

A TUMULT IN JERUSALEM IN 1652.

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THE following graphic description seems worth making accessible in English. It is extracted from *Le Voyage de la Terre-Sainte*, by I. Doubdan, Canon of St. Denis in France: my copy is of the third edition, dated 1666. This work, though less attractive than a similar book by another French ecclesiastic, Morison, Canon of Bar-le-Duc (about forty years later, and one of the most delightful books of travel in existence), is of very great value by reason of its full description, with graphic if rude illustrations, of the various Holy Sites as they appeared in the seventeenth century.

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SHORT though the time be that I have passed in the Holy Land, I have learned that the good or ill fortune of the Christians there depends chiefly on the good or ill will of the Pashas and Cadis, governors and magistrates of the land on behalf of the Grand Seigneur. If these be peaceful, civil, and humane in character, they give opportunity to the Christians to practise both their religion and their commerce freely: who enjoy liberty to come and go and do as they please, so long as they do not contravene the laws and customs of the country. On the other hand, if they are avaricious (their most besetting vice), ambitious, and haters of the Christians, they become tyrannical, inhuman; to satisfy the mad passion that possesses them they cease not to threaten, persecute, outrage—to exterminate, if they can—all the poor Christians; and these have no shorter or more certain means of redeeming themselves from their troubles but their purses, which would soon run dry were they not aided by Christendom—merchants by merchants, ecclesiastics by alms and charity of the Faithful: this only just serves them to purchase freedom from barbarian tyranny. Now as these officials are hardly ever more than one year in their posts, changes are in consequence so frequent

that in the shortest possible time both good and evil can be experienced; that is to say, the easy and peaceful government of the one type, the tyranny of the other. The people, following the lead of their superiors, are in consequence of this so prone and liable to rebellion and sedition that at the least occasion, or under the incitement of malcontents, they never fail to act tragic dramas at the expense of the poor Christians. This can be illustrated by an event involving the ecclesiastics of Jerusalem, who thought they would have lost their lives; and, especially as it happened during my stay, I shall seek to describe it as clearly as possible.

In order to understand it aright we must begin some little time back. For fifty or sixty years the monks in Jerusalem had been unable to gain the consent of the Grand Seigneur to build, or even to repair and maintain, the Convent: this they could see was deteriorating daily for the want of slight repairs which without such permission they were unable to carry out. But at length they obtained the permit, last year [1651], as much by the diligence of the French ambassador at Constantinople as by the large number of sequins and piastres which they were obliged to give to the officials of the Porte (who worship such things). No sooner were the patents, well signed and sealed, received by the Convent, when the Governor and Cadi received notice of them, and they commanded the monks to produce them, that they might learn their contents and the nature of the permission. This was a little surprise for the good Fathers; for they had hoped that they could have kept the permits a secret till a more convenient season. However, they were obliged to submit them to the officials, who learned by their perusal that the monks were permitted not merely to restore the old buildings which were falling into decay, but also to build *de novo* an extension to accommodate the pilgrims, who sometimes arrive in considerable numbers. These two worthies, the Governor and the Judge, whose duty it was to authorise the permit, were delighted to find so good an opportunity of feathering their own nests. Not only did they give their consent, but they gave the monks a strict and absolute command to press on the work as diligently as possible, paying to themselves the dues which were their rights in such a case. This the Fathers did, after adventuring some excuses which proved useless: being compelled, they delivered up the money.

Now the Governor and the Cadi are not always so powerful as to be above the censure of the dervishes and the principal townsmen; of these there were several who could have caused trouble during the work, and it was necessary to buy them off at a high price. Moreover, the surveyors, architects, and master masons also wanted their dues. Altogether more than 20,000 *livres* had to be paid in dues, gifts, bribes, before a single stone could be obtained.

