

Jerusalem

October 27. 1893.

No. 68.

Sir,

With reference to my telegram of this day's date, I have the honour to report to Your Excellency that an affray of a very serious nature occurred yesterday afternoon in the Grotto of the Nativity at Bethlehem.

It appears that a Russian traveller
Your Excellency
The Right Hon^{ble}
Sir Francis Clare, G. C. B.
Yc. Yc. Yc.

Handwritten notes on the left page, including "Consul Briton", "Ref no 11 Nov 2", "Affray at Bethlehem", "Sympathetic Consular Dept", "Hans & Co", "H.C.", and "1893".

traveller, Baron de Hahn, went
with a Russian Officer to
visit the Church of the
Nativity at Bethlehem, and
that they were escorted by
a Cavass (a Montenegrin from
Cattaro in Salunatic) belonging
to the Russian Palestine
Society.

As the tapestry in the
Grotto was undergoing some
repairs, several Latin Monks
were assembled in the Church,
besides representatives from

the

the French Consulate General,
the Local Authorities, and the
Greek Patriarchate, whose
presence is necessary to prevent
disputes which frequently arise
when anything is done to the
Church or its ornaments.

As Baron de Hahn entered
the Grotto, some of the monks
were in the act of celebrating
the usual afternoon service,
and Baron de Hahn and his
companion moved out of the way
up the steps of the Grotto,
but the Cavass remained
standing

standing inside the Grotto.
One of the monks then struck
him severely on the chest,
and the Cavass returned the
blow, whereupon the monk
felled him to the ground
with a heavy bunch of
keys and it is stated, that
another monk fired at him
several times with a revolver.
The Cavass, however, was
able to rise again, and
immediately drew his revolver,
shot one of the monks dead
and wounded two others. The
soldiers

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soldiers stationed in the Church
then interposed and prevented
further disturbance; the
Cavass was arrested, and the
wounded monks, who are
reported to be in a dangerous
state were conveyed to the
adjoining Latin Convent.

This lamentable incident
is now the subject of
correspondence between the
French and Russian Consulates
General, and the Turkish
Authorities, and was the
cause

cause of not a little excitement
yesterday evening at Bethlehem
and in Jerusalem. Baron de
Kahn and his companion
affirm, as I am at present
informed, that the Latin
monks were the first to
use fire arms, and that the
Russian Cossacs merely acted
in self defence. It would
seem however, as has
already been reported in
my Despatches No. 34 of
the 23rd of December last,

and

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and No. 20 of the 15th of June
1891, that the Latins are now,
as the result of their oft
recurring Disputes with the
Greeks and Armenians, in
the habit of carrying arms
when celebrating their various
religious ceremonies in the
Church and Grotto of the
Nativity at Bethlehem, and
such a state of things,
if permitted to continue —
to say nothing of the
reproach it entails on Christianity
may lead to very serious
consequences.

consequences.

I have the honour to be

With the highest respect

Sir,

Your Excellency's

Most Obedient

Humble Servant.

John Williams

AC 886

Handwritten notes in red ink, possibly a signature or initials.

By Order

of the Secretary at Jerusalem

By Order

of the Secretary at Jerusalem

Nov 13

No. 68

Jerusalem, Oct. 27, 1893

Jerusalem,

October 27. 1893.

No 69

Sir,

I have the honour to enclose

herewith extracts from letters, as marked

in the margin, which I have recently

received from the Governor of Jerusalem,

on the subject of the British Flag

having been hoisted over the British

Ophthalmic Hospital, and to submit

to Your Excellency the following remarks

relative

to Your Excellency

The Right Hon^{ble}

Sir Francis Clau-Ford, G.C.B.

yc. yc. yc.

Sept. 5. 1893.

Oct. 10. 1893.

Oct. 12. 1893.