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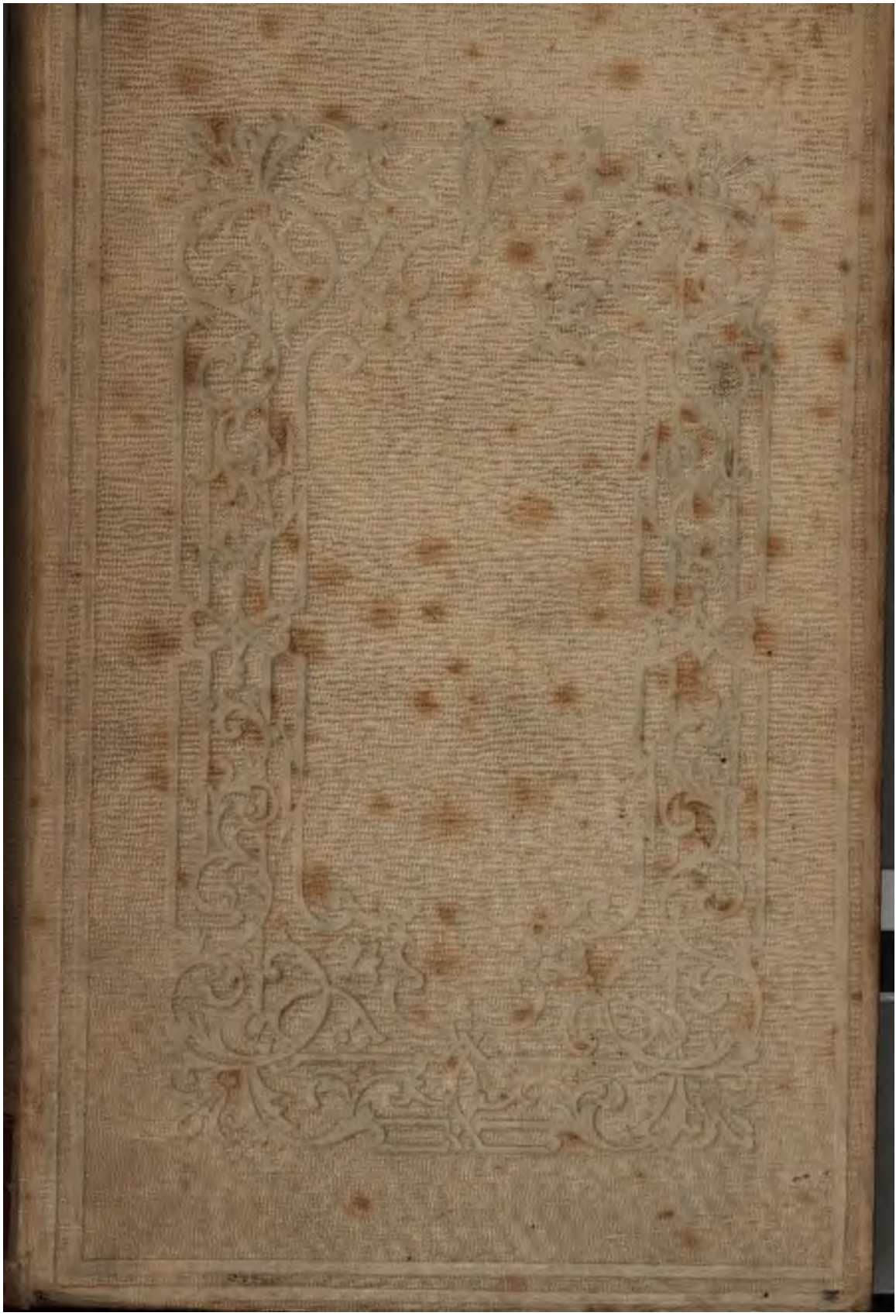

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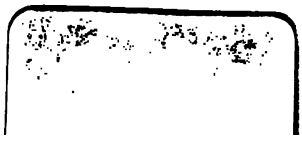


# THE HISTORY

OF

# THE HOLY, MILITARY, SOVEREIGN ORDER

OF

# ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM;

OR,

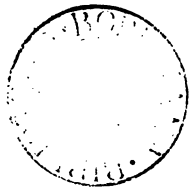
## KNIGHTS HOSPITALLERS, KNIGHTS TEMPLARS, KNIGHTS OF RHODES, KNIGHTS OF MALTA.

By JOHN TAAFFE,

KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE ORDER, AND AUTHOR OF "ADELAIS."

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.



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# THE HISTORY

OF THE ORDER OF

# ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM.

## BOOK III.—RHODES.—(CONTINUED.)

### CHAPTER III.

THE next to fill the magisterial throne was Sir Anthony Fluvian, or De la Riviere, a Catalan;[1] and his first act in that capacity, was to favour one who must have been an Englishman, since he was Turcopolier, though his name has an odd sound, Sir Thomas Sequipunt; but I dare say there is an error from the translation.[2] And the times being comparatively peaceful, there might be a large allowance of law; on which we find a 1423 Papal bull, referring for legal decision to Rhodes between two knights of that order,[3] which was, in truth, only to grant as a favour what had been ruled as obligatory as a right, by the late grand

[1] Seb. Paoli: ii. 406.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. v., anno 1421.
[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. v., anno 1421.
[3] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xcv.

master's chapter-general; and another bull graciously permitting the knights to raise a loan on their own property, towards the expenses of a fleet to face the Cairo sultan, who was threatening them with an invasion.[1] In 1426 cannon must have become quite common, for they are counted among the necessaries of an armed ship.[2] But the principal event of the period as regarded the community, was a chapter general holden at Rhodes, in May, 1428; for in it many important statutes were enacted—among which one of the voters being the Turcopolier, Sir Thomas Lanceleves—curious English name! How not in disguise? Perhaps Launceleweck[3] — is that no member can exercise commerce. Something of the kind might always have been in practice, but this is the first time that I see it laid down as a law.[4] Yet there were exceptions, as Venice, Genova, Florence. One statute renders all idle duels, and illegal homicides, as opprobrious as criminal. Another with proper severity represses corruption in officers and systematic debauchery. Others concern the treasury, the *Esgard*, the baillias,

1427

1428

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., xcvi.

[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. v., anno 1426.

[3] Id.: id. id. 1428.—Appendix, cli.

[4] Id.: id., vi., id. 1437.—*Che i cavalieri e fratelli diquest' ordine esercitar non possino mercantia.*

chiefly the grand Bailly of the German Language, inspector, until then, of St. Peter's Libertini, but which fortress, for the future, to be immediately under the grand masters. Esgard was a sort of court of arbitration, formed of the knights for themselves to prevent them, through respect—true signification of the word—from the noise, loss of time, and scandal of an open judicature. In the Esgard was neither lawyer allowed, nor writing, but only the parties to tell their own story; and this is the most ancient tribunal of the order, and not without something of the jury, in this that they are the *equals* of the accused. The baillias are a high and very ancient dignity, deriving from the French *baillez*, which was the word in fashion with the Kings of France, when conferring any place.[1] If to each of the different Languages had been assigned from the beginning, by custom, a particular dignitarian to head it, as the turcopolier to the English, yet it was for the future to be considered not merely custom, but matter legalized.[2] Caravan in Arabia signifying a company, it is used in the order for the knights chosen for such a garrison, or such expedition, whether by sea or

[1] Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, i. 490, and ii. 533.—App. cxlix.

[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccxxiv.—Appendix, cl. The prior was head of the order in Fngland. The turcopolier, head of the English language everywhere.

land.[1] Sir Anthony had been himself a grand cross, before chosen to be grand master; namely, that very ancient dignity, drapperius, in more modern times called grand conservator.[2]

Timour and Bajazet being dead — the latter's four sons might have divided his realm, or ascended the throne, legitimately, by turns; but that would have been to wait overlong for the youngest, so his fraternal hug relieved the three elders, and Mahomet I. reigned alone. After him his son, Amurath II., became sultan; who, but for Scanderbeg and Huniades, would have mastered all Greece and Hungary, of which the various sovereigns implored the protection of the grand master of Rhodes; who began to make what exertions he could, one of which was the calling of a new chapter general, that began at Rhodes, in 1433, and was continued at Bazil; in which the grand master, from his great age, did not appear in person but by a *locum-tenens;* and the property of the order stood for a large loan towards war with the infidel. To Rhodes the turcopolier hastened, with the king's permission to take gold and silver plate, to the value

1434

[1] Statuti Tit. xix.

[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., i., Num. cviii. The drapperius in 1241 was a French knight, Chev. Poncius Boschant. The Templars had the same dignity, and in 1241, held by the Chev. Pierre d'Aramont.

of three hundred marks.[1] The Order also received embassies of sympathy, of which one was from the King of England, by the Lord Scroope, then of the lords of the council, as his ambassador,[2] when a far worse enemy than the Turks singly—the Turks leagued with the Saracens—were on the point of invading the island; which, from its position between them, had for policy, never to be at direct warfare with both at a time. Rarely did Turk and Saracens coalesce. And now, as at war with the Turks, it would willingly have been at peace with Egypt. And, indeed, the Saracen, at the same time that he ruined the baillyhood of the order, at Cyprus, seized its king and kept him in fetters, 1435 requiring so vast a ransom that, but for the Knights of Rhodes, who gave him money to pay it, the unfortunate Lusignan would have remained in slavery his entire life. Still, though he pretended to renew the late Grand Master Naillac's treaty,[3] the not veracit Daher was determined to assail Rhodes, since taking it, Cyprus would fall of itself. This intelligence, which Sir Anthony had from his trusty spies at Cairo,made him write a circular, calling

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xcviii.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. v., anno 1433.

[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xcix.—Appendix, clii.

[3] Id., id., Id., lxxxvi.

on all his knights in Europe, who instantly replied by flying to Rhodes, in greater number far than was calculated on. In obedience to which the twenty-ninth Prior of England, Sir Robert Malorry, hurried off, with what stores he could collect, and we have the king's passport, allowing of his free embarkation, with his suite, and as far as a hundred marks sterling of gold and silver coin.[1] Daher, a Circassian by birth, had been brought to Cairo a child, and became Mameluke; as was usual with those soldiers carried off by barbarous robbers, or sold by their parents from their cradles in some Christian country, but chiefly Circassia or Georgia, and taken to Egypt to be circumcised. The constitution of which body was, that a father could, in no case, be succeeded by his son, and it may be said they never had legal wives. So this circumstance had for effect, that though many Mamelukes became sovereigns, there was never any royal family. Daher, at present, was king, and celebrated at his day. But with all his evil intentions, the enormous preparations of the knights, and their signal reputation for valour and military science, awed him and engaged him to abstain from his plan;[2] but there

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. c.—Appendix, cliii. and xxx. —Or Malory. Bosio calls him Malorto.

[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. v., anno 1435.

remained such immense expense, that they were obliged to mortgage some of their property. And be it reflected, before we pronounce the Papal consent superfluous, that to have it suited all parties, mortgagees as well as lenders, the sellers as well as the buyers, who often even required it as one of title deeds; for the Pope having been original trustee to nearly every legacy or donation, the lands lost much of their value when sold without his assent and all due formalities; whence it was well for the order to have it, though they were only disposing of their own. We may smile at it, and are wrong; but Sir Anthony and Rhodes were grateful. At Basil everything tended to the reunion of all the various members and interests of the order, and to wiping out any little remains of the great schism; nor did this chapter general break up quickly, but to hear of its proceedings, contributed to the quiet of Fluvian's deathbed; for he 1437 died at Rhodes, in 1437, on the twenty-sixth of October,[1] leaving to his order a legacy of two hundred thousand gold crowns, saved from his private fortune.[2] Mild and excellent prince, he was much regretted! At his own expense he

[1] Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 468.

[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. vi., anno 1437.

erected and endowed a princely infirmary at Rhodes, on the foundations of the former one, in the true spirit of the order, as was practised formerly, and shall be in the far future; where the sick and wounded of the knights themselves might be treated as became noble gentlemen, worthy of every respect and attention, as representatives of the warriors who had won the island, and of those who were its sovereigns, and defended it daily at the price of their blood.

This was the precise climax of the period when the order is said to have been more flourishing and rich than it ever was; and the majority in one of those chapters general (after a circular which brought an unusual flow) amounted only to four hundred and fifty-five knights; to whom if you add (but it must be on supposition, for I find it nowhere on record) a strong minority and the servants-at-arms, you may perhaps come to Vertot's thousand, certainly not surpass. But they were the choice officers of all Christendom, and enough to lead their hired troops, which were likewise excellent, as picked out from every Christian nation. The grand master was then held to be the most powerful Christian sovereign in the Levant; and for above a century (why not repeat it?) no mendicant is said to have been in Rhodes or any one of its numerous islets.

The able-bodied had plenty of work; and for the sick and old, they were cared for by the state, as is just; and there was a splendid hospital and a house of fair honourable maintenance, with good clothing and all necessaries, and many of the luxuries of life,[1] all gratis. As for crimes, there seem not to have been any.

His successor was the Grand Prior of Auvergne, Sir John de Lastic,[2] who was at his priory when he heard of his election, and, unable to proceed to Rhodes immediately in person, he sent to the commander Sir John Claret, already *locum-tenens*, to continue so. Then was Sir William Tong, Commander of Wilton in the Priory of England, made one of the magisterial commission that consisted of only three. Sir John Castello was Commander of Lemoggia in England.[3] Lastic's arrival in December, 1438, found secret communications already announcing a league between Saracens and Turks, and that the former were to invade Rhodes, which the latter were not to oppose. How matters really stood might be found out by an ambassador, whom Lastic despatched to Amurath II., under cloak of

[1] Vertot: v. 192; vi. 377.
[2] Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 468.
[3] Bosio: par. ii., lib. vi., anno 1437.

informing him of his election. To which the infidel returned fine words; but (not unwilling that the Knights of Rhodes should be occupied with Egypt, while he himself had to face the whole Christian league, including Castriot and Humniades), declined renewing the truce made with the late grand master, under pretence of its being totally superfluous, seeing they were candid friends; and that it was therefore as well to let things stand as they were. But this veil did not conceal the truth. On the contrary, it engaged Lastic to lose no time in directing his nephew Sir William de Lastic to visit Egypt, who hurried back to bid him expect to have the whole Egyptian force on his shoulders within a few days.[1] And indeed he soon saw he had acted wisely in summoning all his knights to join him; for the Egyptian fleet putting out very strong with sixteen fire-ships, and a large body of transports containing heavy artillery, and horse, and foot, and land troops of every description, as well as all the necessaries for regular sieges, after taking a fortified castle in one of its dependencies to the eastward,

1440 arrived off the harbour of Rhodes in September of 1440, but were soon driven off by the order's galleys.[2] The same year the Pope sent

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. vi., anno 1439.
[2] Id.: id., id. 1440.

a circular to all the kings of Christendom, informing them that the infamous Soldan of Egypt was preparing a large army in Asia to overwhelm the island of Rhodes, and eventually Europe itself.[1] But success did not prevent the wise grand master from writing to the Castellan d'Emposta and all the Spanish knights, in the most urgent terms, for either their persons or contributions, or both, since he foresaw this was the forerunner of a worse storm.[2] Yet grievous had been the Egyptian loss, and cannon and musketry were on both sides. Curious to see how general the use of gunpowder. They kept up a violent cannonade on each other, not only the Moslem, but likewise the Christian ships of war, being furnished with cannons and musketeers in efficient quantity. The guns of Lango, and other land batteries are spoken of as seemingly of long standing, and of the vessels taking shelter under their cannon. The same may be said of nearly every country in the civilised parts of Asia, and all Europe. We read of thirty-four pieces of cannon in the Milan army in 1397, and of twenty thousand muskets with the same in 1449.[3] It is impossible to indicate the exact

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ci.
[2] Id.: id., Id. cii.
[3] Hallam: Middle Ages, i. 254.

time when the old system ended and the new began, between the Greek fire and the sulphury cloud. The grand master's words relative to the Turkish bombs and artificial lights, make us think of our own bombardments, and congreve rockets, and Bengal illuminations; "bombardis et igne quo mirabili artificio utuntur."[1] Again Eugenius

1441 directs himself to all the Christian potentates, besceching of them to assist the Knights of Rhodes.[2] Nor did his Holiness not continue his benevolent exertions, but wrote to France, Germany, Spain, England, in the same tenor he uses in his brief to the priors, bailliffs, and Knights of Rhodes itself, to encourage their efforts.[3]

1444 The defeat of the Saracen invasion was so complete, that it is to these times some writers refer the Piedmontese, F. E. R. T. (though improperly), and even the pigmy sovereign Prester John, King of Abyssinia, threatened Daher with giving another direction to the Nile, and so destroying all Egypt, if he did not give over his hostilities against Christians, which, though perhaps no better than a rumour, is however repeated by

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cii.
[2] Id.: id. Id. ciii.
[3] Id.: id. Id. cv.—Appendix, clv.

others,[1] and shows what was the sentiment of the time, and the story is here given on the official authority of an Indian ambassador by the grand master, in a letter to the King of England.[2] The name Prester John was long an enigma. But our ancestors did no more than follow the practice of the time. *Æthiopiæ Reges omnes sunt Sacerdotes, Liturgiam super altarem celebrantes.* One of them in the eighth century was called Rex Ynnani, that is *of Nubia*, whose descendants, possessing also Æthiopia, went by the title of Pretiyunani, which though ill written by people who did not know the language, means simply, and word for word, *Kings of Nubia*; and as to emperor, it is pretended they reigned all over India.[3]

In 1445 a chapter general was holden at Rhodes, under what seems superfluous, but denotes the Pope's anxious partiality, perhaps a special Papal exhortation; and that same Pontiff in that same year engaged the grand master to hold by *locum-tenens*, a second chapter general in Sienna, removed afterwards to Rome.[4] All this 1445

[1] Ebendorfer Chron.—Bib. Crois., iii. 202.—Makrisi: Arab.