The money paid, nothing was now needed but materials and labourers. Of these latter the Fathers were obliged to take three times as many as were necessary; for no sooner was the door opened than instead of the poor Christians whom they had intended to employ out of charity, to give them means to live, all the ruffians, idlers and vagabonds, Turks, Moors, and Arabs, rushed in, will they nill they, and "worked"—as many as two hundred squeezed into a space so small that not one-third part did any work, the others getting in their way. Indeed, during a month that I was there I sometimes saw more than fifty spending the whole day in jesting, playing the fool, and wandering about the Convent: however, when the evening was come, they took good care to be fed and paid as though they had worked well. It is impossible to satisfy everyone in such cases: accordingly several of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who had not had anything to do with the affair, came in crowds to visit the works and began to grumble, and to say openly that it was wrong to allow the building to proceed: that instead of erecting new buildings they should have demolished the old ones: that the monks were making a citadel from which to lay the city in ruins, and that they would soon thus make themselves masters. Now it is true that, as the Convent is on the summit of the mountain of Gihon, it is much higher than the rest of the city, and from the terrace of the church almost the whole city can be easily seen. It is also unquestionable that when the old buildings were being demolished to make the new foundations, the more they dug the more discoveries they made of old vaults and caves, of which it was impossible to see the limits, buried in the earth. This made the workmen themselves, and many others, spread rumours that there were passages that ran a long distance out of the city by which Christians could be admitted secretly—some said that they went underground as far as Jaffa, fourteen leagues from Jerusalem, and there were even some so eaten up with malice and

ignorance as to assert that they went as far as Malta, and that the Maltese, their irreconcilable enemies, could by this means capture the city. But the wild absurdities thus circulated, both in the city and in the surrounding country, were endless, and were all calculated to hold the monks up to universal odium. In consequence there were many who said continually that the Convent should be razed and the Fathers massacred, or at least expelled from the city.

While these rumours were passing round, all through the month of April, these sons of Belial forged a new instrument to attain their purpose. Seeing that their first onslaught had no effect, and that the building was proceeding day by day, they started a new rumour through the medium of the riff-raff that were employed in the works, that on the 9th of April the leaden crescent on the summit of the dome of their great mosque called the "Temple of Solomon"—an object large, thick, massive, weighing more than three hundred pounds, and so firmly fixed that neither winds nor storms can move it—that on this day it had of its own accord turned four times from south to west, and that it had been restored as many times to its former position by a dervish who had ascended for the purpose. A council (it was alleged) had been held to determine the significance of this miracle. Some had supposed that God and Muhammad were wroth against them because they had allowed the monks to build, and that they needs must demolish the whole to avert the threats and the punishments of Heaven. Others said that this prodigy had a yet further significance—that it was a promise that their empire, so long flourishing in the East, was now to stretch to the west: that all the Christians were to become "Turks," and that they should begin with those who were in Jerusalem, compel them to accept their law, or else expel and exterminate them. Yet another party said that the monks were whispering in the Convent that it was a good omen: that the empire was coming to an end; that the Westerns and the Franks were to arrive in a short time to make themselves masters of the Holy Land and of the whole East; and that these "fortresses" were being built in order to aid them and to open the gates to them. It was therefore high time to apply the remedy: to level the whole building and to rid themselves of it so soon as possible.

All these conspiracies and rumours had but one end (as the event has proved): to excite a popular tumult, and to exterminate

altogether, as they said, this accursed race, these dogs and swine of Christians, who were filling this land and this holiest of cities with all manner of profanation and uncleanness. Their purpose was chiefly to make the rumours pass current in the Convent itself, in order to have wherewith to accuse the monks; but the Reverend Guardian, most prudently, forbade all under his authority, monks and dragomans, to so much as speak of them, and thus to avoid giving any opportunity to anyone of trumping up a charge against them.

This was all, as it were, a covered fire, which broke out only at the end of April, the season of the Greek Easter, 1652. At this time the Muslims, imitating the Christians, also make pilgrimages in which troops of 5,000 or 6,000 persons, Turks, Moors, and Arabs, assemble together. Most of these live in the villages and the country places, devoid of Faith and of Law, with no more knowledge of God than the beasts. Of all their pilgrimage the chief is that of "Saint Moses," and this day they call the Feast of Sweetmeats: the day on which we set out to the Jordan we saw them going towards the Dead Sea, where they believe this holy prophet to have been buried, and where they still show his tomb. They go thither to honour his memory, and return thence to Jerusalem, which, like us, they consider to be the Holy City, in order to offer their prayers in the Temple, which they consider the holiest and most honourable in the world. There none is so boorish as not to buy sweetmeats—pastes composed of honey and some kind of syrup—which they carry home for their wives and children. Here it was that the mine was sprung, in the following manner.

