

Confidential.

NOTE.—The accounts of practice given in this Print are not to be taken as necessarily having official authority.

THE STATUS QUO

IN THE HOLY PLACES

BY

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With an Annexe on

THE STATUS QUO IN THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY, BETHLEHEM.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

It is probably true to say that no question more constantly exercised the Moslem rulers of Palestine and took up more of their time than the ever recurring difficulties and disputes arising out of the circumstance that the Christian Holy Places in Jerusalem and Bethlehem were not in one ownership but were shared and served by several communities. In this respect the experience of the British Mandatory Government has not differed greatly from that of their Ottoman predecessor. As the several ecclesiastical communities represented in the Holy Places waxed or waned in influence or even (as in the case of the Georgians) lost all representation in the Holy Land, so their shares in the sanctuaries fluctuated and their boundaries within the shrines tended to depend upon the numbers, wealth, and even strong right arm, of the parties concerned and upon the favour of the Sultan. And that the latter was sometimes a precarious asset is shewn by the circumstance that between the years 1630 to 1637—a particularly important period in the history of the Holy Places—the right of pre-eminence (*praedominium*) in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Church of the Virgin near Gethsemane, and the Basilica of the Nativity at Bethlehem, alternated no fewer than six times, at the caprice of Sultan Murad IV, between the two principal shareholders, the Orthodox and the Roman Catholics.

Article LXII of the Treaty of Berlin proclaims the inviolability of the *status quo* of the Holy Places, and the phrase *status quo* has thus assumed a wide significance in this connexion, since it is to it that appeal is made in all questions which arise within these sacred and much contested walls. Not only Orthodox and Latins, but Armenians, Copts, Jacobites and Abyssinians have still their shares in the Holy Places ; and, owing to the complexity of the shares, to the frequent absence of authoritative rulings, and to contradictory decisions given in the past, the *status quo* is often difficult to define.

On this account the Paper prepared by Mr. L. G. A. Cust, who has had several years of experience in the Jerusalem District Administration, supplemented by a detailed description of the complicated practice at Bethlehem by Abdullah Effendi Kardus, M.B.E., District Officer of the Bethlehem Sub-District, will be of practical value to the officers of the Government of Palestine who have to administer and give decisions upon the interpretation of the *status quo*. While it does not attempt the vast task of examining and

sifting all the rulings of the Mamluk and early Ottoman rulers of Palestine, it gives a succinct account of modern practice ; and it is the only collection extant of the rulings and decisions taken since 1918. As such it cannot fail to be a valuable *vade mecum* to those charged with the delicate duty of applying one of the most fluid and imprecise codes in the world.

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JERUSALEM,

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Confidential.

"THE STATUS QUO IN THE HOLY PLACES," BY MR. L. G. A. CUST. CORRIGENDA AND ADDENDUM.

The following alterations should be made in the Section relative to the " Wailing Wall " commencing on page 43.

At the beginning of the last paragraph on page 44, for the first seven words substitute " In certain Jewish circles, however, this right to pray has been."

After " but " in line 5 on page 45 the words " for a time " should be inserted and " were " substituted for " are " in the same line.

At the end of the first paragraph on page 45 the following new paragraphs should be inserted :—

After the disturbances of August, 1929, the High Commissioner issued provisional instructions, in the interests of order and decorum, for the observances at the Wall. By these instructions the Jews were forbidden to bring to the Wall any screens or curtains or any seating accommodation. It was provided, however, that, on the occasions of the feasts of the New Year and the Day of Atonement, a prayer mat of approved size might be brought by each Jewish worshipper and certain approved ritual appurtenances only might also be brought. The Moslems were required during and on the eve of Jewish Sabbaths and recognized Jewish Holy Days to ensure that the wooden door giving access from the pavement to Zawieh at the southern end of the Wall, shall remain locked, and to refrain from driving animals along the pavement before the Wall.

These instructions were to be effective only until the rights at the Wall of the two Communities should have been defined by an authoritative body.

A public announcement was made by the High Commissioner on the 23rd January, 1930, to the effect that the Council of the League of Nations, having agreed that the question of the rights and claims of Jews and Moslems with regard to the Wailing Wall urgently called for final settlement, had decided that the settlement should be entrusted to a Commission to consist of three members appointed by the Mandatory and approved by the Council of the League, who should not be of British nationality and at least one of whom should be a person of eminence qualified for the purpose by the judicial functions he has performed.

Steps are now being taken to appoint this Commission. *March, 1930.*

INTRODUCTION.

Article 13 of the Mandate for Palestine lays on the Mandatory Power the responsibility of preserving existing rights in the Holy Places.

Article 14 provides for the constitution of a special Commission to study, define and determine the rights and claims in connexion with the Holy Places. This Commission has never yet been formed, and in consequence, the Government of Palestine is still under the obligation to maintain the Status Quo in every respect.

Although the arguments of the various claimants in the question of the Holy Places have been set out at length, there has hitherto been no attempt made to discover and codify as far as is possible what *is* the practice at the present time, and, irrespective of what is claimed, what *are* the existing rights that thus the Palestine Government is bound to preserve.

The experience of nearly five years as an administrative officer in Jerusalem is embodied in the following pages. But the Status Quo is not a growth of recent date ; it is an evolution that traces its beginning to the early centuries of the history of the Church. Consequently, to obtain a proper perspective and so be able to appreciate what is the true meaning and import of occurrences that appear at first sight to be trivial, it is essential to comprehend how the position arose. A description is therefore given of the origin and history of the conflicts and rivalries in the Holy Places that culminated in the declaration of the Status Quo by the Sultan in the middle of the last century. The prejudice, it should however be realised, of the various authorities, as well as the valuelessness of firmans and other documents which often are directly contradictory, makes the study of this problem very difficult except when guided by actual experience.

It cannot be denied that the moment is opportune for an attempt to arrive at a solution of the question of the Holy Places. The most important external influences have disappeared for ever, and largely on this account, despite occasional setbacks, a new spirit of accommodation is increasingly evident among the representatives of the various rites that live together in these sacred surroundings. It is most sincerely hoped that the information collected in these pages may be of assistance to this end.

Reports drawn up by Bishara Effendi Habib, who was for over thirty years in the political office of the Mutesarrif of Jerusalem, and has always shown himself ready to put his wide experience at the

disposal of the Government, have been of the greatest service. A very complete and painstaking memorandum written by Abdullah Effendi Kardus, M.B.E., who was for many years District Officer, Bethlehem Sub-District, is given as well in full.

Certain appendices are added, including a detailed description of the Ceremony of the Holy Fire, which was drawn up originally for the guidance of the District Governor's office.

L. G. A. C.

JERUSALEM, *July*, 1929.

THE STATUS QUO. ITS ORIGIN AND HISTORY TILL THE PRESENT TIME.

To form a just appreciation of what is signified by the Status Quo in the Holy Places and thus arrive at a clear understanding of the various rights and privileges that arise from it, it is necessary to trace the development of the Church from its earliest days. For in all its salient features the Status Quo is the logical outcome of some occurrence in history, until gradually the present complicated network of rights and privileges is produced.

It is natural that the actual scenes connected with the Life on earth of Our Lord must from earliest times have been of surpassing interest to His followers, and there has been no important event connected with the history of the Church that has not had its repercussion in the Holy Places.*

A fundamental reason for the present state of affairs is the fact that, except for limited periods, the Holy Places were for 13 centuries under the dominion of a non-Christian power from whom concessions were obtainable by diplomatic pressure or other influences. A remarkable feature, however, of the Moslem domination is the tolerance displayed on all but very rare occasions towards the Christians. The barbarian invaders of Syria and Palestine, such as the Persians and the Charismians spread widespread destruction, and the mad Caliph al Hakem destroyed with scientific thoroughness the second Church of the Holy Sepulchre, but the original Arab invaders and the Saracens later acted in the spirit of protectors rather than conquerors. This magnanimous attitude was doubtless encouraged in some degree by the fact that the Holy Places and the contentions of the different Christian sects on their account were profitable sources of income, but in Moslem eyes the Christians (like the Jews) are Kitabis, *i.e.* People of the Book, worshippers of the true God, but not in the right way, and whom the Prophet ordained should not be persecuted. \

In strong contrast is the rivalry of the Christian Churches and Powers. The history of the Holy Places is one long story of bitter animosities and contentions, in which outside influences take part in an increasing degree, until the scenes of Our Lord's life on earth become a political shuttlecock, and eventually the cause of international conflict. If the Holy Places and the rights pertaining

* Except perhaps the Reformation, which concerned Western Christianity alone.

+ The story is told that the hordes of Chosroes in A.D. 614 spared the Basilica of the Nativity because over the doorway there was a large mosaic depicting the visit of the Magi in a Persian setting.

j: See Fortescue, The Orthodox Eastern Church, pp. 234-7.

thereto are an " expression of men's feelings about Him whose story hallowed those sites,"* they are also an index of the corruptions and intrigues of despots and chancelleries during eight hundred years. The logical results have been the spirit of distrust and suspicion, and the attitude of intractability in all matters, even if only of the most trivial importance, concerning the Holy Places.

A. Early Period.

In the earliest days the Church was one and undivided. Administratively it was split up into three great Patriarchates : Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria. Jerusalem, under its Roman name of Aelia Capitolina, was a bishopric in the Patriarchate of Antioch depending on the Metropolis of Caesarea, at that time the administrative centre as well. Such was the position when Constantine founded the great Churches of the Anastasis and the Nativity.

By the Edict of Milan in A.D. 313, Christianity had become the official religion of the Roman Empire, and the body politic of the Church set about organising itself. Seven great Councils were held, all of which were fraught with matters of great import for the future history of the Church. •]•

At the Council of Nicaea we find the Bishop of the Holy City, who had already obtained a form of honorary primacy, being accorded " the succession of honour " (dexoXouOiiXv r^c, TI.}JLT](;). At the First Council of Constantinople, the newly elevated Capital of the Empire was created a fourth Patriarchate. At the Council of Ephesus, Bishop Juvenal of Jerusalem attempted to obtain like privileges ; he failed then, but succeeded a little later at Chalcedon, and so Jerusalem became the fifth Patriarchate. The venerable antiquity of the Jerusalem Patriarchate is therefore apparent.

These Councils, however, produced the heresies to which the lesser Eastern Churches trace their origin. After the Council of Ephesus the heresy of Nestorius broke off a large portion of the Patriarchate of Antioch, and the Council of Chalcedon saw the rise of Mono-physics, and the separatist Churches of this communion, the Armenian, Coptic,^ Syrian Jacobite,§ and Abyssinian.

* Waddy.

f Nicaea (325), Constantinople I (381), Ephesus (431), Chalcedon (451), Constantinople II (553), Constantinople III (681), Nicaea II (787).

^ The Copts were originally the nonconformist Christians of Egypt. The words Copt and Egypt are of the same derivation.

§ The Syrian Jacobites like to attribute their origin to the Apostle St. James. The name " Jacobites" is actually derived from a monk, Jacob Baradai, who, under the protection of the Empress Theodora, wife of Justinian I, who liad Monophysite sympathies, was in some sort the founder of this Church in the (-itii century. Their official designation is " The Syrian Orthodox Church."

So by the time of the Moslem invasion we find the Church in the East already sub-divided into various sects, all of whom doubtless shared in the common worship at the Holy Places, arranging among themselves the order of their services. But there was only one Patriarch, the Orthodox, and it was the Orthodox Patriarch Sophronius who arranged the terms of capitulation with the Khalif Omar, and again the Orthodox Patriarch Nikephorus who obtained leave from the tyrant El Hakem for the Christians of all rites to resume their services amid the ruins of the Holy Sepulchre he had destroyed. Nor do we hear of any rivalry in these times between Eastern and Western Christianity. On the contrary, Haroun-al-Rashid appealed to Charlemagne for succour for the poor Christians in Jerusalem, sending him at the same time the keys of the Holy Sepulchre.* It is clear that the divisions and schisms in the Church elsewhere were not felt as yet in the Holy City.

That during the earliest centuries there was thus harmony and not discord in the Holy Places is generally accepted by authorities on this period. In the official exposes of the Roman Catholic point of view, one of which was submitted to the Peace Conference in 1919, and another published by the Franciscans in 1922, no mention is made of any claim in regard to the Holy Places prior to the era of the Crusades. This is duly noted in a memorandum in reply drawn up by the Reverend Archbishop Timotheos Themeles, formerly Chief Secretary of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem.}: Similarly that the Khalif Omar entrusted the custody of the Holy Places to the Greek element as distinct from the other Christian sects is an historical impossibility. §

B. The Crusades.

With the arrival of the Crusaders, however, a far-reaching change took place in the history of the Holy Places. Although in the first years after the capture of Jerusalem in 1099 the Frankish strangers and the indigenous Christians worked hand in hand in restoring the ruined shrines, the cleavage between the two elements became more and more pronounced. During the existence of the Latin Kingdom the Latin element enjoyed the paramountcy (*frædo-minium*) in all the Holy Places, and the Orthodox Patriarch retired to Constantinople. At the same time we read in the account of

* Charlemagne also built a hostel in the Holy City for pilgrims. Bernard the Wise stayed here in A.D. 867-

f Les Lieux Saints de la Palestine (pro manuscripto).

\ ' Greeks and Franciscans in the Holy Places, 1919."

§ The famous " Akhdname " or Firman of Omar (636) in the possession of the Orthodox Patriarchate is in some quarters held to be a forgery of the 17th century (see Franciscan Memorandum of 1922, p. 25).

the monk Theodoric, writing about 1172, that there were still at that time representatives of the other churches ministering under the roof of the Holy Sepulchre, though "differing in language and in their manner of conducting divine service."*

Two events now occurred which had an important and far-reaching influence on the question of the Holy Places. The reunion Councils that were held subsequent to the schism of Cerularius in 1054 proved abortive, and after the last one held at Florence in 1438, the estrangement between Eastern and Western Christendom became final and complete, and in the histories and records from that time onwards Latin and Orthodox are to each other dissidents, schismatics, and heretics.

The second event constitutes one of the blackest chapters in the history of European civilization. In 1187 the Crusaders lost Jerusalem to Saladin. Preached by Pope Innocent III, the Fourth Crusade set out in 1204 from Venice for Palestine. Instead of proceeding to recover the Holy Places from the hands of the Infidel, the Crusaders found it easier to fight Christians than Saracens and plundered and sacked the centre of Eastern Christianity with all conceivable cruelty and horror. The Pope, indeed, no sooner heard how the forces and money raised for a Holy War were being used by these "Soldiers of the Cross," when he excommunicated the whole force. But these abominable and unpardonable acts were never forgotten, and from, thenceforth the Eastern Church looked for its revenge on the West.^

From every point of view, therefore, political, racial and theological, the issue is now denuded, and on all these grounds the Holy Places are from that time to this the battle-field of the contesting parties.

For a century or so, even after the fall of Jerusalem, Latin supremacy was maintained; the treaties made by the Crusaders with the Moslems were to secure the position of the Latins alone, and the presence of the other rites was at times barely tolerated. But the end of undisputed Latin supremacy soon came. In 1291 Acre fell, and the other rites began to return, so that Ludolf of Sudheim, writing an account of his travels in 1348, enumerates seven sects as again being in occupation. Latin paramountcy, however, lasted for some time, largely on account of the support given by the Dukes of Burgundy.

* *See Luke, Prophets, Priests and Patriarchs, p. 40.*

f A quarter of Constantinople was burned down, and for days the massacre continued. What was not destroyed was looted. The four great bronze horses outside St. Mark's at Venice were carried off on this occasion.

For the story of this Crusade see the Chronicles of Villehardouin.

% Fortescue has an interesting note that in a Greek school primer there occurs a lurid account of the horrors done by the Franks in 1204, out of hatred of the Orthodox Faith.

It is to be noted that about this time, in A.D. 1230, the Franciscan Order was established in Jerusalem and became the official representatives of Roman Catholicism in the Holy Places, with their headquarters in the Cenacle on Mount Zion, obtained from the Egyptian Sultan, Melek-el-Nasr, in 1332, for 30,000 ducats.

C. The Turkish Conquest.

In 1453, after Western Christianity, with a few honourable exceptions, had refused to come to its aid, Constantinople fell to the victorious army of Sultan Mohammed II. The Byzantine Christians soon, however, found that the Turkish Conqueror, as the Arab centuries before, was prepared to treat his subject peoples with tolerance, under certain clear and unarguable conditions. Not unmindful of their sufferings during the last three hundred years, it is no wonder that they found the Sultan's turban preferable to the Pope's tiara. Accordingly, in the 16th century, a definite change in the balance of power in the Holy Places is discernable : Orthodox influence is renescent at the expense of Latin, a process facilitated by the conquest of Palestine by Sultan Selim I in 1517 from the Egyptian Mamelukes. The Latin clergy were subjects of the Powers with whom the Ottoman Empire was constantly engaged in war, and it is natural that the Sultan's Orthodox subjects should be treated with favour at the expense of the " Frangi." The result was that in 1552 by Imperial decree the Franciscans were ejected from the Cenacle, which passed into Moslem hands.*

The Confraternity of the Holy Sepulchre also comes into existence at this time, founded by the Patriarch Dositheos in 1662, and assumes the direction of Orthodox interests in the Holy Land.

From the second half of the 16th till the 19th century the possession of the Holy Places is in the forefront of international politics. The

• According to some authorities this drastic action of the Sultan was on account of the alarm caused by a rumour, started originally at the end of the 12th century by Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela, that some Christian workmen had discovered on Mount Zion the Tombs of David and Solomon and the other Kings of Judah. The homeless Franciscans were given shelter by the Armenians, until they acquired the Convent of St. Saviour from the Orthodox, who had in their turn obtained it from the Georgians. In memory of this, for some time the Franciscans used to hold a service once annually in the Armenian Cathedral, but the custom has now fallen into desuetude.

The Cenacle is not a subject of concern to this study, being absolutely under the authority of the Moslem Waqf of Nebi Daud, who however arrange to open it to the many that are anxious to visit a site of such sacred traditions.

The delicate nature of this question was pointed out in District Governor's letter, 4470/A.G. of 30 August, 1921.

Its retrocession is one of the most insistent claims of the Franciscans, in which they receive powerful political support from Italy. This was illustrated on the occasion of the visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Piedmont in 1928, when an incident occurred due to the Moslems objecting to the removal of the carpets— see Deputy District Commissioner's confidential letter of 10 April, 1928, and Despatch to Secretary of State, No. Conf.A. 14846/28 of 20 September, 1928.

difficulties with which the Latins were beset aroused the interest of the Latin Powers, especially France, whose Ambassador became their spokesman at the Porte. On the other side, the Orthodox cause is always championed by the CECumenical Patriarch, and moreover another Power now appears on the scene. Western European influence in the Ottoman Empire in any form was an obstacle to the ambitions of Russia, and as a counter move to the French capitulations Russia assumed at the Treaty of Kiichiik Kainarji in 1774, the protection of the Sultan's Orthodox subjects ;

consequently we find from now onwards the Russian Ambassador the protagonist of the Orthodox.

Time and again in these centuries the *praedominium* alternates. Opportunity was taken of the Peace Treaties imposed on the Turk during these centuries to assert Latin supremacy, but as the Turk recovered from his defeats the pendulum soon swung round again. The Capitulations of 1604, 1673, and 1740, confirmed the Latins in the possession of the Holy Sepulchre and Calvary, the Church of the Nativity, and the Church of the Virgin. On the other hand, in 1637 the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophanes III, obtained a firman in favour of the Orthodox and finally in 1757, while the European Powers were engaged in continual strife among themselves, this element definitely regained the supremacy. The Orthodox and Franciscan archives contain many firmans and *hojjets* (*i.e.*, decisions of the Sharia Court at Jerusalem) and other documents of this period which are quoted in support of their claims ; they cannot, however, be considered of much value except as an indication of the nature of the struggle and of the profit that must have flowed into the coffers of the Turk.

It is to be noted that during this period of international contention the smaller rites decline, if they do not drop out altogether, being unable to bear the exactions of the Turkish Government which was intent on making the utmost out of the dissensions of the Christians.*

The close of the 18th century therefore saw the Orthodox Church paramount, and their position consolidated, a process facilitated by events elsewhere. The French Revolution, which proscribed all religion and later the Napoleonic Wars occupied the attention of Europe for two decades and a-half. So when in 1808 the Rotunda was burnt down, the Orthodox Church seized this opportunity and powerfully supported by Russia rebuilt the Church,•)• effacing what

• Vincent and Abel (*Jerusalem*, p. 319) quote an authority of this period who says in connexion with the Church of the Virgin that " Les musulmans sont ferores sur le status quo. On n'oserait pas deblayer le grotte sans la permission des Tures, et ils n'accordent ces sortes de permission qu'avec de grandes difficulties et force's par de grosses sommes d'argent, auxquelles seules il se laissent vaincre."

f It is said to have cost two and a half million roubles to get leave to repair the Church and one and a half million to do the repairing.

remained of the work of the Crusaders, notably the Tombs of the Latin Kings and erected over the Tomb the present modern and featureless shrine. Yet even at this time, a declaration was obtained by the Latin Powers from the Sultan to the effect that this restoration by the Orthodox was not to be considered as having any influence on the rights and privileges of the various communities in the Holy Places.