[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cviii.—Appendix, clvi.

[3] Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 548.

[4] Cod. Dipl. Geros., Giunt. Vatic., ii., Num. xvii.—Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 468.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. vi., anno 1445. The *locum-tenens* was not one, but three; the Priors of France and England, and the Castellan d'Emposta of Spain, Sir Robert Boutil, thirtieth English Prior.—Appendix, clviii., xxx.

had the effect of changing Amurath's politics, and, not to have the Knights of Rhodes also against him —when Scanderbeg turned out a still more dangerous foe than his father, truce between the Turks and Rhodes was gladly renewed. So the Order had breathing. Yet not of duration. But neither quite lost, for many excellent laws were framed by the chapter general from Sienna, transferred to Rome in 1446; where besides these three representatives of the grand master, are named of the English knights Sir Hugh Middleton, Turcopolier, Sir William Langstrother, Bailly of the Eagle, and Sir William Tong, Commander of Wilton. Where these two last were chosen by the entire Language of England to represent them.[1]

Grand Master Lastic confers his coat-of-arms on a Florentine gentleman, who had nobly come to Rhodes to volunteer his services during the late war, and afterwards been extremely useful in the treaty of peace with Egypt.[2]

1448

A third chapter general at Rhodes in 1449.[3]

It cannot be denied that the Popes exerted themselves much concerning Christendom. So in 1450

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. vi., anno 1446.

[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cix.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. vi., anno 1448.—Appendix, clvii.

[3] Bosio: par. ii., lib. vi., anno 1449.

Spain is exhorted with proof evident of the dreadful situation of the Knights of Rhodes, exposed to the infidels of both north and south.[1] 1450

Amurath II. sickened, and after some ill health dying of fatigues, and vexation of a defeat from Scanderbeg, was succeeded by his son Mahomet II.—every way fearful. The succession calling a cloud of ambassadors to speculate on a new reign, Lastic also sent his, and the juvenile sultan received them all courteously, and swore solemnly to renew the numerous alliances—even that with Constantinople; but took it by storm the very next year. The alarm rang all through Europe, even before he had seized on the Grecian capital. His own horrid outbreak previous to marching was, "Constantinople first, and Rhodes next!" Religious fanaticism might enter for a trifle, but was it his principal scope? Certainly not. How could it? He was an atheist—as much as not thinking of the matter, creates that rare bird. Ferocity and ambition can drown thought.[2]

Lastic had to write his circular, summoning the

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cx.

[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. vi., anno 1452, 1453. Certainly it was a very notable thing, as the venerable historian remarks, that the first Constantinopolitan Emperor was a Constantine, son of Helen, and the last a Constantine, son of a Helen.

knights to leave Europe, and hasten to defend Rhodes. If Daher and his Saracens were worse than Amurath's Turks, yet these led by Mahomet II., fresh from the success of Constantinople, would be undoubtedly far more tremendous. "After weeping over the miserable downfall of illustrious Constantinople, as we wrote to you in other letters, this is to command you instantly to come hither, where most urgent is the want of your assistance. For not a day or night elapses, without hearing of some new slaughter of Christians by the Grand Turk and his inhuman cruelties; not from vain rumour, but from our own confidential ambassadors, who relate what they saw with their own eyes. So it is a certain fact that horrors inexpiable have been already perpetrated. Expect no further letters from us, or exhortations, or commands; but the moment you receive these lines, set out at once on your journey towards Rhodes by the quickest conveyance love or money can procure." Such is Lastic's circular, dated 20th January, 1453.[1] January must have been at the end, not beginning of the year, since Constantinople had been taken in the preceding months.[2]

1453

1 Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxi.—Appendix, clix.

2 On the 29th of May of 1453, says Bssio: par. ii., lib. vi., anno 1453.

At that time, the year began in March, that is with some, (as Seb. Paoli observes) who just then began to count the year from the 25th of March, *ab incarnatione*.[1]

In 1454, a letter from the King of England to the Venetians, implores them to be juster and kinder to the Hospitallers, who were defending the universal cause of Christendom; and that, but for the Hospitallers, the whole of Europe would be ruined.[2] Certainly Harry VI. was not cold on the matter; for within the same twelvemonth here are four other of his letters on the same subject. One to the emperor,[3] one to the Pope,[4] one to the College of Cardinals,[5] and one to the Grand Master himself, to encourage him;[6] the three last on the same day. The Langstrother, of whom King Henry speaks as the Hospital's ambassador in England, and an Englishman, was Sir John Langstrother, Commander of Basal and Graston in England,[7] and later Bailiff of the Eagle, but eventually raised to several of the foreign dignities in the order, and died 1454

[1] Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 548.
[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxii.
[3] Id., id., Id. cxiii.
[4] Id., id., Id. cxiv. Appendix, clx.
[5] Id., id., Id. cxv.
[6] Id., id., Id. cxvi.—Appendix, clxi.
[7] Bosio: par. ii., lib. vi., anno 1449.

Grand Commander of Cyprus in 1471.[1] So there were two Langstrothers—William and John, contemporary Knights of Rhodes. After the murder of Irene, began Mahomet's movements towards Rhodes. His way of declaring war was curious. A herald landed at Rhodes, and proclaimed the sultan's demand of two thousand ducats of annual tribute from the knights, which Lastic as solemnly in the quietest terms refused, he being an independent sovereign, and the knights from all the chief European families; so that they could do nothing without consulting the various sovereigns, and above all, the head of their common religion at Rome.[2] On this the Turkish herald announced war, and that his master would come, conquer, and destroy the island and the islets immediately, and again sailed. Instantly was sent off the Commander D'Aubusson on an embassy to Charles VII., King of France, to tell him all that, less from any hope that his succours could arrive in time, than to leave no means untried, or duty undone, when—to a dead man had even our Henry VI. been writing; for his letter is dated 24th of July, 1454, and Lastic (who was aged) had expired on the 19th May of that year.[3] Though

[1] Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 550.
[2] Id.: Id., ii. 551.
[3] Id.: Serie, ii. 469.

it has been said that Fulk de Villaret was called Grand Master, it appears, from what is in the order's chancery, that Lastic was the first to whom that title was officially and generally given.[1] On the 1st of June, 1454,[2] was chosen for thirty-seventh Grand Master Sir James de Milly, Grand Commander of Cyprus, Captain-General of the Fleet, and lastly Grand Prior of Auvergne, which may imply his birth, but no proof. Wondering that at a time when there yet were numbers of English in the order, we find no grand masters of our nation since ever it came to Rhodes, although full surely there were, only their names are too concealed in the translations, I blame myself severely for my want of perspicacity to discern them. Mere sound, to be sure, is insufficient evidence, or rather none at all. Montalt, Montegon, Montherme, Morevic, Moreville, Montfort, Munchensi, Montfichet, Molines, Meschimes, Mussard, and several others, without going out of the M, are good old English names,[3] though they have little the appearance of it to the ear. Who would know them if translated? Even without that operation, they are not very cognizable at present.

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. vii., anno 1454.

[2] Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 469.

[3] Any book of heraldry. What lies on every table will do. Sir Harris Nicolas: Synopsis of the Peerage, ii.

Sir William d'Aunay the Turcopolier, and Sir John Lambton, are selected as of the most renowned knights of the English language in 1454.[1] Is he of the family of Dawney in Lodge?[2] A fleet sent by Mahomet II., in 1457, sacked a village on the coast of Rhodes, and returned with their booty to Constantinople, which was a more grievous loss to the island than such a small matter seemed to merit;

1459 for it rendered the Rhodian peasantry timorous, and little propense to tillage ever after. And to escape death, many of them became renegades and spies on their own countrymen.[3]

Assuredly the good Bosio was engaged (perhaps cajoled) into inserting in his history some documents a little whimsical, which have no existence in the Cod. Dipl. Geros.; as that imputed to Caoursinus, the Vice-chancellor of the Order in 1457, though scarcely his. Of Milly's short reign little is recounted, except that he held two chapters general; one on the 10th of November, in the same year as his election, and the other on the 10th of October in 1459, wherein Sir Thomas Damport appeared to represent the turcopolier, as also Sir William Frestan and Sir John Langstrother for the English

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. vii., anno 1454.
[2] Lodge: Peerage of Ireland, v. 72.
[3] Bosio: par. ii., lib. vii., anno 1457.

language.[1] When it was regularly enacted that the statutes regarding hospitality should be written out on parchment, and hung up where the knights could not avoid seeing it every day, to have that fundamental duty well impressed on their minds; likewise, that two officers of the infirmary shall have the same authority as notaries public, regarding the wills of persons who die in it; that what the dying has told them shall be inscribed before witnesses in a book kept on purpose, and its contents be law, to which the heirs may refer as to a legal depository.[2] If in births death lurks, like poison, so do Languages in the order; yet no blame to Gerard or his next, for he died two centuries before Languages began! Nor was this meeting without the usual disputes; yet near is what unites every one.[3] And a commander said: "Not without deep sorrow and apprehension, do I see dissensions, attributable chiefly to the division of the order into Languages, *flagitiosa dissidentia!* It will be our destruction; mind what I tell you. Would I were a false prophet! But it bodes nothing save evil!" Yet were his exhortations in vain. The four Languages, Italian,

[1] Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii., 469.
[2] Statut: De Hospitalitate, Tit. iv. 7, 8, 18.
[3] Bosio: par ii., lib. vii., anno 1459.

English, Spanish, German, seemed a majority, yet were not. The three French, Auvergne, Provence, France, with the grand master, who had two votes, constituted five. He ought to have been impartial, but was he? An Auvergnian, he sided with Auvergne; at least it was suspected so. For this time, however, the sedition blew over by Milly's falling sick.[1] On his recovering a little, he might attend to the inextricable turmoils of Cyprus—cause or pretext. Its intricate affairs at all events furnished a pretext for the Venetians taking part with the Saracens and Turks; and Lusignan sold himself to the soldan. Was there anything of the prerogative of a free mind in all that? And with great pomp and barbarous solemnities, he was crowned King of Cyprus, after doing homage to the infidel, and obliging himself to dependence superlatively rigorous and fealty, and under dictation pronounced this most humiliating, impious, abominable oath: "By the great God, high, merciful, benign Creator of heaven and earth, and all the things which are in them; by these holy gospels, by the holy baptism, by St. John the Baptist, and by all the saints, and by the faith of the Christians, I promise and swear that whatever I come to learn, I will make it known and discover it, and reveal all such projects to my

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. vii., anno 1459.

most high lord and master the soldan, whose kingdom may God strengthen it. I will be a friend of the soldan's friends, and enemy of his enemies. I will not tolerate pirates in my dominions, nor will aid them in any way, or give them victuals. The Mahometans who are slaves in Cyprus, I will buy them, and give them their liberty. I will offer up as tribute on the first of September or October, every year in the most mighty temples of Jerusalem or Lamech. I will prevent the Knights of Rhodes from aiding the European pirates . . . and if I do not perform all I promise, I will own myself a renegade and apostate from God's commandments and the Christian faith. I will say that the Gospel is false; I will deny that Christ lives, and that Mary his mother was a virgin; I will immolate a camel on the baptismal fount; I will curse the priests from the altar, and—" but who not blush, and his pen blister his fingers, if he transcribed the rest?[1]

Yet the wise Milly preferred to yield some of his rights, rather than expose his unfortunate subjects. "With your valour," said he to his knights, "I know extremely well I can resist the republic of Venice; but can I prevent their galleys from surprising some point of the island, and carrying off

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. vii., anno 1459.

some of our peasantry into captivity? I believe it is better to liberate a few Saracens, however criminal, than that any of our own poor subjects and their families should risk chains and torments." Nor did the order's council not applaud their generous old chief's sentiments.[1] But though the grand master pardoned the four Languages, who had returned to their duty in the chapter general, where Sir Thomas Damport now appeared in somewhat another quality, as deputed with Sir John Langstrother, Commander of Basal and Graston, to represent the English, yet soon did worse than external enemies break out anew; the divisions among the knights themselves, with more bitter words than ever—the four Languages complaining against those of France, which were three, and that of Provence at the head; whereas in a commonwealth like theirs, all nations should be equal. Provence declared that the first place belonged to France, both from birthright and merit; since it was from the French the institution sprang, and their ancestors exclusively founded it, and by degrees admitted all the other nations.—That Normandy was theirs, and had always been theirs — and they, the Normans — so that, as successors of their common forefathers, they claimed the marks of honour won by their blood;

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. vii., anno 1460.—Vertot: vii. 23.

and of which it was unjust to deprive them.[1] Partly assuaged or not, it was during such state of things that Milly died on the 17th of August, 1461.[2] 1461

Sir Richard Leufort and Sir Myles Scaffo were the English knights at the ensuing election on the last Monday of August, 1461.[3] By a most regular plurality of suffrages (whatever said) was then chosen Sir Peter Raymond Zacosta, a Castilian and at that time in Spain Castellan d'Emposta.

If after so many grand masters had been French, this one of a Spaniard argues, what undue influence over the election? This single fact may put down a wagon load of speeches. He reigned little longer than his predecessor, each about six years. From Spain round by Rome, Zacosta reached Rhodes in June of 1462. In the chapter general in October, 1462 (present Sir John Weston, Commander of the magisterial chamber in England, and the turcopolier's lieutenant[4]) holden by the scarcely arrived Zacosta, issued was the decree by which the *quæstio vexata* was settled with the triumph of Spain, by giving it another language—that is, by splitting it

[1] Vertot: vii. 24.
[2] Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 469.
[3] Bosio: par. ii., lib. vii., anno 1461.—Seb. Paoli: ii. 469,
[4] Id.: viii. anno 1463.

into two. 1. Arragon including as before Catalogne and Navarre, retaining that old dignity Draperius for their head, one of the pillars of the order. 2. Castile, including Leon and the other Spanish provinces, with also the kingdom of Portugal. "Yet with whatever ruin we be threatened," said one of the number, "I should much prefer seeing the Languages blotted from our laws; and doubt extremely if dividing us into eight, instead of seven, will result in good, but rather increase the evil. The one inn at present (which tends to speaking one tongue and peace) may be altered some years hence. Who knows? Let us hope every change is not to be in the sense of subdividing us more and more. That the chief of the new Language should keep the iron seal, is just and proper, since to him is to be transferred the ancient title of Chancellor, who seals whatever is admitted to a place in the archives, and on whom the privilege of us all has always depended."[1]

1462

On the 23rd of March, 1463, he sent a circular for all belonging to the order to hasten to Rhodes,[2] and this was corroborated by a Papal bull in February of the very next year, supplicating and

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxix.—Appendix, clxii.

[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. viii., anno 1463.

commanding—stretching the Pontifical authority to its very utmost—under pain of *ipso facto* excommunication, in the highest and worst degree of it, which no power on earth, but the Pontiff alone, can absolve from, except at the hour of death, without distinction even of those dignified with the cardinalship itself, still less others said to be protected by kings at foreign courts, to set out immediately for Rhodes, according to the command already issued by their grand master, with the full consent of the whole body of their brothers assembled in that island in chapt. gen.; whose ordinances whoever neglects them, let him know the curse of the Omnipotent God will fall upon him.[1] And dated on this very same day, is a circular to all the princes in Europe, in which how dangerous the situation of Rhodes, with menaces of incursions from both Saracens and Turks, and ravages of the plague, which had broken out there with dreaful violence, as ambassadors from the grand master have too truly brought us word, and which produces its miserable sequel, famine; all these horrific details are given by the Pope with fervid and deep eloquence.[2]

1464

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxviii.—Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 551.—Appendix, clxiii.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. viii., anno 1464.

[2] Cod Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxvii.—Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 551.

Zacosta rendered his memory lasting by several splendid acts; particularly building the gate and fort of St. Nicholas at his own expense, with some slight pecuniary aid from the Duke of Burgundy.[1] Zacosta's defending of Lesbos personally against the Turks, was remarkably gallant. Zacosta also enacted that the whole line of defences all round the city should be apportioned out to the different Languages, each Language to have its portion for ever, and be named by its name; and none were stronger, or more aptly embellished than the English bastion, to judge even by the remains of it at this day.[2]

In his time at least, at chapter generals, each member was seated, and spoke from his place. One such meeting convened at Rhodes, but by Roman interference altered to Rome, thither where a calumny had been cast on him, he hastened to put it down; on which occasion, among others of his retinue,were the Prior of Ireland, Sir James Chetin, Sir John Langstrother, now Bailly of the Eagle, Sir JohnTurner, Lieutenant of theTurcopolier, Sir John Kendal. In that public consistory when the Pontiff questioned him in a long astute Latin oration, the grand master replied in his maternal tongue,

[1] Seb. Paol: Notizie, ii. 494.