On Wednesday and Thursday, 24th and 25th April, the dervishes and the malcontents of Jerusalem, after corrupting and winning the good-will of the lieutenant in charge, together with the mutinous multitude and the undisciplined loot-greedy peasants, made a general conspiracy against all the Christians, especially the monks, because they had erected their building, and also against the Cadi and the Pasha, because they had given them permission instead of preventing them; and they determined to destroy them. As to the latter, who was absent, they contented themselves with shutting the city gates in his face, as we found when we returned from the Jordan. On Friday, the 26th, about 5,000 of these Pilgrims of Moses entered the Temple of Solomon at 10 o'clock in the morning, whence they began to rouse furious quarrels on this side and on

that, throwing themselves sword in hand on the Cadi, who, quite unconscious of anything amiss, was saying his prayers. Some shouted to "kill him," others not to do so: there was loud tumult and excitement, the prayers came to an end, and, taking advantage of a slight relaxation, the Cadi fled to his house, where he shut himself in. The mob rushed to force and to loot it; but, at the very door, their purpose was suddenly diverted, and, without stopping, yelling and roaring like tigers, they turned their course straight to the Convent of Saint Saviour, breathing out blood and slaughter. They surrounded the house on every side and sought to beat and force in the door with heavy blows of stones.

Now you should know that shortly before, the monks had been warned of the conspiracy by five or six Moorish women, neighbours of the Convent. These were on the terraces of their houses, and made signs to the Convent workmen that their throats were going to be cut, imitating with their hands the action of cutting throats as they spoke, and dancing with joy. Some monks and dragomans who were there, saw this and guessed that some evil was afoot; and immediately afterwards a dragoman, hearing the tumult in the city, ran there promptly to learn what it was, and returning with all speed informed the Fathers of what was taking place. Accordingly they secured the door strongly with bolts and bars and laid several large pieces of stone against it to defend it.

The barbarians began with unequalled fury and violence to beat on the door in order to break it in pieces, using stones and pebbles, while others surrounded the Convent and cast a hail of stones and pebbles at those on the terrace, so that they were almost overpowered. They could hardly appear without being struck. They had no doubt the advantage of height, so that they could simply roll the stones from above on to the crowd below; but these took care not to approach the wall so closely as to be injured. The outcry was so frightful, the blasphemies so horrible, the threats so terrible, that all the monks were filled with fear and trembling and were sure that their last day had come—so much rage and fury did they see on the faces of these barbarians, whose eyes were gleaming like mad lions, and who wished for nothing better than to slaughter them. Accordingly they all fled to the cellar, whither the Reverend Guardian carried the Most Holy Sacrament which he had taken with all haste, and hid it behind wood and barrels, in fear lest it should be profaned by these impious folk with their sacrilegious

hands. They cast themselves where they could, crying out that it was all over with them. While they were thus in prayer, some of those outside were attacking below, and others defending themselves from assault from above: several of them climbed the walls of the court and of the garden, dagger in hand, to kill whomsoever they first met. Some were so bold as to climb up to the terrace, but they were bravely driven back save one, whom those within wished also to cast down, only that he cried out that he was a friend of the Fathers and wished to defend them. But hardly had he set foot on the terrace than he seized a Christian by the throat, dagger in hand, and cried out that he would slay them all; and he would certainly have wounded him had he not been prevented by the others, who seized him and would have killed him had not a monk who had remained there prevented them. During the tumult the infidel women ascended to their house roofs with shrieks, clapping their hands in sign of joy, and screaming at the top of their voices to "cut all their throats!" Strong both in attack and defence, the great number and the violence of the enemies caused such terror inside the monastery that to all human appearance it seemed impossible to resist such an onslaught.

But God succoured them by means of a certain Arab horseman, in authority over those of his nation who were in the crowd. He came on behalf of the Cadi, who was a friend of his, with seven or eight of the Citadel guards. These drew off several of the mob; and an Arab chief, who had supped with us in Jericho, being there also, put all the rest to flight. Thus for the moment were appeased the rage and fury of these wicked peasants (atheists, without fear and without law) who had wished to eat their sweetmeats at the expense of the poor Christians.

