

the whole city would have been in ruins. Again the next year a little before the feast of S. Mark God sent awful earthquakes, which lasted continually for fifty-three days, and then went on for two years, with intervals of eight, twelve, twenty days; or in alternate months, five or eight shocks at a time: and some of them were so serious that they were felt almost throughout the island. At the same time there occurred in the city of Baffo some few shocks, which were not felt at Limisso, nor in the village of Lefcara and its neighbourhood. Then too were seen at night certain great flames in the air, lasting for two or three hours, and visible in many places. In 1569 followed some eight or ten earthquakes at Famagosta at the end of October, and then, or even before 1568, there appeared in the summer large flocks of locust birds, cranes and geese; great flights of them kept coming from Syria and traversing Cyprus, and all that summer their noise was ever with us, which many took to be of evil omen. Lastly He sent us the comet of November, 1569, whose tail pointed down towards Cyprus, a clear sign of the sword of God.

On September 17 or 18 Mustafa Pasha made his host march towards Famagosta, and left to garrison Nicosia four thousand janissaries and a thousand cavalry under the command of Muzaffer Pasha. He caused the guns to be dragged by his own Turks, and the troops set out in great triumph, and with musicians to show their joy: they bore away also the artillery found in Nicosia. Mustafa pitched his own camp three miles from Famagosta, in the village Pomo d'Adam, the rest went to the gardens of Famagosta. As soon as his troops were rested he set them to cut trenches and make forts with fascines, sacks and earth, and thence they tried to disable such Venetian vessels as were in the harbour, with the idea of cutting off our folk from the hope of flight, such as by means of these they might compass in the coming winter: but our side was ready with a large counterwork to dismantle theirs, and so forced them to abandon their plan. In the meanwhile, while we were imprisoned here we saw some of our men make a sortie, which proved fatal to many Turks.

Ali Pasha had now heard from his spies that the Christian fleet had refitted, and, reinforced by some Sphakiot archers, had already left Candia. With fear at heart he came at once to confer with Mustafa Pasha, General of the land forces. They waited here for fresh news, and on the arrival of some of his galliots learned that the Christian fleet was on its way to Castel Ruso, whereat these dogs took fright, and retired to the tent of Mustafa Pasha to consider what they ought to do. Ali and Piali persuaded Mustafa to march away from Famagosta; leaving the booty, slaves, and useless mouths guarded by soldiers and cannon; so that if the Christian ships showed a desire to fight, they might do their best to maintain the greatness and dignity of their sovereign, and not decline an engagement. The commanders, with the whole squadron arrived at Limisso, and off Cape San Piffanio despatched two galleys to get news of our fleet. As soon as they were quite sure that it had turned back to Candia, these wretches, who dreaded that they might lose a battle, greeted the joyful news with music and feasting a whole day through. Mustafa returned to Famagosta, comforted and reassured his men, and then all set to embarking the booty and captives.

On October 3, while certain barrels of powder were being carried on board the great galleon of Mehmed Pasha they exploded, and in the twinkling of an eye destroyed the vessel, setting fire also to a galliot and a *caramussalli*, and sending an indescribable scare through the fleet. In a moment we saw so many noble youths and maidens hoist into the air, a spectacle of incomparable sadness. The Turks sought to know who was the author of the deed, and how it happened, but they could never learn anything, for not one soul escaped of those who were on the galleon, and two or three only from the other two ships. They took it as the presage of some great misfortune which should befall them. To my great wonder