[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. viii., anno 1465.

with a soldier's frankness, notwithstanding his heavy load of years: "I neither know nor see, in truth, of what we can be called culpable. If we have done wrong, we will endeavour to do what is better, and crave pardon. This only I well know and freely avow, that in consequence of the wars, quarrels, discords, fomented not by any fault of ours, but of the malignity of envious, malevolent men, our order has suffered great and ruinous damage; which it has not been in our power to remedy." Justice was finally accorded to the excellent, though rather punctilious old gentleman; but the great exertion bore him down, and he caught a fever at Rome—perhaps by coming thither at all (since some said the voyage and such frequent change of air, sufficed alone to hasten his end), and expired there in February of 1467; and was by Pontifical command buried in St. Peter's, where his recumbent statue in basso-relievo on his grave, represents a long beard that reaches his girdle.[1] At the re-edification of the church, his gravestone changed place a little, but is still to be seen.[2] Knights, and others of the order at that time in Rome, being in one of the Papal ante-chambers,

1467

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. viii., anno 1467.—Bouhours: Vie D'Aubusson, i. 44.

[2] Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 469. Note H.—Appendix, clxiv.

and allowing themselves to be influenced into electing there the grand master (although they protested he ought to be so at Rhodes) elected the Prior of Rome, Sir John Orsini, who voted for the Prior of England; and as return, the English eagle voted for the Prior of Rome. But one Englishman at least, Sir John Weston, then only a simple Knight of Rhodes, gave his vote boldly in contradiction to the Papacy, whose choice, however, was of one not unworthy. Nor did Weston's example go for nothing; since St. Gilles was within a single vote, he having eight and Orsini nine; which votes were collected and written down in a list by the Pontiff's own hands, and moreover he read them aloud; and in the next consistory of cardinals proclaimed the result from his Vatican throne.[1]

The new grand master instantly set out for Rhodes, and despatched a circular calling on all the knights and servants-at-arms to join him in that island, in order to present a sufficient front to the menaces of Mahomet II., whose inextinguishable ambition never left them a moment's ease. Responded to it with the happiest diligence an influx of signal persons,[2] among whom is named a Sir . . . Scaf, a Bourbon, divers Englishmen, and

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. viii., anno 1467.
[2] Id.: id.,ix., anno 1471.

D'Aubusson, remarkable for his military acquirements—particularly in the branch of it then most requisite at Rhodes, fortification—and he was named captain-general and inspector of the whole island; and he widened the ditches of the city, and at the grand master's private expense, raised a wall on the sea-side of above a hundred perches long and six yards high, and prodigious thickness.[1] So that worse than Nero, Mahomet II. (whose mother had been a Christian, and himself bred up as such, and instructed by the good and learned Greek Patriarch) professed Mahometanism, and hated the Christians, being truly of no religion, but utterly ungodly, and full of vices the most cruel,[2] considering the magnitude of an attack on Rhodes, he prepared for it by that of Negropont, in which the Venetian Erizzo distinguished himself by his gallant defence and honourable death; and his beautiful daughter died a blessed martyr, after barbarians had murdered her father. Mahomet, who had promised to spare his head by a sworn capitulation, kept it by having the unfortunate Provveditore sawed in two, leaving his head intact. Nor is it surprising the Turk conquered, with an army of two hundred thousand, and a powerful fleet off the

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. ix., anno 1472.
[2] Bouhours: Vie D'Aubusson, i. 26.

coast, against a handful of Christians.[1] With wise and most laudable policy, Orsini was part in procuring a diversion of the invaders, by receiving with conciliating courtesy a Persian ambassador; and did not scruple to enter into an alliance with Mussulman Persia against the Turks and Saracens, and sent a hundred of his expertest knights, with good founders and gunners, to discipline the Persian army, and introduce the European founderies and artillery, and harquebusiers, in which the Persians were deficient; though their cavalry was then the best and finest in the world.[2]

Deeply persuaded of the use of chapters general, Orsini convened one in November, 1471, after having already been put off four times;[3] of which not many vestiges remain. Yet some do, as that against debts; that no dignity can be conferred on him who has not first paid his debts to the last farthing; and that prescribing the length of sittings of chapters general, that they must sit at least fifteen days (holidays not included), and even a little longer, if the grand master and his council choose.[4]

1471

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. ix., anno 1470.
[2] Vertot: vii. 54.
[3] Bosio: par. ii., lib. ix., anno 1471.
[4] Statuti: Tit. v., Num. 24., vi. 14.

D'Aubusson, who continued inspector of the fortifications of Rhodes and captain general, even after becoming Grand Prior of Auvergne, never relaxed from his zeal and vigilance. Nothing escaped his observation, and under him the Rhodian defences became every day stronger; and rightly, for excessive danger menaced continually. To knights and grand master, D'Aubusson's advice was law. He was the soul and main-spring of every resolution of the council, whether regarding war, finance, or fortifications. He himself executed what he had himself proposed. Always surrounded by officers, artisans, workmen, the difference of affairs never perplexed him. He passed from one to the other with signal readiness. The extent and facility of his mind sufficed for everything. The grand master, aged and infirm, wanted such a prop.[1]

Of which chapter general formed part Sir John Weston, Turcopolier; Sir Robert Tong, Bailiff of the Eagle; Sir John Bosnel, deputy for England; and the grand master was given his standard and the purses, according to the usual ceremony, denoting expropriation in the knights, and obedience and individual poverty. And the favourite

[1] Bosio—Vertot: vii. 61.—Vie D'Aubusson, lib. i.

of a King of England, Sir John Langstrother, having died Grand Commander of Cyprus, the dignity was conferred on another. Of that same year are the letters patent of the King of France, to permit every one of the order to traverse his kingdom freely, with their horses, and whatever they have, without stoppage or disturbance of any kind, or examination, hurrying as they are to Rhodes and the battles in that quarter.[1] The union of the Greek and Latin Churches, as established by the Council of Florence, was always inviolably kept to by the Rhodians, and therefore it more easily came to pass that the people of Rhodes got much attached to the order. Many of the principal, noblest, and richest families then followed the Roman ritual, and the others who did not, yet had to deviate in nothing from their own. So they sturdily asserted they were all of one religion.[2]

The Turcopolier Sir John Weston was named commander of the galleys that were sent to join the Venetian fleet under Moncenigo, in 1473.[3]

On the 1st September, 1475, another general

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxx.—Appendix, clxv.
[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. ix., anno 1471.—Appendix, clxvi.
[3] Id.: id., anno 1473.

chapter met, of which we have a regular record.[1] And in this was a law about horses for the defence of the island; and that the marshal and his staff shall be furnished with horses, clearly showing that cavalry was no longer the principal arm with the knights, but that, though they still somewhat used the land service, it was rather by way of exception, and that they had almost entirely taken the naval bent, ships and artillery occupying their chief thoughts. 1475

And in it Sir John Bosnel appeared as representative of the turcopolier (absent with the fleet, as we have seen), and he and Sir John Vaquelin were for the English language. About which time the King of Naples sent an ambassador to beg for some of the falcons for which Rhodes was then so famous; and the grand master hurried off his falconers into that part of the island where the most sacred, gentle, and best-blooded falcons are found, and expedited several of them to his majesty; and gave strict orders, under a heavy fine and severe comminatories, that no one should presume to catch such birds.[2]

And a prorogation made this chapter last till the 6th of the next following December.[3] But on the

[1] Statuti: Tit., v., Num. 71.—Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxxi.

[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. x., anno 1475.

[3] Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 551.

8th of June, in 1476, he died of a severe malady,
1476 as his monument testifies still in St. John's Church at Rhodes; which the barbarians spared, and its inscription was legible to travellers a few years ago, as a lamentable but not singular proof of the wretched taste of the times.[1]

[1] Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 470.

## CHAPTER IV.

UNANIMOUS were the Knights, those for England being Sir John Bosnel, and Sir John Vaquelin; yet kept to the various ancient customs. As usual in such elections the triumvirate composed of a knight, a churchman, and a servant-of-arms, recalled the three original bodies which have ever formed the order; and the sixteen electors, chosen by all the knightly corps, came out from the chapel three several times, and asked if the order would stand by their election, and were each time answered *yes*, by each of the knights—who, while uttering it, in turn, placed their right hand on the cross on their breast; on which the sixteen returned into the chapel, and soon coming out again, announced Sir Peter D'Aubusson as the new grand master.[1]

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. x., anno 1476.

He had been grand master in reality—in the affections of his order. With as sincere and pure joy did the Rhodian population also light bonfires for his election. All dread of Mahomet vanished, since D'Aubusson was their sovereign. His name alone is sufficient eulogy. Eternal in the whole Christian world. He but remounted towards his ancestral source; since if raised to a throne, his house had occupied many thrones—not omitting Dukes of Normandy, and Kings of Saxon England.[1] He had been a soldier from his boyhood, but cultivated letters too; and in his early campaigns in Hungary, had become a Knight Hospitaller.[2] One of his first acts, was to put himself at the head of a body of cavalry, and visit the whole island—leisurely, inquisitive review, and scarce back into the city, when he directed a circular to the Grand Prior of France, and every other prior, commanders, knights, and all members of the order, to hasten to join him at Rhodes, and participate in the defence against the Turks, who were making all imaginable preparations to invade that island.[3]

Nor was he not anew supplicated to accept the

[1] Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 470.—Caoursinus.—Codgia Effendi.—Bayle.

[2] Bouhours: Vie D'Aubusson, i. 16.

[3] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxxii.—Appendix, clxvii.

charge of captain general, which he did; and, as that of the treasury was included, it was in fact making him dictator during the siege.[1]

In the ensuing May of 1478 there was a chapter general holden in Rhodes,[2] in which several of the wisest laws were made, as loss 1478 of ten years of rank, for whoever obtains a letter of recommendation from a foreign sovereign for any place or dignity in the order—if ever any of its knights could be guilty of such insolent baseness.[3] But what illustrated this chapter general most is its ratification of what the public voice had already done, investing D'Aubusson, with absolute power in every respect, not one alone—during the siege.[4]

That long threatening was at last at hand. Yet not quite, for in spite of everything—Constantinople itself, and afterwards Trebisond, Persia, Negropont, Lesbos, had been but preparations. At Scutari, where the Turks were driven back, so vast a number of arrows were shot, that the townsmen gathering them up, were supplied with firewood for several months—and this too, when artillery and gunpowder were in full use, both with

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. x., anno 1477.
[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxxii.
[3] Statuta de Pœnis, xviii. 16.
[4] Bouhours: Vie D'Aubusson, ii. 68.—Vertot; vii. 82.

besiegers and besieged.[1] The sovereign dictatorial position of D'Aubusson, during the war, corresponded with his military—and indeed after it, by the assent of his subjects. So the supremacy of his rule, there were none to dispute. What would have been his conduct in the more difficult situation of having equals or superiors, is doubtful; but as the case stood, he acted a very noble part, and showed fully as varied talents as almost any one, ancient or modern, and on a greater scale. True, little of his writing remains now, to justify such an encomium. But we have the voice come down to us in several unanswerable documents. When the Turks had nearly filled up the ditch to a level with the ravelin, though his quick discernment suggested at once the proper remedy; yet, for his great modesty he called a council, not of the Hospitallers only, but of all of any esteem of the different nations then in Rhodes—a crowd of the most celebrated persons of nearly every art and science in the Christian world; practical veterans from every nation in Europe, several of them volunteers, many merchants, from all parts of the civilised globe—men of eminent talents, inventions, dexterity, genius, all intensely applied to defend the city, which

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xi., anno 1479.

they considered their own—the general property of all countries. Not an individual of them, or the whole, could rival with the grand master in practice, experience, unerring judgment, foresight to distinguish every difficulty, and discover means to obviate it; so that the entire meeting, when they heard his plan, approved it—rejecting their own and everything besides—and unanimously saw he had selected what must succeed;[1] and that opinion went on, always increasing while he lived; so that long after the siege, to prevent financial disasters, the order conjured him to take the administration of the treasury for ever, entirely into his own irresponsible hands—which he acceded to with difficulty; nor for ever, but stipulating for only three years, enough to regulate it completely; as he did, and restored it to responsible ministers as before, rendering them a clear account to the last fraction. Indeed, scarce a single transaction great or small, particularly during the siege, but he directed himself—making his own gunpowder, superintending the building of his own shipping, erecting his own batteries, minutest duties of an engineer, chemical preparations, and secrets of different kinds; and in the hospital, where he was very

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xi., anno 1480.

assiduous in visiting the sick individually, exacting the details of progress of cure from the doctors.[1] Not from any indifference to religion—and he certainly thought his own the best—but he would not allow it to be propagated by any but fair means; nor admitted of illtimed arguments, only calculated to produce disquietude and domestic strife, nor proselytism, except when clearly prudent; saying that as sovereign of the island, he had to reign, not over the Latins alone, but the Greeks too—schismatic or not—and to treat both with the strictest impartiality—while as a Christian soldier, he was bound to rest neutral between all Christians. No theologian, he resolved not to enter into the dispute about the Council of Florence and the rites ; but, as a temporal authority, to show the self-same treatment to each. But let us take things in their regular sequence. It is said Mahomet regretted that his designs had been penetrated before completely ripe; and wishing for what the proudest of men could not brook asking, he gave orders to his son Zain, then governor of the neighbouring coast of Asia Minor, to send a subtle Greek renegade to Rhodes and propose a truce—to which the able grand master agreed at once; not at all deceived, but desirous of leaving the passage free for succours from Europe. It was

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xiv., anno 1488.

the duper duped. Mahomet's infernal intention was to put Rhodes off its guard, and cool the fervour of the Latin princes. Amongst these was D'Aubusson's elder brother, the Vicomte de Monteuil, who, at the head of a rather large corps, raised and maintained at his own expense, came to volunteer his services; which were gratefully accepted, and himself chosen to a high command in aid of his younger brother, throughout the impending struggle.[1] And indeed there was a sort of friendly rivalry in quickness of obedience, contrivance, industry, and valour between these volunteers and the knights themselves, during the whole siege. There was a good deal about spies (particularly Greeks), and spy-boats, and secret intelligence, and preliminary fence—carte and tierce—on both sides, during the two years that immediately preceded the famous 1480—nor only before iron, but assisting it. The scoundrels were for the most part treated as they merited. Not but some of them had first furnished the Turk with detailed maps, most exactly minute, of the fortifications of Rhodes—maps used in the assaults; when in the long run, the infamous draughtsman was found out, the people would have torn him to pieces, but that his jailors had the mercy to hang him.[2]

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xi., anno 1480.—Vertot: vii. 85.
[2] Id.: id., id. 1479.

To the spy from Constantinople, who just before the siege had come to separate the natives from the order, offering as an inducement that the Grand Seignor would treat them like the rajahs (their co-religionists), who lived happily under his kind government, and that they might even expect peculiar graces—"Greek and Latin all the same!" cried the Rhodians. "We are all of one belief; it is a mistake to think we are not, our trust being in the same Lord Jesus. We are all Christians, servants of the blessed Virgin-Mother, and will be nothing else. We are no emasculated slaves of a despotism, nor circumcised Jews, nor Egyptian vermin, eaten up by money-dealing and every abomination and vice! But we are stout, able-bodied men, standing armed hand in hand with our heroic brothers from Europe; who, brave knights, have arms also, and know well how to make use of them, nor desire anything else so ardently. You deceive yourselves in thinking to divide us. For in truth we are most faithfully and affectionately attached to these valiant gentlemen, who look upon us as their own brothers, and of their own blood, children of the same family, rather than as subjects or vassals. So do you go your own way, and we will go ours. Do you your worst, and we our duty. With God's aid, we'll beat you. Act as becomes

Turks, and we'll not be backward to requite you. You shall have to do with no effeminate Asiatics, but with us, and valorous knights, and the most excellent soldiers from every Christian nation." Yet was there some rhodomontade in this, perhaps to stir up courage in themselves, and even keep off the enemy by that show, and letting him perceive they were not alone, but leaning on the securest of human protectors; for, in spite of a multitude of exceptions, the Rhodians were rather mild and fickle, or voluble, than very perseveringly valiant. Those undismayed knights seem to have infused their own spirit, during the sanguinary struggles, into the whole population, male and female, and converted them into intrepid veterans.[1]

A few days previous to 1480, a noted Ferrarese physician sent an astrological prediction to Corvinus of Hungary, that both Belgrade and Rhodes would be taken by the Turk, which, no doubt, was considered, by the public, as referring to the then present; yet was not, but was unfortunately to be realized several years later.[2] Yet who rung in the celebrated year but the Pope, in his bull, dated January, 1480?[3] And assuredly its 1480

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xi. and xix.

[2] Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 570.—Appendix, clxviii.