The greatest good fortune lay in this, that among all these blows and so violent a hail of stones no one was killed. God had granted this for the sake of the monks, who in such a case would have been condemned to great insults and heavy fines, to redeem the blood of the slain, and to imprisonment of their persons.

This is the course of events while we were at Bethlehem; and, as we have seen already [in an earlier chapter of the book], the rebels, filled with anger and vexation at their failure, ran out of the city and maltreated the monks and the English whom they met. Since then all the infidels have had such a hatred against us that none of us dared any more to go abroad, and the monks were

obliged to let several days pass without going to say Mass on Mount Calvary or at the Virgin's Sepulchre (where they go every day), for fear of mishap.

Now, although the tragedy came thus to an end, and the fire seemed for the moment to be extinguished, it has not failed to be rekindled at the request not only of these same malcontent infidels, but also of the schismatic Christians. These, seizing an opportunity that presented itself, have inspired the new Pasha to torment and persecute the monks beyond belief, and to reduce them to such extremity by new vexations and injuries that they have been almost forced to abandon the Holy Places. We learn this from the perusal of a letter which R. P. Pierre Maboul, Vicaire of Jerusalem (who for 15 or 16 years has rendered great services to the Holy Places), has written to R. P. Michel Picouile, Commissaire of the Holy Land in France, resident in Paris.

The following is the substance of the letter :—

When the building had been happily finished, the monks were left in peace until the following September, setting aside the occasional necessity of averting the usual vexations that they received from the Turks. But the Patriarch of the Greeks and his nation have been inspired by an evil man named Anna, who had been for a long time dragoman of the Convent (but a great infidel): three or four years ago he had become a schismatic Catholic and had entered the service of the Greeks, and these had made use of him to persecute the monks. By false accusations and trumped-up charges these have so greatly incited the Pasha to persecute the monks, that one fine day he caused the dragoman, Jacob by name, and the porter, named Hebraim, to be arrested, and gave them such a cruel bastinado in his house that he left them half-dead and they were confined to bed for a long time. After this noble exploit he sent for the Procurator to treat him in the same way; and he would have wished to beat him half to death had he not been on a sick bed, and had not the Cadi opposed such violence.

Some days afterwards the Pasha had been invited by the Greeks of the Convent of Mar Elias, on the road to Bethlehem; and when he returned to the Government Residence he went straight with all his suite to Saint Saviour, where he found the aforesaid Jacob, still infirm from the treatment which he had received. Wishing to finish him off altogether he flung his mace at him with so much

violence that, missing him, it hit the wall behind and broke in two. However, he cried to his followers to carry out what he had failed to do, and they, rushing, savagely upon this poor wretch, beat him so severely that they disabled one of his arms: this confined him to his bed for a long time, without being cured. The end of it all was that the people beaten had to pay a fine, and were obliged to give the Pasha 500 piastres for his trouble and other presents to his followers as a reward for working so well!

In December following the Pasha of Damascus sent one of his officers with 500 horse to visit the building, and his brother, with 200 other horse, to visit the church, in despite of the poor monks, who were obliged to pay the expenses of their journey. This cost them 20,000 piastres money down, which they could obtain only at high interest, with endless trouble. Hardly was this vexation passed when another arose, less expensive but fraught with much more annoyance and labour. At the end of January a new Pasha and Cadi arrived in Jerusalem, no less thirsty than their predecessors. The same influences began to work upon them: and a few days afterwards a couple of Dutch pilgrims arrived from Aleppo with rather more flourish of trumpets and martial display than was judicious in that country. This gave occasion to the Pasha to accuse them of being Venetians, enemies and spies, and to accuse the monks of being privy to their plans and of receiving their letters. To give the case the greater importance and appearance of justice, it was brought before the Cadi, who was in league with the Pasha to devour all the substance of the poor Franks. He decreed, notwithstanding all that they could say or do, that the monks and the Dutchmen should be confined to the Citadel as enemies of the State. Think to what an extremity of misfortune they could be reduced by a calumny so false and so grave! At last, in order to avert a yet greater storm, the monks were obliged to give, on their own behalf, 2,000 piastres to the Pasha, the Cadi, and others who were in the case with them.