D. The Declaration of the Status Quo.

The third and fourth decades of the 19th century saw a revival of the struggle over the Holy Places and renewed attempts by the Roman Catholic Powers to reverse the position. The political circumstances of the time were favourable ; Turkey was embarrassed as the results of the war with the Egyptians and, for the first time perhaps, the Orthodox cause was weakened at the Porte by reason of the Greek War of Independence. Further, the French " Drang nach Osten " had begun to make itself felt. In 1847 the Latin Patriarchate, that had been dormant since the fall of the Latin Kingdom of the Middle Ages, was revived under the asgis of France, the official protector of all the Roman Catholics in the Ottoman Empire, and assumed direction of all Roman Catholic interests in the Holy Land. In 1850 the French representative at Constantinople, General Aupick, on behalf of his Government and the Catholic Kingdoms of Sardinia, Belgium, Spain, and Austria, submitted to the Sublime Porte a demand for the restoration to the Franciscans of the Holy Places they possessed prior to 1757, that is to say, the Rotunda and the Edicule, the Stone of Unction, the Seven Arches of the Virgin and the Prison of Christ, the Courtyard of the Holy Sepulchre, the Church of the Virgin, and the Church of the Nativity. These claims were received with no less powerful opposition on the part of Russia, the Czar threatening to withdraw his representative at the Porte if they were entertained, and the dispute was one of the causes that led to the Crimean War.*

An important firman issued in 1852 by Sultan Abdul Mejid,f after making reference to a careful examination that had been conducted by a Committee appointed by the Porte, rejected the claim put forward by the Latins to the absolute possession of the major shrines, as detailed by General Aupick, and directed that the Status Quo be maintained in all these places. This firman constitutes the official Declaration of the Status Quo in the Holy Places. Shortly afterwards the Crimean War broke out. The Treaty of Paris at its close in 1855 left the position as it was, the Signatory Powers, including Russia, undertaking to uphold the Status Quo ante bellum

* For an account of these times, see Consul Finn's " *Stirring Times.*" f Khatt-i-Sherif of Jemad-al-Awal, 1268 (A. H.) quoted *in extenso* by Archbishop Themeles.

in the Holy Places in every respect. Satisfaction was given to the French by the grant of the ruined Crusader Church of St. Anne, built over the traditional site of the House of the Virgin, then a disused mosque.* Later, in 1868 and 1869, when the question was raised again, the Sultan Abdul Mejid by firman confirmed the Status Quo.^f Again in 1878 in the Treaty of Vienna that terminated the Russo-Turkish War it was specified that no alteration was to be made in the Status Quo, without the general consent of the Signatory Powers.

As the result of these negative solutions the jealousies of the rival Powers, reproduced among the different rites officiating in the Sanctuaries, were in no way diminished. Russian " peaceful penetration " in the Holy Land was intensified and great churches and hospices were built in Jerusalem, on the Mount of Olives, at Geth-semene, at Nazareth, Hebron and Jericho. On the other hand, the Latin Patriarchate and the French Consulate-General combined their resources. Even in those instances where under the Status Quo matters were clearly defined, under such conditions agreement or co-operation was impossible.

E. The Great War.

Such was the position at the outbreak of the Great War. The Peace found the Holy Places once more under the control of a Christian Power, not, as in the days of the Crusaders, under the shadow of a perpetual menace, but sheltered in the world-wide dominion of Great Britain, the Turk pushed back far beyond reach, and, most important perhaps of all, Russian influence extinguished. A little later also (in 1924) the French Protectorate over Roman Catholics terminated.

The peacemakers saw an exceptional opportunity to find a solution for the question of the Holy Places which had been shelved on so many previous occasions. Following on a provision to that effect in the Peace Treaty with Turkey, a clause was inserted in the Mandate for Palestine providing for the constitution of a Holy Places Commission.[^] The composition of the Commission has, however, been a stumbling block that has up to date proved insurmountable. In 1922 the British Government formulated certain proposals in this regard, but, owing to the difficulties raised by the Roman Catholic Powers, withdrew them shortly afterwards and adopted the attitude

* It had previously been offered to the Anglican Church.

^f This Sultan had realised that these involved questions could not be left to the jurisdiction of local officials, and had in 1853 decreed that all matters relating to the Holy Places were to be referred to the Sublime Porte itself (Khatt-i-Sherif of 17 Shaaban, 1269 A.H.).

^j: See Appendix A.

of taking no further action until these Powers had reached agreement among themselves, when it would re-examine the question and attempt to find a solution satisfactory to all parties.

In 1923 a proposal was put forward by the Secretary of State that, pending the constitution of the Holy Places Commission, a special Commission of Inquiry composed of one or more British judges not residing in Palestine should be appointed *ad hoc* to deal with any disputes arising with regard to the Holy Places that would come under the jurisdiction of the Holy Places Commission, were it in existence. The Foreign Office expressed their concurrence and the Government of Palestine accepted the proposal.* The matter has not, however, been proceeded with, and any dispute that now arises is submitted to Government. If the Government's decision is not accepted, a formal protest is made and the fact is recorded that no change in the Status Quo is held to have occurred.f

The present position therefore is that the arrangements existing in 1852 which corresponded to the Status Quo of 1757 as to the rights and privileges of the Christian communities officiating in the Holy Places have to be most meticulously observed, and what each rite practised at that time in the way of public worship, decorations of altars and shrines, use of lamps, candelabra, tapestry and pictures, and in the exercise of the most minute acts of ownership and usage has to remain unaltered. Moreover, the Status Quo applies also to the nature of the officiants. Thus, the Franciscans alone of the Roman Catholic Orders are allowed to celebrate Mass independently in the Holy Places, although the clergy of any Roman Catholic Order can attend. The Patriarch himself, of course, has the right to pontificate. Similarly, of the autocephalous Orthodox Churches none other than the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem has any standing in the Holy Places. The Russian Church during the last quarter of the 19th century made strenuous efforts to obtain independent privileges and to maintain altars of their own, for the saying of the Liturgy in the Russian language, but this was successfully opposed by the Hellenic elements. \Russian clergy are, however, able to take part in the services.

* See Secretary of State's Despatch, No. 332, of 15 March, 1923, and High Commissioner's reply. Despatch No. 314, of 5 April, 1928.

f The Palestine (Holy Places) Order-in-Council, 1924, ousts all matters connected with the Holy Places and religious buildings and sites or with the rights and claims of the different religious communities from the jurisdiction of the Civil Courts, and provides furthermore that the High Commissioner is to decide finally if a question arises whether any cause or matter comes within this prescription. See Appendix B.

% For the part taken by Russia in the dispute between the Convent and the arabophone Orthodox, see Bertram and Young Report, Chapter III. In 1914, on the declaration of war between Russia and Turkey, the Russian Monastery at Ain Farah was burnt by their rivals.

Roman Catholicism now claims the return to the arrangement of 1740, which was in effect the position in the 14th century at the close of the Crusading era, when the majority of the shrines were in the hands of the Latins.* This the Orthodox world opposes on the ground that there is no justice in selecting the rare periods when, as the result of outside political influences, the Latins were for the moment predominant.

THE HOLY PLACES AFFECTED BY THE STATUS QUO AND ITS GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

1. The Holy Sepulchre with all its dependencies.
2. The Deir al Sultan.
3. The Sanctuary of the Ascension.
4. The Tomb of the Virgin (near Gethsemane).
5. The Church of the Nativity.

The Grotto of the Milk and the Shepherd's Field near Bethlehem are also in general subject to the Status Quo, but in this connexion there is nothing on record concerning these two sites.

The Wailing Wall and Rachel's Tomb, of which the ownership is in dispute between the Moslems and the Jews, are similarly subject to the Status Quo.

In all matters of principle relating to the Status Quo in the Christian Holy Places, only the Orthodox, Latin, and Armenian Orthodox rites are considered. This follows the arrangement under the Turkish Government, corresponding to the Administrative Organization of the " Rayahs," i.e., the non-Moslem Ottomans, into " millets " or " nations " of these denominations, the other Orthodox Eastern rites being grouped with the Armenians.

By the Latin rite is invariably meant the Roman Catholic Church of the Latin rite as distinct from the Uniates, and moreover as regards the Holy Places, the Franciscan Fraternity of the Custodia di Terra Santa.

Certain fixed principles are followed in the administration of the Status Quo. Thus, authority to repair a roof or floor implies the right to an exclusive possession on the part of the restorers. Again, the right to hang a lamp or picture or to change a lamp or picture is a recognition of exclusive possession of a pillar or wall. The right of other communities to cense at a chapel implies that the proprietorship is not absolute.

* See *Les Lieux Saints*. Schedules on pp. 9-13.

For the purpose of defining the Status Quo, the Holy Places and their component parts may be divided into certain categories :—

- (1) The parts that are accepted to be the common property of the three rites in equal shares ;
- (2) The parts claimed by one rite as under its exclusive jurisdiction, but in which the other rites claim joint proprietorship ;
- (3) The parts of which the ownership is disputed between two rites ;
- (4) The parts of which one rite has the exclusive use, but qualified by the right of the others to cense and visit it during their offices ;
- (5) The parts which are in the exclusive jurisdiction of one rite, but are comprised within the ensemble of the Holy Place.

In all these cases the application of the Status Quo varies in strictness. In the parts in dispute nothing is allowed to be done in the way of innovation or repair by any party. In the case of an urgent matter the work has to be carried out by the Government or the local authority, and the question of payment is left in suspense. The Government in this respect are equally bound by the Status Quo. It may be possible, however, to make an arrangement whereby the Community that desires to carry out work in a locality in dispute may be permitted to do so, provided the other rites are allowed to carry out equivalent work in places where they maintain a similar claim.

In other instances it is usually sufficient for the rite in occupation to give formal notice of intended work, but any fundamental innovation would have to be the subject of special arrangement.

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

The whole ensemble of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, that is to say the Parvis and Entrance, The Rotunda, the Katholikon, the main fabric of the Church, and the commemorative shrines and chapels are subject to the regulation of the Status Quo in a greater or less degree.

The present Church is in outline the Church of the Crusaders erected following the partial reconstruction by the Emperor Mono-machus after its destruction by the fanatical Caliph al Hakem and dedicated on **15**July, 1149. The indifferent style of much of the architecture and the unsightly decoration are the result of the tasteless restoration after the fire of 1808,* and the fetters of the Status Quo account for the state of dirt and dilapidation which is characteristic of many parts of the building.

* The fire is said to have started in the Armenian Gallery and to have been caused by a drunken monk, who endeavoured to put it out by pouring aqua vitae over it, which he mistook for water. The danger of fire in the galleries and storerooms is always present.

As in the other Holy Places, the three Patriarchates of Jerusalem alone are considered as having possessory rights in the Church with the exception of the small Chapel in the possession of the Copts. They alone have the right to require the entrance door to be opened on their behalf, to enter in religious procession and to officiate regularly at their will. As is again the case elsewhere, of the Latin Orders, only the Franciscans of the Custodia di Terra Santa have the right to officiate independently. The Copts after a long period of penetration succeeded in establishing an independent foothold in the 16th century, but have no formal residence. They do not hold daily services, but have the right of censing at the shrines : similarly, the Syrian Jacobites have no formal residence and officiate only on Holy Days. Neither the Copts nor the Syrian Jacobites may hold processions unless in company with the Armenians, with the exception that on Good Friday afternoon they each hold a procession independently, after giving prior notification to the Orthodox and the Latins. The Abyssinians have no residence or accommodation of any sort and hold no offices within the precincts of the Holy Sepulchre, excepting their Easter services on the roof of St. Helena's Chapel, around which they reside.*

In the various component parts of the Church the position at the present moment can be summarized as follows :—

(1) The Entrance Doorway and the Facade, the Stone of Unction, the Parvis of the Rotunda, the great Dome and the Edicule are common property. The three rites consent to the partition of the costs of any work of repair between them in equal proportion. The Entrance Courtyard is in common use, but the Orthodox alone have the right to clean it.

(2) The Dome of the Katholikon is claimed by the Orthodox as being under their exclusive jurisdiction. The other Communities do not recognize this, maintaining that it is part of the general fabric of the Church, and demand a share in any costs of repair. The Orthodox, however, refuse to share payment with any other Community. The same conditions apply *mutatis mutandis* to the Helena Chapel, claimed by the Armenians, and the Chapel of the Invention of the Cross claimed by the Latins.

(3) The ownership of the Seven Arches of the Virgin is in dispute between the Latins and the Orthodox, of the Chapel of St. Nicodemus between the Armenians and the Syrian Jacobites, and of the Deir al Sultan between the Copts and Abyssinians. In these cases neither party will agree to the other doing any work of repair or to divide the costs.

* History relates, however, that all these rites as well as others, such as the Georgians, Nestorians, and Maronites, had possessions at one time or another in the Church, which they lost in the course of time, principally from their inability to pay the heavy dues imposed on them by their Turkish masters. See p. 8.

(4) The Chapel of the Apparition, the Calvary Chapels, and the Commemorative shrines are in the sole possession of one or other of the rites, but the others enjoy certain rights of office therein. Any projected innovation or work of repair is to be notified to the other rites.

(5) The Katholikon, the Galleries and the Chapels in the Courtyard (other than the Orthodox Chapels on the West) are in the exclusive jurisdiction of one or other of the rites, but subject to the main principles of the Status Quo as being within the ensemble of the Holy Sepulchre.

The three Patriarchates of Jerusalem are each represented by a Superior and clergy permanently resident within the precincts of the Church, and no other rite is entitled to be thus represented.

The hours of the services of the various Communities are normally agreed on between the Superiors concerned, and only on rare occasions where festivals coincide is any difficulty caused.* Each rite holds its fixed offices daily, but it is unnecessary to specify these in detail. The Orthodox, however, have the right to say the Liturgy at night before the Latins and Armenians officiate.

As a general rule, when minor difficulties arise over the hours of the service agreement is arrived at between the Superiors, who readily co-operate to ensure good order and avoid misunderstanding.

The Parvis.

The Courtyard or Parvis is entered from the Muristan on the east, and down a flight of steps from the Christian Street on the west. The remains of the 12th century arcade, which stood along the north front of the Hospital of the Knights of St. John, are still visible facing the Church.

The Courtyard is surrounded by Chapels and Monasteries belonging to the different rites. On the south side is the Orthodox Convent of Gethsemane and the Courtyard of the Omariyeh Mosque.^f On the west, the Orthodox Chapels of St. James, St. Mary Magdalene, and of the Forty Martyrs.[^] On the north, the Orthodox Chapel of St. Mary of Egypt, beneath the Latin Chapel of St. Mary's Agony. On the east, the Chapel of St. Michael, below the Chapel of the Four Persons, both at present under Coptic control, the Armenian Chapel

* Naturally, complications would be more frequent were the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem to adopt the Gregorian Calendar, as has been the case elsewhere.

^f The true Mosque of Omar, built on the traditional site where Omar prayed before the Holy Sepulchre.

[{] Actually the lower storey of the belfry. For a long time the belfry was disused, as the use of bells was forbidden by the Moslems.

of St. James and the Orthodox Convent of Abraham.* The whole of the Parvis, including the entrance, and all the Chapels on the north and east sides and the exterior of the Orthodox Chapels on the west are subject to the regulations of the Status Quo.

In 1927, at the time of the Orthodox Ceremony of the Washing of the Feet, the Abyssinians protested against the Copts lighting a Lamp in the Chapel of St. Michael, but it was decided that this was the usual practice.

The pavement and the two external doors are the common property of the three Patriarchates. The Orthodox sweep the Courtyard and keep it clean and hold the keys of the external doors, but all repairs are to be conducted at the joint expense of the three Patriarchates concerned, or failing that, by the local authorities. In 1921 the Orthodox Patriarchate repaired the latch of the eastern entrance door, claiming that this was their sole right. The Latin Patriarch objected, and after investigation which showed that similar work had been done previously by the Municipality in 1879 and 1906, "I" the above ruling was given.

The steps leading up to the Chapel of St. Mary's Agony are Latin property. The question as to who was to clean the lowest step, which is barely above the level of the Courtyard, was in 1901 the cause of a sanguinary encounter between the Latin and Orthodox monks.^f The position now is that the Latins brush it daily at dawn, and the Orthodox at times together with the rest of the Parvis.

In front of the entrance to the Church is the Tombstone of the English Crusader, Philip d'Aubigny, tutor of Henry III, Governor of Guernsey, and one of the signatories of the Magna Charta, who died in Jerusalem in A.D. 1236. Thanks to the fact that for a long period it was protected by a stone divan built over it for the use of the Moslem guards, the Tombstone is in a tolerably good state of preservation. To protect it from further damage the Pro-Jerusalem Society in 1925 arranged for it to be sunk below the level of the Parvis and covered with an iron grill. § The necessary funds were provided by the Daubney family, the lineal descendants of the Crusader, and by the Island of Guernsey.||

* In 1885, the Patriarch Nicodemus assigned to the Church of England the Chapel of Abraham on the upper terrace of the Orthodox Convent of this name for the celebration of Anglican services. This act conveyed a privilege but no right of any description.

^f On this last occasion, the Municipality put in iron locks, but this was objected to as an innovation and the wooden ones were replaced.

^t In this affair several Spanish and Italian monks were injured, and their respective Consuls took measures to obtain satisfaction on their behalf. This was objected to by the French representatives, who maintained that this was their prerogative in view of the protectorate exercised by France over all Roman Catholics in the Ottoman Empire. They were not, however, successful in their pretensions.

§ During the operation, the bones and some of the accoutrements of the Crusader were discovered and the stone was replaced exactly above them.

|| Reference District Commissioner's letter. No. 4025, of 11 June, 1925.

Instrumental bands are not allowed to enter the Parvis. When this ruling was given in 1925 the Latin authorities objected, citing instances before the war when bands had been admitted. It was established, however, that on these occasions the Turkish Government had protested and held the practice to be irregular.

National flags, if unfurled, are similarly forbidden, and neither flags nor bands are allowed within the precincts of the Church.

The Entrance.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is entered from the Parvis* by a single portal, closed by a massive wooden door in two leaves. Originally it was a double entrance, but the eastern portal was walled up by Saladin.^f

Above the portals are sculptured tympana of 12th century work.^j

The left-hand panel is in a badly damaged condition. §

In May, 1927, it was noticed that a further fragment had recently disappeared. Whether this was due to wilful damage or to the effects of the heavy snowfall that was experienced that year was uncertain. Protective work was carried out by the Government at the joint expense of the three Patriarchates.

Above the doorway runs a classical cornice, a relic of the Byzantine buildings. This is reached from the windows of the Armenian Chapel of St. John, and this Community has the use thereof on the occasion of the festival ceremonies that take place in the Courtyard. The upper cornice is used in the same manner by the Orthodox. These two cornices are in a damaged condition and the whole facade is badly weather-beaten and requires expert attention.

The keys of the entrance doors are in the custody of Moslem janitors, who occupy a divan just within. According to tradition, the origin of the appointment of Moslem guardians dates from the

* This is the only entrance to the floor of the Church. Another entrance existed previously from the west and the arches may still be seen near the Christian Quarter Police Station.

^f The hope is held in Latin (and some Anglican) circles that one day this other portal may be reopened ; the Orthodox on the other hand would oppose this, as thereby the sites of the Tombs of the Latin Kings which were covered over at their instigation at the beginning of the last century would be opened up.

[^] The frieze is of French marble and was probably worked in France. The left-hand panel depicts scenes from the life of Our Lord, the Raising of Lazarus, the Triumphant Entry, and the Last Supper, and the right-hand one is composed of a mythological subject. Formerly there were mosaics over both lintels.

^t § A portion was acquired by the French archaeologist Clermont-Ganneau some years ago and is now in the Louvre." It has been suggested to the French Government that this missing fragment should be returned and replaced, but only a cast was offered.

time of the Khalif Omar. It is a recorded fact that the Arab Conqueror refrained from entering the Anastasis and entrusted it to the Patriarch Sophronius, placing it at the same time under the protection of Moslem guards. After the Saracens had finally recovered control of the Holy City from the Crusaders in 1289, the custody of the keys was given to the family of El Insaibi to prevent disputes between the various Christian Communities over their possession. Suleiman the Magnificent and other Turkish Sultans confirmed this practice. Ibrahim Pasha divided the guardianship with the Judeh Family, and this is the position at the present time, the Judeh Family holding the keys and the Insaibi having charge of the actual opening of the door.

The right of requiring the door to be opened is confined to the three Patriarchs of Jerusalem. For each time one leaf of the door is opened a payment of 80 mils is made to the janitors, and for each time both leaves, 180 mils. They receive as well some gratuities from the Copts and the Jacobites. Two-thirds of the payments made are assigned to the Insaibi Family and one-third to the Judeh. The door is opened by the different rites in turn ; thus in Easter week, on Maundy Thursday, the door is opened by the Orthodox, on Good Friday by the Latins, and on Easter Eve (the day of the Holy Fire Ceremony) by the Armenians. The Community which desires the doors to be opened knocks on the small " guichet " in the door, the key of which is kept by the Orthodox. The Orthodox servant notifies the Moslem custodians who come and open the door, a ladder, which is common property, being passed out for this purpose through the small " guichet." No dispute has been brought to notice regarding the opening and closing of the doors. Apart from his other functions, the Moslem janitor has always been treated as the neutral and disinterested authority on matters concerning the rights of the various Communities in the Holy Sepulchre.*

The three Patriarchs of Jerusalem alone have the right of entering the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in sacerdotal procession. Visiting Ecclesiastics and pilgrimages of these rights are permitted to enter in procession, but provided no sacerdotal vestments are worn ; in the other event, • the Patriarch must accompany the procession himself. Thus, on several occasions Cardinals have visited the Church.