[3] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxxiv.

sentiments were as worthy of Christendom's high priest, as of the gallant warriors in whose favor it was written. Nor do we not find some of the same spirit in the letter of the King of England, in the following April, wherein, after speaking of his faithful Irish subjects, and the defence of Rhodes (for which Sir John Kendall, the Turcopolier, was sent to seek recruits in Ireland), the monarch adds, "We command the aforesaid John Kendall, Knight, Turcopolier of the Order of Rhodes, and *locum-tenens* for the grand master in England, Italy, Flanders, and Ireland, to attend to that business, with the greatest care and despatch; and whoever aids his commissioners, or John Kendall the Turcopolier himself, will be doing what is very agreeable to us."[1] And a couple of months after, we have a proof that brave and vigilant D'Aubusson was no ways wanting to his fame or his duties, since (after the many circulars he had issued, all in the same sense, for they were many, in hopes some of them might arrive, he knowing that the Turks had intercepted several,[2] and were bent on intercepting all, as a means of cutting off his communications with Europe)—we still have this, probably the only one remaining, when the terrible drama had already

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxxiii.
[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xi.

begun, but yet succours might still have been efficient—circular to the whole order, as well to those in Rhodes, as to those somewhat dilatory in coming thither, dated May 28th, 1480—showing that all the workings of the Grand Turk had Rhodes for their true and ultimate object, with inexorable hate: "because his insane fury considers our very resistance to his will, and that we resolutely scorn even to hear of tribute, deep guilt; therefore his immense fleet of one hundred and nine sail, or thereabouts, has been surrounding and blockading us from the 15th of last June, and has machinery and heavy artillery, and mortars, and huge preparatives of every kind, for war the most destructive and inhuman. Do not flatter yourselves that we have to withstand an inexpert soldier, or effeminate Asiatics. But we also have abundant means of defence, our troops, knights, stores of every description, and this beautiful city, surrounded with strong walls, ramparts, ditches, bastions, towers, fortified and adorned. The tyrant hopes that by prolongation he may force us to consume all our provisions, and terrify, beat down, attenuate our soldiery; while, with him it is not so, but when he loses any number of his men, others may replace them from the continent. The rabid dragon is in error, and does not see what succours will flow

inundating us from Rome the great, and the various sovereigns of Christendom. Nor knows he how intense, most ardent, is the zeal and incomparable obedience of our brethren, and their invincible courage; which precludes the possibility of any substantial danger to this metropolis and capital of our order, its ark, this sacred city of Rhodes. Our enemy has no idea of our true position, and that the breezes of spring and autumn carry ships, with careful and intelligent pilots, down swiftly through the Lycian current, and straight into our harbour, without the possibility of stopping them. Dearest companions, this is what I assure you of; and you may fully credit me, you that are here. For those others, I implore their aid and command it. Let us hope for succours; but, at all events, feel quite certain of victory. Most distinguished, most honourable confraternity, you see the immensity of our perilous situation; but to us not perilous, from your incomparable bravery. But let those at a distance know that Rhodes is in a state of siege—Rhodes our glory, our delicious home, and proud jewel of our order—this common refuge of all Christians in the East—their resting-place, asylum, garden of delight — the city of ancient fame, and splendour, and magnificence, is blocked and besieged by the Turks! Think of eternal life and your

mighty renown. Come quickly you who are as yet away, into our common treasury, instantly, as an impetuous river into the sea, rush responsions and payments for three years in advance, from throughout all the priories, commanderies, houses, knight's fees, the whole property of the order."[1]

Gardens, villas, most verdant hills, orange groves, pomegranates, woods, a profusion of large single trees, an immense number of springs of extremely lucid and delicious water, characterised the suburban district of Rhodes, in D'Aubusson's time.[2] No wonder, then, that one of its own citizens calls it: "The favourite, sweetest island of the sun, where the air is so pure, and the country so smiling!"[3]

The truce had not lasted long; for on the 23rd of May, 1480, the Moslem fleet of above one hundred and sixty sail[4] appeared off Rhodes, and approaching quite close to the city, under the universal gaze, disembarked its mighty land army without opposition—rather with pomp and music, like vic-

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxxv.

[2] Bouhours: Vie D'Aubusson, iii. 109. Mary Dupuis; for thus the man named himself, and not Merri, as Vertot has; Je Mary Dupuis gros et rude de sens et de l'entendement, selon que je peux voir à l'œil," that is, "temoin oculaire," which may be enough, as to the exterior appearance of Rhodes; but is not when military operations are to be described.—Appendix, clxix.

[3] Caoursinus: Orat.—Appendix, clxx.

[4] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xi., anno 1480.

tors coming to enter a conquered city;[1] and two days afterwards, while Islam's batteries were preparing, came before dawn to the walls (escape from the slavery of years as he pretended) a most dangerous clever spy, a German renegade, who was lifted up into the besieged town, and led to the grand master as a Christian refugee; but was in fact a pernicious turncoat, employing even truth itself as a veil of concealment, and to intimidate others —avowing he was a founder by trade, and had founded recently sixteen huge cannons for Achmet, commander-in-chief of the very army before their eyes, the sultan's vizier or general, a Palælogos degenerated into infidel, yet one of the cleverest officers in the world, particularly for artillery. "And," subjoined the diabolical hypocrite with seeming remorse, "I founded many basilisks for him, or double cannon eighteen feet long, throwing balls of from two to three feet in diameter.[2] But above everything his mortars are stupendously dreadful, and belch huge marble globes of prodigious size. And without doubt you will soon yourselves experience them, and then, indeed, require your utmost precaution. The army is fully

[1] Bouhours: Vie D'Aubusson, ii. 107.

[2] A cannon (now gone out of use), of forty-eight pounds of ball, of two hundredweight. Engineer's Dictionary.

one hundred thousand strong." But the rope quickly rewarded the villain's scheme.[1]

Three thousand seven hundred (some of them the heaviest of all cannon) have battered their walls for several days, to say nothing of the roaring of an infinity of mortars and lighter artillery, which play day and night round the entire city; that shower of bombs fall into it at all hours, exploding, burning, demolishing houses, towers, palaces, entire streets, without exciting the least sign of wish to surrender.[2]

Yet as to the siege itself, which Beccatini says, lasted ninety-nine days, with the death of above forty thousand Turks;[3] but the official document has a little less, with strict exactitude. I know that others have got up a particularised account, reposing on the memory of eye-witnesses. Still I own I am a little afraid of recounting what I have not documentary proof of; nor is there any urgent reason for risking a tedious enumeration of stormings and repulses, in face of the declaration of the author of a diary, who might be of weight did he not deprive himself of it by his acknowledging

[1] Mestre George, he was called by Mary Dupuis, 601.

[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xii. If exaggeration, not mine; I give my authority.

[3] Storia Ragionata dei Turchi, lib. ii., cap. ii.

no records whatever were taken during that confusion, and no one more in the case to know it than himself, who had for duty to affix the state seal to each document admitted into the archives. In a copy of his book, deposited there to reply to its want of documents regarding that interesting interval, he left these words written: "The city of Rhodes, while blocked and besieged so cruelly by the Turks, in such perturbation and fear, the public acts were not written; but the victory won, the history was edited by William Caoursinus, Vice-Chancellor of Rhodes, which the press has divulged all over the world, but in that interval nothing was written. So it is; William Caoursinus, Vice-Chancellor."[1] Then perhaps just as well keep to the certain, and content myself with giving what is particular enough, and which I think neither Bosio nor Bouhours, nor any of the order's historians could ever have seen (since it was found much later in the archives of Germany) D'Aubusson's own despatch immediately after the siege, to the emperor, as Christendom's chief in temporals—military affairs particularly.[2] And if, notwithstanding he had been born a subject to the King of France, he directed himself on this occasion to im-

[1] Seb. Paoli, al Lettore, ii.—Appendix, clxxi.

[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxxvi.—Appendix, clxxii.

perialism, it was that he was grand master; nor even alone, but with his consuls or councillors, who also signed; and this is a new proof of the order's perfect neutrality between Christians, and that it recognises for country not merely the individual spot of birthplace, but all Christendom. "Most invincible and serene Prince,—That we address ourselves to your Imperial Majesty a detailed relation of our proceedings at Rhodes during its defence against the Turks, appears to us nowise incongruous, now that the day of fight has had a happy exit, to the honour of the Christian name; and we do not doubt but your Imperial Majesty will derive no small joy from our victorious struggles.

"The Turks having encamped round the city, and explored the situation with great diligence, began beating our walls on every side with heavy guns, and to make strenuous exertions to shake and undermine them, and in short display their intentions: and with batteries of cannon and mortars[1] environed the city, and so far succeeded, that they overthrew nine of its towers and one of its bastions, and hit the magisterial palace with several mon-

[1] At their explosions the whole island of Rhodes trembled. They were heard at Castel Rosso, an islet above a hundred miles from Rhodes; and warriors from every part of Christendom declared they had never seen such tremendous guns and terrific effects anywhere before.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. xi.

strous balls, so that it partly fell down. But chiefly they thought proper to attack and press the city on three sides, and that their efforts above all should be to destroy the tower of the mole of St. Nicholas, as the surest road, in their opinion, to possess themselves of the city.

"This tower rises like a little citadel out at the end of the mole, stretching northward into the sea as far as the entrance of the harbour, so as to be instantly in full sight of the pilots, who can draw up close to it if they choose, or easily keep off from it. To the west stands St. Anthony's Oratory (of which the Turks got early into possession, as a sort of suburb, and not defensible), about two hundred paces from the tower, with a little channel of sea between.[1] On an inspection of the site then, the enemy became avid of gaining the tower, and had recourse to every expedient in their power. So to batter it down, they brought three brazen cannons of immense size—so wonderfully immense as to be nearly incredible—that threw balls of stone nine palms diameter, and placed those huge cannon at St. Anthony's.[2] Marvellous to relate and calamitous to see, that celebrated work, and that seemed of

1 Which indeed forms the inner port of Rhodes for galleys, admitting only one galley at a time.

2 Es jardins du dit St. Anthoine.—Mary Dupuis.

such astonishing strength, after resisting for some days during which it was struck by three hundred of those enormous balls of solid rock, the greater part of the tower was uprooted from its foundations, and lay prostrate and torn to pieces. At which the enemy exulted and applauded, beating their hands loudly—vain joy, soon converted into sorrow! For solicitous as we were of preserving the tower, on contemplating those extensive and horrid ruins, tried to prop up the remains of it; still further reflection making us perceive the inutility of the attempt after that tremendous crush, we determined on exerting all our vigilance, care, intellect, in defending, not the tower but St. Nicholas's Mole itself. With the utmost resolution, therefore, we set to work, and with a thousand labourers, day and night, and various inventions, were indefatigable, and not to no purpose, dug a deep trench, without a moment's intermission for several days, and with strengthenings of timber constructed a wall on the mole, where the remains of the tower stood; and building round outside, and uniting those fresh works to its middle and very foundations, so as to make one with it (not without enormous expense), erected a new tower and mole that were inexpugnable, and enclosed those that were there before. Then we placed a garrison of our bravest warriors

within the ruins of the mole and tower, and finished the fortifications wholly. And at the root and foot of the same, where the wall stops and the sea is fordable, we placed another garrison towards the west, and similar towards the east, to guard both sides; so it was necessary to watch and protect it in each direction, lest the Turks should pass and attack us behind.[1] We likewise ordered heavy guns to be disposed on the walls of the city, so as to do their duty properly during an assault. Fire-boats also got ready to assail the fleet. Twice did the Turks endeavour to storm our work; in their first attempt they employed a tolerable force, thinking it easy, just at daybreak when the light was dubious. They came in three-oared ships prepared purposely, and fought for a while, but were driven back. Our men had scarcely to leave their labour, and returned to it with assiduity. In the battle seven hundred Turks were killed, as we learned from the deserters. After a few days, with rage

[1] Bosio moreover says, the grand master stationed a body of both infantry and *cavalry* in the nearest ravelin, to prevent the enemy from going round the mole, and putting the town between two fires. The infantry well and good; but what had *cavalry* to do there? How could cavalry act? or were horses nimbler than at present? Use might have still given somewhat of the agility of Acre. Could they, where ours could not? At all events they soon got out of fashion, and gave place to the Spanish infantry.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. xi.

doubled from that former repulse, the enemy returned, with a body of mariners to reinforce them, and all they had of art and talent, and battered our rising edifice, and threw down some of our unfinished constructions with those huge cannons. But with celerity did we rebuild what they had thrown down.

"They then, to end the business, prepared adequately shaped triremes and corresponding munitions, and with ingenuity added certain transports in the guise of ships of war (called *parendarias* in common parlance), laden with heavy artillery and stone, in order to establish themselves on the mole, where the tower had stood, and annoy the city from that position, destroy, make a breach, take it by storm. They also bring a cloud of flat-bottom boats, from which some of the boldest of them descend easily on the mole; and with admirable artifice determine to raise a swimming bridge, to pass thither across from St. Anthony's church.[1] But we suspecting it, for many days and nights ever since that first attempt, had laboured with all our strength, mental and physical, and been adding fortification upon fortification, and men and stores of every de-

[1] Un pont de boetes et tonneaulx et par dessus clouer tables, planches aix et aultres choses . . . depuis l'Eglise St. Anthoine jusques a la tour St. Nicholas.—Mary Dupuis, 607.

scription to our post of tower and mole, saving no expense whatever; for we conjectured right, that there lay the safety of the city. Therefore a little before midnight, the Turks burning with more ardour than ever, on the 13th of the Kalends of July, attacked our principal position in the profoundest silence, assailing the entire length of our front, at the same time with one energetic simultaneous rush; we however were not asleep, but with erect ears. Finding it was the enemy, our great guns began to vomit, our soldiers to gird on their swords, and every warlike implement showered from the tower and mole, to keep off the Turks, and hard did we fight, from midnight until ten o'clock. The Turks who in a considerable number from boats and triremes, had descended on the mole, were every man of them killed. The swimming bridge laden with them is broken, by the shots from our heavy artillery, and down go all who were upon it, and perish in the waves. Four galleys also, and the transports freighted with the great cannon and balls of stone, are fractured by the discharges from our bastions, and sink. The fire-ships advance against the infidel fleet, and force it to recede. Thus was the Turkish retreat. Nor in the brilliant action had not many of the most renowned of their captains fallen, whose lost was

bitterly mourned for by the army. Deserters after the combat, assure us it was to them a woful day, and two thousand five hundred slain.

"But when they gave up all hopes of taking the tower and mole, they turned all their labours and power, and intelligence, on an attack upon the walls themselves; and although the city was so shaken and torn by those various deadly engines, that it scarce retained the least resemblance of what it was, still they prefer attempting principally the part from where looking east Jew Street ends, to that which leads to the tower of Italy. Consequently for the purpose of destroying, lacerating, subverting that whole line of wall, they have eight tremendous cannons of the largest size ever seen, disgorging balls of flint nine palms diameter, which never cease day or night, from scourging and scourging those groaning flanks. Nor to augment the terror of the blows, do the noises of guns and mortars halt for a single minute; and the continual bombardment echoes horribly in all quarters. We however, to afford some protection to the women and children, and the weak and infirm, from the cannonade and terrible bombardment, hide them in the ovens, caves, caverns, underground spots in the orchards; so that few of those unoffending creatures were slain by that infliction. The enemy made

use too of another sort of horror—globes of fire, and fiery arrows thrown from the cross-bow or sent off whirling from catapultas, that the houses may be set on fire. We on the other hand, whose duty it was to save the city, chose consulters from persons of the art, to remain most attentive; and they, as soon as ever the incendiary matter fell, applied themselves with the fleetest caution to extinguish the flames. By such remedies we were able to preserve the Rhodians from many mishaps. Nor did not the infidel attempt to approach the city underground; but with many zig-zag ditches covered with earth and trees, to steal into the fosses of the city, wrought with deep occult art; and erected strongholds abundantly, and placed colubrines,[1] upon them and serpentine cannon, from which they kept up a continuous shooting to weary us out, and scatter our ranks; and likewise imagined it was convenient for them to *complete*[2] that part of the ramparts that lies next the wall of the spur at the salient angle. So brought a great heap of stones, and secretly threw down others into the fosse, and continued doing it incessantly for several days, so

[1] Sort of heavy artillery, throwing a ball of sixteen pounds. The serpentine cannons were hugely long; we are told of one fifty feet long. They threw a fire-ball that went waving and hissing.

