

ridiculed them and scorned their proposals in a way that made them marvel. So they began torturing him, and did so from morning until noon with sundry kinds of tortures. But he remained ever unshaken and firm in the faith, and manfully demolishing their doctrine, and showing it to be false. And when the Saracens saw that he was not to be turned from his purpose, they hung him up to a certain tree, and there he remained from the ninth hour until night. But when night fell they took him down from the tree quite unhurt, and when they saw it was so, they clove him in sunder, and in the morning no trace of him was to be found. But it was revealed to a person worthy of belief that God had concealed his body till in due season He should be pleased to disclose it.<sup>1</sup>

And that God might make manifest that their souls had inherited the kingdom of heaven, on that very day when these blessed friars became glorious martyrs, that Melic had fallen

<sup>1</sup> There are different statements as to the date of the martyrdom of these four friars. Wadding puts it under 1321, the *Acta Sanctorum* under 1322. The editors of the latter urge the authority of a MS. of Odoric's narrative of the circumstances, which had been communicated to them, and which named the Kalends of April as the day, combined with the assertion of Jordanus (see letter in this collection) that it was on the Thursday of the week before Palm Sunday, a combination which would fix the date to 1322. This, however, is inconsistent with the positive evidence of Jordanus in his following letter. For in it, dated Feast of Fabian and Sebastian, 1323—i.e., in our reckoning, 20th January, 1324, he says that he had then been alone for *two years and a half* since he had buried his comrades. Had their death occurred in 1322, the interval would have been only one year and eight months, which no rounding of numbers could convert into two years and a half; whereas if it had occurred in 1321, the interval might naturally have been so spoken of.

It does not appear to be clear that those four friars ever received the official beatification of Rome, though they appear as Beati in the *Acta Sanctorum*. The Order applied to John XXII to have this done, and he intimated approval; but certain schisms and controversies arising in the Order about this time, the matter was lost sight of. According to one author, however, quoted by Wadding, but apparently without much confidence, the beatification was sanctioned by John's successor, and the feast ordered to be celebrated on the Wednesday of Holy Week.