In 1927 the Roumanian Patriarch and Co-Regent Miron Cristea, who was making an official visit to Jerusalem, entered the Church in procession, and after vesting within, was received at the entrance to the Tomb by the Patriarch Damianos. The Latin Patriarch protested that the entrance of the Roumanian Patriarch and his act in giving an address in Roumanian by the Tomb constituted breaches

* Hence the sealing by him of the door of the Tomb during the Ceremony of the Holy Fire.

of the Status Quo, in that the Roumanian Orthodox Church had no connexion with the Greek Orthodox Church, and that a comparison with the visits of the Cardinals who are all of the same Church as himself was not relevant. The Government decided that the Status Quo had not been violated by the Patriarch's entrance, nor by the use of the Roumanian language, as there is no one universal tongue in the Eastern Orthodox Church.*

If a visiting ecclesiastic of note of the Coptic, Jacobite, or Abyssinian rites desires to visit the Holy Sepulchre, notification is made to the Armenian authorities, who arrange for the opening of the door, after informing the Orthodox and Latins, and receive him at the entrance, placing a carpet for him before the Stone of Unction. Two Armenian clergy also accompany the visitor to the Tomb.')

The Stone of Unction.

Just within the entrance lies the Stone of Unction, commemorating the spot where Our Lord's Body was anointed before entombment. The Stone is of native red limestone, nine feet long by four feet six inches wide and one foot high, and has, it is asserted, been placed there to protect the real stone underneath.

The first mention of the Stone of Unction as a feature of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is in the narrative of Saewulf, who made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the 12th century. It was at that time in the Chapel of the Virgin, which existed on the site of the present belfry ; at another time it was in the Chapel of St. Mary, somewhere on the site of the present Courtyard.

The Stone with the floor surmounting it is common property, and before it all genuflect on entering the Church. The Lamps suspended above it belong to the various rites as follows :—

4 to the Orthodox Community ;

1 to the Latin Community ;

2 to the Armenian Community ;

1 to the Coptic Community.

The great candlesticks belong two to each of the three principal communities.

* See Deputy District Commissioner's letter. No. 10/60, of 24 June, 1927, to the Chief Secretary. The possibility that the Patriarch of Jerusalem might endeavour to make a departure in favour of the Patriarch of Roumania so as to influence the Roumanian Government in the matter of the confiscated properties of the Jerusalem Patriarchate in Bessarabia was not overlooked :

on the other hand, the Jerusalem Patriarchate are intensely jealous of their privileges and rights in the Holy Places, *vis-a-vis* the other Orthodox Churches and could be entrusted to preserve them with the utmost vigilance.

f A breach of these provisions was reported in April, 1927, when a Coptic procession entered the Church wearing vestments and censing.

Turning to the left the door on the left leads up to a room with a curious window, which is used by the Copts. The room opposite is Orthodox.*

The Station of the Holy Women.

Between the Stone and the Rotunda is a circular slab in the floor covered by a metal cage. This is said to mark the spot where the women waited and beheld the Crucifixion, and where the Virgin Mary stood while the Body of Our Lord was being anointed for Burial. The Armenians have charge of this part of the Church, their Priory is here and a steep staircase leads up to their portion of the Gallery and to their Chapel of St. John the Almoner. As mentioned previously, the windows of this Chapel lead out to the cornice overlooking the Courtyard.

The Rotunda.

Eighteen columns support the iron Dome and Galleries that enclose the Edicule covering the Tomb. The Dome is the common property of the three rites and was reconstructed in 1866 after fifteen years of diplomatic negotiations at the joint expense of the Turkish (as representing the Armenians), French and Russian Governments. ^

The floor of the Rotunda within the circle of pillars is common property. No fixed furniture is permitted in it, and it must be kept free for circulation at all times. The three principal rites clean and sweep it in turns by weeks.

The portion of the Rotunda between the Edicule and the Orthodox Katholikon is known as the Latin Choir. Within this space the Latins hold regular services and the benches, lectern and other pieces of furniture and the hangings on the pillars, as well as the small room in the northern pillar, are their property. In February, 1928, the Orthodox objected to the Latins repairing alone one of the benches, but it was shown that these benches bear their distinctive marks and are their absolute property. This space is subject to the principles of the freedom of passage in the Rotunda and the two other principal rites have the right to hold religious offices here. When an office is being held it is accepted that the rites that are not worshipping and the general public refrain from passing in front of the Tomb.

The large candlesticks in front of the Edicule are the property of the three communities, two to each.

* This room is used as a First Aid Post during the great festivals.

•f He was Patriarch of Alexandria at the time the Church was destroyed by the Persians and despatched money, tools and workmen to assist in its rebuilding. He was the Patron Saint of the merchants of Amalfi, who founded the hostelry in Jerusalem, which gave rise to the Order of Hospitallers of St. John.

^ The wooden Dome that previously covered the Rotunda was consumed in the 1808 fire. In the reconstruction, however, the dimensions were accurately reproduced.

In 1573 the Copts, despite the protests of the other rites, were able to build the small Chapel they own against the west end of the Edicule. This Chapel is their exclusive possession except that its exterior is subject to regulation under the Status Quo. The Register of the Armenian Priory of the Holy Sepulchre contains an entry dated 4 August, 1901, to the effect that the Copts, in return for the construction of a drain under the area in their occupation, were granted " as a favour " the right to sweep and wash the roof and exterior of this Chapel, which privilege would be withdrawn " in the event of their creating disorders or trying to acquire new rights." For a long time, i.e., between 1920 and 1924, the right of passage by the entrance of this Chapel was the subject of a prolonged and bitter dispute between the Copts and the Latins. When the Copts are celebrating their Mass the passage way, which is very narrow, becomes blocked by the worshippers. The servants of the Franciscan Convent of the Holy Sepulchre bearing food-stuffs, etc., are accustomed to cross by this way to avoid passing in front of the Edicule. When this occurred at the time the Coptic service was being held, the Copts refused to allow the servants to pass. The Latins accordingly refused to allow the Coptic Deacon to exercise his right of censuring in the Latin Chapel of the Apparition. The Copts for their part attempted to pass through the Latin service in their Choir in front of the Edicule, and on another occasion assaulted the Friday procession at the IXth Station near the entrance to the Coptic Convent.* After many efforts on the part of the Government to effect a compromise had failed, it was decided that the right of passage must be upheld and the obstruction was forbidden.! The Latins also have the right to pass benches by this way for use during their services on Palm Sunday and Good Friday. The benches have to be removed immediately after the conclusion of the services.

In 1920 the Orthodox placed tables with images thereon round the Edicule. It was complained that this was an innovation and the practice was forbidden.

All round the Rotunda are small rooms in the occupation of various rites and opening into it. These are constructed in the ambulatory that originally encircled this part of the Church. The columns also, together with the intervals between them, belong to different rites. With the exception mentioned below, the proprietorship of each column is indicated by the picture or ikon hanging on it. Beginning from the east, columns 18 to 15 are Armenian ; then

* On another occasion a dispute occurred between these two Communities over the position of the Chair of the Coptic Convent Kavass, which it was complained impeded the worshippers at this station. Instructions were given that the Chair was to be placed on the doorstep of the Convent when the procession was in progress.

until column 12 Orthodox. The Copts have the use of the next two rooms, but columns 11 and 10 are Armenian, as also Nos. 9 and 8 in front of the Chapel of St. Nicodemus. The big pictures on columns 10 and 11 are however Coptic.* From column 8 to column 5 is Orthodox property. Between columns 5 and 4 a common passageway used for the storage of furniture leads past a walled-in Byzantine column to the closed-up entrance of St. Mary.f Columns 5 to 1 are Latin.

A dispute arose in 1924 about the right of the Copts to dust the doors leading into the room they occupy between columns 11 and 10. The Armenians claimed the exclusive right, as the Copts only have the use of the room by their permission, and by virtue of their situation as their subordinates (*cf.* the Jacobites), j: The Armenians produced documentary evidence in support of their claim § and the Government decided that the exclusive right to dust the doors was enjoyed by them.||

The Edicule.

The Edicule which encloses the Chapel of the Angel and the Tomb was erected in the place of the Crusaders shrine after the fire of 1808 ;

the architect was a certain Commenus of Mitylene, whose name is inscribed just inside the inner doorway.

The Edicule is the common property of the three rites. In 1926, the Government, after much preliminary negotiation, undertook with the consent of the Patriarchates and at their joint expense an investigation into its structural condition. The report showed that, whereas the construction was very indifferent, there was no immediate danger of collapse, and it was not found necessary to do any repair work.^

The lamps and fixtures that hang on the exterior are the property of the three principal communities in specific proportion.

On certain of their Feast Days, the three communities decorate the Edicule with heavy cornices and other ornamentations, in carefully regulated quantities. In 1920, at the instance of the Inspector of Antiquities, they were requested to desist from the practice, owing to the insecure state of the building, but it has now been resumed.

The interior of the Sanctuary is open at all times to pilgrims and visitors. In the centre of the Chapel of the Angel is a pedestal supporting a portion of the Stone on which, according to tradition,

* This is a departure from the general rule of proprietorship—see p. 12.

•I- See footnote on p. 17.

^ Seep. 12 and p. 26.

§ Letter of Mutesarrif to Armenian Patriarch, dated Mad. 29, 1315 (1901).

|| District Governor's letter, No. 4025/2, of 17 September, 1924.

^ See District Commissioner's letter. No. 5745/D.C., of 18 June, 1926.

the Angel sat. From this Chapel two staircases lead up to the roof of the Edicule. The one on the right of the entrance is used exclusively by the Latins, and that on the left by the Orthodox and Armenians.

The Tomb chamber itself is entered by a low doorway. The Tomb* is covered by a marble slab, and over it hang forty-three lamps that are always kept burning. •[• Of these the Orthodox, Latin, and Armenians have 13 each, and the Copts 4.

The ledge above the slab is divided between the three rites ; the centre portion is Orthodox ; the left angle is Latin and the right angle Armenian, while the two projecting ends are Orthodox. The votive candles of each Community are supposed to be kept on the portion of the ledge allotted to it. The pictures and candlesticks all belong to the three principal rites and they alone have the right to officiate regularly within the Sanctuary.

The Chapel of St. Nicodemus.

At the west end of the Rotunda is the Chapel of St. Nicodemus. The Chapel, which is really the western apse of the Church, is entered by a doorway between Pillars 8 and 9 opposite the Coptic Chapel and consists of an antechamber, the Chapel with an altar and beyond a cave containing some old Jewish Tombs. Two of these are venerated as the Tombs of Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, following the tradition that the last named made arrangements that when he and his friend died, their bodies were not to be laid in the Tomb in which Our Lord's had lain, but in this tomb near by. The presence of these tombs is considered a powerful argument for the historicity of the site of the Holy Sepulchre, as the Jews always buried their dead outside the City Walls, j:

The possession of this Chapel, which is open to visitors at all times, has been for some time in dispute between the Armenians and the Syrian-Jacobites, and much bad feeling has been thereby caused between these Communities. § The Armenians say the Chapel is their property, and the Syrian-Jacobites enjoy the right of officiating there on Sundays and on certain other fixed days with their permission and by virtue of the fact that they are there " sub-ordinate adepts" | in all matters relating to the Holy Places. The Syrian-Jacobites,

* Of the original Tomb little can have survived the restoration of Constantine or the destruction of El Hakem.

f Except for the Ceremony of the Holy Fire.

^ Curzon holds this view : see " *Monasteries in the Levant*," Chap. XIII.

§ As an instance, a fracas occurred between these Communities at the conclusion of the Holy Fire Ceremony, in 1927, when the Syrian-Jacobite Patriarch placed his chair in such a way as to prevent the exit of the Armenian procession : see Appendix C and Deputy District Commissioner's letter, No. 1900 10/22, of 25 June, 1927, to the Chief Secretary.

|| In .Turkish " Yamaklak," meaning " client " or more literally " hem (of a garment)."

however, do not accept this position and claim that the Chapel is theirs, and any rights the Armenians have in it have been obtained by force.

There is little historical evidence that can be brought to bear on the question. Travellers in the latter half of the 15th century tell of a Chapel belonging to the Jacobites adjoining or behind the Tomb. On the other hand, the Dutch traveller, Rauwolf, who visited Jerusalem in 1575, states that the Jacobites owned (as they do now) the Convent of St. Mark, but does not assign them any special locality in the Holy Sepulchre. Cornelius de Bruyn, the Dutch painter, visiting Jerusalem in 1691, says the Syrians like the Abyssinians have ceased to be resident in the Church.

The map of the Holy Sepulchre and its surroundings drawn up by Dr. Shick in 1885 denotes this Chapel as belonging to the Jacobites.

Serious quarrels broke out on two or three occasions between the contending parties under the Turkish Government, in 1874, on account of the repair of one of the doors by the Armenians, in 1881, over one of the clothes-presses, and again in 1889, when the Armenians white-washed the ceiling ; on this last occasion, the Armenian picture over the Altar was torn to pieces. In every case, according to the Armenians, the enquiries instituted by the Government resulted in their favour,* and in 1890, the Mejiiss Idara submitted to Constantinople a full report on the whole subject, with the conclusion that the Altar, the lamps and the upper chamber belong to the Armenians, while the Syrian Jacobites " as the ' Yamaks' of the Armenians " say Mass in the Chapel on appointed days, and have the use of the upper room in Easter Week.

Once again, to continue the Armenian version of this story, in 1900, when the " Armenian question " had encouraged the Syrians to renew their pretensions, the Turkish Government ordered the matter to be looked into afresh,f and the local Mejiiss Idara in a second report f, confirmed the substance of the report made ten years before.

No satisfactory solution to the dispute was found by the Turkish Government, and the matter was left in the position that no repairs were to be conducted by either party except with the consent of the other, and after notification to the Government, and in the case of their disagreement any essential work was to be carried out by the Government at public expense. This the Turkish Government naturally avoided as much as possible, and the consequence has been the dilapidated state of the Chapel at the present time.

* Letter of Mutesarraf to Minister of Justice, dated 18th Teshrin Seni, 1298 (1882), letter of Minister of Justice to Jacobite Vicar in Constantinople, 22nd Teshrin Awal, 1305 (1888), and report of Mutesarraf of 13th Teshrin Sani, 1306 (1889).

t Letter of Grand Vizier, of 26th Hegira, 1317 (1900).

i Dated 18 August, 1900.

Since the British Occupation disputes have continued to occur. In 1926, the Armenians repaired the floor after giving notification to the Orthodox and the Latins. The Jacobites immediately protested and asked for the floor to be restored to its former state, as they feared that, to further their claims of proprietorship, some of the new stones had been inscribed on the underneath by the Armenians. It was ruled that the Armenians had acted incorrectly in carrying out the work without the authority from the Government.* At the same time what had been done undoubtedly constituted an improvement and was therefore allowed to remain. •)

There was in 1926 a recrudescence of trouble in this as in other matters of dispute between these two Communities. %

The Armenians claimed that the Jacobites were causing wilful damage to the upper room during their use of it, and were deliberately tearing the Armenian picture on the Altar and defacing its inscription (in Armenian): the Jacobites said the picture was theirs and the rent was made by the Armenians as in this corner there was an inscription in Syriac.

The Armenian arguments are set out at great length in a memorandum dated 4 July, 1927, in which they quote the official documents mentioned above. They adduce in proof of their rights of possession the facts that :—

- (1) They own the doors and keep the keys and do all the cleaning in the Chapel;
- (2) They are at liberty to officiate in the Chapel whenever they desire ;
- (3) The Altar and the picture on it belongs to them ;
- (4) The 12 lamps all belong to the Armenians, two of them are always kept alight by them, and they light three others during the celebration of the Syrian-Jacobite Mass on Sundays, and the remainder on festival days ;
- (5) The pictures on the outer wall of the Chapel and between the Pillars are all Armenian.

On the other hand, the Syrian-Jacobites have, according to them, been granted the right of :—

- (1) Hanging three mobile pictures on the walls of the Chapel;
- (2) Keeping their vestments in two clothes-presses allotted them by the Armenians ;
- (3) Officiating in the Chapel every Sunday ;
- (4) During Holy Week using the room of the Armenians above the Chapel, the key of which has to be returned on Easter Monday.

• See p. 13, para. 2.

f Acting District Commissioner's letter. No. 4025, of 12 October, 1926, to Armenian Patriarch.

^ The question of the ownership of this Chapel came into special prominence in 1926 during the time that the Syrian Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch, Ignatius Elias III, was on a visit to Jerusalem.

The Syrian-Jacobites' point of view is detailed in a memorandum dated 5 March, 1927. They claim that the fact that they have the right to officiate on Sundays and other Holy Days is sufficient proof of their rights of possession, of which they have been deprived by force. They argue in the same way as regards the upper chamber, which they state they have improved and repaired on several occasions and quote documents they hold which show that a monk of their Community, by name of Yacub, lived there in the 15th century.*

The Syrian-Jacobites have never been able to produce convincing evidence in support of their claim to the proprietorship of this Chapel. Moreover, the picture over the Altar clearly bears an Armenian inscription. In the Holy Sepulchre their position *vis-a-vis* the Armenians is the same as in the Church of the Nativity and the Church of the Virgin. At the same time the Armenian assertion that the Syrian-Jacobites are their Yamaklak or subordinates, and should only deal with the local authorities in any matter concerning the Holy Places through them, is now a dead letter, though once it may have been a fact, in the same way that the Armenian member on the Mejiiss Idara was considered as the representative in administrative matters of the lesser Orthodox Churches.f

The Status Quo therefore as regards this Chapel is such at the present time as it was under the Turkish Government, as described above.

The Katholikon.

The great Katholikon or Chorus Dominorum, in the middle of which is the stone marking the Centre of the World, is, as it has been since the 14th century at least. Orthodox property ; at the same time, being within the ensemble of the Church, any important or structural innovation should properly be notified to the other two rites. ^ Thus, when in 1922 the Orthodox regilded the gates leading into the Rotunda considering they had exclusive authority over this part of the Church, the Latins objected and the Government ruled that this principle of the Status Quo should be held to apply. §

The Orthodox also claim that the 12th century central lantern and Dome over the Katholikon are included within their exclusive jurisdiction, especially as the only access to its exterior, and to the top gallery within it, is from their Patriarchate. In the time of the Patriarch Nicodemus, however, the right to carry out work on the Cross surmounting it was strongly contested by the Latins. When the question of its urgent repair arose after the earthquake in 1927, the Orthodox notified the Government of their intention to restore it. It was decided, however, that as the Dome was part of the main

* See Deputy District Commissioner's letter, No. 1400/10/22, of 25 June, 1927, to the Chief Secretary. The pictures have now been glazed. f Seep. 12. t See p. 13. § See District Governor's letter. No. 4025/G., of 14 November, 1922.

fabric of the Church and the right of the Orthodox to repair it at their sole expense was disputed, the work of reparation should be undertaken by Government. It was subsequently decided that the costs should be defrayed by the Orthodox Patriarchate in view of the authority granted to the Armenians and the Latins to carry out certain works of repair,*

The Commemorative Shrines.

Since very early days shrines commemorating the various incidents of the Passion have been a feature of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and no pilgrim can have felt the lack of devotional suggestiveness. They are mentioned by Saewulf, and are frequently referred to in documents of later date.

To the North of the Rotunda, between the Rotunda and the Khankah Mosque lies the Franciscan Convent and the Chapel of the Apparition of the Virgin, approached by a vestibule dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene. In the Chapel is preserved a portion of the Pillar of the Flagellation, and in the vestibule two stones mark the traditional spots where the risen Lord and Mary respectively stood when He appeared to the latter and she mistook Him for the gardener. All this area is Latin property, but the provisions of the Status Quo apply.

Thus in 1922, when, as mentioned previously, the Orthodox regilded the gates of the Katholikon, the Latins were permitted on their part to carry out some new work of decoration in this Chapel,^f Further, the Orthodox, Armenians, and Copts have the right to cense before the right-hand Altar in the Chapel of the Apparition, provided there is no Latin service in progress.[^]

The part lying north of the Katholikon is known as the Seven Arches of the Virgin, consisting of vestiges of the structural alterations carried out at different times. §

The ownership of this part of the Church is in dispute between the Orthodox and the Latins. Ladders are kept here, but absolutely no alteration by either party is permitted. The pictures are Orthodox. The Latins hold firmans and *hojjets*, principally of the 17th and 18th centuries, which refer to the Arches as in their possession, but at this period the possession of the Holy Places alternated

* See Deputy District Commissioner's letter. No. 2541/10/1, of 12 July, 1927, to the Chief Secretary, and Chief Secretary's letter. No. 1938/27 of 23 November, 1927 ; also pp. 28, 29 below.

^f See letters of Latin Patriarch Prot. 522/22, of 25 September, 1922, of Orthodox Patriarch No. 1487, of 6 October, 1922, and Governor No. 4025/G., of 9 October, 1922.

^j: During their dispute with the Copts about the right of passage by the Coptic Chapel, the Latins for a time prevented the Copts from censing at this Altar. See p. 21.

§ It may be that the Byzantine Pillars mark the northern boundary of Constantine's great court. Some Greek inscriptions are clearly visible. See Vincent and Abel " *Jerusalem* "

several times between the contending parties. Shick's map assigns it to the Orthodox. No recent incidents regarding this area are recorded, but the Status Quo is rigorously adhered to.

The Galleries above are exclusively in Latin use as store-rooms.