[2] To close: term of geometry.

as to fill up the fosse at last in that spot, and even raise it equal to the fore-wall—like a mound in form of a back, which presented a ready ascent upon the walls themselves. We however, perceiving the enemy's attempt and alive to the danger, saved the city by undertaking a minute examination of all its fosses, as well as anew repairing and provisioning the citadel and the whole range of its defences with the utmost diligence; which the Turks seeing, turned in despair to the wall of the Jewish quarter and other parts, while with the strongest reparations, refortifying what they had ruined, we planted stakes of thickest greenest timber, and covered them with earth and branches of stout tough underwood and thorns, which, compactly uniting, could sustain the force of any machinery, and protected the wall, and held it together, lest it should fall into the city, and afford an easy descent from the walls. Likewise we made similar fortifications of green stakes, laced with earth, to cover our men, and prevent the Turks from climbing up. We also prepared artificial wildfire, and other inventions conducive to withstanding the violent charges of the Turks. We also thought it better to evacuate that part of the fosse which they had filled with stones; but considering that in the short nights of the dog-

days it was impossible to do it secretly, from the jutting out as requisite, we had to content ourselves with working under the stones, and drawing them forth from below, and carry them without the least noise into the city; nevertheless, the Turks nearest the fosse remarking that the heap of stones in it was diminishing, and that they would lose that way of ascent, if they were not very alert, stormed us without delay. Therefore thirty-eight days having been consumed in these labours, during which they had hurled about three-thousand five hundred of those monstrous balls of rock against our walls, the Turks, perceiving they were letting slip the opportunity of getting into the city, hastened to finish what they were employed on; and throughout the entire day and night preceding, and even dawn of the morning itself of the storm, directed eight of their enormous cannons, hurling said rocks without intermission, against the part of our walls close to the new fortification, till it was for the most part shaken, torn, shattered; videttes, sentinels, guards, companies, all killed and swept clear away, that it was hardly possible for one of us to get to the walls at all, save by hiding him with great care; and at the stroke of a bell he descended a little, and at another, mounted. Nor was there time ever given to repair the fortifications, for the

cannon-shots never ceased for a single moment; so that in that small number of hours three hundred rocks went flying. Scarcely had the cannonade ended, when the Turks fired a mortar erected the day before, as a signal, at which (it being then the seventh of the Kalends of August), their advanced troops rushed forward with a tremendous shout, in a most collected body, and with the greatest speed, and scaled the wall. And it was easy, as we have said—easier than on our side by ladders. Annihilating the post we had left on the upper part of the wall (since it was utterly impossible to resist that first rush), the enemy occupied the place, and planted their colours there before our relief could climb up by the ladders. In the same way the summit of the tower of Italy became Mahometan. But we of the relief ascend by three of the ladders communicating with Jew Street, since the fourth had been broken by our own orders. There was the noise! We opposing the Infidel, and aiding the Christians. Most manly were the efforts of our troops, and the signal valour on both sides. Suddenly, ours wheeling into two corps, facing the foes, drive them back by sheer exertions from the higher part of the wall, to the left and right, which hinders them their running about. And well and most beatifully armed were those Turks;

about two thousand drawn up in tight ranks, who closed with ours. These with all their might endeavouring to expel them, and those the contrary. Still the firm courage of ours could not be moved; but of their opponents three hundred or more were by main force pushed over the inside of the wall, that down they tumbled into Jew Street, where they were every one slain. This infidel van, that had at first scaled and occupied the top of the wall, was quickly re-inforced by their other van, a vast multitude that covered the field, adjacent ruin, valley, ditch, that no eye could easily distinguish ground; for deserters say that the whole storming party mustered four thousand;[1] at which, perceiving a great conflict ready, we raised and planted firm the banner representing our sacred Lord Jesus Christ, and beside it that of our order, directly facing our enemy, and then ensued a desperate battle of two hours. At length the Turks, pressed, broken, wearied, terrified, and covered with gashes, tremble, recede, turn, fly; with such an impetus, that they hinder each other, and hasten their own destruction. There fell in that conquest, three thousand five hundred of them, as exactly as can

[1] Bosio has forty thousand; tremendous difference: par. ii., lib. xii., anno 1480.

be learned by their corpses, which we had gathered from walls, streets, or ditches, and those of their camp, the sea, and sea-shore, and burned,[1] to prevent plague. The flight was contagious, and from one to another, until the whole Moslem army were in decided rout. Our troops, after having pursued the fugitives quite across the plain with much slaughter, seized their spoils, and returned safe and joyous. In these battles we have lost many of our knights and baillies, fighting valiantly in the thickest of the hostile squares. We ourselves, and our companions-in-arms, have had many wounds; but after placing a strong garrison on the ramparts, returned home to render thanksgiving to Almighty God. Nor was it not the Divine assistance that averted such a butchery from ours. No doubt the Almighty sent down the succour from heaven, lest his poor Christian people should be infected with the filth of Mahometanism. Turkish women had prepared the ropes, which, in expectation of the city's being taken, were to serve to

[1] Dedans le boys qu'ils avoient aporte pour leur approuches et remplir les fosses; et tant en y avoit qu'ils mirent plus de huic jours a bruler; et les bonnes femmes qui les veoyent bruler et rendre la grece, les meuldisoient et dysoient qu'ils estoient si gras des figues et oultres fruits qu'ils leur avoient menge en leur jardins: et altreschoses ne plaignoient. Mary Dupuis.

tie the captives, and got vast multitudes of stakes made, that were to inflict deaths of torture. It had been decreed that every male and female above ten years old was to be put to death, or impaled alive; no exception, but all mortals above that age. The children, without distinction of sex, to be carried into slavery, and brought up Mahometans.[1] The city to be sacked, and its rule reserved to the sultan. But, frustrated in their atrocious design, they scampered off like a flock of sheep. Nine thousand of them are said to have been killed in the suburbs by our artillery, and an innumerable quantity wounded. Amongst those who died of their wounds were German Balse,[2] and a certain son-in-law of the Grand Seignor. It ended by the Turks burning their stores, and retiring about a mile from the city, and embarking what remained of their machinery and heavy baggage, and sending some into Lycia, which consumed a few days; and back-beaten, and with marks of

1 A very remarkable part of the dress of the Moslem going to the assault is the knot of small ropes hanging from every man's girdle, to tie his prisoners. At Rhodes are said to have been eight thousand stakes stuck up all round the city. The boys to be given to the sultan for his Mamelukes, or kept by the soldiers for themselves; the females to the harem.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. xii.

2 Or Primanus Bassa, as others (perhaps properly) read.—Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 552.

ignominy they left the Rhodian shores, and retired by Phiscus,[1] and continent, to the ancient metropolis they had come from. May the Omnipotent vouchsafe welfare to your Imperial Majesty.

"Your Imperial Majesty's humble servant,

"PETER D'AUBUSSON,

"*Master of the Jerusalem Hospital and Consuls.*

"*Rhodes*, 13*th of September*, 1480."

For my part, it must be owned, that until I read it, I never well understood the more spun-out accounts, and think my readers will have a completer notion, than if I troubled them about it longer. Save, it seems but bare justice to D'Aubusson to add, he is allowed on all hands to have been the soul which animated that defence, and took a personal and lion's share in each of its hazardous events, great or small, working like a common labourer, carpenter, engineer, chemist; and having planned his battles like a great general, fighting them like a private soldier, invariably the headmost man; so that he slew many of the Turkish officers with his own hand, and was covered with wounds some of them severe, yet

[1] A port in Asia Minor, opposite to Rhodes, and about eighteen miles from it.—Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 551.—Appendix, clxxiii.

never permitted them to keep him from action; hearing the opinion of every one with a most encouraging smile, before he formed his own decision as commander-in-chief; but which, once taken, never changed, or even was permitted to be reconsidered. Sovereign dictator; how he survived the fatigue, with such short snatches of sleep, during so many weeks of over-exertion, is a problem which at least shows how little suffices nature.

To cite a few of the many anecdotes told of him in those dreadful scenes suffices. Learning some mutinous knights had spoken of an honourable capitulation, he sent for them, and quietly said, "Gentlemen, if you choose to leave us, do so; there is the port, and however severely blockaded we be, I undertake to send you out of it safe and sound; but should you prefer remaining, listen well to my warning; that, in case you speak a word about capitulating on whatever terms, I will have every one of you put to death!" These, and that he called them *gentlemen*, as if they were no longer knights, and his brethren, struck them with such remorse, that one and all they threw themselves at his feet, and were patterns of valour and discipline ever after. His helmet having been broken from his head by a cannon-ball, he calmly stooped down and put on the hat of a soldier, who had just been killed near



him. To the general of artillery, who besought him not to expose himself so much, he replied with an affectionate smile; "Nay, if it had killed me, you would have more to gain by my death than I to lose;" which passed for a prophecy amongst those who held him prophet, as well as inimitable warrior; meaning he considered Del Carretto worthy of being elected grand master after him, eventually to be the case, as we shall see.

That he had public prayers immediately before and after the siege, no one will find otherwise than laudable; and if he had exposed a miraculous image of the Virgin, which on the loss of Rhodes was transported to Malta, and placed in St. John's Church, that image is said to have been to the Rhodians what Minerva's was to the Trojans; they believed it the safeguard of their home, and that as long as they kept it among them, they had nothing to fear.[1]

Though so popular and generally mild, he was sometimes very severe, as when during the siege he resisted every supplication in favour of two deserters, or rather, who only meditated desertion, and had them hanged from the windows of his palace, and their dead bodies flung into the sea.[2]

[1] Bouhours: Vie d'Aubusson, ii. 106.—Appendix, clxxiv.
[2] Id.: Id., iii. 140.

The women fought like brave men during the siege, and wore the dress of males.[1] So that not to allow Turks were beaten by women and Giaours, was probably what made Khodgia Effendi's Moslem vanity attribute the discomfiture to the vizier's avarice, in forbidding plunder, that all the booty might go into his own pocket.[2] However that be, it was a mortal wound to Mahomet the Second, that his great army and favourite had been overthrown by D'Aubusson, who, with all his celebrity, was only a Christian.

Perhaps it was enough for his simplicity not to mention himself, but only that the succours went up by those ladders: yet is it not right in us to add what is known of the full truth, that alighting from his horse, he led those succours up by the foremost ladder himself, and was the first in the whole battle on the wall? and in his heroic efforts received four severe wounds, the last of which was judged mortal by the surgeons, who visited it, but whose prognostics did not make him leave the wall or combat; nor did he fall from the loss of blood until the day was won, and then he was carried to his bed, where, in spite of his violent pains, he received the gallant knights, who presented him

[1] Bouhours: Vie d'Aubusson, iii. 159.
[2] Id.: Id., iii. 163.

with the Moslem standard from the vizieral tent, and he immediately ordered public thanksgiving for the victory. During three days that his life continued in danger, the anxious citizens crowded the street before his door. And less (it was said), was the joy of the Rhodians when the Turks sailed away, than when their grand master was declared better, and that the surgeons avowed they had been wrong in thinking his wounds mortal; and if even there was something divine in his cure, neither he nor his people doubted but that the Almighty, if He pleased, might do at Rhodes what he had done in former ages. Now for the first time since eighty-nine days,[1] were the town gates opened, and men naturally desired to take a walk into the country; and those who had villas and gardens (and none but the very poorest were without them), to see how much or how little they had been ruined; yet their anxiety to have news of the grand master was so great, that it kept most of them within Rhodes. All his subjects, of all grades, were long in agitation about his wounds, even after the faculty's favourable opinion; for they had at first pronounced them mortal, and his knights, as fit, were the most concerned; nevertheless he recovered, though slowly.[2]

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xii. [2] Id.: id., id.

Early in the siege, after the first attack on St. Nicholas's, it being necessary to keep a sharp look-out, lest the enemy should disturb the workmen, who were to work seventy hours without intermission, he is represented by nearly all the order's historians in almost the same words, which makes it in a manner certain that they were not dealing in fancy, but relating a well-known fact; and considered very characteristic of the man, which prevents me from daring to leave it out. "His armour (perhaps to be more readily known to his soldiers), was gilt or golden, and kept highly polished and shining, and at the head of the aforesaid chosen, pre-eminently valiant squadron, he sat on his horse the whole night long, without moving, or taking a moment's repose; and the splendour of the moon reflected from that gold cuirass rendered him a clear and highly remarkable object."[1] But as much might have been said of many a knight.

His Italian secretary having with equal penetration and fidelity discovered a plot to poison him (which might have easily succeeded) by two of his domestics, suborned by the Turk; they were hanged, which was not enough for the enraged populace, who had to be given their dead bodies

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xi.

to tear to pieces, so extravagantly were they attached to him. Not that the Rhodians were sanguinary, far from it; but it was the enthusiasm of enraged love for their protector.[1]

Nor when the siege was over did he neglect to indemnify every one of them for their losses during it, as far as money or his ability could in any way go; and distributed abundance of corn, and exempted all the people of Rhodes in a body from every sort of subsidy and taxation for several years;[2] and in commemoration of the victory, he built two magnificent churches, one for the Latins, and the other for the Greeks,[3] for the Rhodians affirmed that their ancestors (whose example they were resolved to follow), had refused ever swerving from the decision of the Council of Florence,[4] when Greek and Latin were for a moment united. So are called *devout Catholics* by Bosio, who must have meant the word in its primitive sense of universal; for otherwise he would probably have *Roman Catholics*. Be that as it may, there was a very friendly understanding between the two Churches. At first the selectest Rhodian was

[1] Bouhours: Vie d'Aubusson, iii. 135.
[2] Id.: Id., iii. 171.
[3] Id.: Id., iii. 168.
[4] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xii.—Platina: iii. 344.

thought little of (on a footing with the mere peasantry, who during the whole siege were only used as pioneers, or spades and shovels) but the knights soon learned to esteem him, and good reason; and more than one Rhodian was admitted into the order. Caoursinus, Ambassador to the Pope, and acting Vice-Chancellor, and though no professed knight, compiler of the statutes, was himself a Rhodian, and was voted what would purchase a fitting house for him and family, besides other decorous presents, on his taking a wife after the siege.[1]

Such a small body of Christians against such a stupendous multitude of soldiery, provided with the best implements of war then known, nor in any ignorant age, but in that of gunpowder, mortars, and cannon—no wonder victory was held almost or certainly a miracle. Yet is there nothing of miraculous in D'Aubusson's relation, nor anything unbefitting a military despatch of our own day.

But the names of the heroes, where are they? It is not but they are in the book of eternal life; yet why not in this life too, for the world's example? Alas, most of those worthy and valiant knights were never known on earth, for the lists

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xiii.

were never made, or are lost, except only a few commanders, of whom there was necessarily some record in the various commanderies, and likewise in the chancery for a time, but at length lost in both places.[1]

Bosio gives only ninety-two French commanders; knights of all three Languages; thirty-five Italians, thirty-five Spanish and Portuguese, five English, eight German, and eighteen between chaplains and servants-at-arms of various nations. To which five English knights I will add a few on his own authority, though afterwards left out in his list. If meagre be the memorandum of the other Languages, most meagre indeed is the English.

1. Sir John Vaquelin, Commander of Carbourch, killed.

2. Sir Marmaduke Lomelay, desperately wounded, but recovered and became Prior of Ireland.[2]

3. Sir Thomas Bem, Bailiff of the Eagle, killed.

4. Sir Henry Haler, Commander of Badsfort, killed.

5. Sir Thomas Ploniton, killed.

6. Sir Adam Tedbond, killed.

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xi.—Appendix, clxxv.

[2] Taken from Sir James Heting.— Bosio: par. ii., lib. xiii., anno 1482.

7. Sir Henry Batasbi, killed.

8. Sir Henry Anulai,[1] killed.[2]

9. Sir John Kendall, Turcopolier,[3] one of seven grand crosses, whom the Chapter General of 1478 elected to be more particularly at the grand master's disposal during the approaching siege, whether sent where he pleased, or kept near him at Rhodes. So he despatched Kendall for succours to England, where he had been often resident ambassador, and had him back from thence as fast as possible, after 9th of April, 1480, date of the king's mandate at Westminster; so Kendall might be back at Rhodes in the middle of the next month; and surviving the siege, went in 1489 on an embassy to Rome, where he died, while they at Rhodes elected him thirty-second Grand Prior of England.[4]

10. Sir Thomas Docray, one of the sixteen in the election of D'Aubusson; but outlived the siege, and came by turns to every one of the three grand crosses in the English language; Turcopolier,

[1] Vertot writes Davalas. [2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xii.

[3] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xi., anno 1478.

[4] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxxxvi.—Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii., 561.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. xiv., anno 1489. Kendall giving up the Turcopoliership to another English knight.—Appendix, Num. xxx.

Bailiff of the Eagle, and thirty-third Grand Prior of England.[1]

11. Sir Leonardus de Tybertis, whose grand uncle had been thirty-second Prior of England.[2]

12. Sir Walter Viselberg.[3]

13. Sir John Rucht.[4]

14. Sir John Besoel.[5]

Not Mahomet II. himself, but his vizier, a renegade Greek, whose baseness was worthy of his sanguinary master, was the person who led and misled the barbarians driven from Rhodes, and merited a worse disgrace than befell him, exile in a miserable village; but the fate of the infuriated despot of whose *lofty genius*, the Decline and Fall chooses to speak, may be surmised; and the surmise may be idle; but others aver that Mahomet II. was indeed a choleric, dangerous savage, who in reply to a courteous ambassador doing no more than his duty in asking "*against* whom such a mighty armament was raised"—and verily it was against his own country—broke out with : "If a hair of my beard knew my secret, I would instantly pluck it

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxlv.—Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 567.—Appendix, Num. xxx.

[2] Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 533.

[3] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xi., anno 1478.

[4] Id.: id., id., anno 1478.

[5] Boswell.—Bosio: par. ii.. lib. xi., anno 1478.

out, and throw it into the fire;" and inflamed with rage and indignation, levied an enormous army of it is said three hundred thousand men, and putting himself at their head, advanced into Asia Minor with the view of crushing the obstinate island, as ascribing invincibility to himself alone, and that on none of his lieutenants, not even his best, would good fortune condescend to light, but only on his own proper person.[1] Yet in the small town of Nicomedia fell sick, his first real sickness,[2] and died on the third of May, 1481, a new, terrible example of the ruling passion strong in death, since the frenzied tyrant dictated in a hurry to one of his grandees, to inscribe in Latin on his tomb, *My intention was to take Rhodes, and subdue proud Italy;* and then a moment before vomiting forth his soul (as is given on no common authority), shrieked out "*Rhodes, Rhodes, Rhodes!*"[3]

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xii.

