty thousand soldiers, all horsemen. So at our first encounter of the king, Sir Anthony and his brother did alight off their horses, and came to kiss the king's foot, for it is the fashion of the country, be he never so good a man, he must kiss the king's foot at the first meeting; after that was performed, the king did look upon them both very stately, and afterwards did look upon us all, giving never a word to Sir Anthony, but bid the lieutenant-general place him according as he had given direction, and so the king set spurs to his horse, and did ride away for the space of an hour." The following description of the king's personal behaviour seems very strange, and probably the result of a frolic, for it is wholly unlike anything I have ever seen, heard, or read of elsewhere. Yet the narrative of Manwaring bears, throughout, so much the stamp of truth, that I should be unwilling to deem this exaggeration:—

"Sir Anthony being placed in the king's place, with his brother, Mr. Robert Sherley, the lieutenant-general on the right hand, and the lord steward on the left. After the king was departed, the lord steward told Sir Anthony that it was the custom to entertain strangers in that fashion, but willed him to have patience awhile, and he should see the event; so within an hour the king returned back again as fast as his horse would go, and having following him sixteen women on horseback, richly attired, and when he came close to Sir Anthony, the women did halloo, and gave such a cry, much like the wild Irish, which did make us wonder at it; then after they had made an end, the king came and embraced Sir Anthony and his brother, kissing them both three or four times over, and taking Sir Anthony by the hand, swearing a great oath that he should be his sworn brother, and so he did call him always, and so the king marched along putting Sir Anthony on his right hand. It was a wonderful sight

<sup>1</sup> The hats of the Elizabethan age were of enormous size compared with those of the present day.

<sup>2</sup> This semi-lunar figure is commonly assumed by troops in Persia at grand parades.



to see the multitude of people that were there that day ; and still as the king did pass along, the people would kneel down and kiss the earth ; but before we came into the city, there was proclamation made that, upon pain of death, no soldier should enter the city, but such as were born there, for fear of making any uproar ; and so they were all discharged and departed every one to his own country for that time. So after we had entered the city, we marched through every street, and in the end came to a banquetting house of the king's, when the king brought Sir Anthony up into a very fair chamber richly trimmed ; in which chamber, Sir Anthony delivered a speech to the king, what was the occasion of his coming, with a discourse of our wearisome journey, and of our usage in Turkey, and other accidents which did happen unto us by the way, which the king did hearken very attentively unto, and when Sir Anthony had ended his speech, the king stood up and replied ; " Brother, I do grieve to hear of thy sore adventures and troubles by the way ; but I do much rejoice to see thee here in safety at our court, for be well assured I will place thee on my head." This was his meaning, that he would advance him to great honour ; then was there a great banquet brought in, with music before it, where they passed away their time for the space of two hours with great joy ; after the banquet was ended, the king requested Sir Anthony to look through the window to behold their sports on horseback."

The simplicity of the king's manners in private is quaintly pourtrayed, and conveys us at once to the spot :—

"So when the sport was ended, Sir Anthony sent me down of some business, and as I went down the stairs, it was my chance to meet with the king, who, when he saw me, took me by the arm, and caused me to return back again with him, and brought me to the chamber where the Turks' Ambassador was, and did lead me along to the upper end of the chamber, and put me above the Turks' Ambassador, bidding me sit down there, by reason they have no stools but sit on carpets. I could ill sit cross-legged after their manner, but kneeled on my knees ; then the 'Turkish Ambassador told the king it was the fashion of England to sit on stools, for he had been oft-times in the English merchants' houses in Constantinople. When the king had heard these words, he presently went into the next room, and caused one of his pages to bring forth a little form, which they did use to set bottles of wine upon, and throwing a carpet of gold upon it, caused me to sit down ; then he called for some wine, and did drink a health unto me, and did use

these words : ' I do esteem more of the sole of a Christian's shoe, than I do of the best Turk in Turkey ; ' and then he asked me if I would serve him ? I answered him, in regard I was a subject in his country, I must be at his command, yet I was loth to leave my old master, in regard he loved me well ; at which words the king did take me about the neck, and embraced me three or four times, and said, ' I do highly commend thy constancy ; nevertheless, I will entreat my brother, thy lord, for thee, that thou shalt be my servant so long as you stay in this country. ' "

