Chapter VI.
GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS OF THE PALACES

1580
Correia-Afonso

Pages 29-30
Letter from Fr. Henriques to Fr. Peres

Father Provincial had given us a Bible in four languages, consisting of seven tomes which were very well got up, to be gifted to the King. On the day we made the presentation he performed such an elaborate ceremonial that we were altogether surprised. He caught hold of each individual tome and, after kissing it, placed it on the head with great reverence in front of all his grandees and captains and the rest of the people gathered in the vast courtyard of the palace, and everyone was amazed. He persisted in asking which one was the Gospel and, when it was pointed out to him, he paid it greater reverence than to the others. He desired that we should leave the Bible at his residence and then he ordered a new box and placed the Bible in it, and now he keeps it in a room of his own where there is nothing else besides.

Page 72
Letter from Fr. Monserrat to Fr. Vicente

The same day in the evening we went to the Darigtiana or palace, and making as is customary taslim to the King (which is a kind of reverence) he bent his head 3 or 4 times, showing he rejoiced at seeing me: because His Highness was very busy with some business in hand we did not speak to him at that time. Another day we returned thither and, speaking to him, I once again offered to serve H.H. and gave him an account of my stay in Agra, because H.H. had asked about me many times, and he showed himself to be satisfied with everything.... //

Saturday, day set aside for hearing the things of God, all three of us went to the palace, and when it was time, the King having with himself six of his mullahs of the most knowledgeable, he sent for us and we went up to a veranda where he is wont to speak at other times. And after they were
seated, Fr. Rudolf presented him with a paper written in Persian, which contained the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ taken from the Gospel.

Page 83
Letter from Fr. Monserrate to Fr. Vicente

After this there passed a Saturday without our hearing anything or there being a chance for it. The next Saturday, which was on 3 September, the Fathers went there and he [Akbar] heard a little of what they had taken in writing. And changing the subject, he said that he wished that Pahari, his second son, should learn to read and write and speak Portuguese, and he asked the Fathers if the following day were a good day, and they replied that it was our Sunday. He asked the same of a Hindu raja and he said that it was a good day, and with this the Fathers took their leave that day. The following day, which was Sunday 4 September, as we had finished eating, there came a message from H.H. in a great hurry, saying that he sent for us. All three of us went there and he made us go up to a veranda where H.H. was making a very beautiful cage.

Page 85
Letter from Fr. Monserrate to Fr. Vicente

Friday morning I went to the palace, and when I reached [it], the King was entering the place where we teach and, when I had greeted him, he made a sign that I should enter within, and once again he told me the same as on the previous day, and that the painters should paint all that I should tell them and should be by my side. The prince showed him my Persian handwriting, and the King showed it to some of his suite that were with him, showing he was pleased with it. With displeasure on the part of Pahari the other two brothers come close and surround me like little chicks and they learn obiter.

173
short time to an inner apartment, he ordered them to be conducted to him there, (i.e. to the hall which is known as Capur Talau), in order that he might exhibit them to his wives. Then he took them to another courtyard called the Daulatqhana, where he put on Portuguese dress—a scarlet cloak with golden fastenings.

Page 29

In his dining-hall he had pictures of Christ, Mary, Moses and Mohammad; when naming them he showed his true sentiments by putting Muhammad last; for he would say 'This is the picture of Christ, this of Mary, this of Moses and that of Muhammad'.

Page 30

The most noteworthy features of Fattepurum are, firstly, the King's audience chamber, which is of huge size and very beautiful in appearance....

Page 36

When the Fathers had refreshed themselves for a short time from the fatigue of their journey, they were again summoned before the King. Whereupon they set their hands to the work on behalf of which they had undertaken so long and tedious a journey. For this purpose they made the following opening. On the 3rd of March they took to the audience chamber a copy of the Holy Bible, written in four languages and bound in seven volumes; this they showed to the King. In the presence of his great nobles and religious leaders Zelaldinus thereupon most devoutly not only kissed the Bible, but placed it on his head.... He then told the priests to come with their Bible into his own private room, where he opened the volumes once more with great reverence and joy. He shut them up again very carefully, and deposited them in a beautiful bookcase, worthy of such sacred volumes, which stood in the same private room, where he spent a great deal of his spare time.