About a month afterwards the Greek Patriarch, moved by mortal hatred against the Latin Catholics or the Frankish nation (as they call us), in order to have good ground for encroaching upon and appropriating the Convent of Bethlehem, as they had tried to do several times—they have already usurped the holy Cave of the Nativity and the Cradle of Our Lord—informed the Pasha and Cadi against the monks, that they were there coining false

money; that they had several secret places full of arms, and that they were plotting some enterprise against the State; and that they had a number of underground places capable of hiding and keeping in secret more than twenty thousand men: with other infamous calumnies which they invented. Accordingly, on the 22nd February the aforesaid Greek Prelate, having made large promises to the Pasha and the Cadi, conducted them himself, with their suite, to the Convent of Bethlehem, more than 200 men, who made an exhaustive visitation of the whole place, with horrible yells and howlings after their fashion. But with it all they found nothing on which to ground action but the cave on which the Convent is founded, built by St. Paula and St. Jerome; and it was there that they burst out into a torrent of insult and abuse, calling them (the monks) traitors and perfidious to the Sultan and to the country, in that they held a place so spacious in which to hide soldiers. So when they had exaggerated the facts, *more Turcico*, and vomited out against the monks present all the insults that the devil suggested to them, the Patriarch with his *caloyers* claimed insistently before the assembly that as these had been convicted of treachery and treason against the King and the country, the Convent should be given to themselves, as they were vassals and faithful subjects of the Sultan. They even produced certain documents to prove that the Convent belonged to them. To cut the matter short, one of two courses had to be chosen: either to abandon the Convent of Bethlehem and be driven out of it as infamous usurpers, or else to pay out large sums of money. This put the Holy Land [*i.e.*, the Convent] in such a condition that they had to pledge their silver lamps and candlesticks to raise this devilish imposition, which cost them 10,000 piastres.

This misfortune was succeeded by another on the following 16th July, at the hand of the same Pasha and Cadi. Knowing that the Reverend Guardian was gone to Constantinople, and being assured that he was seeking some aid against their tyranny, transported with rage and wrath, they went to the Convent accompanied by more than 200 people and made a thorough—and horrible—visitation, with insults, abuse, and vituperation against the monks, such that, as the Reverend Father writes, the human tongue cannot relate nor the pen set them down in writing. Finally, they made a written statement against them, just as they pleased, and with as many false witnesses as seemed good to them, and caused all the

chief inhabitants of the city to sign it; and then they sent it to the Grand Seigneur in Constantinople by three horsemen. God knows what would have been the end of the matter—some misfortune, without doubt—had His goodness not turned it aside. And to fill up the measure of these miseries, plague broke out in the Convent and in one day carried off eight monks.

We see therefore by this narrative that if the Christians have the consolation of seeing the Holy Places, they also suffer many misfortunes and have but little security. They are in constant danger of losing their goods and their lives, as they have always some entanglement with people wholly devoted to tyranny or to sedition.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES OF PUBLICATIONS.

The Exodus in the Light of Archaeology. By the Rev. J. S. Griffiths. Scott, London, 1923.

This little book consists of an energetic defence of the historical authenticity of the Pentateuch with special reference to the vexed problem of the Exodus. The author, who bases himself mainly upon the work of Mr. H. M. Wiener, gives some survey of the evidence, and concludes that "all the available data point to one year, and one year only, as the date of Israel's exodus from Egypt—the second year of Merneptah, 1233–1223 B.C.," so "the problem has been solved" (p. 77). The Dean of Canterbury contributes a foreword.

The Prophets of Israel in History and Criticism. By Harold M. Wiener, M.A., LL.B. Scott, London, 1923.

Mr. Wiener writes on the chronological and historical problems of the Hebrew prophets, with special reference, partly to the external evidence, and partly to the attitude of modern critics, against which he inveighs. It will be read with sympathy by those who share his position; but it cannot be said to remove those difficulties which weigh with those students who, with the best will in the world, are unable to accept the old pre-critical point of view.