In the evening, Sir Anthony and his brother were invited to join the king's party at dinner, which was given on the circular terrace where the Cotwal, or mayor of the town, sits to administer justice daily, at the union of the four great covered Bazar-streets in the middle of the city. Here Shah Abbass insisted on Sir Anthony Sherley's sitting on the king's own chair, though the latter protested against it, while the king himself stood talking with his courtiers, apparently to produce a favourable impression on the minds of his subjects of his regard for the English chief. The royal banquet was preceded by a band of music, and by twenty women singing and dancing before it. After dinner, the king took Sir Anthony by the arm, and walked through several of the principal streets, all of which were illuminated, preceded by the women and music ; and each of the European gentlemen was conducted in like manner by a nobleman of the king's suite. This feasting was continued in the same manner every evening during a whole week ; after which, the king having provided tents, carpets, and carriage for Sir Anthony, and his suite, proceeded to Cashan, at which place, on one occasion, Manwaring thus describes the fireworks :—

" Then there was such stately fireworks, made by a Turk, that Sir Anthony did wonder at it, which seemed as if dragons were fighting in the air, with many other varieties, especially one firework worth the noting, which was this,—there was a great fountain of water in the Piazza, out of which, from the very bottom, there would arise things like fishes, throwing fire out of their mouths about a dozen yards, which we thought a great wonder. "

From Cashan the court proceeded to Isfahan. An instance of the terrible power of a capricious despot is exhibited in the following description of a review of the troops drawn up to receive the king at Isfahan :—

" There we made a stand, and the king caused his lieutenant-general to see his soldiers skirmish, and some of his gentlemen being amongst them, did not behave themselves to the king's mind ;

and moreover, his soldiers were not so perfect as the king did expect they should ; whereupon he presently ran in amongst them with his sword drawn, like an Hercules, and, upon a sudden, he gave four of them their death's wound. Then did he grow more into blood, and not sparing any, but cutting off the arms from divers of them. One gentleman, which did but only smile, the king never left, and coming for succour into our company, the king gave him such a blow in the middle, that the one half of his body fell from the other. There we spent that day ; and in the evening, about six of the clock, we marched towards the city, where the governor leading the way, the young prince came riding fast by him, and jesting with him somewhat grossly about his wife, in regard she was a fair woman, the governor did use some unkind word to the prince, which made him angry ; so he came presently and told the king, who charged him to take his bow and arrows and shoot him through, which he did immediately, and did shoot him through one of his thighs. The governor presently did alight off from his horse, and came and kissed the prince's feet ; when the king saw it, he came to the governor and kissed him, and made him viceroy of that province, and ever after did impose great trust unto him : so we entered the city, and marched about in every street. Then the king brought Sir Anthony to his house, which was prepared ready for his coming, and willed him to have patience, and he would see him again in the morning ; then the king went to his palace, and that night we rested. There was slain that day to the number of seven score, in regard to the extremity of the heat, and those which the king himself did kill ; amongst the rest, it was the king's fortune to kill one of Sir Anthony's footmen, being a Persian, and when the king was told of it, he was exceeding sorry, thinking he had been a Christian, and he came the next morning in private to Sir Anthony, and told him he was exceeding sorry, wishing it had been his fortune to have slain a dozen Persians for him ; Sir Anthony made answer, that he was a Persian ; when the king heard it, he was exceeding glad, and willed Sir Anthony to make choice of any footman that he had : and thus much for our entertainment into Persia."