Page 64

When a council was being held, or when he summoned them to his private audience-chamber for familiar conversation, he used to make them sit beside him. He shook hands with them cordially and familiarly. He frequently left the public audience-chamber to converse with them in private. Several times he paced up and down with his arm round Rudolf's shoulders. Once,
when he was in camp, he desired another of the priests, in the middle of a
crowd of his nobles, to help him fasten on his sword, which service the Fa-
ther performed, amidst the envy and wonder of all the courtiers. He wished
the priests to be sharers of his inmost thoughts, both in good and ill fort-
tune—no common mark of love and kindness. He ordered his door-keepers to
grant them entrance, whenever they wished, even into the inner courtyard of
the palace, where only the most distinguished nobles had the right of en-
trance. He sent them food from his own table—a mark of distinction which
he is said never to have conferred upon anyone before. He visited one of
the Fathers when he was ill, and greeted him in Portuguese as a sign of
respect. There would have been no end to his gifts, had the Fathers not
frequently told him that all they needed was food and clothing, and these
of the most simple description. This reply pleased him so much that he
repeated it publicly: and each month sent them as much money, under the
guise of alms, as he thought would be sufficient for their daily expenses.

Page 175-76

On the present occasion this nine days' festival was celebrated by Ze-
laldinus with such lavish expenditure of money, with such magnificence of
clothing, ornament and all manner of appurtenances, and with such gorgeous
games, that the like, as we were told, had not been seen for thirty years.
For the walls and colonnades of the palace courtyard were decorated with
hangings of cloth of gold and silk. Games were held and pageants conducted
each day. The King himself was enthroned on a high golden throne ap-
proached by steps. He wore his crown and insignia of royalty. He distrib-
uted gifts to many generals who had accompanied him on the campaign; and he
gave instructions that all classes of the citizens should be bidden to show
their joy either by leaping, singing or dancing. He welcomed all who came
to see the festival with largess, free supply of wine, and free banquets.
Hence whole communities of Jogues arrived, with their chiefs. These men
were evidently devoted to religion in appearance rather than in fact; for
they profanely and frivolously laid aside all pretence of piety, danced
impudently and shamelessly, and fulsomely flattered the King in the songs
they sang. Women were allowed to visit the // palace and see its magnifi-
cent appointments. It was so widely reported amongst the Musalmans that
the King had become a worshipper of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God,
that a certain noble, a relation of the King, secretly asked the officer in
charge of the royal furniture for the beautiful picture of the Virgin which
belonged to the King, and placed it (unknown to the King himself) on a bracket in the wall of the royal balcony at the side of the audience-chamber, where the King was wont to sit and show himself to the people and to give audience to those who desired it. The aforementioned noble surrounded and draped the picture with the most beautiful hangings of cloth of gold and embroidered linen. For he thought this would please the King. Nor was he mistaken; for the King warmly praised the idea, which also gave great pleasure to the priests, who perceived that non-Christians were worshipping and reverencing the picture, and—as if compelled by the unaided force of truth—were not denying adoration to the image of her whom the morning stars extol, and whose beauty amazes the Sun and Moon, (though some, who vainly claim to follow Christ and to be ministers of the Gospel, impudently abuse her, and are thus worse than the very Musalmans).

He is very fond of carrying a European sword and dagger. He is never without arms: and is always surrounded, even within his private apartments, by a body-guard of about twenty men, variously armed. He much approves the Spanish dress, and wears it in private.

He generally sits, with crossed legs, upon a couch covered with scarlet rugs. However, he has a velvet throne of the Portuguese type carried with him on a journey, and very frequently uses it.