An entrance leads from the North Transept to the great latrines, which are common property.

Just to the east lies the Prison of Christ, a low Chapel, originally a Tomb or cistern. It is in Orthodox possession but claimed by the Latins. At the entrance two round holes in a marble slab, "The Stocks," are shown.*

Entered from the great eastern ambulatory are, beginning from the north, the Chapels of St. Longinus, Orthodox ; of the Parting of the Raiment, Armenian ; and of the Derision or Mock Coronation, Orthodox.^f These Commemorative Chapels are first mentioned in connexion with the reconstruction of the Emperor Constantine Monomachus in the 11th century.

Between the Chapels of the Parting of the Raiment and of the Derision is the stairway leading down to the Chapels of St. Helena and of the Invention of the Cross. The stairway and the Chapel of St. Helena belong to the Armenians, j: The walls of the Chapel are of solid rock, though the roof is of construction, originally Crusader. The floor is some 16 feet below that of the Rotunda. There are two altars in this Chapel, that to the north being dedicated to the Penitent Thief, and that to the south to St. Helena. Near the latter is shown the stone seat on which the Empress is said to have rested while she was watching the excavations in search of the True Cross in the Cave below. The Armenians were given authority to carry out the restoration of this Chapel in 1929.§

The Grotto of the Invention of the Cross, which is a cavern reached by a rough rock-hewn staircase, much worn by the feet of pilgrims and worshippers, leading from the Helena Chapel, is in two parts, the shrine with a marble slab the spot where the Crosses lay, and an altar adjacent commemorating the visit to Jerusalem, in 1850, of the ill-fated Archduke Maximilian, afterwards Emperor of Mexico.

The Latins claim exclusive possession of the Grotto of the Invention and of the stairway approaching it, and in 1929 they were authorized to place an iron grill staircase over the old stairs. || The Orthodox, however, claim certain rights over the actual Place of the

* A similar " holy site " is to be found in the Convent of the Prison of Christ in the Via Dolorosa.

^f Formerly Abyssinian. See p. 30.

^t Though formerly to the Abyssinians—see p. 30. Casola A.D. 1494, however, found the Armenians in possession of a Chapel" which goes down by many steps under Mount Calvary." Ten years previously it is said to have belonged to the Georgians. See Luke op. cit. pp. 42 and 43.

§ See Chief Secretary's letter. No. 1938/27, of 23 November, 1927.

|| *Ibid.* Some years previously the Latins had attempted to place an iron staircase over the steps by night.

Invention, and some disagreement has occurred about the placing of candles thereon. The Orthodox, however, now refrain from the practice.

The Armenians and Syrian Jacobites hold services here on the Feast of the Invention of the Cross.

The shrines mentioned above are all visited by the various Communities so entitled and censed during the litanies and other offices.

Calvary.

The Calvary Chapels lie to the right of the main entrance, and are reached by two steep staircases, the northern belonging to the Orthodox and the southern to the Latins.* Below are the Orthodox Chapel of Adam, where the rent in the rock may be seen, and the Orthodox vestry ; also the sites of the Tombs of Godfrey de Bouillon and Baldwin I, which were destroyed in the reconstruction after the fire of 1808.f

From the time of Constantine the traditional scene of the Crucifixion has been the object of veneration, and chapels have at various times been built on the site. Originally the Church of Calvary, called the Martyrion, was separate from the Church of the Anas-tasis.j: The Crusaders enclosed Golgotha as part of their great cathedral on the flank of the southern transept ; the shrine was two-storied, and of much the same appearance as at the present time. §

The Orthodox have possession of the northern portion, known as the Chapel of the Plantation or Exaltation of the Cross, where the hole in which the Cross was fixed is shown, and the Latins of the southern, that of the Crucifixion. The altar between the two, that of the " Stabat," is Latin. A grill looks out on to the Latin Chapel of the Agony. The Mosaic pavement belongs to the XIIth Century, and was repaired by the Latins in 1929. !| At one time during the Middle Ages, the Calvary Chapel belonged to the Armenians and at another to the Georgians. The Latins claim that, in 1740, they had part possession of the northern Chapel as well.

The Chapels are visited and censed during their offices by the rites so entitled in the same manner as the other commemorative shrines. On Good Friday, the Latins hold a ceremony on the Orthodox altar. In 1920, a disagreement arose with the Orthodox about the removal of the Orthodox altar-cloth before the Latin altar-cloth is placed in position, the Orthodox attitude being that this act implied a form of possessory right to which the Latins were not entitled, and it was decided that, until the matter had been cleared up, the Orthodox altar-cloth should not be removed for this ceremony. Tf

* The semi-circular seat between the two staircases has a line marked on it

to indicate the dividing line between the area of the two Communities. f See Curzon : "*Monasteries in the Levant*," Chap. VIII. j: The two Constantinian Churches are depicted in mosaic in the Church

of St. Pudenziana in Rome.

§ See old illustration reproduced by Hanauer, p. 70.

|| See Chief Secretary's letter, No. 1938/27, of 23 November, 1927.

^ For similar occurrences in the middle of last century, see Consul Finn's

"Stirring Times," *Vol. I*.

All the living and store-rooms and passages behind the Calvary Chapel, and the two doors leading to them, are exclusively Orthodox.

The Upper Portions of the Holy Sepulchre.

The Gallery on the south side above the Rotunda is Armenian property as far as the southern divided Column. It is said that they acquired this portion in the 15th century, after the Georgians took their place in the Calvary Chapel. The rest of the Gallery is Latin and contains several portraits of Roman Catholic Sovereigns and Princes. An Armenian and a Latin picture are hung on the divided column.

The topmost Gallery under the Dome is Orthodox, and can only be reached from the Orthodox Convent.

The terrace above the Gallery of the Rotunda is under Orthodox control on the south, while the northern section is comprised within the precincts of the Khankah Mosque. The rest of the roof and the belfry is in general under Orthodox control, but as being part of the main fabric of the Church the provisions of the Status Quo apply as regards any important structural alterations.

The Convent of Deir al Sultan.

The Convent of Deir al Sultan is adjacent to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on the east side. It consists of a Courtyard with a Dome in the middle, and a cluster of hovels occupied by Abyssinian monks, under a Coptic guardian. The Dome is the lantern of the Chapel of St. Helena. The Convent occupies the site of the cloisters of the Augustinian Canons of the Latin Kingdom, ruined in the sack of the City by the Charismians in 1245, traces of whose buildings are still visible. The Chapel of St. Michael, which opens on to the Parvis of the Holy Sepulchre, and of the Four Martyrs are attached to the Convent. The big Coptic Convent lies to the north.

The Copts and Abyssinians both claim possession of the Deir al Sultan, the Copts maintaining that the Abyssinians living there do so as their guests and on their sufferance. The story of this dispute is long and complicated, and it is especially regrettable in that the Coptic and Abyssinian churches are of one communion, for the Abyssinian church is a daughter church of the Coptic Patriarchate of Alexandria by whom its Primate or Abuna, who is always a Coptic Ecclesiastic, is appointed.

Several mediaeval writers bear witness to the presence of Coptic and Abyssinian (or Nubian) monks in the Holy Sepulchre, and undoubtedly the Abyssinians at one time had important rights in the Holy Places. In the 14th century the Abyssinians owned the small Chapel of St. Mary of Egypt, and in the 15th the Chapel of the Derision in the Ambulatory. At another period, they owned the Chapel of St. Helena.* In the 17th century, however, together with the other smaller Christian Communities who could not afford to pay the

* See p. 28.

exactions of the Turkish Governor, they lost their holdings in the Church itself, when, as they claim, they obtained possession of the Deir al Sultan which they have occupied till the present time.

The Copts assert that the Deir al Sultan has always been their property, and that out of charity they took in their co-religionists when they were expelled from their possessions, and their pilgrims needed a place of rest. In the same way they were permitted to officiate in the Chapel of the Four Martyrs.*

The dispute over this Convent is first heard of early in the last century. It is not clear how the established order that had been the rule hitherto became upset or why these sister churches, whom it might have been thought would have been close allies in all matters that concerned the Holy Places, quarrelled. The Copts hold a document dated 17 October, 1820, consisting of an inventory made by the Cadi of the furniture of the Abyssinians " when expelled from the Sultan Monastery." They can produce four or five other documents relating to repairs carried out by them at this period, with official approval. They also possess one document of earlier date which makes reference to their occupation of this Convent.

In 1838, there was a calamitous plague in Jerusalem and the Abyssinians, it is related, all died out. This was during the occupation of the City by Ibrahim Pasha, and the Copts appear to have profited by the occasion in obtaining the Pasha's assent to the burning of the Abyssinian documents and library, including their title deeds, on the ground that they were infected with plague. They also secured the keys of the churches and the Convent. The wrangling between these two Communities continued throughout the 19th century. In 1863, the Abyssinians had apparently recovered possession of the keys. An enquiry was ordered by the Turkish Government and the verdict was favourable to the Copts. The Abyssinians refused to give up the keys and accordingly new locks were provided, the keys of which were entrusted to the Copts. This incident occurred just at the time when King Theodore was involved in war with Great Britain and the Abyssinians were consequently at a disadvantage.

The next incident occurred in 1889, when the Copts received permission from the Municipality to enlarge the northern gate. They had desired to pull down the whole north wall, but this was not allowed by the Turkish Government in view of the Status Quo. The Abyssinians violently opposed the right of the Copts to carry out any alterations, and insulted the Coptic Archbishop. The Copts thereupon refused the Abyssinians their *ab antique* right of officiating in the Chapel of the Four Martyrs.f

* A pamphlet in support of their claims has been published for the information of the Holy Places Commission by the Coptic Patriarchate, and the Abyssinian's point of view has been set out in a brochure entitled :

" Abyssinians and the Holy Places," by A. Devine (1926).

f The Abyssinians never had the right to officiate in the (lower) Chapel of St. Michael.

The matter came before the Turkish Government who refrained from compelling the Copts to reopen the Chapel to the Abyssinians, but allowed the latter to open a door for their exclusive use in the east wall of the Convent: and at the same time despite the objections of the Copts, the Abyssinians obtained permission to erect a tent on the terrace of the Convent for the celebration of their Easter services.* The Abyssinians redoubled their efforts after this adverse decision, but to no purpose, and it is evident that the Turkish Government in this troublesome matter was predisposed towards the Copts.f At the same time, the Abyssinians could never produce any documentary evidence in support of their claims.

Mention has been made of the destruction of the Abyssinian documents in 1838. The legend, however, grew up that the title deeds were still in existence in Abyssinia. The uncertainty arising from the reputed existence of these title deeds provided an acceptable occasion for foreign intervention. Russia saw in the matter an opportunity to further her designs on the Holy Places and sponsored the Abyssinian claims, on the understanding that a portion of what Abyssinia expected to recover would be handed over to her ally. Accordingly in 1893, at the request of the Russian Ambassador acting on behalf of the Abyssinians, the Porte ordered a fresh enquiry into the case of the Deir al Sultan. The Jerusalem local authorities replied that the matter had already been thrashed out and prayed that it be not re-opened. Again in 1902, the Italian Consul in Jerusalem made representations to the local authorities at the request of the Emperor Menelik. Once again in 1907, the Turkish Government informally raised the matter, but the British Occupation found the position the same as after the 1889 dispute, i.e., neither party will permit the other to do any act which may convey an implication of proprietorship, and neither agrees to pay any share of the cost of work done for fear of weakening its position.

In 1919, and again in 1927, it has been necessary for repairs to be carried out to the Convent, which on account of the disputed ownership is in a very bad condition. These were done by the Municipality while, in 1923,j: the pruning of the trees was effected by the Department of Agriculture.

On the occasions when the Government has had to intervene, the Abyssinians have made reference to the existence of their title deeds in Abyssinia, and requested leave to produce them. Accordingly, in 1920, His British Majesty's Consul-General in Addis Abeba was asked to institute enquiries.

* For a description of this Ceremony, see Luke, op. cit., pp. 27-29. f This may have been due in part to the fact that the Abyssinians were not " Rayahs," and had always resisted Turco-Egyptian pretensions of suzerainty over them.

f See District Governor's letter. No. 4408/A/1, of 9 February, 1921, to the Mayor of Jerusalem, with copies to the Coptic and Abyssinian Superiors.

The information obtained was that the alleged title deeds were said to have been formerly in the possession of a certain Baron Nicholas Chef d'oeuvre, a Russian domiciled in Abyssinia, who had endeavoured to part with them for a very high price to the Emperor Menelik. Some such documents were produced in 1925 at H.B.M.'s Consulate-General at Constantinople for certification. On the other hand, there is a local version that they were sold to the Copts by the agency of a member of the Orthodox Synod of Jerusalem. At all events, it is clear that the Regent Ras Taffari gave little credence to the fable of the deeds, and correspondingly small encouragement to the intrigues on their account.*

The situation of the Abyssinians in Jerusalem is now much improved in that, in addition to a Convent in the Old City, they possess a Convent with a handsome Cathedral outside the Walls, besides other urban property of considerable value.

It has here to be mentioned that His Highness Ras Taffari, at the time of his visit to Jerusalem in 1924, obtained from the Orthodox Patriarch the cession of a cellar under the Convent of St. Abraham, adjoining the Holy Sepulchre, in exchange for an amount of gold and certain properties in Abyssinia. The matter roused strong protest in lay Orthodox circles and in the Holy Synod. The real importance of the transaction lay in the fact that the cellar was partly situated under the Deir al Sultan, and, as it was intended to close the existing staircase leading from the Orthodox Convent, the only means of communicating with the cellar would have been to construct a staircase leading down to it from the Deir al Sultan. The Government viewed the matter in the light of an infringement of the Status Quo and intimated to His Beatitude that the transaction could not take place, requesting that His Highness be so informed, and in February, 1925, His Beatitude informed the Government that he had taken the action required through the medium of His Highness* Greek physician.

THE SANCTUARY OF THE ASCENSION.

The traditional site of the Ascension in El Tor Village, on the Mount of Olives, is venerated by all the Communities that hold rights in the Holy Places.

* A Russian Mission under the leadership of the Grand Duke Alexander has been one of the principal parties.

The title-deeds have also been brought into negotiations regarding the Lake Tsana and Alcohol Concessions. See Secretary of State's Despatches, Confidential A, of 14 and 28 September, 1925.

The situation as regards this Sanctuary is peculiar in that it is, and has for many centuries been, in Moslem hands, being attached to the Assadiéh Takya; * it is not, however, in use as a Mosque, and the Christian Communities conduct services there on the festivals of the Ascension. It is open at all times, and is regularly visited by tourists and pilgrims, partly because a superb view of the Holy City is obtained therefrom.

The Sanctuary consists of a circular yard enclosed by a high wall, in the centre of which is a round domed building, covering the rock which is shown as the spot of the Ascension and bearing the imprint of the foot of Our Lord. Remains of a mediaeval building are visible, and the dome rests on carved capitals of great beauty.

Early travellers, such as Arculf (A.D. 700), Willibald (A.D. 783), and Bernard the Wise (A.D. 867) relate having seen a round church on the site of the Ascension with its roof open to the skies, " to admit of the passage of Our Lord's Body " and having three porticos.

The Orthodox have a stone altar behind the shrine to the right, and the Armenians, Copts, and Syrians have one each built up against the enclosure wall. Services are held on these altars by the various rites on the Eastern Churches' Ascension Day ; awnings are hung from hooks let into the wall, and the Orthodox place a table (for candles, etc.) midway between the shrine and the entrance to the yard, and the Armenians one nearer the shrine but leaving a passageway between it and the wall of the shrine. The Latins hold their service on their Ascension Day inside the shrine.+ In 1922 they placed an altar outside in the yard, to which the Orthodox Patriarch protested. The Latin Patriarch, however, maintained that the Latins had the right of worship outside or inside the shrine as they chose, and the matter closed.

In 1926 the Orthodox carried out some repairs to the exterior of the enclosure wall, but this gave rise to a protest from the Latin Patriarch, on the ground that the shrine and enclosure were common property, and the work was stopped. Before the War some repairs were carried out by the Jerusalem Municipality, at the joint expense of the three rites, and any repairs are to be carried out at the cost of the three Patriarchates.

THE TOMB OF THE VIRGIN AT GETHSEMANE.

This Church (Sitna Miriam) is situated in the Valley of the Kidron, near the Garden of Gethsemane. It is a mediaeval building of the Crusading era, having been founded by Queen Melisande, and is

* The Mosque buildings were seriously damaged by the earthquake in 1927. † The Orthodox were permitted by the firman of 1852 the right to hold their service within the shrine, but they have never exercised it.

constructed in great part underground. A long flight of steps leads down to the floor of the Church, which has two semi-circular side apses.

St. John Damascene refers to a church on this site in the 4th century.

Bishop Arculf (*circa* A.D. 700) saw here a round Church of two stories, enclosing the place of the Agony, and Bernard the Wise in the 9th century describes a round church " on which rain never falls, although there is no roof on it."

The Church of the Virgin is under the joint control of the Orthodox and the Armenians, and the keys are kept, and all cleaning done, by these two Communities. The Copts and Syrian Jacobites have the right to hold services there on the Armenian altars, the Copts twice and the Syrian Jacobites once a week.

The Latins have no standing in this Church at the present time, and do not hold any services there.* One of the claims, however, that the Latins press with the greatest insistence is to the possession of this Church, of which, they maintain, they were despoiled by the Orthodox. The general principles of the Status Quo therefore apply.

There is no doubt that the Latins at one time had exclusive possession of this shrine, and various documents they hold make reference to this fact. In the Middle Ages there was a Benedictine Abbey here of St. Mary of Jehosophat, and the architecture of the present structure is purely Gothic. By the beginning of the 18th century, however, the Orthodox and Armenians each possessed an altar in the Church, and the Latins were finally dispossessed in 1757, at the same time that they lost control of the other sanctuaries. Attempts of the Orthodox or Armenians to do any work of repair are, therefore, protested against. In 1924 the Orthodox, in agreement with the Armenians, and after notifying the Government, repointed the roof and the facade ; the Latins protested that this was a breach of the Status Quo, but it was ruled that the correct procedure had been followed and the work was allowed to proceed."f]"

In the Church the first Chapel on the right is Orthodox, and dedicated to SS. Joachim and Anne ; the next a little lower down on the left of the stairs, of St. Joseph, is Armenian. Next on the right comes the Orthodox altar of St. Nicholas.

In the right-hand apse is the Tomb of the Virgin. The hangings and lamps in the right section are Orthodox, and in the left Armenian. The Chapel behind the Tomb, beginning from the step at the entrance is Orthodox property. Near by is the Armenian altar of St. Bartholomew, on which the Syrian Jacobites officiate. The

* The Firman of 1852 referred to on the previous page accorded them the right to hold services here like the Orthodox and the Armenians, but it was never exercised.

f See District Governor's 4025/Gof 7 December, 1924, and Latin Patriarch's letter in reply.

adjacent altar of St. Stephen and all the end part of the Church is Orthodox. The Chapel in the left apse, that of the Presentation, is Armenian and used by the Copts when they hold their services.

The Syrian Jacobites claim that the altar on which they officiate is their property. A dispute occurred between them and the Armenians in 1923 with regard to the changing of two old and dilapidated icons by the Armenians on this altar. The Syrian Jacobites protested, claiming that the icons as well as the altar were their property. The Armenians proved that the icons had Armenian inscriptions, and the change was therefore permitted.*

Adjacent to the Church is the Grotto of the Agony, which is exclusively in Latin possession, and in front of the Church is a Moslem wely.

The three Gardens of Gethsemane are not affected by the Status Quo. When, however, in 1925 the Latins were building the new Basilica, a serious dispute arose with the Orthodox, on account of the demolition of the wall near the Pater Noster Column which marks the spot of the Betrayal. The Orthodox Patriarch had made some concessions here to the Latins who in their turn had abandoned the right they had of holding a service in the Orthodox Church of the Viri Galilaei on the Mount of Olives. But the right of access to the pillar had to be maintained. The Column was eventually replaced opposite to the entrance to the Russian Garden, on the public way.

THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY AT BETHLEHEM.

The Basilica of the Nativity, dedicated to St. Mary, is one of the noblest Christian monuments in existence, and is probably the building of greatest antiquity still in constant use for Christian religious worship. Originally built by Constantine in A.D. 330, it was restored and enlarged in the 6th century by Justinian, who added the three great apses and built the belfry, f Most of the early travellers testify to its glory and magnificence. To instance a few, Archlf refers to the " Great Church of St. Mary." Willibald, the cousin of St. Boniface, calls it " a glorious building in the shape of a cross." Bernard the Wise tells of " a very large Church of St. Mary, with a crypt and two altars," and the accounts of pilgrims generally present a striking uniformity of admiration. It was especially

* The dispute is of a similar nature to that regarding the Church of St. Nicodemus. See District Governor's 4025/AG of 8 August, 1923. Also Armenian Patriarch's 1593/22 of 17 October, 1923.

f Not however, without opposition from the members of the Confraternity. See Governor's 4025/AG, of 18 October, 1920.