[2] Bouhours: Vie d'Aubusson, iv. 176.

[3] Caoursinus.—Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni. ii. 553.—Bouhours: Vie d'Aubusson, iv. 177.— Theodoro Cantac Constant.—Appendix, clxxvi.

## CHAPTER V.

MAHOMET II. dead, having already murdered Mustapha, eldest of his three sons, the next, Bajazet, succeeded, and almost immediately proposed a peace with Rhodes, by a letter from his Vizier, Achmat Bassa, dated ninth of July, 1482,[1] which D'Aubusson, thinking proper to take the Pope's advice on, before his Holiness's assent could have arrived, a strange event occurred; namely, the third brother, Zain, after having tried various battles to mount the throne, and lost them all, made application to Rhodes, and was answered in a letter still extant, dated July 13, in which consents to receive him, not

1481

1482

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xix. Giunt.

only D'Aubusson, but the whole council, who shared the responsibility with him.[1] Whatever accrue from his being born in the purple may be allowed him; for his elder brothers (both the dead Mustapha, as well as the living Bajazet), as begotten before their father's succession to the throne, were sons of Mahomet, but Zain, of the emperor. They had rarely seen each other, or their parents, or Constantinople; but remained in their governments, the elder on the eastern bank of the Black Sea, the younger in Asia Minor. Bajazet was pacific; Zain, hasty, noble, generous; not so handsome as the elder brother, still in the younger's countenance something of greatness, softness, and pride mingled; expression more valued perhaps than mere beauty. Fond of hunting, and all military exercises, he nevertheless was not illiterate but knew many languages, among which Greek, and such Italian as is spoken at Rhodes. An historian, he died while writing his father's reign. A zealous, though not fanatical Mussulman, he loved the Knights of Rhodes almost as much as his father had hated them; and above all, owned to a particular affection for the grand master even before he saw him; and it augmented on personal

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xx.—Giunt., 411.

acquaintance. At that very time the knights had undertaken an attack on Lesbos. Why should they too not try to profit by Mahomet's death? It was then one of the richest islands held by the Ottomans. Bajazet's party had now become the stronger, by his being legitimately crowned at Constantinople. For him his very feebleness defended; "pity being akin to love," particularly with the soldier. Zain, though naturally a warrior, was beaten in battle; so rode off with forty horse, round by Jerusalem and Solomon's Temple, where he for some hours stopped to pray; else travelling day and night through the desert and unknown lands, got to Cairo; and ultimately, angry at that sultan's offer to make a compromise between the two princes, saying to him it was better to have a part of the empire than none – clearly implying that, as younger, he might content himself with some distant province, while Bajazet continued to reign at the metropolis—he rode away anew on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and on return left his wife and infants (two, a boy and girl)[1] in Egypt; and himself accepted an invitation to go back, and join the rebels in Caramania. The second campaign being as unsuccessful as his first, he determined, as a final resource, to throw himself on the pro-

[1] Bouhours: Vie D'Aubusson, iv. 183.

tection of the order; which called for no great gratitude. No time to wait; Zain was in a woful condition.

His embassy to Rhodes with a formal epistle written previous to his final disaster, and mentioning safe conduct and terms, had been taken by the Turks; so, when reduced to extremities, he sent those two faithful servants, who got to that island, with a few lines of credence. They stipulated for nothing but an asylum and a ship to take him to it; he wanting to consult with D'Aubusson on his intricate affairs, and that he hoped his being a Mahometan, as he was born, would not prevent knights from pitying a forlorn prince under such bitter persecution. Yet was he really in a more pitiable state than his messengers knew, for he had then a small suite; but he was now deserted by all the world, and pursued by murderers into the sea. Still even what was known at Rhodes was quite enough. Neither D'Aubusson nor the council could reject so reasonable a prayer, not for troops or money, but only an asylum. As to the safe-conduct cited by Bosio, it infallibly argues a mistake—probably papers in the Chancery relating to something else—a sketch never finished or sent; not of sufficient authenticity for the diplomatic collection; and at any rate there was a gross error as to the facts, for it pre-supposes a suite of

seventy persons, whereas he was now alone. His followers had so melted away, that the Pasha of Caramania and three domestics were all that remained with him when arrived on the Lycian seashore; where he entreated of them to leave him, and for mutual security, go each separate; and that they might possibly escape, or settle their matters with the common foe, as he gave them full license to do. So he was now utterly alone, when suddenly he saw a squadron of Mamelukes emerging from behind a rock within fifty paces of him, dart at full gallop to seize him; for a price had been laid on his skull, dead or alive. Instantly dropping from his saddle, he leapt on chance into the sea towards a poor Christian fishing-boat, known as such by the cross on its prow, and which he had observed with some suspicion until then; but pirate or not, he now thought of nothing but to get aboard of it, which, after wading a little, he had only bare time to effect; for the Mamelukes driving their horses into the water, were hot on their prey, close, touching, when the boatmen lifted him clean over the side; and then rowed back a yard or two. The disappointed ruffians, grumbling, returned to land. And he, without losing a moment, drew writing materials from his breast, and wrote a letter, which he shot to the Mamelukes by tying it to an arrow,

and with a loud commanding voice bade them deliver it to their master.

"*King Zain to Bajazet, his cruel brother.*

"If I commit a crime in flying to the Christians, and above all to the Knights of Rhodes, mortal enemies of our very illustrious house, it is wholly your fault, in the eyes both of God and man. Not satisfied with having deprived me of the empire against every law human and divine, you now force me to seek a shameful asylum, to save my life. If our father had foreseen what a stain you would
1482 one day have brought on the honour of the Mussulman name and the Ottoman race, he would have been your executioner himself; but I hope Heaven will avenge me on your tyranny, and I pray our great Prophet to hasten the chastisement you merit!"

It is said Bajazet wept at reading it, strange proof of the force of nature and religion—even a false one—in softening the cruel and most impious; or he was not of the obdurate heart reported. Then what had Zain for it but roving the seas? Without intelligence from those he had sent to Rhodes, what could he do? So full of distrust when the Rhodian ships appeared, he thought them pirates; but they soon proved the contrary. Orders were to treat him as the son of an emperor and king. And the grand

master himself wrote to him that the vessel was commanded by a nephew of the King of Spain; and that the knights so far bound themselves in the enclosed safe-conduct (usual style), that it insured him a safe and honourable reception in Rhodes, as well as freedom to leave it when he pleased. In furtherance of this, there were tasters at his first meal on board; but such not being the Mahometan etiquette, Zain inquired what it meant; so hearing it was a royal ceremony, and might also prevent poison, he replied that he had no similar apprehensions with such generous warriors, and would much rather be treated as a friend than as a prince; and looking down furtively on his finger, thought he had a better warrant that there was no poison present, for the emerald of his ring never turned pale, or gave the least twinge. So taking heart, he began eating of every dish the major-domo had not yet tasted; and seemed somewhat joyous at this kind behaviour, and to regain his natural spirits awhile, and nearly forget all his troubles. But when he lost sight of land, he felt nothing deserves more compassion than a fugitive king; and sat silent for hours, and even seemed to exert all his courage before he could resume his previous gaiety.[1]

[1] Bouhours: Vie D'Aubusson, iv. 197 and 198.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. xiii.

It was certainly no scheme of the Christians lured him into their power, but his own ambitious projects; and the asylum was not from their inclination, but pity for his situation—restriction never to be forgotten, but permanently understood in all future cases. The statesmanship may have come afterwards. In all protections they afforded him, that fact is to be borne in mind. It were an injustice towards them to do otherwise; nor should he have abused any safe-conduct given under such circumstances. Little it matters in Turkey whether a brother be elder or not, but with us considerably; and to make Zain pass for such, gave him a show of legitimate right to the throne, and engaged many Europeans (particularly the ladies) to take an interest in his favour and his sorrowful and (as they made it out) romantic destiny. Yet in truth it is certain, from three quite indisputable documents, he was the younger; nor would I venture to assert it in contradiction to respectable historians, if I were not in some degree forced by the clearness of the evidence; for though any one of those documents would suffice, yet it happens there are three, of which one shall be in the Appendix.[1] And Zain, the fiercer

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii.—Giunt, Num. xxi.—Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xxiii.—Giunt., Num. xxvii.—Seb. Paoli: Discorso, ii. 603.—Appendix, clxxvii.

man, attacked the other most wantonly, and even went to the Nile to raise him up an enemy; but the Turkish soldiery declared for their sovereign, and conquered the rebel in fair battle. So after that, it was no wonder he became an object of fraternal acrimony, begotten on fear.

When the book of statutes was ratified, it was by a deputation from the chapter-general, through a knight from each Language, and then Sir John Weston, Prior of England, was from the English.[1] And after the Languages came one deputy from the clerical body, one from the magisterial palace, and one from the treasury, who also was an Englishman, Sir John Kendall, the Turcopolier; and they all swore into the grand master's hands, that the compilation was exact, only leaving out the superfluous. This in 1482, which in one sense may be considered the most glorious age of the order, when it had the sultan nearly tributary. Then too was Sir James Heting formally deprived of the Priory of Ireland for not having obeyed the circular, and come to Rhodes during the siege, and worse, refused sending the proceeds of the priory; and in his stead was appointed a knight who had come, Sir Marmaduke Lumley.[2]

[1] Thirty-first Prior.—Appendix, xxx.

[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xiii., anno 1482.

That the proffered peace was uppermost in the sultan's mind, is shown by Zain's not being even mentioned in the credentials for Achmet Bassa to D'Aubusson; and since Bajazet had passed over to Asia Minor, that and some delay in the offices may well incline us to believe that notwithstanding said letter be dated late in August, it had been ordered previously to the 12th of July.[1] Caoursinus and Jaligni are of direct opposite opinions. No possibility of reconciling them. Nor is that new in history, nor in private life either. So I had to come to my conclusion without paying much attention to either of them,[2] pinning my faith only to an accurate survey of these impartial papers.

On the 27th of July, Zain entered Rhodes, as we learn from a letter dated on the last day of that month, in which D'Aubusson expressly writes to the Pope that after much reflection, the order had

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xxii.—Appendix, clxxviii.

[2] Yet if obliged to choose between them, it would be injustice not to prefer the man who had lived most part of his life at Rhodes, and was married there, so as to be almost reputed a Rhodian, although Fleming by birth, and with a bad, flatulent style of writing, and deprived himself of all authority respecting the siege, by acknowledging no records had been kept during it: not so with regard to Zain, whose entrance he was on the spot to see; whereas Jaligni, though a contemporary, was living at Paris, not Rhodes, being secretary to Peter Bourbon, a personage well known in the history of France.

given a safe-conduct to the prince in such urgent necessity, that he should be received amicably as he desired—"postulatis obtemperare" (but he postulated for nothing beyond an asylum for a consultation, a ship to take him, and liberty to depart when he pleased) "tutus aditus exitusque;" that therefore they were maintaining the princely refugee. "And we have florid hopes, and are determined to do all we can: if we succeed, well; if not, we must consult for the interests of the island, taking care to preserve the public faith, for this must be kept inviolably, even towards the deadliest enemy, whatever his misbelief"—expressions worthy of D'Aubusson! Nor was he capable of perfidy, nor the learned Sixtus IV., to whom he was writing.[1]

Most clear it is, the order never undertook to preserve Zain all over the world, from every mishap. They answered only for his treatment at Rhodes; nor, though they tried more, could they ever be sure of more. "Te excipimus ut Hospitem, non ut Hostem," were the very words of the Prior of Castille as he received him into the galley.

Not then that he accidentally got to Rhodes, nor that the knights volunteered; but that he sent to crave protection, and that they would despatch a galley to take him, and so they did. Nor was it

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xxi., Giunt.

from choice that he applied to them, but because he had no other chance; and most generously did they act by him, and far more than kept their word, both verbally and in the spirit.[1] The celebrated King of Hungary's reply proves the same.[2] But, notwithstanding all my dislike to lengthen the Appendix, here is the original letter itself, which decides the question. Since really the only essential point is to clear those ill-treated gentlemen from all blemish on their memory; as to the rest, of what importance has it been this long time?[3] All he had asked for was already in his pocket when he arrived at Rhodes. A platform had been made from the end of the mole to the deck of his ship; and at the foot of the platform waited him a superb Spanish horse with rich trappings, where mounting, he found the streets strewed with myrtle, and flowers whose variegated design, when pressed by the horse's feet, emitted the most delicious perfume. Exquisite were the hangings, wool and silk mixed, of French and Belgian manufacture, then the most esteemed in the world; the Turkish carpets fine, the fine horses richly caparisoned and proudly neighing, the sex in their finest, which made him observe that

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xiii.—Seb. Paoli: Discorso, ii. 603.
[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xxvii., Giunt.
[3] Id., ii., Id. xx., Giunt.—Appendix, c'xxix.

the Rhodian ladies were reputed the most beautiful in Asia; cannons, trumpets, sweet music; and came to meet him the grand master himself, in a mantle all covered with precious stones, and on a splendid Neapolitan courser, followed by all the magisterial court, brilliantly dressed and mounted; and nearly every one of D'Aubusson's pages, aide-de-camps, and numerous officers, were famous riders. At his very first sight of the grand master, Zain made his salute; and he made it in the most reverential form used in Turkey, putting the index finger of his right hand to his lip, as we do to denote silence; else neither joy nor sorrow did he ever give the least sign of during the cavalcade, but had the air of a person equally habituated to good and bad fortune, and who felt himself entitled to all the honours given him. Nevertheless it was evident he was contented with the knights, and finally, on their all alighting, he did so too and embraced the grand master with great affection, and then went up stairs and took his rest amid rich cushions cross-legged, in the Turkish fashion.[1] At the magnificent banquet, the grand master sitting below him, and he objecting, the former replied: "Sire, personages like you occupy the first line everywhere; and would to God you had as much power at Constantinople as here at

[1] Caoursinus, 546.—Appendix, clxxx.

Rhodes." And an amicable altercation terminated, not as the prince said, but as the other wished.

To inform the princes of Christendom of Zain's visit, ambassadors were sent, amongst whom two English grand crosses, Sir John Weston, thirty-first Prior of England, and Sir John Kendall, Turcopolier.[1]

That Zain had a squint, was fat, and anything but handsome, may be true or not, neither is anyways surprising, nor interests us, though by friendly eyewitnesses.[2]

But it soon appeared he was not safe at Rhodes, and on various occasions he thought he saw the colour of his amulet a little troubled. Next day the grand master visited him in his apartment—the former sitting in a chair, and the latter on cushions, as is the Oriental fashion. Particular in many things were his habits. Whatever wine he drank, he mixed it with aromatics, which he thought so changed it that he might drink it without any breach of his religious observances. His usual beverage however was what the French call *eau sucrée*. He went almost daily to the sea, and there undressing without the least shame stark naked entered into it, and swam; besides which he took a hot bath every day without fail; and, to refresh

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xiii. 367.

[2] Caoursinus.—See Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 554.

after it, had cool water thrown over him. Naturally melancholy, and as it were wrapt up in lofty and profound musings, he was also so restless that to confine himself long to one place was impossible. In the house he was always wandering from one room to another, examining each sedulously, and preferred changing bedrooms every night. Often used he to ascend to the terrace on the roof, and go out into the open air, from his bed before daybreak; and then back to bed again. He was a strict Mahometan, and seeing one of his people intoxicated was so scandalised that he rose to strike him. Having read much from boyhood, he had acquired a tolerably good style in writing.[1] In vain had hunting parties, tourneys, and every sort of noble diversion occupied each successive day in his honour; they could not dispel his anxiety, but increased it; the more at hearing of frequent Constantinopolitan visitors—and that the Porte offered not only to forbear from the very name of tribute, but also to give *carte blanche* to the Christians, and engaged to sign it. These advances, so much unlike Moslem pride, alarmed him to such a degree that he, unbosoming himself to the grand master on the 17th of August, begged to be sent to France; that in spite of the generous

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xiii., 374.

and most honourable dispositions of the knights, and all the popular demonstrations at his arrival, he saw evident causes for deep apprehension; that if he ever took a walk in the island, he might be carried off by pirates; that even within the walls, in spite of all the care of the order, he might easily be murdered by dagger or poison; that to be surrounded by Greeks, many of them renegades and even several Mussulmen, who were mostly spies and probably murderers, struck him with fear; that what dismayed him worst was the duplicity of both sexes of Greeks—let alone Jews, who would perpetrate any crime for money, and he knew Bajazet would purchase his life, at whatever sum they demanded. And he repeated several times that he had not the smallest dread of the knights, on the contrary, reposed implicit confidence in every one of them; but the Greeks, accustomed to all sorts of duplicity, treason, and murder, would not the divan find them humble instruments? Would he not be the mark for each poisoner, each assassin's dagger? Is this not too near the hotbed of crime? Ought he not take refuge in some distant land? Besides that he judged by the grand master, he had often heard of the generosity of the French, and now that he was speaking to one of that nation,

was it not natural that he should think of putting himself under protection of the King of France?