The following is a favourable picture of the state of the country, and of the king's abomination of an infamous habit so common in Turkey and in Persia at the present day :—

" You shall understand that the country of Persia is far more pleasant for a stranger to live in than the Turks' country, for this king, since his coming to the crown, hath brought this country into such subjection, that a man may travel through it with a rod in his hand,

having no other weapon, without any hurt : the people are very courteous and friendly to strangers ; their apparel very neat and comely. The men wear long coats to the small of their legs, with great rolls on their heads of divers colours, called turbans : they wear gowns furred with rich fur, for although the country be exceeding hot, they always wear furred gowns. The women are very beautiful, for the better sort, in regard they wear veils over their heads, so that the sun never shines on their faces ; the women do wear breeches as well as the men, and red velvet stockings. The men have only one wife, but as many concubines as they can keep : a woman that is married, and is proved to commit adultery, she is presently burnt ; and as it is allowed in the Turks' kingdom for the men to have the use of boys, it is not so here, for the Persians do severely punish that vice, for I saw a notable example : at my being in the country, there was a great nobleman, called Peer Koolli Beg, and allied to the king, which did offer that abuse to one of the king's pages, offering him a large gift ; but the boy did acquaint the king with it, which, when the king heard of it, he sent presently in a rage for the lord, and caused the boy to cut off his head with his own sword."

The toleration of wine-drinking at this time in Persia is thus described :—

"They keep their Lent much about that time that we do here in England, and they call it their Bairum ; it lasteth twenty-eight days ; and all the day they eat no meat, until the south star do appear, and then they go to their victuals : and then will they sport themselves all night. The better sort of them do never at this, or any other time, drink wine, except they have a license from the king, and sometimes the king, in his humour, will cause a proclamation to be made, that for three days any man may drink wine at his pleasure ; then sometimes you shall see them drunk, and then will the king take great delight to walk up and down the city to see them ; but he that is found drunk when those three days are expired, shall presently lose his head : all Christians are allowed to drink wine, and all the king's servants."

In speaking of the manufacture of gun-barrels, Manwaring says that he never saw better gun-barrels than those manufactured at Isfahan ; and that two hundred persons are always employed in "the arsenal in the construction of pieces, of bows and arrows, swords and targets, for the use of the court."

Sir Anthony's party had now increased to the number of twenty-four persons, including English, French, Greeks, and Persians. The

scene which took place between the king and a Franciscan friar, on his journey from India to Spain during this time, serves to show how the king was affected towards Christianity and its tenets generally.

“Well, after all these matters were concluded on, there came to us a Franciscan friar to Isfahan, and told Sir Anthony, in regard he was a Christian, he was the more bold to come to him; and told him, moreover, that there was another friar coming, a Dominican friar, who was the Bishop of Ormus, a Portugal born, and he was going on great business to the King of Spain. His request was this, that Sir Anthony would get him that favour from the king, that he might go apparelled in his own weed or habit, which favour Sir Anthony did obtain of the king. And the next day Sir Anthony did go and meet him four miles forth of Ispahan, with one hundred horse to attend him; and so he brought him into the city, and lodged him in his own house. The next day after, he brought him to the king, who received him, for Sir Anthony’s sake, very royally; and the king gave him a crucifix of gold, set with diamonds, turquoises, and rubies, which crucifix was sent the king from Presbiter Jhan, as the king himself did show it unto us. The king asked the friar ‘where he had travelled?’ The friar answered, that he was sent from the pope, as his deputy, into those parts amongst the Christians. ‘The pope!’ said the king, ‘what is he?’ although he did know very well what he was, yet did he make as though he had never heard of him. The friar made answer, ‘that the pope was Christ’s vicar upon earth, to pardon and forgive sins.’ ‘Then,’ quoth the king, ‘he must needs be a very old man, if he have been here on earth ever since Christ was crucified by the Jews.’ ‘Nay,’ said the friar, ‘there hath been many popes since that time, for when one dieth, another cometh into his place.’ ‘What!’ said the king, ‘are they earthly-born men in Italy or in Rome?’ ‘Yes,’ said the friar. ‘But have they at any time talked with Christ, or God the Father?’ said the king; ‘No,’ quoth the friar. Then the king made this answer,—‘I do not believe that any man on earth can pardon or forgive sins, but God the Father; and for Christ,’ (said the king,) ‘I do hold him to be a great prophet, yea, the greatest that ever was; and I do think, verily, that if any man could forgive sins, it was he; for I have read that he did great miracles when he was upon earth: he was born of a woman, but, as I have read, the angel of God came to her, and breathed on her, and so he was conceived. I have read, likewise, of his crucifying by the Jews, which doth make me hate them, for to this hour there is none suffered to live in my country.’ The friar was stricken mute; and we all did wonder to hear the king

reason so exceeding well, in regard he was a heathen; but he told Sir Anthony he was almost a Christian in heart since his coming unto him."

At this time Sir Anthony Sherley had sufficient influence at court to procure his being deputed as ambassador to the court of Queen Elizabeth, and received letters to the several sovereigns of Europe, to combine and make war against the Turks. He was accompanied by a Persian nobleman, called Cuchin Ally Beg. His departure is thus described:—

"So we took our leaves of Ispahan, and the king brought us two days' journey, and did take his leave of Sir Anthony very sorrowful; and did take his brother, Mr. Robert Sherley, by the hand, whom we left behind us; and the king said to Sir Anthony that he would use him as his own son, and that he should never want, so long as he was King of Persia. Then he gave Sir Anthony a seal of gold, and said, 'Brother, whatsoever thou doth seal unto, be it the worth of my kingdom, I will see it paid.' So the king kissed Sir Anthony three or four times, and kissed us all, and said, that if we did return again, we should receive great honour."

We need not follow Sir Anthony in his travels through Russia and Europe to England; suffice it to say, he was betrayed by the Franciscan friar who accompanied him, and the Persian envoy, Cuchin Ally Beg, returned from Rome, after having quarrelled with Sir Anthony. On his arrival at the Court of Persia, he attempted to justify himself, and to throw odium on the character of Sir Anthony Sherley; but this was so completely refuted, that the king directed him to be first of all mutilated, and, eventually, decapitated. Sir Anthony Sherley reached England in September, 1601, and was favourably received by Queen Elizabeth. After this he prosecuted the objects of his mission against the Turks in many of the European courts, and eventually died, according to Granger, in Spain, in 1630, at the age of sixty-five.

There are some discrepancies in the several accounts which are extant, regarding the true date of the birth of Robert, the youngest of the three brothers; some asserting that he was born in 1564, while another account states that he was only twenty-eight years of age when he reached Rome in 1609, which would make his birth in 1581. His brother, Sir Anthony, speaking of him in 1599, says, "I had my brother with me, a *young gentleman*, whose affection to me had only led him to that disaster, and the working of his own virtue, desiring, in the beginning of his best years, to enable himself to do those things which his good mind raised his thoughts unto." This

would lead us to suppose that he was born, as has been in one case represented, in 1581, and he was then only nineteen in 1599; and, consequently, when his brother, Sir Anthony, left the Persian court, but twenty-one years of age.

The first opportunity he had of distinguishing himself, was in an engagement between the Persians and Turks in 1605, at the age of twenty-six, when, it is stated, he commanded the king's troops, and that thirty Turkish chieftains fell prisoners into his hands. On this he addressed a letter to the general of the Turkish army, demanding the release of his brother, Sir Thomas Sherley, then imprisoned at Constantinople, as the ransom of his prisoners; to which a scornful answer being returned, they were put to death, and their heads, according to the custom of Persia, exhibited in triumph on the points of spears.

On the following day he attacked the Turkish army again; and the account of that transaction, in the MS. from which the above notice is taken, thus describes his address to his soldiers, before leading them into action:—"Let me be this day a mirror of your magnanimity; let my actions be your precedents; press but as far as your general; and—courage, gentlemen!—the victory is ours." "With this, catching a strong staff, pulling down his beaver, and putting spurs to his horse, he furiously rushed upon the enemy, his soldiers following with such a desperate resolution, that the Turks were amazed at his valour; for he ran without stop through the troops, and, like a lion, massacred whom he met; which the enemy perceiving, and what a great slaughter he had made amongst them, many of them fled, many laid down their weapons and yielded; the rest he put all to the sword, without partiality or favour. Out of this, his second overthrow of the Turks, he again reserved alive some three-score of the chiefest of them, and sends the like proffer to the Turk for redemption, but without effect."

In one of his engagements with the Turks, he received three wounds, on which occasion high honours were conferred upon him by Shah Abbass. Notwithstanding the failure of the mission of Sir Anthony, Robert Sherley was appointed ambassador, on the part of the King of Persia, to several Christian potentates, to engage them in war against the Turks; and it is supposed he left Persia in the year 1608 or 1609. He first went into Poland, where he was honourably treated by Sigismund the Third. In June, 1609, he was in Germany, and received the title of Earl Palatine, having previously had the honour of Earl of the Sacred Palace of Lateran, and Chamberlain, conferred upon him by Pope Paul V.

