

So matters stood up to the beginning of the new year 1766, when some new impulse united the two *Muhassils*, and it was decided for the third time to insist on the collection of the 14 piastres. The recusants immediately left their houses again, and mustered, to the number of 5000 persons, under the standard of Khalil Agha. On January 10 their chief sent a party of 500 to Famagusta; knowing of how great value its capture would be; but though its armed defenders numbered scarcely 100 it proved impregnable. On the 24th he abandoned the attack on Famagusta, and with the whole rebel band took up his position before Nicosia. The gates were again closed, and cannon mounted on the walls. Khalil Agha refused to break up his camp, and a messenger was sent out of the city to inquire his terms. He demanded to be Governor of the island, and to enter Nicosia. To this silly request no answer was given. Presently he sent word to the Governor that this was no freak of his own, but an order from the sovereign, which he invited the Governor and his council to come out to the camp to hear—a trick which did not deceive the wily *Muhassil*. The rebels meanwhile made several attempts to scale the walls; but these were badly planned and wholly failed, involving the lives of some of the assailants. Several sallies and skirmishes of little moment followed, while the defenders of Nicosia, some 1500 only, were obliged to look after the safety of their houses.

January 27 was a day of great anxiety to the inhabitants of Larnaca, particularly the Europeans, who imagined that the rebels might swoop down on the town, and strip their houses. Confusion reigned, and everyone was busy packing up his most valuable effects, and sending them with the women on board the ships of Christian Powers which happened to be in the roadstead. The next morning the alarm was seen to be false, their fears vanished, and all was quiet again.

At the beginning of February the island generally was