D'Aubusson, though much it grieved him, approved of his reasoning, but as it was a matter of consequence, determined to take the opinion of his privy council before deciding. These of course were of divided sentiments—one party holding that the order's honour and interest required them to keep him in Rhodes; that as long as he remained in their hands, Bajazet would never dare to take a step against either one under their protection or against the knights themselves; that as to his murder, they had only to be vigilant in well guarding him, that few assassins would attempt his life, at the evident price of their own: the other, the majority wisest, and most disinterested, that nothing could preserve him from the multitude of villains certain to surround him; that neither war nor peace could keep off murder; that traitors find their way everywhere; that neither servants, nor guards, but can be bribed by a large sum of money, at least with few exceptions; and here one or two scoundrels would suffice to ruin the unfortunate prince, which would call down the most indecent surmises on the innocent order itself, from the envious or thoughtless, who are prurient everywhere; that as long as he stopped at Rhodes, the infidels would never cease

plotting to secretly get at him, and at last publicly demand him; when the order could not give him up, without breaking their faith; and if they refused, they might assuredly count on suffering the cruelest hostilities; and that Zain himself, seeing the necessity of removing quickly from his dangerous position, would implore the grand master to allow of it. So D'Aubusson no longer hesitated to advise him to set out for France—and in a Rhodian's words : "prudentissimus Rhodiorum magister arbitratus est Principem Zizimum tutius apud Gallias defendi atque protegi *ubi monstra non gignuntur, et ubi toxici tabies ignoratur.*" He, who was himself of France, could not but warmly and justly esteem his own high-minded native country. Indeed his pity for him who had flung himself into their arms, rendered him in some degree neglectful of the people confided to his care; since, without much reflecting on the unpleasant consequences sure to result from this sudden departure, he gave the necessary orders for a long voyage.

Zain's last days at Rhodes were more crowded than ever with courtesies. On the vigil even of his sailing, the grand master gave him a most magnificent banquet, only two at a table in public, during which an Englishman distinguished himself by his musical performances on an unknown instrument

of his own invention (but it is said to have sounded like four flutes), to the delight and admiration of every one present. Observing the richness and regularity of the courses, the Moslem prince affirmed the imperial grandeur of the Ottomans had nothing not far inferior. Infinitely was he satisfied by such marks of friendship throughout his stay at Rhodes; and, after thanking the grand master with fervour repeatedly, gave him three authentic documents to prove his gratitude to all time, and which he had already prepared and signed: 1st. An act to empower him to treat with the Porte, and in his name conclude any agreement he liked. 2nd. A sort of manifesto, discharging the knights in full, and that it was he himself wished to leave for France; and this document alone ought to justify already, what was accused by ignorance or malevolence, of being a disregard for hospitality, and a breach of the law of nations. 3rd. A perpetual confederation; but here it is:—"Let all the world know that I, Sultan Zain, of the Ottoman House, and son of the invincible Mahomet, King of kings, and Sovereign Emperor of Greece and Asia, am in the loftiest degree grateful to the generous and most illustrious Signor Peter d'Aubusson, Grand Master of Rhodes; but let all the world likewise know, that, in consi-

deration of the good offices he rendered me in the most dreadful misadventure of my life, wishing to testify my gratitude as far as the actual low state of my fortune permits, I promise solemnly to God and our Great Prophet, that if I ever recover either entirely, or in part, my father's imperial crown, I promise (I say), and swear to keep up a constant peace, and inviolable alliance with the Grand Master D'Aubusson, and his successors, under the following conditions: In the first place, I engage myself and children, and my children's children, to have an eternal attachment for the Order of St. John of Jerusalem; so that neither I nor my descendants shall ever do anything to displease the knights by land or sea; that far from obstructing their vessels, or disturbing Rhodian commerce, we will open our ports to their merchants and those of their islands, and will allow them to pass freely through our territories, as if our own subjects, or rather our friends, in permitting them to buy, and sell, and transport their merchandise as they think fit, without obliging them to pay any duty or tax. Besides which, I consent that the grand master annually draw from my dominions three hundred Christians of either sex, to transfer them to the order's islands, or wherever he pleases. And for the purpose of making some re-

turn for the expenses the grand master has been at, and is at every day with such extreme liberality on my account, I oblige myself to pay him one hundred and fifty thousand gold crowns. In fine, I promise under oath, to restore to him all the islands, lands, and fortresses, of which Ottoman emperors have ever dispossessed the order.

"And, as a proof that such is my will, I sign the present deed, and have it sealed with my seal. Done at Rhodes in the Palace of the Hotel of France, the fifth of the month of Regeb of the year of the Hegira 887."

The next morning, September the 1st, 1482, he embarked with the self-same ceremonial he had been received; and after a farewell to the knights, not at all such as marks a barbarian, he threw aside all proud rudeness, when he fell at the grand master's feet, and with profound respect kissed his hand. And tenderly the grand master embraced him, and wept over him; whether wholly from compassion, or also a secret presentiment that they should never again meet. Two dignitaries of the order accompanied him to France, and an escort of knights, who ascending with him into the largest of their ships, it sailed with a fair wind.

Forty days had he tarried at Rhodes, during all which time, says D'Aubusson, in his letter to the

Pope, there were continual conspiracies, and murderous attempts to make away with him, slave or corpse.[1]

Undoubtedly his departure originated with himself, and had his own consent. He had, from the first, declared he would follow D'Aubusson's advice,[2] and indeed obliged himself to it, both in Latin and in Turkish, *prout litteris Latinis et Barbaris*, and it was under that condition he was allowed to enter Rhodes.[3] Had not the knights cause to be circumspect for other reasons too? His partisans were well-known to be the most virulent of all the Turks in their prejudice to Christians in general, and the order in particular. Even without wicked intentions of his, might he not be led astray? If he lived under their protection, the knights had a full right to see it was not with ruin to themselves. It is ridiculously untrue to say they anywhere and at any time, treated him like a prisoner. The grand master can be trusted when he said *magnis sumptibus eum tractamus.*[4] Up to his leaving Rhodes, he had been maintained at the order's expense, but

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xiii., 373.—Bouhours: Vie D'Aubusson, iv. 217.

[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. xxx., ii. 431.

[3] Id., ii., Num. xxxi.

[4] Seb. Paoli: Discorso, ii. 607.

when he left it he conjured D'Aubusson to accept a power of attorney to treat with Bajazet in his favour, and engage him to pay him an appanage.[1] And he did so with success, and was an indefatigable and most delicate agent in the sight both of God and men, as the Greek original papers now before me clearly prove; and happy for any one to have so clever and conscientious a man of business.

Though that appanage was great,[2] and most regularly paid, it scarce sufficed for his expenses, with such splendour did he live, and such a large suite, composed chiefly of his own Mahometans; nor by force did the knights ever attempt, nor had he any inclination to change his religion.

In one respect the bad effects of his quitting Rhodes did not occur. Bajazet sought as warmly as ever for peace, and to bring it about, had his vizier, who was against it, slain. But the King of France, perhaps loath to break with the Porte, at that precise moment, when setting out on his invasion of Italy, received him very coldly, notwithstanding D'Aubusson's introductory; also to his numerous illustrious relations in the high employments of the French Court. So the knights had

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xxix., Giunt.

[2] About twenty thousand a-year, or a little less. Forty-five thousand Venetian golden ducats.

to take him to one of the order's castles, in a fine country, where the Priors of Auvergne usually resided. There was no other way than that apparent imprisonment to prevent his being murdered.[1] In France he was sometimes content to pass for dumb during weeks, lest he should be discovered by his speech. His luxurious and splendid household, and ministers, and ambassadors, continually going or returning from Constantinople and other courts, account for his immense outlay, and the grand master had always to add a little of his own. Far from gaining by it, he lost every year.[2] All which precludes every idea of a prison, and he was certainly most anxiously looked to by the knights who accompanied him in his travels; for they knew there were plots to carry him off, both by well-wishers and ill-wishers, some to make him the puppet of a revolutionary outbreak, and some to murder him, as desirous of obtaining his brother's favour; and when D'Aubusson held that his safe continuance with the order was the most effectual curb on Bajazet, and a benefit to all Christendom, it was only the wise observation of a statesman, and does him

1483

[1] Bouhours: Vie D'Aubusson, iv. 220 and 225.

[2] Id.: Id., iv. 226.—Seb. Paoli: Discorso, ii. 614.

[3] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xxx., Giunt.

infinite credit. As to what would not merit an answer, any more than that about the order of Lazarus, if it were not so triumphantly disproved, his making money by the unfortunate youth's captivity, and profiting by his allowance, it is nonsense, and so untrue that we have the decision of a chapter general, after a severe examination of the accounts, that D'Aubusson ought to be repaid by the treasury upwards of £12,000—50,749 gold crowns, which sum he had anticipated out of his own purse to Zain. And they were repaid.[1] At the second chapter general, holden by D'Aubusson, with its decisions were sent to Rome two ambassadors, one of whom was Sir John Kendall, the Turcopolier, his real rank, the diplomatic only occasional.[2] Not in 1482, nor by word of mouth, but shortly after the 24th of June, 1484, along with an autographical letter, in Latin, the gift covered with a sort of highly prized silk (Zendado) in a splendid case, sealed with the Grand Turk's seal, was presented by his ambassador; letter preserved in the archives till the time of Seb. Paoli, who supplies the exact date corroborated by the Bollandists, as shall be in the Appendix;[3] nor

1484

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxxxvii.—Appendix, clxxxi.

[2] Id.. ii., Id., cxxxvi.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. xiii., anno 1483, and par. ii., lib. xiv. 413.

[3] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxxxi.—Appendix, clxxxii.

could a more gentlemanly letter be written by any one! The gift's rich case was still more enriched by D'Aubusson, with a tabernacle to keep it in, of purest gold, with a quantity of jewels and pearls, "as we see it to this day, in the treasury," says Bosio.

Of its reaching Malta, there is no doubt; but if it was among the trophies that went down in the Mediterranean, it had a nobler monument than ever was formed of bronze or marble by the most glorious human artist. Whoever possess the arm, it is among the favourable arguments, since it wants the hand. What wonder if Bajazet thought it would be satisfactory to a hero and his whole order to receive the right hand of who also was a hero, though in another way, and whose name they bore? Being one of the spoils at the taking of Constantinople, it fell to be of the lion's share, perhaps from the magnificence of the case in which it had been preserved. And assuredly Frederick the Great's hat, or Napoleon's cup, though interesting objects, are less noble than the sultan's present to the most noted warrior of his day.

Nor is its identity much questioned by the erudite, who though discordant on so many points, seem to agree in these: that St. John the Baptist was buried at Sebaste—that when Julian burned the skeleton,

some Christians made away with the hand to Antioch —that Justinian had it brought thence to St. Sophia, for the dedication, and then restored it to those of Antioch—that Theodorus had it taken anew to Constantinople, by sea; the Greek Patriarch and senate, in great pomp, sailing to receive it in A.D. 959—where it long remained in a monastery close to the Blancherna, and afterwards in a chapel within the imperial palace itself, escaping every sack until Mahomet's.[1]

That it was not on Zain's life or death, but on D'Aubusson's turned the whole Turkish politics at that time, is clear, from Bajazet's confidential letter in reply to one dissuading him from moving, which would infallibly have kindled a European war.

*Au très heureux Prince D'Aubusson, Grand Maistre de Rhodes.*

"Nous avons appris par la bouche de votre ambassadeur ce que vous souhaitez de nous. A la verité vous demandez des grandes choses, et qui sont d'une extreme consequence pour nostre empire. Car enfin on ne peut faire un armament considerable, sans beaucoup de frais; et on ne peut l'abandonner sans quelque sorte de honte; neanmoins, comme je me dèfére entierement a vos conseils, et que je ne puis vous rien refuser, j'oublie en vostre faveur tous mes avantages. Je cesse d'armer, et je vous

[1] Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 555.

engage ma parole, que mon armée navale ne sortira point du detroit de Gallipoli. Je fais cela volontier dans le desir que j'aye que vous soyez toujours mon ami; commez vous devez l'etre puisque je renonce pour l'amour de vous, à mon interet et meme à ma gloire. De Constantinople le 5 du mois de Rabi el Elvel de l'année de l'Egire 889."[1]

Besides the adventures of Zain, many important events succeeded.

In August of 1484 died good Sixtus IV., and was replaced by Innocent VIII. (Cibo). And Genoa may rightfully glory that while one of its citizens reigned as Pope, another of them discovered the New World.

1485 With regard to D'Aubusson's cardinalship, his knights might be offended at it for a totally different reason, and reasonably enough,[2] since the most learned jurist then in Europe laid it down a few years later, in his solemn opinion to the Emperor Charles V., when regulating the etiquette of the strictest Court in Christendom in matters of precedence (the Spanish), that the grand masters rank superior to

[1] 13 d'Avril, 1484.—Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 562.

[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxxxiv., and cxlii.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. xiv.—Appendix, clxxxiii.—It is an error to read 1488, and has the air of having some relation to Zain's removal to Rome, whereas it has truly nothing to do with it; D'Aubusson having been cardinal years before.

cardinals, and all ecclesiastical authorities (saving the Pope alone), as well as to such archdukes and ruling princes as are not independent crowned heads.[1] Likewise, the tacking of legate to it, seems corroborative of what was suspected at the time, that title of cardinal was meant for a lure to give to the Papacy, as its agent in the East, the most distinguished warrior of the time. In which case the bait was swallowed. Nor could he in courtesy refuse what appeared to be given to him in courtesy, though whether he would or not, and without asking him beforehand, which implied still greater delicacy, it was affirmed, and honour. Priest he never became, nor by any act of his ever ceased to be a layman. Whatever be our opinion now, to become cardinal was considered matter of congratulation even from the Republic of Venice.[2] Albeit he never indeed went to Rome after his cardinalship, very far was he from using that burly clerical pompousness of gait, which nearly all find vulgar, affected, misplaced, ridiculous; and many, very offensive likewise; but he preserved to his most advanced age that simple hilarity of manner, and bold upright bearing, so well adapted to the open, off-handed kindness of a gallant soldier, and

[1] Cujacius.—Vertot: xii. 349.

[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxxxiii.—Appendix, clxxxiv.

highly endearing in an honoured, grey-haired warrior. D'Aubusson had become the peace-maker of the whole world, and all ill-treated Christians, and even Saracens, had recourse to him in any dispute with the Turks; and it must be avowed that Bajazet and his Pashas were ever ready to profit by his opinion.[1]

1486

Indeed, after a careful perusal of these secret papers, my notions respecting that sultan are much modified; for I find him always ready to embrace any generous offer that D'Aubusson proposes, and it is the ideas, not the words certainly, for these originals are themselves translated into bad Greek and bad Latin, or worse Italian, and in most instances we have both, forming in some two columns in the despatch, and often so spelt as to be very curious, and hard to understand. Of the names, they are for the most part incomprehensible, and I found out at length, elsewhere,[2] that Sir John Kendall was meant, when φρεζίδες τζουὰν Καουτὰλ is the Greek, and the Latin version, Frater Joannes *Caytal* or *Quental!*[3] the Italian is *Quendal.*[4] There

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xxxvi., Giunt. Id. xxxvii., xxxviii., xxxix., xli.—Appendix, clxxxv.

[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxxxvi.

[3] Id., ii., Id. xxix., Giunt.

[4] Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii., 561.

was a John Kendall among the lances at Agincourt; was it the same person in his youth?[1]

That dignity of ideas, which bespeaks not genius or learning, but an honest intention, and readiness to recognise what is proper and fair, as soon as it is pointed out, could not be feigned throughout a correspondence of several years, without once discovering itself. Instead of that wonder, I am inclined to believing what is easier, that writers have been too suspicious in invariably imputing duplicity and wicked motives to Bajazet. The pacific sentiments inculcated by D'Aubusson seem to have had an influence in all Bajazet's relations with Christendom, to judge by his letter to the King of France.[2] Probably anybody who has the patience to peruse these documents, will come to a similar conclusion. 1488

In continually arbitrating was D'Aubusson kept busy, between the Grand Seignor of Constantinople and the Soldan of Cairo, both sending ambassadors to Rhodes, and using every art to gain his favour, but both whom he sent away after getting them to agree among themselves, lest any more apparent interference might only compromise his own neutrality and sharpen their dissensions; as he writes

[1] Sir Harris Nicolas: Agincourt, 339.

[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xlix., Giunt.—Ap. clxxxvi.

in one of perhaps his last letters to the Holy See; and also between them and all the Levantine princes.[1] Certainly, it is very extraordinary, that the two chief Turks of that day (sultan and brother) should both have been his friends, though deadly foes to each other.

After many changes of domicile, and safety nowhere, but dangers increasing daily, by Bajazet's letter we know that his brother was still in the French dominions in 1488;[2] but in that very year, by Zain's own desire, with D'Aubusson's full approval, this latter sent his great karack to take the Ottoman prince and his whole suite from the shores of Provence to Civita Vecchia, when they were received with every honour, and the citadel given up to the knights, who, with the royal youth under their safeguard, fixed their lodgings there, until they entered solemnly into Rome on the 13th of March. And considering how powerful the Papacy still was, we will not be surprised D'Aubusson should think him more at freedom under it, with the brave knights round him, than under the protection of any king in Christendom, since even that of France had failed him. Grand indeed must

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xlvii., Giunt.—Ap. clxxxvii.