The patent granted by Rudolphus II., Emperor of the Romans, is addressed to "Count Robert Sherley, Knight, and Earl of the Sacred Palace of Lateran, the assigned Ambassador to us, of Abbass, King of Persia." He did not reach England till the year 1611, where, on the 2nd of October, he had an audience of James I. Stowe observes, that Shah Abbass had given him in marriage Theresia, the daughter of Ismy Hawn, or Ismael Khan, Prince of a city of Circassia Major; which lady accompanied him from Persia, and was delivered of a son, unto whom the Queen of England was godmother, and Prince Henry was godfather, who called the child Henry, after himself. Sir Robert remained in England above a year after this event, and returned to Persia with his lady and child, in a ship provided for him by the king, directing that he should be landed at any port most convenient on the Persian coast. He was accompanied, both from Persia and England, by Captain Thomas Powell, of Hertfordshire, who commanded a body of 700 cavalry in the service of the King of Persia. Powell was created a knight by King James before his departure.

In the year 1623, Sir Robert was again appointed by Shah Abbass, Ambssador to the King of England. On the former occasion he wore the European dress at court, and conformed to the usual practice at the audience of uncovering before the king. In the present instance, however, having assumed the Persian costume, much difficulty arose at court as to his reception, and whether, as an Englishman, he should not be uncovered. To this he strenuously objected, having been permitted to wear his turban both at the court of the Emperor, and in Spain. After much discussion, however, he consented to lay his turban at the king's feet, if he were permitted to re-assume it again immediately. Vattel, in his *Rights of Ambassadors*, condemns him severely for this act of submission; and goes so far as to say, that Shah Abbass might, with propriety, have taken off his head when he returned to Persia; and it does not seem improbable that this circumstance gave rise to the events which led to the decline of his influence at the court of the Shah. He had his first audience of King James, on the 27th of January, 1624; and on the 13th of April following, he was admitted to pay a private visit to Charles I., to whom he offered his condolence on his father's death.

While Sir Robert Sherley was in England, the East India Company communicated to the court that one of their vessels had brought one Najdi Beg, a Persian nobleman, as Ambassador from the King of Persia, who reached London on the 19th of February, 1626. The



Company made great interest to obtain especial honour to be done to this individual, so much so, indeed, that one of his Majesty's state coaches, conveying the Earl of Warwick, Master of the Ceremonies, and other gentlemen of the household, were sent to Kingston to bring him to the capital. A report was also spread that the new ambassador was deputed from Persia to denounce Sir Robert Sherley as an impostor, and as the bearer of a spurious commission. The connexion of this noble family with Persia—the circumstances of Sir Anthony and Sir Robert having both been accredited to Queen Elizabeth, and King James I., ought to have taught the court to be cautious how they gave credence to this statement; but such was the influence of the East India Company, that the Ambassador was permitted to show in what respect Sir Robert Sherley was the impostor the former proclaimed him to be. Whether the laying of his turban at James the First's feet had been heard of in Persia, and caused his recall, is unknown, nor, as we learn, was it ever complained of by Shah Abbass. Certain it is, however, Najdi Beg came armed with full powers to degrade Sir Robert Sherley in England, who was probably the victim of his enemies at the Persian court.

At an investigation of the accusations made against him by the new ambassador, before the Privy Council, he was charged with having produced spurious credentials, bearing the king's seal on the back of it, whereas the true patent would have borne the seal and signature on the face of and at the top of it. To this Sir Robert truly made answer, that his only credentials were included in a letter addressed to King James; and if so, the fact of the king's signet being at the back, instead of in front and at top, as in a patent, would be accounted for; but, on the paper being handed to the Persian, he flew into a violent passion, tore it to pieces, and assaulted Sir Robert Sherley by striking him in the face, and the Persian's son assisted the father, and fairly knocked him down; thus destroying Sherley's defence. Another charge against Sir Robert was for stating that his wife, the Lady Theresia, was a cousin of the king. This Sir Robert denied, and explained the misrepresentation by saying, that he had only said she was nearly related to the Queen of Persia. The violence of the Persian was not deemed to have been sufficiently resented by Sir Robert, but on the matter being represented to Charles I., he put off the audience which had been appointed for the Persian, and did not admit him, though much importuned, till the 6th of March. The behaviour of the Persian ambassador at the court is thus described:—