His table is very sumptuous, generally consisting of more than forty courses served in great dishes. These are brought into the royal dining-hall covered and wrapped in linen cloths, which are tied up and sealed by the cook, for fear of poison. They are carried by youths to the door of the dining-hall, other servants walking ahead and the master-of-the-household following. Here they are taken over by eunuchs, who hand them to the serving girls who wait on the royal table. He is accustomed to dine in private, except on the occasion of a public banquet.... He dines alone, reclining on an ordinary couch, which is covered with silken rugs and cushions stuffed with the fine down of some foreign plant.
The splendour of his palaces approaches closely to that of the royal dwellings of Europe. They are magnificently built, from foundation to cornice, of hewn stone, and are decorated both with painting and carving. Unlike the palaces built by other Indian kings, they are lofty; for an Indian palace is generally as low and humble as an idol-temple. Their total circuit is so large that it easily embraces four great royal dwellings, of which the King’s own palace is the largest and the finest. The second palace belongs to the queens, and the third to the royal princes, whilst the fourth is used as a store house and magazine. The roofs of these palaces are not tiled, but are dome-shaped, being protected from the weather on the outside by solid plaster covering the stone slabs. This forms a roof absolutely impervious to moisture. The palaces are decorated also with many pinnacles, supported on four columns, each of which forms a small covered portico. Not a little is added to the beauty of the palaces by charming pigeon-cotes, partly covered with rough-cast, and partly showing walls built of small blue and white bricks. The pigeons are cared for by eunuchs and servant-maids. Their evolutions are controlled at will, when they are flying, by means of certain signals, just as those of well-trained soldiery are controlled by a competent general by means of bugles and drums. It will seem little short of miraculous when I affirm that when sent out, they dance, turn somersaults all together in the air, fly in orderly rhythm, and return to their starting point, all at the sound of a whistle. They are bidden to perch on the roof, to conceal themselves within their nesting-places, or to dart out of them again; and they do everything just as they are told.

With the object of exhibiting his wealth four times every year he has sacks of minted copper money publicly piled up (I think in the palace courtyard) into a heap ten feet wide and thirty feet high. By the side of this pile sit the superintendents and tellers of the treasury. They supervise the counting of the money, which is paid out to those who are entitled to receive it, after deduction of the profit which an ordinary banker would have made if it had been deposited with him. Each sack holds about four thousand copper coins.
However the priests began to suspect that he was intending to found a new religion with matter taken from all the existing systems.... Furthermore he caused a wooden building of ingenious workmanship to be constructed, and had it placed on the very highest point of the palace roof: and from this he watched the dawn and worshipped the rising sun.

That any person might be able to speak to him on business of importance, Echebar appeared twice daily in public, and gave audience to all classes of his subjects. For this purpose he made use of two large halls of his palace, in each of which was placed on a raised dais a splendid and costly throne. To the first of these halls all his subjects had access, and there he listened to all who sought speech with him. But to the second none was admitted but the captains and great nobles of his kingdom, and the ambassadors who came from foreign kings to confer with him on affairs of importance. Eight officers, men of experience and good judgment, were in constant attendance on him. Amongst these he apportioned the days of the week, so that each had his special day for introducing those who desired an audience. It was their duty to examine the credentials of all such persons, and to act as masters of ceremony, instructing them, more especially if they were foreigners, how to make reverence to the king, and how to comport themselves in his presence; for on these occasions much ceremony is observed, it being the custom, amongst other things, to kiss the feet of the king on saluting him. When giving audience, the king is also attended by a number of secretaries, whose duty is to record in writing every word that he speaks. This is a custom much practised by the princes of Persia, and other eastern countries.

One evening the same priest was disputing with the Mullas in the royal ante-chamber, while the King sat listening in his private apartment. In the course of the dispute, the priest said that the law of Mahomet was a tissue of errors and lies. This so enraged the Mullas that they were on the point of laying violent hands on him when the King entered and re-
strained them, appeasing their anger by telling them that it was no unusual thing for one engaged in a disputation to hold his own views to be true, and those of his adversaries to be false.

