

to regain what he had paid, and fantastic wealth besides. But his evil fate exposed him to the wrath and indignation of the people, so that he was assassinated with eighteen of his *choquadars*. The fact that the imperial tribute was ready for despatch to Constantinople, the pillage and robbery committed by the mob, and the assassination itself, brought the whole population, great and small, Turks and Christians, into imminent danger of the Sultan's wrath, had it not been that God was pleased to inspire feelings of pity into the heart of the sovereign.

When Chil Osman had read the firman conferring on him the post of Governor, he allowed a few days to pass after the ceremonial visits, and then, through the Dragoman, Haji Joseph, proposed to the Archbishop and the rest, that, as his office was burdened with a debt of many purses, he had calculated that unless he received from every *rayah* whose name was entered on the demand warrants forty-sixen piastres, he should not be able to meet his engagements. The prelates were astounded, and replied that as they had fared with his predecessors, so they hoped to fare with him, but to collect such a sum from the *rayahs*, thinned as their numbers were by death and emigration, was altogether impossible—they talked to him and implored him, but he remained inflexible, and began to threaten them that he would harry the monasteries and exact contributions from them, and inflict fines upon the bishops for their obstinacy. They were confused, and finding that their entreaties had no success they sent messengers secretly to Constantinople with petitions to the Porte, imploring mercy, and setting forth the implacable rapacity of the *muhassil*. The messengers, though after some delay, obtained through the *Silihdar Agha* speech of the Vazir, and carried away a strongly worded firman, commanding the said Chil Osman not to exact more than the sum fixed by the imperial rescript, or he would be punished. Meanwhile, the messengers were long in returning, and the Governor never ceased to press for promises and signatures about the matter in hand, and for the circulation of such among the *rayahs*. Paisios then took counsel with his suffragans, and they arranged to escape by night. They started, but, because the Bishop of Citium did not keep the secret, they were caught the next morning at Liopetri, at a spot called *the River*, by the Governor's men, and carried back to Nicosia, where Chil Osman ordered them to be guarded night and day in the Archbishop's house, fearing lest they should again escape, and accuse him to the Porte as a robber.

At last about the middle of October there appeared a *Vazir Choquadar* bearing the aforesaid imperial order. The Governor was sick with vexation, still October 25 was appointed for the reading of the document: not however publicly in full Divan, but in an apartment of the palace, in the presence of the Ulema, the aghas, the bishops, and a few Greeks and Turks, on the day when an ancient custom collects people from all parts of the island to the fair of St. Demetrios, held outside Nicosia. Here the villagers buy and sell what they want for their fields, and for their winter use, they make terms with their creditors, and transact various business. The persons above mentioned assembled accordingly to hear the order, which was read, when the Governor began in a reproachful tone to ask the Archbishop what harm he had done the *rayah*, that the Archbishop should accuse him to the Porte. Paisios replied, "God forbid, we came with tears to implore mercy on the poor *rayah*, but we never accused you." He had hardly spoken these words, when the floor on the side on which we Greeks stood, for I was among them, suddenly and utterly collapsed, and we were hurled into a black gulf, bishops and attendants, Greeks and Turks, with other victims, and the beams of the roof heaped on top of us. With no small damage and risk of our lives we freed ourselves, and were dragged out covered with dust and dirt, scarred all over, a sorry sight! We were carried to our houses, one with an injured back, another with a broken leg: