

inside the church. Any other police would have kept the road clear for the pageant from the first; but, with that incompleteness which is the peculiar characteristic of the Oriental mind, the Turkish commanding officer came to clear the way just before the pageant began. It took him three quarters of an hour, and very hard work, to get a very narrow passage clear just round the sepulchre and up the nave. The time required arose, not from the gentle manner in which it was done, but from the impossibility of compressing human bodies beyond a given amount. As to gentleness in doing it, the colonel did it all with his own hand, and a rough hand it was. He was armed, not only with his sword, but with a far more serious weapon. He had a whip of bull's hide, which reached twice as far as his sword,—just what you read of in the 'Arabian Nights.' He preceded his leading soldier, shrieking at the top of his voice at each recumbent form, and striking at it, if not instantly out of the way, bedding and all, with blows that resounded through the whole church. His oaths and language were dreadful, his blows more noisy still. The scene would have disgraced a gambling hell, and yet it was in the house of Christ. All shrank from him as from an exploding shell. The stricken ones writhed under the fearful blows. If any one made even a cry, they were immediately handed over to the soldiers, and violently thrust out of the church, beaten all the way down the files, and the great fear of ejection kept the majority quiet. When beds had been piled on beds, and the way was cleared, it was held by the soldiers, and the Turkish colonel, who had just knocked a man down with the butt-end of a musket, (he was introduced to us afterwards, and seemed with ladies a very gentle being,) looked complacently around, as if he had done the Christian religion good service. All this time you must not think the church was quiet. It was the most noisy assemblage I ever was in. All who were not asleep were talking, or shrieking, or singing hymns, or quarrelling with each other. You had to bawl to make yourself heard even by the person next to you; and as all were bawling at once, and there were probably five or six thousand people in the church and chapels, and scarcely ten together were bawling the same language, it was rather a tower of confusion than a church of God entering on its most sacred ceremonial. The pageant lasted from nine at night till four in the morning; but we, with great exertion, got away at two. It consisted in nothing more or less than in carrying Jesus Christ all about the place. They carried Him to prison, where He was crowned with thorns. They carried Him from prison to the Stone of Flagellation, where He was scourged. They carried Him upstairs to Calvary, where He was crucified. They parted His garments among them, and cast lots upon His vesture. They took Him down from the Cross, and carried Him to the Stone of Unction, where He was anointed. They carried Him to the sepulchre, where He was buried. They carried a coverlet for the tomb very much like the one I saw leave Cairo for Mecca, to envelope the Holy Prophet (there is a similarity in all these things). Whether He rose again and went through His duty in the other parts of the church, as in the garden where He appears to His mother—whether He vanished out of the church at the spot marked for that event, and whether the true Cross was buried and found three hundred years afterwards in the crypt of Santa Helena, we were too tired to wait and see. As a pageant, it was magnificent. Flags and banners, mitred heads, croziers and diamonds, deep bass voices, three thousand hands armed with the living flame, crosses and genuflexions, incense and blessings, Roman candles and other sweetmeats, all made up a vision which millions have come from the distant parts of the earth to see, and none should on any account omit who are near the Holy Land at Easter tide. The extraordinary devotion of the greater part of the crowd was the most striking element of it all. However violent and quarrelsome before it began, they were hushed and subdued after its commencement. There were two sermons during the performance—one at the stone of unction at half-past eleven, another at the sepulchre at half-past one. During these I worked my way through all the different parts of the church. . . . Every part of the church (other than the Latin church and the Greek nave) is a disgrace in its rottenness and in its filth; while, worse than all, in the very rotunda where the sepulchre stands, one