1633
Peter Mundy: 228

The kings howse or Moholl stands on the highest hill, within which are aboundance of Courts, Conveyances, galleries, Chowtrees [chabutra], Arches, pillars, Tancks, Chaboochasees [chahbacha], private roomes, all verie rich, curious, and full of invention of panteinge, carvinge, etts.; Also a little garden. The water to water it is also to fill the Tancks alofte, and for their use is drawne from the valley, first into one Tanck and then from that into another higher, and soe into 4 or 5 untill it come alofte, by that which wee in Spaine call Noraies.

c. 1625-40
Gokulanatha: 174-76

Kumbhanadasa composed many padas and people everywhere began to sing them. A musician learned one of Kumbhanadasa's padas and sang it before the Emperor Akbar in his palace at Fatehpur Sikri. When Akbar had heard this pada, he was deeply moved and exclaimed, "No one on earth has had such darshana of the Supreme Being as was enjoyed by the saint who composed this pada."

When the musician had heard Akbar's reaction to the pada, he said, "Sahib! The saint who composed this pada lives very near here. His name is Kumbhanadasa and he dwells in the village of Jamunavata over by Govardhana Hill."

When Akbar had got this information from the musician, he sent some of his men and several different kinds of vehicles to bring Kumbhanadasa back to the royal palace so that he might meet with him. When Akbar's men reached Jamunavata, they found that Kumbhanadasa was at his field by Chandrasarovara near Parasoli and not in Jamunavata. As soon as a villager could be found who would serve as a guide, Akbar's men set out for Kumbhanadasa's field. When Akbar's men had finally found Kumbhanadasa and told him that he was wanted at the imperial court, Kumbhanadasa said, "I am a poor Brajvasi and I am no one's servant. What does the emperor want with me? Why should I go to him?"
GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS OF THE PALACES

To this Akbar's men replied, "Baba Sahib! We know nothing but the emperor's order to us. He told us to bring you and he sent a horse-drawn buggy with us for you to ride in. So, please get into the buggy so that we may go. We came here at the command of the emperor; we must bring you back with us. If we should disobey the imperial order and return without you, then the emperor would have us executed. Please come with us to meet the emperor; when you ... have met with him then you can come back here." // At this Kumbhanadasa thought to himself, "A terrible misfortune has befallen me, but I have no choice but to go. I will have to face whatever may come."

As Kumbhanadasa was hesitating, Akbar's men again urged him to climb into the vehicle so that they could hurry back to the imperial court. Kumbhanadasa, however, silenced them and said, "I have never ridden in a buggy and I am not going to do so now. I will put on a pair of shoes and go to Fatehpur Sikri on foot." Although Akbar's men pleaded with Kumbhanadasa to ride in the buggy, they could not persuade him and he walked all the way to Fatehpur Sikri.

When the party reached Akbar's palace and the emperor was notified of Kumbhanadasa's arrival, he invited Kumbhanadasa to come to him at once and the poet complied. When Kumbhanadasa came into the presence of the emperor, he was clad in a short shirt, a torn and dirty turban, a simple dhoti, and he was wearing a worn-out pair of shoes on his feet. Akbar greeted him and asked him to sit down. The pavilion in which the two men were seated glowed with inlaid jewels and pearls and was sweetly scented with perfume. Kumbhanadasa, however, was very unhappy and said to himself, "I feel as though I were sitting in Naraka. I much prefer the trees of Braj, among which Shri Govardhanadhara [Krishna] likes to play."

Then Akbar spoke to Kumbhanadasa. "Baba Sahib, you have composed a great many verses about Visnu; I would like to hear some of those padas straight from your mouth."

Upon hearing Akbar's request, Kumbhanadasa became troubled and thought to himself, "I will not be able to avoid singing. Yet, I cannot sing padas about Shri Thakuraji's lila in front of a mleccha. What shall I sing? Only Shri Govardhananathaji deserves to hear my songs. By summoning me here, this mleccha has separated me from Shri Nathaji; therefore, I will sing him a pada that will probably make him angry. But, even if he should become angry, he cannot harm me. As wise people say, 'One who has been accepted by Shri Krsna is always safe and will never, even if the entire universe be
against him, lose a single hair from his head". With these thoughts in
his mind, Kumbhanadasa composed the following pada and sang it before
Akbar:

A bhakta has no business coming to Sikri;
I ruined my shoes in going there and I forgot Hari's name. //
Now I must pay homage to one whose very face brings sorrow; Kumbhanadasa says, without Lala Giridhara this whole palace is only a sham.