^ The belfry was destroyed by an earthquake in 1575. The lower story that survived is now part of the Orthodox Convent. Its massive proportions give an indication of the magnificence of the belfry before its destruction.

prominent during the Latin Kingdom of the Crusaders.* The Byzantine Emperor Manuel Comnenus restored it thoroughly in the 12th century, from which period the mosaics date. Of particular interest also is the fact that in 1482, Edward IV of England supplied the lead for the roof.f

The ensemble of the Church is strictly governed by the Status Quo and the arrangements regarding the services of the different Communities are most complicated. The Basilica has had the same vicissitudinous history as the other Holy Places. The Latins hold many documents, principally of the 17th and 18th centuries, which show that for long periods the *prae-dominium* was theirs, but at the present moment the Orthodox enjoy by far the most privileged position. \Thus the Orthodox alone hold processions round the Nave. In the North transept is the Armenian Church. In the Nave the rights of the Armenians are limited to passage to their Church.

Latin Christianity has a special interest in the Church too by reason of its connexion with SS. Jerome and Paula, who lived and died at Bethlehem in the 5th century. The Grotto in which, according to tradition, St. Jerome made his translation of the Vulgate and the Tombs of the Saint and of Paula and Eustachia are exclusively in Latin possession, but subject to the general principles of the Status Quo. The modern Church of St. Catherine, § which commemorates Our Lord's appearance to St. Catherine of Alexandria, is their absolute property. In the main Church the privileges of the Latins are limited to the possession of the altar of the Manger|| and the right of passage from the main entrance to the door of their Convent and from their Church in a straight line across the north transept to the north door of the Grotto. They may hold no religious ceremony in the body of the Church, and take no part in the general cleaning.

The official cleaning of the Church takes place in January and lasts about two hours. The Orthodox Patriarch notifies the Government of the date, and a Government representative is present. The date is notified by the Government to the other communities. Whenever the Government uses implements belonging to one or other of the communities, formal notice is given that no form of right in favour of that community is thereby conveyed.

* Baldwin I was crowned here on Christmas Day 1101 : his brother, Godfrey de Bouillon was crowned in the Church of the Resurrection.

f This roof was removed by the Turks in the early part of the 17th century for the manufacture of ammunition.

\ These shrines were shown to pilgrims in mediaeval times. Paula and her daughter Eustachia were two patrician Roman ladies who were converted by St. Jerome and accompanied him to Bethlehem. These grottoes are connected by a wooden door with the Grotto of the Nativity. A similar series of caves exist under the south wall of the Nave, but no especial significance is attached thereto.

§ Built adjoining the Basilica to the north by the Franciscans in 1881.

|| Acquired through the influence of the Emperor Napoleon III.

The Parvis.

The Orthodox claim the sole ownership, but no work can be carried out except with the consent of the other Communities. The same applies to the cisterns, the water of which is used by the Bethlehem Municipality. The Status Quo applies to the northern face of the Armenian Convent which lies on the south side and on the east, to the outside wall of the Church as far as its junction with the new building of the Casa Nova : the opening of new doors and windows or the enlargement of existing ones can only be done with the consent of the three Communities, and efforts that the Armenians have made to enlarge the windows of their convent have been opposed.

On the north side lies the Orthodox Cemetery. The Orthodox have the right to erect buildings only in the northern part of the cemetery, and so as not to come higher than the level of the railings.*

The three Patriarchs enter the Church in solemn procession at the Christmas festivals, being accompanied from Jerusalem by an escort of mounted Police. Distinguished personages are met outside the District Offices by the clergy in sacerdotal robes with religious banners and conducted to the entrance. The Roumanian Patriarch in 1927 thus made an official visit to the Church. The Latins alleged that a breach of the Status Quo had taken place. As in the case of His Beatitude's visit to the Holy Sepulchre, it was difficult to find a precedent, as no distinguished personage of the Orthodox faith had visited Bethlehem in recent years. It was decided, however, by the Government that a breach of the Status Quo had not occurred.!

The Entrance Doorway.

This small opening is the only direct entrance into the Church. The remains of larger entrances are visible and the retrenchment was due, apart from reasons of security, to the necessity of preventing animals, etc., being brought into the Church.

The key of the door is kept by the Orthodox, though the Latins also formerly possessed a key. I The door is opened and closed daily immediately after the Latin bells ring, the time varying according to the season of the year, i.e., earlier in summer than in winter. On the request of the Latins, the door is opened earlier or kept open later on account of their services, especially during the month of November and the fortnight before Christmas. On the Latin Christmas Eve, the door is opened at 9.30 p.m., on the Armenian at 10 p.m., and on the Orthodox Christmas Eve it is kept open all night.

* In 1924 a portion of the cemetery was surrendered, after some opposition from the Lay Orthodox Community, to enable the approach road from the north to be widened.

f The Grand Dukes Serge and Paul of Russia made an official visit to Bethlehem several years ago and were received in this manner. See the reference quoted in connexion with the Rumanian Patriarch's visit to the Holy Sepulchre, page 19.

f See the Firmans of 1852 and 1853.

The Narthex.

This is the space between the Nave and the entrance door. It is Orthodox property and cleaned daily by them, with the exception of the two steps leading to the Armenian Convent to the south, which are cleaned by the Armenians. The room on the left is Government property, being intended for the use of the Guard. The lamp in the centre belongs to the Orthodox and the other to the Armenians.

The Nave.

The plan of an early Christian Basilica can here be seen untouched. Four rows of Corinthian pillars, eleven in each, support architraves bearing a wall 32 feet high with clerestory windows. An unsightly wall built across the east end by the Orthodox in 1842 was removed at the instigation of the Military Governor in 1919, thereby restoring the symmetry of the building.

All the ikons, lanterns and lamps in the Nave belong to the Orthodox. The lamp inside the door is kept burning day and night. The floor of the Basilica and the pillars up to the cornice are dusted daily by the Orthodox, and the marble slabs under the lamp in the centre and in front of the east door in the north aisle, known as the "common door," is washed by them every Saturday. The Font is Orthodox property, but now unused. The big processions take place in the Nave on festivals and other Holy Days.*

The Latins have the right of passage from the entrance to their Convent door between the first and second pillars of the northern rows. Any attempted departure from this practice is immediately objected to by the other Communities.

The Armenians have the right of passage through the Nave to their Church, after notifying the District Officer who informs the Orthodox authorities in writing, on the occasion of weddings, baptisms and funerals, and certain feast days; they pass straight up to the steps of the Katholikon and then turn north and go through the "common door."^f

The Orthodox close the "common door" every day after sunset, but the Armenians have also a key and can open the door at their will.

The cleaning of the Nave, including the windows and roof, is done exclusively by the Orthodox, though formerly the Armenians used to attempt to take part. With regard to the question of repairs, this matter came into prominence in 1926, when it was found necessary to make the roof watertight. The Armenians and Latins demanded to share the expenses with the Orthodox, but the latter

* In Greek *SUOLOI* : they are divided into big, medium and small. Of the former 5 take place every year, and 4 and 34 of the other two respectively. For a detailed statement and description see Abdullah Eff. Kardus' memorandum, pp.53, 54.

^f Previously, the Government had to give final permission, adding the phrase "a titre conteste" as the Orthodox maintained a formal objection. In the same way, the Armenians used to register a formal protest against the cleaning of the Nave by the Orthodox.

refused, claiming the exclusive jurisdiction. As the matter was of great urgency, the repairs were carried out by the Government in the presence of representatives of the three Communities, and the incidence of the costs held in suspense.*

The Katholikon.

As in the case of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, this part of the Church is exclusively used by the Orthodox, though the principles of the Status Quo apply as regards innovations or alterations, and any intended change of furniture must be notified to the Government. Cleaning may not, however, take place while the Armenians are holding a service in their Church. The Orthodox Patriarch has on more than one occasion requested permission to repair the pulpit, and to put a railing between the Nave and the Katholikon on the alignment of the wall removed in 1919. His Beatitude was asked to submit a design, but this has never been received.

The Church of St. Nicholas.

This Church in the south transept is exclusively Orthodox, as well as the door leading into the south aisle of the Nave. Here also, however, the principles of the Status Quo apply.

The Armenian Church of the Nativity.

This is situated in the north transept. In the north-west corner is the door leading to the Latin Church and the Latins have the right of passage in a straight line thence to the north door of the Grotto, and to clean the passage way. This right has been established only after many incidents between the two Communities in the past.

On the Armenian Christmas Eve, the Latins at the request of the Armenians close the door leading into their Church for 24 hours from 10 a.m. when they complete their sweeping till the morning following. The Armenians then are permitted to place carpets and chairs in the whole of the Church, i

At the time of the Orthodox Christmas Festivals the Copts and the Syrian Jacobites hold services in the Armenian Church, the former at the main altar and the latter at the side altar. Neither,

* See District Officer, Jerusalem's letter of 18 December, 1926. A similar situation had arisen under the late Government, when the Orthodox replaced some broken window panes. The Latins strongly objected, and satisfaction was given by Government sending up a mason with another pane, who pretended to break the one replaced by the Orthodox.

t See letter of D.C. Bethlehem to the Orthodox Bishop, No. BM/9, of 24 March, 1924. By an ingenious contrivance the great chandeliers are made to swing during the festivals.

^ In this Church a chain will be noticed suspended from the ceiling, but without any lamps. This is due to an unfortunate omission, as by mistake authority to suspend a chain only was obtained from the Turkish Government.

however, are permitted to place any Church vessels or furniture of their own on the altars, excepting a Chalice. They also descend to the Grotto and officiate. The Syrian Jacobites follow the Copts down to the Grotto, a regulation which was infringed in 1927, partly owing to the Coptic procession being late.* The Syrian Jacobites claim that the altar at which they officiate is their own property and that they have the right to use vessels of their own.f Under the present circumstances, however, their position *vis-a-vis* the Armenians in the Church of the Nativity is the same as in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and in the Church of the Virgin.

The arrangements for the cleaning of this part of the Church are very complicated. In places where the possessory rights are in dispute, the cleaning is done by the Government. The detailed procedure is given on page 56. ^

The Grotto.

The Grotto of the Nativity is situated under the Katholikon, and entered by stairways from the north and the south. The cavern is really continuous with the series of caves comprising the Tomb of St. Jerome, etc., but is divided from them by a wall.

As early as the days of Justin Martyr, in the second century, a cave was shown as the scene of Our Lord's Birth, and the present spot has been the object of devotion and veneration without interruption from the days of Constantine. Traces are still visible of the mediaeval decoration. The shrine consists of two parts, the Altar of the Nativity, belonging to the Orthodox and the Armenians, and at which the Copts and Syrian Jacobites officiate, and the Altar of the Manger which is exclusively in Latin use.

The order of the services is very complicated ; arrangements in their regard are made between the Superiors concerned. If a Community desires to hold any office other than what is customary prior notice is to be given to the Orthodox Superior. Any such office is interrupted for the ordinary office or ceremony to take place. The lamps and furniture are the property of the three rites ; the existing position of the hangings has to be most scrupulously adhered to.

The southern door is used exclusively by the Orthodox, no clergy of the other communities being permitted to enter the Grotto by this way in sacerdotal dress. In a private capacity, however, any person

* See p. 4 of Deputy District Commissioner's letter to Chief Secretary,

No. 1900/10/22 of 25 June, 1927.

f See their memorandum of 5 March, 1927, referred to on Page 26. j: This procedure was originally denned by the Deputy Military Governor,

Bethlehem, in 1919. One of the first problems regarding the Holy Places that

confronted the Military Government was this question of the cleaning of the

Church of the Nativity.

is at liberty to use the staircase at any time.* The curtains along the steps belong to the Orthodox, Of the two lamps that are suspended above them, the one nearer the door is Latin and the other Orthodox. There are also two ikons on the east wall, one Orthodox and the other Armenian.

The hanging round the main walls is Latin property.! Of the pictures on it, six are Orthodox and six Armenian. Many of them are very faded, but under present conditions their replacement would be a matter of great difficulty. The floor is cleaned alternately by the Orthodox and the Latins, an equal number of persons of each Community participating.

The northern entrance is used principally by the Latins and Armenians. The hangings along the side of and above the northern flight of steps are Latin. The Latins clean this set of steps daily. Above this door are two ikons and two lamps, belonging one each to the Orthodox and Armenians. The steps leading down to the door are cleaned alternately by the Latins and the Armenians.

The actual Grotto is in two sections : the lower section where there is the Star of the Nativity, and the upper where there is the Altar.

The silver Star was in the early part of the last century, on more than one occasion, the cause of international contention. It was more than once stolen, the last time by the Orthodox in 1847, on account of its Latin inscription.f Harried by the Ambassadors at his Court, the Sultan eventually replaced it himself. § Again, when at the beginning of this century, some of the nails were lost, they were replaced by the Government. As the result of the disputes and aggressions that were continually taking place in the Grotto, the Turks stationed a guard here, and the British Government has maintained the practice.]]

The Star is dusted daily by the Orthodox. It is washed by the Orthodox and the Armenians, twice a week each ; the Altar above is cleaned by the Orthodox alone.

On the Altar above the Star there is a small Orthodox iconostasis ;

the other ikons belong to the Orthodox and Armenians in equal proportions. The purple embroidered strip is Orthodox. The iron railing in front is opened and closed by the Orthodox at fixed hours. The other hangings here are Orthodox.

* See District Officer of Bethlehem's letter to the Orthodox Superior, No. BM/9, of 20 March, 1924.

f The hanging is made of asbestos on account of the fact that tapestries hung there previously were set on fire.

t Hie de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est. See Consul Finn's " *Stirring Times*," Vol. I.

§ See Khatt-i-Sherif of 1269 (1853) quoted by Themeles.

|| The Turkish sentry was formally relieved by a British Guard on our occupation of the Town. A Police Guard is stationed there now.

At Christmas, 1928, the Latins objected to the retention of the Orthodox ikon on the Star during the Latin night mass. The ikon was removed, but it was subsequently established that the ikon should remain until the morning.*

In 1924, a member of the Polish Consular Staff was married in the Grotto. The Orthodox Patriarch protested that this was a breach of the Status Quo, but the right of the Latins (as of either of the other Communities) to hold such a ceremony was upheld.

Stringed musical instruments may not be introduced into the Grotto.f

In 1928 the Latins made application to bring electric lamps into the Grotto, but authority was not given.^

The Manger.

This is exclusively in Latin use. The hangings all belong to them. The hanging near the steps can only extend to half the width of the pillar between it and the Orthodox hanging. A dispute occurred about this hanging in 1921, and its exact position has to be regulated to the nearest inch.

In front of the Manger, there is a pillar which is cleaned by the Latins. The hanging which falls down this pillar should not, however, fall lower than the cross carved on it. The three candlesticks in front of the pillar belong one to each rite.

The floor of the Manger is cleaned exclusively by the Latins. Efforts have been made by them on more than one occasion to repair it, but this has not been permitted by the other rites, in view of the application of the Status Quo to the whole of the Grotto. When the Armenians desired to replace a very dilapidated picture in their Church, the Latins only consented provided that they were allowed to repair this pavement. To this the Armenians did not agree, as they claimed under the Status Quo certain rights as regards the floor of the Manger, whereas the picture, they maintained, was their exclusive possession.

THE WAIUNO WALL.

The Wailing or Western Wall, so termed from the custom of the Jews to pray there especially on Sabbaths and other Holy Days, is situated at the southwest corner of the Temple Area. In Arabic it is known as " Al Burak," and in Hebrew as " Hakotel Hama' Aravi."

* See Acting Deputy District Commissioner's letters Nos. 14330/10/2 of 19 July, 1929, and Page 60.

f See Deputy District Commissioner's letter, 11576/10/2, of 10 September, and Latin Patriarch's reply, of 5 September, 1928.

^ See Deputy District Commissioner's letters to the three Patriarchs of 6 September, 1928.

The Wall is undoubtedly one of the oldest antiquities remaining above ground in the Holy City, and (as regards its lowest strata) is generally accepted to be part of the western temenos wall of the Third Temple built by Herod the Great.

Of the extent of the Wall that is visible a short length lies within the enclosures of private houses to the north and the south of the Wailing Wall proper. From within the Temple Area, the arches of a great gateway can be seen on the interior face of the Wall, some way below the present ground level.*

The Herodian strata are of massive construction, and comprise six courses of drafted stones. Above these are three courses of undrafted masonry. The exact age of these intermediate courses is not certain, but they are probably of Roman work of, or subsequent to, the time of the rebuilding of the City as a Roman Colony by the Emperor Hadrian. The upper strata are clearly of later date, and belong to the Saracenic period, about A.D. 1500. The immediate neighbourhood of the Wailing Wall is inhabited by a number of Moroccan families, who are the beneficiaries of the ancient Waqf dating from the thirteenth century of Abu Midian. Some of the dwellings are entered from the space in front of the Wall. The wall separating the garden to the north from the Wailing Wall was rebuilt without incident in 1929. The wall overlooking the Wailing Wall by the Bab-al-Mughrabi was also rebuilt at the same time. The Moslems wanted to erect a low wall, but it was ruled, to preserve the Status Quo, that the wall must be rebuilt to its former height.

The Wailing Wall, as being one of the few relics of the Temple of Herod of undisputed authenticity, is held in very great veneration by the Jews. Jewish writers refer to it as " the Holiest possession of the fifteen millions of Jews throughout the world which they have not forgotten for one moment since the Dispersion." On Sabbaths and other Holy Days the Wall is thronged with worshippers, the American and European Jew mixing with the Orthodox Jew in his caftan and the Bokharan in his gorgeous silks. The Jewish custom of praying here is of considerable antiquity, being mentioned by Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela and has now become an established right.

This right to pray has, however, become linked with the claim to the actual ownership of the Wall. The Moslems resist this on the ground that the Wall is an integral part of the enclosure wall of the Haram al Sharif, and that the space in front of it is a public way, and part of the premises of the Abu Midian Waqf. For this reason the Moslems have always protested against the placing of benches or chairs in front of the Wall by the Jews as causing an obstruction in this public way and implying possessory rights. Though benches

* They were discovered in. 1807. Excavations have shown that this gateway of the Temple was nearly thirty feet high. According to some authorities, these are the remains of the Gate of Mercy mentioned by Benjamin of Tudela (A.D. 1160).

have certainly from time to time been introduced, there is extant a resolution taken by the Administrative Council and confirmed by the Mutasarrif in 1912 that chairs or tents or curtains (to divide the women from the men) 'are not to be allowed. This is still enforced, but portable camp-stools or boxes or tins with cushions are permitted for the convenience of worshippers. This ruling was notified to the Jewish religious authorities and the Police by the District Governor in 1922, and confirmed in 1926 after a rather serious dispute had arisen on account of the introduction of some benches on the previous Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur).*

These conflicting claims have caused difficulties in regard to the carrying out of repairs to the Wall, such as repointing or the removal of weeds. The question arose in 1920, during the last weeks of the Military Administration, when the Waqf Department commenced to repair the upper strata and the Jews objected. The Moslems instanced previous occasions when they had repaired the Wall, and it was ruled, not however without protest from both sides, that in the first place the upper Saracenic courses were to be repaired by the Waqf authorities, but under the supervision of the Department of Antiquities, as the Wall was a registered Antiquity ; special care was to be taken to avoid inconvenience or danger to the worshippers below, and no work was to be carried out on Fridays or Saturdays. Secondly, as regards the middle and lower courses, work thereon was, in case of necessity, to be undertaken by the Government.

In 1927 the question arose as to whether this ruling applied to the portions of the Wall outside the limits of the Wailing Wall proper. The Moroccan occupants of the garden just north of the Wailing Wall started clearing away some weeds from the interstices of the stones and the Jews objected. As it was considered illogical, and was, moreover, irritable to Jewish sentiment that the sections of the stones which are within the boundaries of the Wailing Wall should be under Government care for archaeological and religious reasons and the remainder not, although held in equal veneration, it was ruled that the old Wall, i.e., the lower and middle strata, throughout its entire length was to be treated as an antiquity site, and therefore under Government charge.

In recent years on more than one occasion, allegations have been made that stones have been thrown from the neighbouring houses with the intention of causing annoyance to the worshippers. Police investigations established that on one occasion a stone was actually thrown by a child from within one of the Moroccan houses ; in another instance the occurrence was attributed to the fact that fragments of stone or mortar had been dislodged by pigeons nesting

* See District Commissioner's letter 2271/3 of 5 October, 1922, to Rabbi Kook and 227 I/DC, of 6 April, 1926, to the District Superintendent of Police.

in the crevices of the middle courses.* A further incident occurred in July, 1929, when the Mughrabis started the practice of singing and drumming in the Garden to the north of the Wall at the time of the Jewish prayer hours. It was clearly an innovation, and the practice was forbidden.^

It may be mentioned here that early in the British Occupation the Zionist Commission made certain official demarches with the object of securing the formal transfer of the Wailing Wall to Jewish ownership. The Military Governor, on his opinion being sought, discouraged the pursuit of the matter in view of the sensitive state of Arab opinion, and urged that in any event the matter should not be raised officially. Informal negotiations were, however, continued for a while until it transpired that a Jew of prominence had approached certain of the Moslems interested with a pecuniary offer. Moslem opinion thereupon became seriously agitated, and instructions were received from the Foreign Office that the matter should not be pursued for the time being, j:

The matter again became acute in connexion with incidents which occurred at the Wall on the Day of Atonement in September, 1928, and the question was raised not only locally, but in the House of Commons. The Secretary of State for the Colonies issued a White Paper on the subject in November, 1928, printed as Cmd. 3229.

RACHEL'S TOMB.

Rachel died giving birth to Benjamin, " on the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem," when Jacob was travelling from Bethel to Hebron. § A pillar was set up over her grave, and we read that the spot was a familiar landmark in the time of Samuel. || The present Tomb is situated on the outskirts of Bethlehem, on the Jerusalem-Hebron road. Various mediaeval writers, both Jewish and Arab, make reference to it as a Jewish Holy Place. It is mentioned by Maimonides^I and Benjamin of Tudela and the Arab writer Mugeir-al-Din, who describes it as " constructed of eleven stones and covered with a Cupola which rests on four pillars, and every Jew passing writes his name on the monument." It is also mentioned by St. Paula, 380 A.D.

* See District Officer of Jerusalem's letter No. 2271 of 17 November, 1926.

f See Acting Deputy District Commissioner's letter. No. 10/24, of 9 July, 1929.

t See Despatch Pol. No. 168 of 31 October, 1925, forwarding a memorandum of the District Commissioner giving the whole history of the case.

§ Gen. XXXV, 20.

|| 1 Samuel V, 2.

T] He was Saladin's Jewish physician.

The present Tomb consists of an open ante-chamber and a two-roomed shrine under a cupola containing a sarcophagus. The building lies within a Moslem cemetery, for which it serves as a place of prayer. The keys of the actual shrine are in the possession of the Jews, one for the Sephardic Community, and another for the Ashkenazic. The Tomb is a favourite place of Jewish pilgrimage, especially during the month of Elul and the Tishri festivals when large crowds visit it.

The Jews claim possession of the Tomb as they hold the keys and by virtue of the fact that the building which had fallen into complete decay was entirely rebuilt in 1845 by Sir M. Montefiore.* It is also asserted that in 1615 Muhammad, Pasha of Jerusalem, rebuilt the Tomb on their behalf, and by firman granted them the exclusive use of it.

The Moslems, on the other hand, claim the ownership of the building as being a place of prayer for Moslems of the neighbourhood, and an integral part of the Moslem cemetery within whose precincts it lies. They state that the Turkish Government recognised it as such, and sent an embroidered covering with Arabic inscriptions for the sarcophagus ; again, that it is included among the Tombs of the Prophets for which identity signboards were provided by the Ministry of Waqfs in 1328. A.H. In consequence, objection is made to any repair of the building by the Jews, though free access is allowed to it at all times.

From local evidence it appears that the keys were obtained by the Jews from the last Moslem guardian, by name Osman Ibrahim al Atayat, some 80 years ago. This would be at the time of the restoration by Sir Moses Montefiore. It is also stated that the antechamber was specially built, at the time of the restoration, as a place of prayer for the Moslems.

In 1912 the Jews were given official permission to repair the shrine itself, but not the ante-chamber, f Again, three months after the Occupation, the whole place was cleaned and whitewashed by them without protest.

In the autumn of 1921 the Chief Rabbinate applied to the Municipality of Bethlehem for a Permit to repair the shrine. The matter came to the notice of the Waqf Department and objection was raised, and the right of the Moslems to do any repairs claimed on the grounds stated above. It was then ruled by the High Commissioner that, in view of the conflicting claims of the Moslems and the Jews, until the matter was regulated by the Holy Places Commission, any

* A fact commemorated by two tablets let into the wall of the building. f The funds were provided by the late Marcus Adier, brother of the Chief

Rabbi of England, and the work was carried out by Jewish labour under the

supervision of Mr. David Yellin.

repairs should be undertaken by the Government.* Much indignation was caused in Jewish circles by this policy of the Administration-land as the repairs were not considered urgent, the matter was dropped at this time.

In 1925 the Sephardic Community again requested permission to repair the Tomb, stating that its structural condition was very bad and a member of their Community on a visit to Jerusalem had offered to provide the necessary funds. The policy the Government was following was verbally communicated to the President of the Sephardic Community by the District Commissioner, and at the same time instructions were sent to the Public Works Department to carry out any repairs that might be necessary for the safety of the building. The cementing of the exterior of the Dome and repointing of the walls were carried out by the Department of Public Works, and the building thereby made structurally sound and watertight. When application was made to the Jewish authorities for the keys of the shrine to enable the interior repairs to be effected, they refused admission stating that they recognised no one excepting themselves as having any right to repair the Tomb. The interior repairs were unimportant, and to avoid controversy were not proceeded with 4

» See Chief Secretary's letter. No. 2214/Pol. of 29 September, 1921. f An article in the Press described it as " showing a desire to rob the poor-man of his one little ' ewe lamb ' the grave of our great mother Rachel." i District Officer of Jerusalem's letter, No. 4822, of 4 November, 1926, to

District Engineer, Jerusalem.

ANNEXE,

THE STATUS QUO IN THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY, BETHLEHEM, BY ABDULLAH EPFENDI KABDUS, M.B.E.

Introductory Note.

It would not be correct to say that the records set out below are absolutely accurate and indisputably consented to by the communities concerned. Nevertheless, they are in the absence of official records as near as any one can compile from private records and personal experience as to the alleged rights. In fact, they are records of practiced rights since the British Occupation together with certain additions from private registers to render them as complete as possible for future guidance and compliance.

The Status Quo begins with the Orthodox Cemetery, the square in front of the Church of the Nativity, the northern side of the Armenian convent overlooking the square aforementioned, and the western outside wall of the Church as far as the point where the new building of the Casa Nova and the old building join together.

According to a ruling laid down by the Turkish Government, the Orthodox can only build, if they so desire, at the back of the cemetery on the Beit Sahur old road and as far as the end of the wall which runs from N. to S. provided the building does not go southward further than the plain wall enclosing the back part of the cemetery and does not exceed in height the railing of the front part thereof.

Although the Orthodox claim absolute ownership of the square in front of the Church of the Nativity, yet no repairs thereto or alterations thereon can be effected without the consent of the other two communities concerned.

There are two cisterns with three openings in the square above referred to. The waters of these cisterns which previously served for the watering of pilgrims' animals, are now used for the same purpose by the Bethlehem people.

No new openings or widening of existing ones in the wall of the Armenian Convent overlooking the church square is permissible without the prior consent of the other two communities.

No new opening or widening of existing ones in the north-western wall of the Church which is partly overlooking the square and partly the road between the Franciscan Convent and the Orthodox cemetery, as far as the point where the old wall of the Church and the new wall of the Casa Nova join together, is to be effected without the concurrence of the Communities concerned.

The Entrance.

The key of this door is kept by the Orthodox.

This door is opened and closed daily immediately after the morning and evening bells of the Latin Community ring. This coincides with the time specified hereinafter for each month of the year.

Jan. Feb. March. April. May. June.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|-------|------|-------|------|------|------|
| Opening.. | 5.30 | 5.15 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 4.30 | 4.15 | July. | Aug. | Sept. | Oct. | Nov. | Dec. |
| | 4.15 | 4.45 | 4.45 | 5.0 | 5.15 | 5.30 | | | | | | |

Closing .. 20 minutes after sunset.

To this rule, however, there are certain admissible exceptions.

1. On 3 November the Latin Sexton, owing to the night services they hold, applies to the Orthodox Patriarchal representative to keep the door open for some 20 to 30 minutes later than usual until 5 December, and, as the Latins have no lights in their passage, the Orthodox Sexton is supposed to keep the two lamps in between the first and second two pillars in the Basilica, as well as the lantern in the Narthex, alight.
2. Similarly the Latins apply for permission to have the door opened half an hour earlier than the usual time, in view of their morning services, for the period from 14 December up to Christmas. For the same reason the Orthodox light the lantern in the Narthex and the two lamps in the passage.
3. On 24 December the Latin Sexton requests the Orthodox to open the door at 9.30 p.m. for the night service.
4. On the Orthodox Christmas Eve the door is kept open the whole night.
5. On the Armenian Christmas the Dragoman applies to the Orthodox Patriarchal representative for the door to be opened at 9.30 p.m.
6. On Thursday of the Orthodox Holy Week, the Armenians request the Orthodox to leave the door open until they complete their Liturgy.
7. On the three days, i.e., Thursday, Friday and Saturday of the Holy Week, when the Latins do not ring their bells, the door is opened and closed according to the time table.

The Narthex.

The Narthex is the space which comes immediately after the iron door and which is bounded on—

N. By the Guards' room.

S. By the door leading to Armenian Convent.

W. By the iron door.

E. By the wooden door of the Basilica.

This space with the exception of the two steps leading to the Armenian Convent is cleaned daily by the Orthodox.

In the Narthex there are two lanterns, one in the centre belonging to the Orthodox, and another above the door of the Armenian Convent belonging to the Armenians ; these lanterns are lit at liberty.

The room which lies on the northern side of the Narthex and opens on it, is now in the hands of the Government and used as a rest room for the guard of the Church.

When the official cleaning takes place the Orthodox clean all the Narthex with the exception of the two steps leading to Armenian Convent.

The Basilica or Nave.

The Basilica is that part of the Church which comes immediately after the Narthex. This is bounded **on—**

N. By the wall separating the Church from Franciscan Convent. S. By the wall separating the Church from Orthodox Convent. E. By that part of the Church known as the Katholikon. W. By the Narthex.

Above the wooden door which separates the Narthex from the Basilica there is an icon of St. George and a lantern. This lantern is kept lit day and night.

On the wall south of the wooden door there is an icon hung on the southern side of the wall which is opposite the first pillar of the first row on the right-hand side of the Basilica.

There are 44 marble pillars in the Basilica, in 4 rows of 11 pillars each. Of these pillars, 4 are half-hidden in the western walls of the north and south transepts of the Church, which constitute respectively the Armenian Church and the Orthodox Church of St. Nicholas.

There is an icon above the western door on the western side of the Church of St. Nicholas.

There are also 54 lamps and 1 lustre in the Basilica ; of these 44 are between the pillars and the remainder and the lustre are in the middle of the Basilica.

Orthodox Rights in the Basilica.

All icons, lanterns, lamps, and lustre in the Basilica belong exclusively to the Orthodox.

The floor of the Basilica is cleaned and the pillars up to the cornice are dusted daily by the Orthodox. The marble under the lustre in the midst of the Basilica as well as the marble (an area of one meter and a half) in front of the door leading from the Basilica to the Armenian Church are cleaned with water every Saturday.

The Orthodox have the exclusive right of cleaning the whole of the Basilica when the official cleaning takes place, including the windows, which are left open for this purpose for the whole day. The day of the official cleaning is fixed by them, and the Government is notified and informs the other communities accordingly.

The font in the Basilica was solely used by the Orthodox. At present, it is disused and its key is with the Orthodox.

Near the font there is an icon of the Virgin Mary. This icon belongs to the Orthodox.

The Orthodox celebrate in the Basilica 5 big processions, 4 medium processions, and 34 small processions. On the following festivals the priests officially receive the Patriarch or his representative at the door by the font in the Basilica:

1. Christmas.
2. Second Day of Christmas.
3. New Year's Day.
4. Epiphany.
5. First Sunday in Lent.

6. Third Sunday in Lent.

7. Palm Sunday.

8. Easter Sunday.

9. Thomas' Sunday (First Sunday after Easter).

10. Whit Sunday.

11. Feast of the Holy Cross.

The following is a list of the 43 processions according to the Eastern Calendar :—

Big

Day of Month or Name of Processions. Feast.

above referred to, dated

Medium Small Processions. Processions or euo^{oi}.

8-9

14-9

Feast of the Patriarch . .

21-11

6-12

25-12 Christmas

24-12 . .

26-12 ..

27-12 .. 1-1

5-1

6-1

7-1

Feast of Patriarch's rep.

30-1

2-2

First Sunday in Lent ..

Third Sunday in Lent ..

Palm Sunday

25-3

Thursday of Holy Week

Good Friday

Holy Fire (Saturday) ..

Easter Sunday ..

Easter Sunday (noon) . .

Easter Monday ..

Easter Tuesday..

First Friday after Easter

First Sunday after Easter

Ascension Day . .

Whit Sunday . .

Whit Monday . .

29-6

6-8

15-8

34

A. Big Processions.

These are composed of the Patriarch's representatives, the priests, the deacons, choir, and candles and banner-carriers, preceded by the sexton, all of whom are in ecclesiastical robes.

The procession starts from the Sanctuary and goes down to the Armenian Church by the eastern set of steps and turns westward to the common door, entering the Basilica ; then between the northern rows of pillars to the wooden door separating the Narthex from the Basilica, whence it turns southward and back between the two rows of the southern pillars to the Church of St. Nicholas, passing through it and down to the Grotto by the southern door where the usual prayers for the feast and for the reigning Government are said. The procession then leaves the Grotto by the northern door, passing

through the Armenian Church and by the common door to the Basilica through the rows of pillars as before to the Church of St. Nicholas, and from thence to the Katholikon by the eastern set of steps. From there the procession descends again to the Armenian Church by the eastern set of steps and through the common door to the Basilica passing through the two northern rows of pillars to the wooden door separating the Narthex from the Basilica, where it turns eastwards through the Nave of the Basilica to the spot under the lustre in the midst where the usual prayers and prayers for the safety of the reigning Government are said. From there the procession proceeds to the Katholikon and the Temple where the prayers are terminated. After the prayers the procession leaves the Temple and goes through the Katholikon to the centre of the Basilica and turns southward and leaves the Basilica and the Convent by the door near the Font.

Christmas Day.

The procession is composed of the Patriarch or his representative, the Bishops, the Priests, the Deacons, the Choir, candles and banner-carriers, all of whom are in ecclesiastical robes. This procession is preceded by Kawasses.

The Patriarch or his representative leaves the Sanctuary by the Katholikon and goes down by the eastern set of steps to the Church of St. Nicholas and down to the Grotto by the southern door where the usual prayers for the feast and the safety of the reigning Government are said the choir standing on the steps which lead to the Armenian Church. After prayers the procession leaves the Grotto by the northern door and passes through the Armenian Church, and the common door, then between the northern set of pillars in the Basilica to the wooden door which separates it from the Nartbex and turns southward and proceeds between the southern rows of pillars to the Church of St. Nicholas and to the Katholikon by the eastern set of steps. From there it again descends to the Church of the Armenian Community by the eastern set of steps and through the common door to the Basilica, passing between the northern rows of pillars down to the wooden door of the Narthex. Then it turns southward and passes between the two rows of the southern pillars and through the Church of St. Nicholas and goes up to the Katholikon, from where it again descends to the Armenian Church as before, and passes through the common door to the Basilica and in between the northern rows of pillars to the wooden door. The procession here turns up the Basilica to the spot under the lustre, where the usual prayers for the feast and safety of the reigning Government, are said. After prayers the procession goes up to the Katholikon and the Sanctuary where the Liturgy is said. At the termination of the Liturgy the procession leaves the Sanctuary passing through the Katholikon and descends to the Basilica, where it turns southward and leaves the Church through the door at the font to the Convent.

Easter Sunday. Between the hours of 10 and 11 a.m. all the bells ring. The Priests, the Deacons, the Choir and the Servants of the Church, together with the Orthodox congregation assemble in the Convent. The Patriarch's representative, the Priests, the Deacons, the Choir, the candles and fan-bearers, as well as the banner-carriers, robe in ecclesiastical garments. Then prayers begin and the whole assembly proceeds singing to the space in front of St. George's Church. From there the procession proceeds by the door near the Font to the Basilica passing under the lustre in the midst, and goes up to the Katholikon, where prayers begin, there being no prayer in the afternoon on this day. Then a small procession takes place. After this the Sexton places chairs in the Basilica for the Patriarch's representative and the Priests : the choir of the Patriarch's representative is stationed at the second pillar of the northern front row of pillars, and a chair is placed at each other pillar according to the number of priests taking part in the ceremony By each

of these pillars two persons stand, one carrying a banner and the other a fan or a candle. The Patriarch's representative after prayer in the Katholikon descends together with all the Priests to the Basilica, where they seat themselves on the chairs above-mentioned. The congregation then, one by one, kiss the crosses in the hands of each priest, while the choir sing the usual anthems. The procession then leaves the Basilica by the door near the font and returns to the Convent.

The chairs above referred to are then removed.

B. Medium Processions.

These are composed of the Patriarch's representative, the Priests, the Deacons, the Choir, and the candles and fan-carriers, preceded by the Sexton. No banners are carried.

This procession leaves the Sanctuary and goes down to the Armenian Church by the eastern set of steps and passes through it to the common door and in between the northern rows of pillars, the wooden door separating Basilica from Narthex, wherefrom it turns eastward and goes through the Basilica to the Katholikon, where usual prayers are said.

C. Small Processions.

These are composed of the Priests, Deacons, candles and fan-carriers preceded by Sexton.

In these processions the Patriarch's representative remains seated on his throne.

This procession leaves the Sanctuary and goes down to the Armenian Church by the eastern set of steps and passes through it to the common door and in between the northern rows of pillars the wooden door separating Basilica from Narthex, wherefrom it turns eastward and goes through the Basilica to the Katholikon, where usual prayers are said.

At the close of processions whether big, medium, or small, and when the Patriarch or his representative leaves for the Convent, all the Orthodox bells ring. The Armenians are not supposed to ring their bells when this is in progress.

Distinguished Orthodox Visitors and Pilgrimages.

When the visitor is a Patriarch, a Prince or a Duke, he is officially received by the clergy, attired in ecclesiastical garments and accompanied by religious banners, at the District offices, and proceeds with him to the Church in the following manner :—

The visitor alights in the open space in front of the District Offices where, if he is a Patriarch, he is clad with a cope and conducted in procession from the District Offices over the Church Square by the small iron door and through the Nave down to the Grotto of the Nativity and to their Church above and subsequently to their Convent.

When the visitor is of minor importance, or for a pilgrimage, the Orthodox Clergy wait at the wooden door separating the Narthex from the Basilica.

Latin Rights in the Basilica.

The Latins have the right of passage to their Church and Convent. This passage is by the iron door and through the Narthex and the wooden door thereto and through the Basilica, in between the first and second pillars of the Northern rows.

Attempts on various occasions have been made by the Latins to pass between the second and third pillars, but were objected to by the Orthodox.

When a distinguished personage is visiting the Church, a procession, composed of clergy in ecclesiastical vestments, banner-carriers and candle-carriers,

leaves the Church in procession shortly before the arrival of the visitor and. waits for him in the open space in front of the District Offices, where he is received and conducted to the Church in the manner described above. The Patriarch is thus received on Christmas Eve. On such occasions, no civil banners may be carried.

Armenian Rights in the Basilica.

The Armenians have the right to pass down the centre of the Basilica, and then through the door known as the common door at the east end of the northern row of columns to their Church in the North Transept.

The common door which connects the Armenian Church with the Basilica is closed daily by the Orthodox after sunset prayers. The Armenians have also a key to this door and can open it without any restriction whenever required.

The Armenians have the right to pass through the Nave with their wedding ceremonies, baptisms, and funerals on prior notification being made to the Government, who in due course communicate same in writing to the Orthodox.

When in wedding and baptismal ceremonies the officiating body accompanies the ceremony, the priests, etc., disrobe in their convent and send their vestments with the sexton to their Church.

At a funeral the priests leave the Convent vested and the procession passes through the Nave to their Church. After prayers the procession leaves the Church again through the Nave and out to the cemetery.

The Armenians have also the right to pass through the Nave of the Church on the following feasts, provided of course they notify the Government, as is the case with weddings, baptisms, or funerals :—

1. Circumcision Day.
2. Purification Day of B.V.M.
3. Palm Sunday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Sunday.
4. Ascension Day and Whit Sunday.
5. Assumption Day of B.V.M.
6. Feast of the Holy Cross.
7. Transfiguration Day.

The Katho'ikon.

This part of the Church is exclusively used by the Orthodox.

At the east end there is the Sanctuary.

In front of the *iconostasis* there are four candle-stands, two large and two small.

Fixed to the north-eastern wall there are seven seats, to which another one is added at Christmas for the seating of Consuls. Above these seats there are 35 icons. In front of the seats there is a stand for the choir and a round stand on a platform.

Affixed to the south-eastern wall there are the Patriarchal Throne, a seat for the bishop and another five seats. There is a small lamp hung on the Patriarchal Throne.

Hanging from the ceiling there are four chandeliers, two big ones, one medium, and one small, and several chains of lamps.

On the north-western corner of the Katholikon there is a pulpit, at the bottom of which there is a small lamp hanging from the mouth of a bird;

above the pulpit there are two candlesticks on the heads of two birds, and above the steps of the pulpit there is an icon of Christ. On the wall under the pulpit there is an icon of the Resurrection of Christ.

On the southern wall of the Katholikon there is an icon of the Entombment, and under it another icon of the Virgin Mary with Christ.

On the western wall, eastern face, there is an icon of Christ. The Orthodox have no right to sweep or clean the Katholikon while the Armenians are having their prayers in their part of the Church, but may do so after the Armenians descend to the Grotto of the Nativity.

Church of St. Nicholas. (South Transept.;

This Church is the property of the Orthodox, who clean it as they desire.

On the western wall there are four icons. There is also in this wall, a cupboard in front of which a table is usually placed. There is also a door at the northern end of the wall which leads from St. Nicholas Church to the Basilica. On the eastern and southern walls of St. Nicholas Church there are fourteen icons. Fixed to the eastern wall there is an altar. There is also a door leading to a private room. In front of the eastern wall there are two candlesticks. Near the western wall there is a rectangular stand for the sale of candles. In the centre of St. Nicholas Church there is a pillar on either side of which there are three lamps. In front of this pillar there is a box for the poor. North-east of the pillar there is another lustre. South-east of the pillar there is an *iconostasis* with four icons thereon.

There is a lamp in front of the Icon of the Virgin Mary which is hung to the east wall.

On Christmas Eve the Orthodox place between the two sets of steps on the northern side of St. Nicholas Church a large table for the sale of candles, and a desk for writing down the names of the pilgrims who pay money for the Church.