“Entering the banqueting house, where his Majesty stood under

the state canopy to receive him, he advanced without one look or gesture of respect, till, coming close to the king's person, he clapped his letters to his eyes, one after the other, kissed them, and pressed them into the hands of his Majesty, but not so much as bowing his body at their delivery. Having thus finished this little ceremony, he, in his retreat, after some twenty paces, *made with his back to the king*, turned about, and, waving his hand on each side imperiously, as commanding a prospect (hindered by the multitude that pressed in between his sight and the king's), he made a kind of stooping reverence, then a second, and a third, and departed. When, understanding that the queen was gone abroad (whom he meant to visit) he employed the time awhile in a walk with all his coaches about St. James's park, and, returning, saw her Majesty. The next day, the other ambassador (Sir Robert Sherley) had a private audience of his Majesty, in his withdrawing chamber. After many contestations between the merchants (East India Company) and the Ambassador Sherley, whether the expenses of his return voyage were to be defrayed by them as the king required, or by the king himself, the two Persian ambassadors, and Sir Dormer Cotton on the part of King Charles I. ambassador to Shah Abbass, all sailed in the following year, and reached Gombroon, in the Gulf of Persia, on the 10th of January, 1627. Najdi Beg, the Persian, died on the passage, having (as Sir Thomas Herbert says, who sailed in the same fleet) poisoned himself."

Sir Robert Sherley and Sir Dormer Cotton proceeded from Gombroon by the route of Shiraz and Ispahan, to the king's court at Cashan. Here Mahomed Ali Beg, the minister, seemed decidedly hostile to Sir Robert Sherley; and Sir Dormer Cotton could never prevail on the king to say whether or not Najdi Beg was authorized to play the ambassador as he had done. The king would not receive his son at court, and pretended that he had exceeded his powers. The mystery of the recall of Sir Robert Sherley was never cleared up. Sir Thomas Herbert observes, "These and the like discontents (casual to mortal men) so much afflicted him, that, immediately a fever and apoplexy overcharged him, so that on the 13th of June, he gave an *ultimum vale* to this world. And wanting a fitter place of burial, was put into the earth at the door of his own house in Casbin, where he died."

"Though it may seem impertinent, I cannot pass by in silence without injury to her memory, whom I so much honoured, the thrice-worthy and undaunted Lady Theresia, his faithful wife, to this sad time constant to our company. Her faith was ever Christian,

her parents so, and noble ; her country Circassia, which joins to Georgia and to Zinria, near the Euxine and Caspian Seas. At that time, when her husband lay dead by her, and herself very weak by a long dysentery, a Dutch painter (who had served the King of Persia twenty years) conspires with Mahomet Ali Beg, and pretending an engagement he was in to one Crole, a Fleming', (for some monies Sir Robert Sherley had long since borrowed of him,) he is believed, and got a warrant from the Cawsee, or justice, to seize upon the lady's goods, which wicked plot could not be so private, but was known by a faithful, honest, gentleman, Master Hedges, a follower to our Ambassador, who straightway acquaints the lady with it, which, as she knew was false, so seemed it strange ; yet, recalling herself, she tore a satin quilt with her feeble hands ; and trusted him with her treasure, a cabinet, some jewels, rich stones and the like, with which he was no sooner gone, than the Pagan serjeants, with John the Fleming, entered her chamber, carried away what was valuable or vendible, his (Sir Robert's) horses, camels, vests, turbans, a rich Persian dagger, and some other things ; but after a narrow search, finding no jewels (for they had seen him wear many, and it was for them they had worried in their ostrich appetites), mad, angry, and ashamed, they departed unsatisfied."

After the death of her husband, Lady Theresia retired to Europe, and was residing at Rome when Sir Thomas Herbert published his travels. No account has ever transpired of what became of her son, the godson of Henry, Prince of Wales, the elder brother of Charles I.