At first, when the emperor had heard this pada, his heart was filled with anger. But, after a moment of reflection, he said to himself, "If Kumbhanadasa had been greedy, he would have tried to flatter me." Thus, Akbar realized that Kumbhanadasa was devoted to his god above all else. Then Akbar said to Kumbhanadasa, "Baba Sahib, I will carry out any order that you deign to give me."

Kumbhanadasa replied, "From this day on, you must never call me here again." Upon hearing Kumbhanadasa's words, Akbar dismissed him.

1783
Hodges: 131
At the foot of the hill on which the mosque is situated are the remains of the palace, occupying a great extent of ground. The palace is in total ruin, not a single apartment remaining; and the only part which serves to give any idea of its former beauty is the principal gate.

1825
Heber: II,351
A little to the right is the palace, now all in ruins except a small part which is inhabited by the Tussildar of the district. We rambled some time among its courts, and through a range of stables worthy of an Emperor, consisting of a long and wide street, with a portico on each side, fifteen feet deep, supported with carved stone pillars in front, and roofed with enormous slabs of stone, reaching from the colonnade to the wall.

1845
Orlich: II,64–65
We passed from the lodges of the guards, through the palaces of the ministers, and through those of the princes of the family, into those of the Emperor. These consisted of lofty, vaulted apartments, supported by square pillars covered with manifold arabesques and ornaments, and contain
GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS OF THE PALACES

// three courts of audience, in which small gardens, with basins and fountains, once afforded refreshment both to the mind and body when relaxed by the heat.

1853
Taylor: 121-23

The buildings of the palace cover the crest of the hill, having superb views on both sides, over many a league of the fruitful plain. There is quite a labyrinth of courts, pavilions, small palaces, gateways, tanks, fountains, and terraces, and I found it difficult to obtain a clear idea of their arrangement. Most of the buildings are so well preserved that a trifling expense would make them habitable. For a scholar or poet I can conceive of no more delightful residence.... //

In this same court is a pavilion, consisting of a pyramidal canopy of elaborately carved stone, resting on four pillars, which have a cornice of peculiar design, representing a serpent. This pavilion approaches as near the Hindoo style of building, as is possible, without violating the architecture of the palace, which is a massive kind of Saracenic. It was the station of a Gooroo, or Hindoo Saint, whom Akbar, probably from motives of policy, kept near him....

We paid rather a hasty visit to the Diwan-e'-khaz, the Diwan-e'-am, and the mint. The latter is an immense quadrangle, half blocked up with ruins. In the diwan-e'-am, is the balcony where Akbar usually made his public appearance // in the morning, to the crowd waiting in the court to see or petition him. He was greeted on these occasions with the cry of "Allah akbar!" (God is great!) to which he invariably replied: "Jilli jellalli-hool!" (May his glory shine!) This was a mode of salutation introduced by himself, because the two phrases contained his name—Jellal-ud-deen Akbar. I have frequently heard a very similar style of address in Bohemia, where the greeting is: "Praised be Jesus Christ!" and the answer: "In eternity. Amen."

1858
Minturn: 304-08

At length we found ourselves on a plateau, which had been formed into a great square. On one side was the massive palace of Akbar's prime minister—on the other, that of the Emperor himself. Both were of redstone, in the simple Saracenic architecture of the period. Time seemed to have left
them uninjured—every angle was sharp, the most delicate sculpture was perfect, and one could almost imagine the king and his court had gone forth to hunt, and would return by evening to their homes.... This great palace contains numerous other courts, vestibules, and corridors, as well as a mint, Dewan Am, and all the other accessories of an Indian Emperor's residence, including long ranges of stables, and apartments for servants; but we went through the rest of the building so hurriedly, that I feel myself incompetent to describe it. A whole day, at least, is necessary to see it thoroughly, and more than a day's study would be required for a perfect description.

1859

Ireland: 475

In an adjoining court Ackbar's Kutcherry, or Hall of Justice, called Diwar-e-am. Here the people greeted him with the exclamation of "God is great:" and he replied "May His glory shine for ever."