In the north wall of St. Nicholas Church there is the southern door of the Grotto. Hanging from the pillars on either side of the door are two curtains covering the wall and an icon and a lamp.

The Armenian Church. (North Transept.)

This part of the Church belongs to the Armenians, but the Latins have the right to pass in a direct line from the door of their Church to the north door of the Grotto ; hence the Armenian carpet is cut in the manner it is.

In this Church there are 37 oil lamps, 3 lustre, and 3 candles in front of icons. Ten movable and immovable stands are fixed in the corner of Church.

There are two chains running from east to west and north to south similar to those in the Orthodox Katholikon. No lamps, however, are allowed to be attached thereto.

The procedure for the cleaning of this part of the Church is very complicated. The roof beams and walls down to, but not including, the cornice, and to a similar level in places where the cornice does not exist, all to be cleaned by the Orthodox. Where on the west wall of the North Transept a thinner wall is built on, the Orthodox sweep the sloping part. For the purpose of cleaning, the Orthodox place steps on the floor of the Armenian Chapel, but do not lean a ladder against the wall. The cornice and walls below the level of the cornice, are cleaned by the Armenians. The three windows in the Armenian Chapel under the level of the cornice are cleaned with their window recesses by the Government. The northern face of the Grotto is

cleaned by the Government. The pictures in the northern face of the Grotto are to be removed, the eastern one by the Orthodox, and the western one by the Armenians, and to be rehung by them. The pillar west of the Grotto entrance is cleaned on the south-west, south-east and north-west sides by the Orthodox, and on the north-east side by the Government.

The rectangular pillar on which the Orthodox pulpit is built is cleaned on the east face by the Orthodox, and on the north face by the Armenians up to the cornice level and above by the Orthodox.

The window embrasures over the door to the Nave on the east side of the iron work is cleaned by the Armenians, and on the west side by the Orthodox. The steps to the Katholikon are cleaned by the Orthodox, and the floor space between by the Government, this space being where a Guard used to be stationed.

The pillar east of the northern face of the Grotto is cleaned on the north side by the Government, and on east, south and west sides by the Orthodox.

The rectangular pillar in the wall east of the last pillar, is cleaned on the north side by the Armenians, on the west side up to the top partition by the Armenians, and above the partition by the Orthodox up to the cornice. The partition between the last two pillars is cleaned on the north side by the Government, and on the south side by the Orthodox. The Armenians clean the four pictures hanging on their partition, but do not remove them. For the cleaning of the roof in the smaller Armenian Chapel, the ladder of the Orthodox may only stand in one place, namely close by the pillar west of the northern face of the Grotto, and leaning towards the south. It may not be moved to any other place.

The Grotto of the Nativity.

The southern door is used by the Orthodox officiants alone.

The curtains along the steps leading to the Grotto and stretching from the pillar of the door to the floor of the Grotto belong to the Orthodox. From the roof above the southern steps of the Grotto two lamps are suspended, the one nearer the door belonging to the Latins and the other belonging to the Orthodox. On the eastern wall of the Grotto and at the foot of the southern steps two icons are fixed, the one of the Virgin Mary on her way to Egypt belonging to the Orthodox and the other of St. John belonging to the Armenians.

In the semi-circle above the Star of the Nativity there are eleven icons belonging to the Orthodox, and in front of these icons there are sixteen lamps, four of which belong to the Latins, six to the Orthodox, and six to the Armenians.

Above the Star of the Nativity there is an altar known as the Holy Altar. This is made in the shape of *aniconastasis* of six small fixed icons and a movable icon in the shape of a semi-circle. Above the semi-circle of the Altar there are two icons, one belonging to the Orthodox and the other to the Armenians. On the sides of the semi-circle above the Altar there are four icons, two of which belong to the Orthodox and two to the Armenians. **On** each of the two sides one icon belongs to the Orthodox and one icon belongs to the Armenians. The six above-mentioned icons are placed on the curtain which covers the semi-circle. This curtain belongs to the Orthodox.

The Orthodox open and close the railing which closes the semi-circle above the Holy Altar. This railing is opened for the Orthodox dawn prayers, and is kept open until the Armenians finish their prayers before noon. This grate is also opened when the Orthodox have pilgrims, and by special request from the Armenians when they have pilgrims. It is also opened when the Orthodox large bells ring. This takes place on Saturdays and the eves of feasts. When this is opened on these occasions, the Orthodox place their icon above the Altar, and, as soon as their sunset prayers are terminated, the icon is removed and the gate closed.

The velvet tapestry covering the inside of the semi-circle belongs to the Orthodox and is changed when required.

The curtain which hangs down the sides from the top of the Holy Altar to the ground of the Grotto belongs to the Orthodox.

The floor of the Grotto of the Nativity (the Star of the Nativity and the Manger excluded) is cleaned on alternate days by the Orthodox and the Latins.

The Star of the Nativity and the Altar together with the icons thereon are *dusted* daily by the Orthodox between 1.30 and 3.30., i.e., before the prayers at dawn.

The place of the Star is *washed* by the Orthodox and Armenians only, the Orthodox on Mondays and Saturdays and the Armenians on Wednesdays and Fridays. Should a lamp break or oil drop on the place of the Star any time after the Armenians have washed it the Orthodox only have the right to cleanse it.

The Holy Altar is cleaned by the Orthodox only.

On the right-hand side of the Star there is a small stone basin on the top of a small pillar. In the bottom of this basin there is a hole connected to a drain. Here there is also a cupboard in the wall for the Orthodox use only. At the foot of the northern steps of the Grotto there is also a cupboard. This cupboard, which was previously used by the Armenians, is disused at present.

Above the northern door of the Grotto there are two icons and two lamps. The icon and lamp on the right-hand side belong to the Armenians, and the icon and lamp on the left-hand side to the Orthodox.

The Latins clean daily the northern set of steps leading down to the floor of the Grotto. The five steps leading to the northern door are cleaned by the Latins and Armenians on alternate days.

The Manger.

In front of the Manger there are five lamps and an icon. There is also another rectangular icon at the top of the Manger with a lamp burning in front of it.

Facing the Manger there is an altar. Above this altar there is an icon and candlesticks belonging all to the Latins. On this altar the Latins say their Masses in the Grotto.

The walls of the Manger are all covered with tapestries belonging to the Latins. These tapestries stretch out as far as half the pillar which separates them from the Orthodox tapestries which run up the southern steps as far as the southern door of the Grotto.

The pillar at the angle formed by the steps leading to the Manger is cleaned by the Latins. The tapestry which falls down this pillar may not go lower than the cross marked on it.

The Manger is cleaned exclusively by the Latins.

In front of the pillar at the angle of the two sets of, steps leading to the Manger there are three candlesticks, the middle one belonging to the Orthodox, the right one to the Armenians, and the left one to the Latins.

It is customary for certain pilgrims of the Orthodox and the Armenian communities to place their belts or a piece of cloth round the pillar at the angle of the two sets of steps leading to the Manger.

The Tapestries in the Grotto and to whom they belong.

Orthodox.

1. Tapestry along walls of the southern steps.
2. Tapestry covering the arch above the Star of the Nativity and the Holy Altar from the top of the arch on either side down to the floor of the Grotto.
3. Tapestry inside the arch of the Holy Altar.
4. Tapestry hung above the Star of the Nativity.
5. Tapestry fixed to the roof above the southern set of steps leading to the Grotto.

Latins.

1. All the tapestry in the Manger including the piece falling down the pillar at the angle of the two sets of steps leading to the Manger and the piece covering half the pillar which separates the Latin tapestry from that of the Orthodox.
2. A triangular piece of tapestry above the place where the Patriarch's representative (Orthodox) stands in time of prayer.
3. The tapestry along the sides of and covering the roof of the northern set of steps leading from the Armenian church to the Grotto of the Nativity.

Round the Grotto, there is an asbestos tapestry. On this tapestry there are twelve icons, five of which are on the northern wall, three on the western, and four on the southern. Six of these icons belong to the Orthodox, and six to the Armenians. There is also an icon above the door which leads into the Grotto of St. Jerome.

The total number of lamps in the Grotto and Manger is 53, of which 19 belong to the Latins, 17 to the Orthodox, and 17 to the Armenians.

Masses and Usages in the Grotto.

The following is the order of the observances :—

3 a.m. The Orthodox bells ring and their icon is placed on the Altar. Prayer is held in the Katholikon.

3 a.m. 15 minutes before the Orthodox finish the prayer, the Armenian bell rings.

As soon as the Orthodox finish the prayer in the Katholikon, the Armenians begin prayers in their church.

3.15 a.m. The Latin door to the Grotto is opened. The Latin sexton prepares the altar in the Manger for Mass.

Half an hour before the exterior iron door is opened the Latin Mass bell rings to warn the Armenians to affect incensing of the Grotto if they have not yet done so.

Five minutes after the small bell rings the Latins descend to the Grotto for Mass. At the close of this Mass the Latin bell rings and iron door opens.

If Armenians have not completed their incensing of the Grotto, they finish this after the Latins leave the Grotto.

The Orthodox sexton descends to the Grotto to prepare the Altar for their Liturgy, which takes place immediately afterwards. When this office is finished the Orthodox remove their icon.

The Armenians then place their icon on the Altar, and the Latins second Mass takes place.

Ten minutes before the Latins finish their Mass, the Armenian bell rings.

When the Latins leave the Grotto the Armenian sexton prepares the Altar for the Armenian office, which takes place immediately afterwards.

On conclusion of this office, the Armenians remove their icon, and the second office of the Orthodox is celebrated.

The Latins have the right to celebrate once a week a solemn Mass in the Grotto. In these Masses they bring a harmonium to the Grotto, benches, chairs, and a rug which they place partly on the floor and partly on the place where the guard usually sits for seating their officiating priests. The Armenian office follows.

On Saturdays and eves of feast days the Orthodox place an icon above the Holy Altar in the Grotto of the Nativity.

On the 7th and 20th of January, i.e., the Orthodox and Armenian Christmas respectively, the Latins celebrate their two morning Masses one after the other to allow the Grotto to be cleared for use by the Orthodox and Armenians on their respective Christmas festivals.

When the Latins have the right to incense in the Grotto and at the same time the Orthodox have the right to place an icon on the Holy Altar, the Latins incense the Grotto before the Orthodox place their icon. The Armenians turn for incensing then comes, and after they have finished incensing, the Orthodox incensing and office takes place. At the termination of the Orthodox office their icon is removed from the Grotto, and when the Grotto has been cleared the Latin procession takes place.

When the Latins receive pilgrims or visitors who are desirous of celebrating Masses in the Grotto, it is the duty of the Father Superior of the Latin Convent or his representative to notify the Orthodox to that effect. When it is the hour for the Orthodox or the Armenian office the special Latin Masses are interrupted until these are performed. Special Latin Masses do not interrupt any incensing by the other communities.

It is permissible for the Latins to celebrate marriages and baptisms in the Grotto when it is free of Princes, Consuls and other such personages.

The Latin Christmas Festivals.

On Christmas Eve two candlesticks are placed on the second step from the door of the northern steps leading to the Grotto.

The Armenians ring their bells at 12.45 p.m. for the afternoon prayers.

At 1.0 p.m. the Orthodox bells ring and their icon is placed in the Grotto and removed immediately after the prayers are over.

At 1.30 p.m. the Latin Patriarch arrives at Bethlehem.

The Latin sexton requests the Orthodox to open the iron door of the Basilica at 9.30 p.m.

At 4.30 to 5.0 p.m. the Latins go in procession to the Grotto. This procession is headed by either the Patriarch or a Bishop.

The Orthodox place their icon in the Grotto at 8.0 p.m. and it remains there till the morning, and is removed after their morning prayers.

The Latin Masses in the Church of St. Catherine begin at 10 p.m.

The Orthodox bells ring at 12.45 p.m., and an office is held in the Katholikon.

Shortly before the Latin procession takes place the Latin sexton places a rug on the floor of the Grotto.

At 2 a.m. approximately, the Latin procession with the Baby Christ takes place. The Baby Christ is first placed by the Patriarch on the Star of the Nativity, and then laid in the Manger, and remains till the Epiphany.

A Cushion is placed on the step of the Star of the Nativity for the Patriarch or his representative.

Two candlesticks are sometimes placed one on each side of the Patriarch on the Holy Altar above the Star.

During these offices the Orthodox Dragoman and the sexton behind him stand on the right and the Armenian Dragoman on the left of the step of the Star of the Nativity.

Immediately the procession leaves the Grotto an Orthodox priest attired in vestments preceded by two candle-carriers and the sexton incense the whole of the Grotto, including the Manger.

The Latin Masses continue till 5.30 a.m.

At 5.30 a.m. the Orthodox bells ring, and an office is held in the Katholikon and the Grotto. At the termination of this Mass the Orthodox icon is removed, and the Armenians place their icon on the Holy Altar. The Latin Masses are continued.

If the evening prayers of the Orthodox begin before the Latin Masses in the Grotto have been finished, the Orthodox do not descend to the Grotto to incense until the Latins have finished their Masses.

After the Orthodox incensing of the Grotto the Armenians descend to complete their Mass, at the termination of which their icon is removed.

The Orthodox Christmas Festivals.

On Jan. 5, at 10 p.m. the Orthodox bells ring and their icon is placed on the Holy Altar, and is removed at midnight.

The Armenians place their icon in the Grotto in preparation for their office, which is celebrated immediately the Latin Mass is over.

When the Orthodox night prayers are over and their icon is removed, the Latins begin their Mass.

The Armenians now begin their prayers in their Church, and descend to the Grotto when the Latin Mass is over, and complete the office.

On Jan. 6, at 2.30 a.m., the Orthodox bells ring, and their icon is placed in the Grotto, and their night prayers are said in the Katholikon. When these are over, the Armenians begin their night prayers on the small altar in their Church.

As soon as the Armenian night prayers are over, a Latin Mass is celebrated in the Grotto.

When the Latin Mass in the Grotto is over, the Orthodox bells ring and their prayers begin. Four incensings and readings from the Gospel take place in the Katholikon, the Grotto and the Basilica. The first incensing is made by a Bishop and the other three by a priest. After the readings, a priest goes to the Grotto to hold a service, and another priest at the same time holds a service in the Katholikon. The two services finish at 9 a.m.

Two candlesticks are placed by the Orthodox on the first step from the door of each of the northern and southern doors of the Grotto. They also decorate and place their golden icon on the Altar of the Nativity, where it remains till the evening of Jan. 9. The candlesticks put on the first step of the northern door of the Grotto remain for three days only, whereas those placed at the southern door remain till the Orthodox Epiphany.

On Jan. 6, at 11 a.m., the Patriarch arrives with his suite in Bethlehem, and is received by the clergy in vestments, the banner-carriers, the cross-carriers and fan-bearers, who leave the church shortly before his arrival and await him at the District Offices. When the Patriarch alights in front of the District Offices a carpet is put on the ground for him to stand on while putting on his cope. A short address of welcome is usually made by his representative in Bethlehem. When the speech is over the procession proceeds to the Church through the Narthex and the Nave of the Basilica to the Katholikon, where, after a short prayer. His Beatitude descends to the Grotto accompanied by the procession which had received him. In the Grotto he incenses the Star of the Nativity and the Manger, and visits these two places followed by the Bishops and the consular representatives that usually attend the festival. He then leaves the Grotto by the northern door to the Katholikon, passing through the Armenian Church. The four Gospels are then read. His Beatitude descends after the first gospel to the Grotto to incense the Star and the Manger, and ascends to the Katholikon by the northern door of the Grotto and incenses the public in the Katholikon and the Basilica. After each other gospel a Bishop goes down to the Grotto and up to the Katholikon by the northern door of the Grotto and incenses the congregation in the Katholikon and in the Basilica.

After the Gospels the sunset prayers begin.

At the beginning of the sunset prayers two Deacons, preceded by two young men in vestments and a sexton descend to the Grotto and incense, and then ascending by the northern door incense the congregation.

During the sunset prayers the priests make two processions, one with the Gospel and another with the sacred vessels of the Church.

The procession referred to above begins from the Katholikon down the eastern set of steps to the Armenian Church, the Armenian church, the common door, the Basilica and through it back to the Katholikon. After these processions the prayer is completed and the Patriarch leaves the church and returns to the convent.

At 10 p.m. all the Orthodox bells ring, and the Patriarch or his representative descends from the Convent and proceeds to the Church by the door near the Font, where he is met by the clergy attired in ecclesiastical garments and conducted in procession to the Katholikon.

Night prayers begin, and while the Patriarch is seated on his throne a priest descends to the Grotto and incenses, and then ascends by the northern door and incenses the congregation.

At midnight His Beatitude with the clergy and the choir go down to the Grotto in procession. His Beatitude reads the Gospel and offers prayers for the reigning authority and for the Orthodox Kings. It is customary also for a portion of the Gospel to be read in English. He then incenses the Star and the Manger and kisses them both. The Bishops and the consuls also kiss the Star. He then leaves the Grotto in procession as described above.

During the Orthodox procession in the Grotto of the Nativity, a Latin sexton stands at the southern end of the Manger. The Armenians by a mutual agreement with the Orthodox send no representative to attend this ceremony.

After the procession a Bishop goes down to the Grotto and holds another office there.

Should the office down in the Grotto finish before that celebrated in the Katholikon, the Armenians have no right to descend to the Grotto before the Patriarch leaves the Church.

When the Patriarch finishes the Liturgy he disrobes and leaves the church in procession through the Basilica and by the door at the Font to the Convent where he stays till 2 p.m. of the following afternoon.

Before the Patriarch leaves the Convent the Orthodox bells begin to ring, and he descends with his suite and visits the Church and the Grotto, and passes out through the Basilica and the iron door.

After the Patriarch leaves Bethlehem, the Orthodox clergy attired in vestments proceed in procession to the door at the Font and receive the Patriarch's representative in Bethlehem into the Church. The Bishop is conducted in procession to the Katholikon, where afternoon prayers are offered. During these prayers two Deacons with two candle-carriers headed by a sexton descend to the Grotto by the southern door and incense the whole of the Grotto and ascend by the northern door and incense the congregation in the Church. After this another procession takes place. The Priests, Deacons, a sexton and five boys carrying candles, church fans, and a cross, go in procession beginning with the Katholikon, the Armenian Church, the common door, the Basilica, and round through the Nave of the Church to the Katholikon.

On the morning of Jan. 8 a similar procession is held as on the previous afternoon, and in the afternoon a procession composed of two candle-carriers, one Deacon and a sexton incense the Grotto and the Church. A small procession then takes place.

On the third day of the Feast, at 5.30 a.m., a Liturgy is celebrated in the Katholikon and the Grotto. An incensing is made and two small processions of the priests are held.

In the evening of the third day the Orthodox remove their icon from the Grotto and the two candlesticks placed at the northern door.

When the Armenians celebrate a Mass in the Grotto on these three days, they place their icon over that of the Orthodox but on a special stand.

Christmas Services of the Copts and Syrian Jacobites.

On Jan. 6, in the afternoon, the Copts and Syrian Jacobites officiate in the Armenian Church, the former on the main altar and the latter on the altar of the Circumcision. In the evening they both visit the Grotto in sacerdotal robes for prayer, and again at night after the Orthodox office is completed. The Syrian Jacobites must in this respect follow the Copts, and during their service the Armenians place an icon on that of the Orthodox.

Neither the Copts or the Syrian Jacobites are allowed to place church vessels, etc., of their own on the Armenian altars, with the exception of a chalice.

The Latin Epiphany Service.

On Jan. 6 at 4 p.m. after the Orthodox sunset prayers are over, the Father Custodian and the Latin clergy in vestments proceed to the Grotto in procession, starting from the Latin Church and passing through the Armenian Church down to the Grotto by the north door. After prayers the Baby Christ is removed from the Manger and carried back to the Latin Church.

During this service, a representative of the Orthodox and the Armenian Patriarchates stand on the right and left side of the Star respectively.

The Armenian Christmas Festivals.

On the afternoon of Jan. 18 a table for the sale of candles is placed in the Basilica on the left hand side of the common door, and two candlesticks are put on the third step leading to the northern door of the Grotto.

From 10 a.m. on this day the door leading to the Latin Church of St. Catherine from the Armenian Church is closed for 24 hours.

The whole of the Armenian Church is covered with carpets and a chair placed in the centre as the Patriarchal Throne.

An altar is set under the picture of St. Stephen, which is hung on the southeastern wall, and a small table and basin placed near the main altar for Epiphany, which is celebrated on the same night.

A carpet and a chair are also placed in the Grotto of the Nativity for the service there.

At about 10 a.m. on January 19 the Armenian clergy and choir, without vestments, descend from their Convent, passing through the Narthex and by the iron door, to the Church Square, where they await the arrival of their Patriarch or his representative.

When the Patriarch arrives he is conducted over the Square and through the iron door to the Narthex, where two candle-carriers in ordinary dress await his arrival. From the Narthex the procession goes to the Armenian Convent.

At 1 p.m. the Patriarch descends from the Convent and is met in the Basilica under the icon of St. George, which is hung on the wooden door of the Narthex, by the Armenian clergy lined up in two rows going from W. to E. and carrying candles and religious fans; a mat, and a carpet above it, is placed under the above-mentioned icon for the Patriarch to stand on while putting on his cope. He is then conducted through the Basilica as far as the steps of the Katholikon, and then northward to the common door and into the Armenian Church and the Grotto.