"The gentleman (Master Hedges), when the storm was past, redelivered her her jewels, of a double value now, cause of that conquest, which, had she wanted, I do not think her fortunes left her would have made up fifty pounds, a small revenue for so deserving a lady, and most useful in those uncharitable regions against woman-kind, who, though much esteemed by the Persians, yet seem rather, in those parts, created for slavery and fancy, than to enjoy liberty or praises, prizes not a little sought for, and desired by those female weak ones."

"After some discontents, and fourteen days' sickness of a flux, got either by eating too much fruits, or cold on Taurus, that religious gentleman, our ambassador, Sir Dormer Cotton, died in Casbin, the 23rd of July, 1628. We obtained a dormitory for his body among

<sup>1</sup> The circumstance of these Flemish artists residing in Persia at this time, may account for the Persian painting alluded to in the early part of this essay, having found its way to England in 1623. The painting is superior to anything which could be executed by a native artist of the present day.

the Armenian Christians residing there, who, with their priests, assisted us. His horse was led before, with a mourning velvet saddle on his back, his coffin had a crimson satin quilt lined with purple silk ; over him was laid a bible, sword, and hat : such of his followers as were able, waited on it ; and Doctor Gough (a reverend gentleman) put him into the ground, where, though his memory and virtue cannot die, yet I would he had a monument—a more eminent memorial.”

After his death, the widow, Lady Theresia, came to England, and died at Rome.

In the splendid work of Sir Robert Kerr Porter, who travelled in Persia about twenty years, he makes mention of the two celebrated brothers, Sir Anthony and Sir Robert Sherley, and of the beautiful wife of the latter, but he is in error in supposing her to be a near relation of the king, or a Mahomedan at all, as has been clearly shown by the evidence of contemporary writers. The extract from Sir R. Kerr Porter's work is as follows :—

“ We reached Ossipus, our halting place, still in the range of the Eclauts, in four hours. The night was beautifully clear ; and having taken the usual precaution of sending our Mehmander before, while our horses and ourselves enjoyed the freshening air, when we arrived, we found well furnished tents ready to receive us. The village itself consists of a few miserable huts straggling round the foot of an artificial mound, on the summit of which the remains of an old fortress are yet visible. The place boasted considerable consequence between three and four centuries ago, Shah Ismail, the renowned founder of the Seflean dynasty, having colonized it with Christian families from his conquests in Georgia ; but time and disaster have reduced Ossipus and its inhabitants to mere remnants of what they were, and we see nothing but poverty and wretchedness. The ruins of a spacious caravansary complete the desolate picture, by affording shelter to a few poor native families, quite as ragged and forlorn in appearance as their Christian neighbours. Besides having been a colony of manufacturers during the reigns of the Sefi monarchs, it was also a military station. A pass equal in danger to that of Inan Zada, from the descent of the hostile mountaineers, commanded all ingress from the Ispahan road to this part of the valley ; and to render it secure from depredators, the great Shah Abbass planted a strong garrison in the fortress of Ossipus ; which, together with the immediate district surrounding it, was placed under the government of Sir Anthony Sherley, one of the chivalric brothers of that name who sought a soldier's fortune in Persia, during the reign of that

gallant prince. Shah Abbass used to speak of him as 'the friend of his soul, who had daily drank out of the same cup with him, ever since they first met in his pavilion at Casvin,' and for whose sake, as well as on the best political grounds, he granted the most encouraging protection, and privileges to the settlement of Christian merchants in his dominions. It is said that the two British Knights eminently assisted their benefactor in military tactics, and particularly taught him the use of artillery. In return for some of these services, he bestowed a lady of such reputed high rank on Sir Robert Sherley, that it was probable she was of the blood royal, it being no uncommon honour for the sovereigns of Persia to confer the hand of a daughter, or a sister, on a favourite minister. That the Sherleys were not of the national faith would hardly be an obstacle in the way of the universally tolerating Shah Abbass. These recollections of my brave countrymen could not fail to fill me with an additional sentiment of regret, when viewing the now abandoned spot, which was once so flourishing under their protection and influence."

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