After the afternoon prayer the procession returns to the Convent in their vestments. A few minutes later a priest preceded by two Kawasses, two Deacons, and two candle-carriers, all in vestments, return from the Convent passing through the Nave to their Church.

By mutual agreement between the Orthodox and Armenians neither of those two communities have a representative in the Grotto during the Christmas services of the other. This was conditional on the space between the last step of the southern set of steps leading to the Grotto and the pillar south-east of the Manger being kept clear on the Armenian Christmas.

Immediately after the Mass in the Grotto, the carpet and chair are removed, and as soon as the service is over in the Armenian Church, the carpets, chairs and the table for the sale of candles in the Basilica are all removed. This usually takes place about 6 a.m. on the 20th.

The Orthodox Epiphany.

The Orthodox place in the midst of the Church, under the lustre, a carpet and a large table, on which they set a large cross, two candlesticks and the Gospel. They also put either on or by this table a basin and two barrels of water and the Icon of the Baptism.

The Orthodox place their Icon on that of the Armenians on the Altar in the Grotto, and an incensing takes place. The incensing body, which is composed of a Deacon and two candle-carriers preceded by a Sexton, effect the first incensing at the beginning of the prayers. A procession of the Priests, Deacons, candle-carriers and fan-carriers takes place towards the middle of the afternoon prayers.

On the morning of the day following two masses are celebrated, one in the Katholikon and another in the Grotto. An incensing and two processions in the manner above indicated take place,

The Orthodox Feast of the Holy Cross.

On this occasion also, the Orthodox place in the midst of the Basilica, under the lustre, a carpet and a table. On this table they put a tray and on it the Cross. The consecration of the Cross is carried out by the Patriarch's representative, or any person delegated by him, in the following manner :— 1st. By prayers at the table above referred to. 2nd. By prayers at the wooden door separating the Basilica from the

Narthex.

3rd. By prayers at the door near the Font. 4th. By prayers at the northern wall of the Basilica. 5th. By prayers at the table.

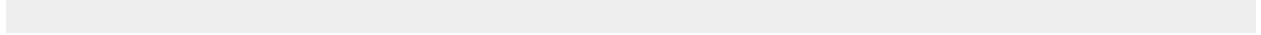
When this has been completed the officiating body proceeds to the Katholikon for the termination of the Mass.

APPENDIX A. MANDATE FOR PALESTINE.

Article 13.

All responsibility in connection with the Holy Places and religious buildings or sites in Palestine, including that of preserving existing rights and of securing free access to the Holy Places, religious buildings and sites and the free exercise of worship, while ensuring the requirements of public order and decorum, is assumed by the Mandatory, who shall be responsible solely to the League of Nations in all

matters connected herewith, provided that nothing in this Article shall prevent the Mandatory from entering into such arrangements as he may deem reasonable with the Administration for the purposes of



carrying the provisions of this Article into effect ; and provided also that nothing in this Mandate shall be constructed as conferring upon the Mandatory authority to interfere with the fabric or the management of purely Moslem sacred shrines, the immunities of which are guaranteed.

Article 14.

A special Commission shall be appointed by the Mandatory to study, define and determine the rights and claims in connexion with the Holy Places and the rights and claims relating to the different religious communities in Palestine. The method of nomination, the composition and the functions of this Commission shall be submitted to the Council of the League for its approval, and the Commission shall not be appointed or enter upon its functions without the approval of the Council.

APPENDIX B. PALESTINE (HOLY PLACES) ORDER IN COUNCIL

AT THE COURT OF BUCKINGHAM PALACE. The 25th day of July, 1924.

PRESENT, THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY IN COUNCIL,

WHEREAS by the Palestine Order in Council, 1922, it is (among other things) provided that the Civil Courts in Palestine shall exercise jurisdiction in all matters and over all persons in Palestine :

AND WHEREAS it is expedient that certain matters shall not be cognizable by the said Courts :

AND WHEREAS by treaty, capitulation, grant, usage, sufferance and other lawful means His Majesty has power and jurisdiction within Palestine :

NOW, THEREFORE, His Majesty, by virtue and in exercise of the powers in this behalf by the Foreign Jurisdiction Act, 1890, or otherwise, in His Majesty vested, is pleased, by and with the advice of His Privy Council, to order, and it is hereby ordered, as follows :—

(1) This Order may be cited as " The Palestine (Holy Places) Order in Council, 1924."

(2) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Palestine Order in Council, 1922, or in any Ordinance or law in Palestine, no cause or matter in connection with the Holy Places or religious buildings or sites in Palestine or the rights or claims relating to the different religious communities in Palestine shall be heard or determined by any Court in Palestine.

Provided that nothing herein contained shall affect or limit the exercise by the Religious Courts of the jurisdiction conferred upon *them* *Vy*, **or** pursuant to, the said Palestine Order in Council.

(3) If any question arises whetno^ ~»y cause or matter comes within the terms of the preceding Article hereof, such -i—<tion shall, pending the constitution of a Commission charged with jurisdiction '-,,Rr ^he matters set out in the said Article, be referred to the High Commissione,

who shall decide the question after making due enquiry into the matter in accordance with such instruction as he may receive from one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State.

The decision of the High Commissioner shall be final and binding on all parties.

(4) His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors in Council, may at any time revoke, alter or amend this Order.

AND the Right Honourable James Henry Thomas, one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, is to give the necessary directions herein accordingly.

COLIN SMITH.

APPENDIX C.

THE CEREMONY OF THE HOLY FIRE.

1. Introduction.

The Holy Fire, the supreme ceremony of the Eastern Churches, takes place at midday on Easter Eve, according to the calendar of Eastern Christendom, in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Its origin is uncertain, but that it is derived from the ritual and symbolism in usage by the very early Church is undoubted: the ceremony is first mentioned by Bernard the Wise, writing in the middle of the ninth century, and may have originated when during the time of Charlemagne pilgrimages to the Holy Places were much encouraged and had become very popular.

In essence, the ceremony symbolises the triumph of the Christian Faith, renewed year by year in commemoration of the first Victory after Calvary. The Patriarch enters the Edicule over the Tomb, in which for this one occasion all lamps are extinguished, and the "Miracle" of the descent of the Fire occurs. The Fire is then distributed to the crowd that throngs the Church, and is carried away far and wide. Before the War, the Fire was borne by devoted hands to the furthest corners of Russia.

The Turkish Government fearing that the fanaticism and excitement of these Easter crowds might result in an outbreak, were accustomed to station a large body of troops in and around the Church.

2. Conduct of the Ceremony.

The ceremony is conducted by the Orthodox Patriarch. There also participate a Bishop of the Armenian Patriarchate, who alone accompanies the Patriarch into the Edicule, and representatives of the Coptic and Jacobite rites, but not of the Abyssinian, take part as well.

The ceremony is, however, essentially the service of the Orthodox Church, and the representatives of the other rites participating previously obtain permission from the Orthodox Patriarch to take part, by proceeding to the Orthodox Altar and doing obeisance.

3. Participants in the Ceremony.

Apart from the Patriarch and the Armenian Bishop, the following clergy and laymen take actual part in the service at different periods :—A Bishop, Archimandrite, Dragoman, and a chorister of both Orthodox and Armenian rites, a lay representative of each of these rites, and one Coptic and one Jacobite representative, either a cleric or a layman. The Copt is frequently a layman who has purchased the privilege of receiving the Holy Fire.

The Moslem Guardian of the Holy Sepulchre exercises his traditional privilege of sealing the door of the Tomb previous to the entry of the Patriarch, and a Franciscan monk is present throughout the ceremony.

4. Allocation of Space on the Floor of the Rotunda.

At this ceremony the Church becomes entirely filled with a seething excited congregation, and each rite must be confined to its allotted floor space, within which the area may be further divided by towns.

The Orthodox Area is on the side of the Tomb furthest from the entrance, from the front of the Tomb to the middle of the seventh pillar.

The Jacobite Area is from thence to a black cross on the right side of column 9, at a distance of about three feet from the centre. This boundary is generally the matter of dispute, the Jacobites claiming the boundary should be the centre of the column. The question has, however, been definitely decided as above.

These two boundary lines converge on the north-west corner of the Edicule.

The Coptic Area extends from the Jacobite boundary to the centre of column 12, on a line drawn to the south-west outside corner of the Edicule.

The Armenian Area completes the circuit to the front of the Tomb, but the spaces in front of the doors between columns 12-15 are Orthodox.

It must be remembered that the days and nights previous to the day of the ceremony the church becomes filled with pilgrims and others, especially Copts, with bedding, etc., who must on the day of the ceremony be rigorously confined within the limits of their respective areas. Disputes are also likely to occur between the Jerusalem and Jaffa contingents in the Orthodox Area.

5. Accommodation for Visitors.

The Orthodox Balcony on the north side of the entrance to the Orthodox Katholikon from the Rotunda is, by courtesy of the Patriarch, accustomed to be put at the disposal of the Government, and will hold ten people, but only five to six chairs.

The Armenian Patriarch is accustomed to put at the disposal of the Government two windows in the southern gallery, holding seven to eight each. Ladies are usually accommodated here, and there is space in each for three chairs. This is approached by a staircase near the Armenian Vestry on the left of the main entrance.

Other guests can be accommodated in the gallery overlooking the Orthodox Choir. Access is obtained through the Calvary Chapel, and there is ample room, if the view is rather interrupted ; there is, however, no seating accommodation.

The Orthodox Patriarch also puts at the disposal of the Government, if possible, a small window in the upper range under the Rotunda. This holds six people standing, and is reached from the Orthodox Patriarchate.

The Balcony on the other side of the entrance to the Orthodox Choir from the Rotunda is at the disposal of the Greek Consul-General.

The spaces immediately below these balconies are reserved for guests of the Patriarchates, Orthodox on the north, and Armenian on the south, and should not be filled except with the consent of the Dragoman. Tiers of seats may not be constructed in these spaces, but benches may be placed for the convenience of those present.

Each visitor for whom accommodation is being found by the Deputy District Commissioner's Offices should be provided with a ticket showing the place allotted to him. Arrangements should be made for guides to direct ticket-holders. The tickets for the Gallery and window are supplied through the Deputy District Commissioner by the Dragoman of the Orthodox Patriarchate.

6. Order of the Ceremony.

Between 8 and 9 a.m. the doors are opened by the Armenians. Arrangements should be made for a passage-way to be kept through the crowd for the Armenian representatives, and the crowd should be kept some distance from the door, to prevent a precipitous crush and overcrowding when the door is opened.

On entering, the Orthodox congregation pass to the right of the Stone of Unction and enter the Rotunda through the Orthodox Katholikon, the other congregations pass to the left and enter the Rotunda direct.

At 10.30 a.m. the Armenian Patriarch arrives in procession, entering the Rotunda by the main entrance. After passing in front of the Sepulchre, he proceeds round the Rotunda once and then enters the Armenian Vestry. The Armenian Patriarch does not take actual part in the service, but is accustomed to occupy the first window in the Armenian Gallery.

At 11 a.m. the door of the Sepulchre is sealed by the Moslem Guardian in the presence of one Archimandrite of the Orthodox and one of the Armenian rites, standing one on each side close to the door. This sealing consists of the closing of the door and the placing of a large piece of wax across the centre of the door, which at the same time holds in place a white ribbon, the ends of which pass through the two door handles. These ends are held during the sealing by the two witnesses mentioned above. The Orthodox clergy are always stationed on the north side of the door, the Armenian on the south.

At 12 noon, the Orthodox Patriarch comes down through the Church of St. James, enters the Holy Sepulchre and proceeds through the south door of the Katholikon to the Altar. The representatives of the other rites then do obeisance and obtain permission to take part in the ceremony.

The Holy Lamp is then taken by an Archimandrite to the Edicule, the door of which is unsealed by the Orthodox Dragoman. The door is not sealed again, but the tapes are replaced.

The two Archimandrites holding the ends of the tapes are now relieved by two Bishops, behind these are two Dragomans, and behind these again two Sextons.

About this time, groups of young men enter the Rotunda through the Orthodox Chapel clapping their hands and singing traditional songs. One or two may be borne on the shoulders of their co-religionists. It is just now when excitement is running high, and the pressure of the throng is very intense, that disputes occur, especially over the line-up from the holes in the Edicule through which the Fire is given.

The District Staff take up a position by the northern seat near the entrance to the Tomb.

Throughout this period, the space between the entrance to the Sepulchre, including the stone seats and the entrance to the Orthodox Chapel, must be kept clear by Police cordons, momentarily opening when required to let processions through.

No individual should be allowed in this space except the officials and clergy concerned. These latter are the two Bishops, Archimandrites, Dragomans, and Sextons, one of each of the Orthodox and of the Armenian rites, as well as a lay representative of each and the Moslem Guardian. The Coptic and Jacobite representatives do not approach until later, but remain adjacent just behind the cordon to the south. The Franciscan takes up a position near the door of the Sepulchre on the north side.

At 12.30 p.m., the actual service commences with the procession of the Patriarch from the Altar of the Orthodox rite. The procession is preceded by banners 13 in number and representatives of the leading Orthodox families and ascetics. The way is given to clear the way through the

throng. The procession circles the Rotunda three times. On arriving in front of the Sepulchre for the third time, the banners and all the clergy, except the Patriarch, and his immediate attendants, and those previously mentioned, return into the Orthodox Chapel.

The Bishop of the Armenian Church, who is to accompany the Patriarch into the Sepulchre, here joins His Beatitude.

The Patriarch now disrobes, and his mitre and vestments are carried by the attendant clergy to the Altar in the Orthodox Chapel. The door is then opened and the Patriarch enters the Tomb, accompanied by the Armenian Bishop.

The Copt and Jacobite now come forward, and take up their position directly in front of the door, ready to enter as soon as it is opened. The other clergy do not enter at this time, and it is necessary to prevent this, and also to ensure that the Syriac and Copt enter and that the Patriarch is able to come out. The door is not to be opened until the Patriarch knocks.

The Holy Fire is then passed out by the Patriarch and the Armenian representative to their congregations by the holes on each side of the Edicule, through the northern (Orthodox) side first. This is heralded with frantic cheering and clapping of hands and ringing of bells. The Orthodox custom is that the first to receive the Fire is a Parish Priest, and after him a selected representative of the Community. The crowd presses to light the bunch of **33** candles—the total years of Our Lord's Life—each holds, and the building is soon a blaze of light.

When the Patriarch is ready to leave the Sepulchre to return to the Orthodox Altar, he intimates his intention by knocking on the door. The door is opened by the Orthodox Bishop, and the Copt and Jacobite immediately enter and receive the Fire inside from the Patriarch. No other of the clergy present enter at this time. The Patriarch then emerges carrying a flaming torch in each hand, and followed by the Bishop of the Armenian Church. The Copt and Jacobite should not come out of the Sepulchre too quickly after the Patriarch. The appearance of the Patriarch is usually the signal for a converging rush of worshippers eager to light the candles from the torches he carries. The cordons must withstand this, and it may be necessary for the Patriarch to receive the assistance of officers in clearing a passage. In passing up the Orthodox Chapel, care must be taken to avoid the stone marking the Centre of the World.

The Copt and Jacobite on coming out of the Tomb with the Fire proceed to their congregations. Assistance in clearing a way and in prevention of the Fire being extinguished may here be necessary as well. After that the Patriarch and Armenian Bishop have left the Sepulchre, the Sextons enter, • he Orthodox first, and light their respective lamps within and without the Tomb. The Franciscan also lowers and lights a lamp over the entrance.

Shortly afterwards, the two Bishops enter and the Orthodox Bishop removes the lamps and bears it to the Orthodox Altar.

The Armenian Bishop does not accompany the Patriarch but goes straight to the Armenian Priory, and it is necessary for a passage-way to be kept to enable him to pass through the crowd, and to allow the Armenian Clergy and Choir to come out of their Priory and proceed in procession round the Rotunda. The Coptic and Jacobite Clergy and Choirs also form up in their respective areas and follow the Armenians in procession in this order. All circle the Rotunda three times and then return to their Chapels, after holding each a short service by the entrance of the Edicule. It is important in the processions to limit the number

of Clergy and Choir participating, otherwise it is impossible for the processions and services to be conducted in an orderly manner. A maximum of seventy should be allowed for the Armenians, fifty for the Copts, and forty for the Jacobites, a proportion fixed on the basis of the areas allotted to each Community. In forming up, the end of the Jacobite procession should not be

allowed further east than a line drawn from the centre of column 6 to the opposite corner of the Edicule. A sufficient interval should be maintained between the head of the Armenian and the end of the Jacobite processions.

While in turn the Copts and Jacobites are awaiting the termination of the Armenian and Coptic services in front of the Tomb after the procession, it is customary for a chair to be placed for the officiating cleric of these two Communities on the south side of the Edicule. The chairs must be placed on a level with the hole through which the Holy Fire is passed, so as not to obstruct the exit of the Armenian procession at the conclusion of their ceremony.

APPENDIX D.

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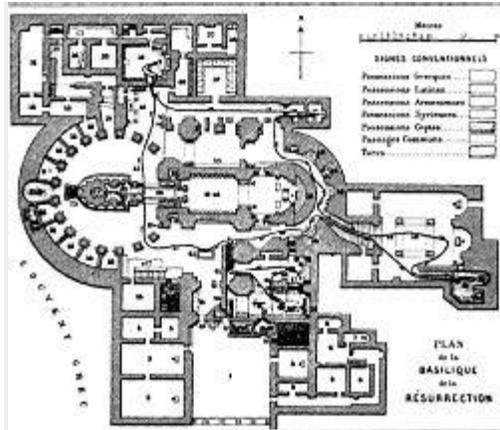
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PLAN OF THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

Most of the church is in the possession of the three major denominations, Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Armenian. The minor denominations -Copts, Syrians and Abyssinians - have very little property in the church and are dependent on the others.

The GREEK ORTHODOX hold possession of the major part of the church:

the main prayer hall (Katholikon, 56-59), most of the chapels of the ambulatory (46,48, 54) part of the Calvary (65-67), the "Prison of Jesus" (45-47), and most of the rooms surrounding the Rotunda (18). They also possess most of the buildings surrounding the courtyard of the church (2-7).

The ROMAN CATHOLIC own part of the Calvary (64,68-71), the Chapel of Mary's Agony (11-12), the Chapel of the Invention of the Cross (51) and most of the northern part of the church (31-38,40-43).

The ARMENIANS own the Church of Helena (50, 52-53), the station of the Holy Women (17) and adjacent section (16), one room of the Rotunda (81), the Chapel of the Parting of the Raiment (49) and the Chapel of John (8).

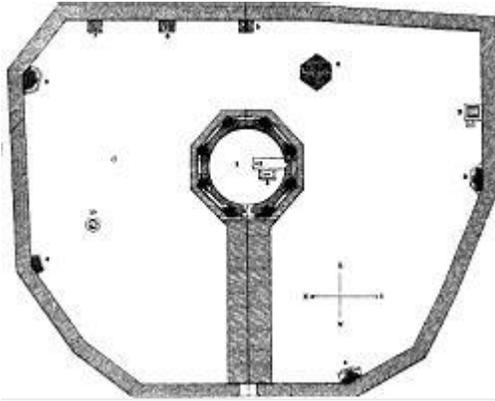
The SYRIANS own the Tomb of Nicodemus and adjacent room (20, 22).

The COPTS claim jurisdiction over a small chapel behind the edicule of the Tomb (23), two rooms of the Rotunda (21), one room near the entrance of the church (15) and the Chapel of Michael (9).

The ABYSSINIANS have no possessions of any sort within the precincts of the church itself and hold their Easter services on the roof of Helena's Chapel (Deir al Sultan) around which they reside.

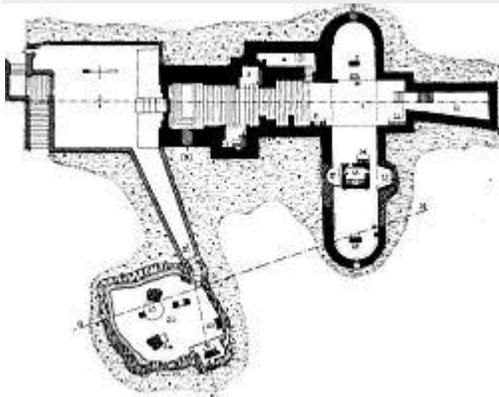
The courtyard of the church (1), the entrance, the Stone of Unction(62), the corridors surrounding the Katholikon and the Edicule and the Tomb itself (24) are common property.

Moslem custodians have a divan at the entrance (14).



PLAN OF THE CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION - ALTARS BELONGING TO THE DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES

1. Chapel of the Church of the Ascension
2. Mirhab
3. Stone with the "Foot Print" of Jesus
4. Altar of the Greek Orthodox
5. Altar of the Syrians
6. Altar of the Copts
7. Altar of the Armenians



PLAN OF THE CHURCH OF MARY

4. Tomb of Joseph? (Armenian)
5. Sacristy (Greek Orthodox)
6. Tomb of Anne? (Greek Orthodox)
7. Tomb of Joachim? (Greek Orthodox)
8. Altar of the Greek Orthodox
9. Altar of the Copts 10. Sacristy of the Greek Orthodox
12. Altar of the Greek Orthodox
13. Altar of the Syrians
14. Altar of the Syrians
15. Tomb of Mary (Greek Orthodox and Armenian) 16-17. Mirhabs
18. Altar of the Greek Orthodox
19. Altar of the Greek Orthodox