[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xiv., anno 1488.—Bouhours: Vie D'Aubusson: iv. 225.—Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxxxviii.

that entry have been, since there were many cardinals with their mules, and red hats, and some sovereigns, and ambassadors from all the other several crowned heads, and the whole Papal Court, all with their most pompous trains—coursers—coaches; so that without including the soldiery, the number of horses are said to have amounted to twelve thousand. Yet better had it been, if he had continued entirely with the order, even in any of its castles in Europe. For as long as he was with them, he incurred no harm, except an appearance of restraint, which he knew absolutely necessary for his personal preservation. There were in fact many ridiculous reports; but had the truth been known, the grand master had no other way than that apparent imprisonment to keep him from being murdered. At least Innocent VIII., to whom he was now given up, was not wicked himself, but somewhat avaricious and wordly-minded, and had herds of wicked people about him; and the common story is, that Zain had paid forty thousand crowns to kiss the Pope's knee instead of his toe, which the sturdy Mussulman refused; a circumstance that marked him as a pigeon worth plucking.[1]
The next year his old friend Mathias Cor- 1489

[1] Platina: iii. 441.

vinus sends him a most flattering letter and embassy.[1]

Sir John Kendall was again at Rome in 1489, as ambassador and procurator general, when chosen at Rhodes Grand Prior of England, but the good news found him on his death bed. As to his turcopoliership, he was succeeded in it by Sir John Besoel.[2]

If ever the Popes had any right to confer commanderies, or other dignities of the order, they renounced it by a bull of Innocent VIII. dated the 28th of March, 1489, binding not only himself, but his successors solemnly and in perpetuity. Whether or not the order ever availed itself of it, that *de jure* it might, is certain; and if any Popes broke it, they have a terrible malediction on their heads.[3]

Young Charles VIII. had descended into Italy and disappointed many boasts, by marching triumphantly almost through its entire length. And intended, he said, to make it his road to the East. And it may have been the truth, for he was too young perhaps for duplicity. So wrote several letters to D'Aubusson, begging of him to meet him

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. 1, Giunt.—Ap. clxxxviii.

[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xiv., anno 1489.

[3] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxxxvi.—Bosio: ii., lib. xiv. —Bouhours: Vie D'Aubusson, v. 273.

at Rome, or wherever he might be, to instruct him on that head, and despatched them in turn by ambassadors to Rhodes: firstly, from Paris; secondly, from Piedmont; thirdly, from Rome itself; fourthly, from Capua after his conquest of Naples. But D'Aubusson was far too wary to go, or contribute more than sound advice by letter and fair excuses, until he should first see how his Italian expedition answered; of which probably he augured no good from its hasty incautious manner.

Although on Zain's being formally delivered over to that Pope, it was stipulated with precise public contract, confirmed and countersigned by the entire sacred college, that the knights should remain his guards as before, under penalty of twelve thousand lbs. of gold, to be forfeited by his Holiness to France, on the smallest infraction of said stipulation, nevertheless after the short lapse of a few years, it was otherwise, and Innocent the VIII. died.[1] Scarcely had Alexander VI. become Pope, 1494
when separated were the knights from poor Zain, who was all astonished and terrified at seeing himself shut up in St. Angelo's. Not that either he or they were accused of any wrong, but that they were superfluous, since he was in a place of

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xiv.—Bouhours: Vie D'Aubusson, v. 284.

safety. What was it to him the assurance that one of his two masters was of the order? Which might be a falsehood. At all events, they were not the persons he was accustomed to. Those had won his confidence and had been his friends for years. And his faithful Mahometan servants, where were they? But these were new faces, and he saw they were his jailors. They were indeed guilty wretches! The knights had been so long about him as brothers! With them he appeared in a certain degree to be with his own family. Why not give the words of his letter to D'Aubusson at least in part?

"MOST REVEREND SEIGNOR AND FATHER!

"With the strongest affections of my heart, do I recommend to you my poor person, and am always desirous of hearing from you, and likewise learning what they mean to do with me here. You must know I find myself in Rome, considerably against my inclination. But am not without hope (since you were cause of my being in these parts) that I shall finally be placed in the estate and dominion which belong to me. The which I supplicate you to solicit for me with your whole power, assuring you that I shall always be most grateful to you and your order. As to my health, I am healthy and stout, by the grace of God, to whom I pray it may be the same with you, and all your brethren. And

I am at present at Castle St. Angelo, for suspicion of war, that is in the neighbourhood; and am honourably and sufficiently well treated, except that it has pleased the Pope to deprive me of my usual guard, the knights, which vexes me much, and causes me infinite grief. However, I contrive to support the entire with patience, since I am not at liberty. Most kindly and faithfully have I been served by the said knights—without being in the least able to show it by remunerating them, as I ardently would have wished. With the warmest and most affectionate cordiality I beg of your most reverend Seignory to have the kindness to consider them all as particularly recommended to you by your love of me. I declare to you I will think every favour and benefit you confer on them, as conferred by your condescension on myself personally. Nor do I trouble you with saying more now, unless that again I recommend myself to your most Reverend Highness, beseeching you to pity my actual condition. And I offer up my prayers to God that He may accomplish your every desire. From Rome, 27th October, 1494."

Nor did the knights approach their grand master with the Mahometan's letter alone, but also with a Pontifical brief.

"Having learned both from letters and otherwise that there were numerous plots against Prince Zain,

I have thought it safer, to shut him up for some days, close in our fortress and castle of St. Angelo, and therefore judged it no longer necessary to retain the knights, his body guard, who have always conducted themselves with the highest integrity and fidelity in that quality—having consigned him to the care and custody of our own nephews."

So it was evident the knights had performed their difficult duties egregiously well, as became them, and in nowise merited their sudden dismissal. That D'Aubusson was much hurt was but natural, and even alarmed for the unfortunate prisoner, towards whom he bore something not unlike paternal love; as also for such a slight towards his worthy order, and indeed himself in particular, whose fair fame in this world was thus exposed to slander, notwithstanding their best precautions.[1]

Ill-fated Zain had indeed fallen into the worst possible hands, those of the execrable Alexander VI., of whom, whatever his mind, our adverting to it would only seem a palliation of his crimes, which no honest man should attempt; for justice is to be left in such instances to the Creator, lest we run the risk of confounding right and wrong, which would be a greater injury to this universal world, than any benefit to his memory. His doom

[1] Bouhours: Vie D'Aubusson, v. 290.—Mines de l'Orient, v. 183.

in this world is settled, and personifies villany. What use of disturbing it? Who were the foremost to reprobate his wickedness, if not the virtuous Catholic clergy themselves, immediately about his person, and full of holy indignation at the monstrous dishonour he was bringing on the earthly head of their Church? Only for them we should never have known half his iniquities. Whoever wrote, or shall ever write ably about Borgia, drew, and must draw, from Roman Catholic authority. Protestant as you please, no one can speak more severely against him than the Catholics. But, at the same time, they have a right to exult that their Church underwent even that rigid proof, and consider it not unlike a miracle.

Borgia was the man in the world for poisoning, or any other enormity; who, not satisfied with poisoning many others, poisoned himself; and (at least regarding his neighbours), it was the best action he ever did, and he did it unintentionally. It was the age of poisoners, and other signal malefactors. To believe Guicciardini, scarcely any person worth notice died then a natural death; but in cases of no actual proof of murder, he ends his periods with—"*Not without suspicion of poison.*"

After some negotiation, suggested by fear of the French, the wily Pontiff had the cardinals to trump

up a peace between France and him, at price of Zain's being rendered over to the Lord of Seine,
1495 for which an interview succeeded in Rome of his Holiness, Charles VIII., and the Moslem Prince. At which interview this last so courteously requested the first to recommend him, and then so warmly, and with such noble frankness urged the monarch to accept him as his captive, kissing his royal hand and shoulder with such generous confidence and dignity, that the juvenile descendant of St. Louis could not but glow with corresponding sentiments; and as frankly received him into his protection at once, and hurried off with him to his camp towards the Neapolitan. But on the Papal side it was all a cruel deception, it is said. And likewise that most people about the Roman Court were not displeased to be thus revenged of one who deprived them of such a capital opportunity of thoroughly fleecing a Paynim; therefore sent him regularly primed for the feast. And he had just at that hour the full dose within him; and Alexander well knew it when he was giving him to Charles with every show of courtesy; the infernal drug acting slowly, nor discovering itself the least, until the poor victim had reached the end of a day's journey. Whether at Velletri, Terracina, Gaeta, or Capua,[1] that he

[1] Guicciardini: Colle Note di Rossini, lib. ii., caput. ii., fol. i., 256,

died suddenly of poison among the French is unfortunately only too certain.[1] If the emerald was of no avail—when its office would have been most needful—he satisfied himself by saying, *It was written!* And how resist the will of the Eternal? Had He not predestined all things? Man has but to submit!

That nation (the French) not having at any time acquired the fame of poisoners, but quite the reverse, no one ever suspected them; but the common voice is, that the tragedy begun by Cibo's barber, without his master's knowledge, was finished by Borgia's, with his consent, or rather by his orders. It seems to have been the same man who was barber to both; but howsoever that may be, the base instrument is beneath attention, since the writer held highest and most orthodox at Rome, Raynaldi, the ecclesiastical historian, is unanswerable, and is quoted by Bouhours, who would have doubted, if an honest doubt could be indulged, the words thus weighty with a twofold weight, the quoter and the quoted. "Perstringunt nonnulli Venetos Turcico corruptos auro operam dedisse ut veneno Zizimus necaretur; alii autem Alexandrum Pontificem carpunt qui Zizimum tabo infectum Gallo Regi tradiderit."[2] Nor, on another point, is

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xv.

[2] Raynaldi: Annal. Eccles., anno 1495.

Bouhours less stringent as to a few ignorant, or however intentioned, who pretend Zain died a convert, which he in candour disbelieves, for a very important consideration—"cequi me fait croire que pour comble de malheur il est mort Mahometan."[1] Why did Heaven permit such things? That is a mystery! So it is indeed. What is not a mystery to us? Not only the unseen, but much that we see. It stands there before us, within a foot of us. It stares us in the face, or nearer, rooted in our heart or head; and we are broad awake! Yet how little do we understand of it, or its purpose, or can account for even to ourselves! No doubt there is profound wisdom and goodness in all that, though far beyond human comprehension. These are among the "admirable secrets" of which a few favoured persons may perhaps have some feeble notion, but we certainly, or the world, none whatever. As it was the French avowal to make use of Zain in a war to take Constantinople, the Morea, and all Islam, his misfortunes pursued him even beyond the grave; for he thus raised Bajazet into something like an illustrious patriot fighting to defend country, home, religion.[2]

But the news of Zain's hard fate arriving sud-

[1] Bouhours: Vie D'Aubusson, v. 294.

[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xv., 424.

denly, struck the grand master with such horror, that it went within an aim's ace of killing him on the spot; and he required an exertion of his whole remaining strength to recover from the shock.[1] In truth, he seems never to have recovered from it completely. The loss of one infinitely dear to him, and the disgrace fallen on all Christendom, ulcerated his wounded tenderness. A sort of death-blow; at his time of life, how expect him to rally? Yet had he various consolations, if such can exist in his situation. On the King of France retreating from Italy, the then emperor refrained from attacking him until he should have D'Aubusson's assent, for which purpose he despatched an ambassador to Rhodes. Much more, he refused to declare war on the Turk without consulting the great hero, of whom all Christendom was proud. As a token of respect, a little later it must have pleased D'Aubusson that the King of England sent an ambassador with an extremely flattering letter and very nice present of various pieces of the most beautiful artillery, and several riding horses, extraordinarily rare in their kind, and highly prized, as very nobly bred and gentle, *from the island of Ireland, and called Eburi.* "The cannons for the defence of Rhodes, and particularly the English

[1] Bouhours: Vie D'Aubusson, vi. 295.

post, and the horses for the private use and comfort of him whom I look up to and love as my father."[1]

1498 His fourth chapter general had just ended, in which Sir Thomas Docrai was the Turcopolier; the procurator for the English Language, Sir Thomas Tefi; and of the sixteen, two Englishmen, the Turcopolier and Sir William Weston; absent were the Prior of England and the Bailiff of the Eagle.

But what was most consolatory to him was, that instead of a league against the throne of France, he procured peace with it, and a league of all Christendom against the Mahometans; and he himself

1500 was named captain-general; and if this was attended with great expense to the order, his knights all rose when the offer was announced in council, and most affectionately entreated him to accept; for that, whatever was the expense, their having their chief generalissimo to all Christendom was too dear and signal an honour to be refused at any price. Yet was he far wiser than not to perceive the futility of any such league. "Two things are absolutely necessary," he exclaimed, "neither of which, you'll see, will be maintained—that each power should be exact as to contingents and pay, and that the armament should not break

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xv., anno 1499.

up at the end of each campaign; but keep together for a reasonable time, which at such distance from Europe must mean half a dozen years perhaps. Otherwise my generalissimoship is a mere word; the responsibility would be mine, but not the power. My views may be just, but can they be executed without the allies?" One power, who had only two ships, promised fifteen for contingent, and in reality gave none; and others acted as badly, or worse, exactly as he had foreseen. Which the French admiral observing at the rendezvous off Lesbos, sailed home with his fleet. "Not only an indelible stain lies upon Christendom, but my order and myself too are dishonoured by not performing what we undertook," said D'Aubusson, and a deep melancholy crept on him for ever, as he returned with his thirty-seven sail to Rhodes; whose inhabitants, if with tears they had seen him 1501 embark, now hailed his return with the utmost joy,[1] —so ardent their attachment. As a final resource, after many epistles and struggles of every kind

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xvi., anno 1501.—His was indeed a monster ship, later off Lesbos, since we find it holding not only D'Aubusson, as generalissimo of Christendom, with his court and staff, and a large body of troops—infantry and cavalry—but also acting as a general granary for the entire Christian fleet, with all kinds of stores, provisions, and arms, and the long etcetera.

(among which numerous embassies to all Christian Courts, including the English, by Sir Thomas Sheffield) proving vain, he gave up the league, and
1502 directed himself to England alone, through the Turcopolier, Sir Thomas Newport, proposing a strong and quiet demonstration on Constantinople, which, without hostilities, could not but in such circumstances be successful. Whereas to besiege Lesbos would be very bloody, and decide nothing. But in London also he met with ice that he could not melt; seas and mountains with a cypher for product.[1]

Kendall dead, Sir Thomas Docray was elected
1503 to the Priory, from his Bailiwick of the Eagle, which went to the Turcopolier, Sir Thomas Newport, and Sir Robert Daniel was made Turcopolier.[2]

In D'Aubusson's fifth chapter general, Sir Thomas Docray was Prior of England; and the turcopolier (named to command the second of the four galleys which formed the order's contingent) was represented by Sir Robert Rebeston. The knight for England was Sir Thomas Sheffield.

But that grand master's biographers must tell the further details of his honoured life. Have I not been already too long?

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xvi., anno 1502.
[2] Id.: id., id., anno 1503.

In five chapters general holden by him, many laws of exceeding importance were enacted. Like his far-off predecessor, the second of the order's chiefs, almost all his disciples, one by one, as they survived, were elevated to the grand mastery. It was the way his grateful brethren showed their own feelings and his popularity. If it be an exaggeration to say he was equal to any hero of antiquity, which may smack of the days of Louis XIV., when drakes were swans; yet the sixteenth century's opinion may be adopted as perfectly exact, that D'Aubusson was far superior to any man of his times, as well as of those immediately preceding; and that many years must elapse before the world could have his equal. Without contrast, happy in his illustrious biographers, it is an encomium to have such; and well did he deserve to be proposed to Christian princes as their model.[1] He was now aged—above eighty—and a shattered, weak cane; and generous-minded invalid, magnanimous old chief; grieved am I to add it was from Rome[2] came shocks that produced first the seeds of death, and by frequent repetition his final sickness, which, exasperated by his clear foresight of mighty evils to

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xvi., anno 1503.—Bouhours: Vie D'Aubusson, vi. 340.

[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxlii..

ensue from profanation of a seat meriting such reverence, could not be cured. So resigning himself to his Creator's will, he, with the serenity that became his gallant spirit, directed, it is affirmed, the calmest, wisest discourse to his sorrowful knights, whom he had assembled round his bed, exhorting them to choose a worthier than himself to be their grand master, to remain faithfully attached to their ancient constitution, which, under God, they should do all in their power to preserve intact. Nor did the unconquerable hero, who with so many splendid and generous deeds had showered down honour, glory, and utility on the whole of Christendom, as well as on his order, lament to join that vast majority who once were mortals; but gently, without even a move of his pillow, closed his eyes and departed. It was (be the record as eternal as this world) the 30th of June, 1503.

Strange as it may appear, that a sultan should condescend to be the staunch friend of a Giaour, it were still stranger to be his sycophant. What would the present diplomatists at Constantinople think of presuming to suppose the sultan a Christian cur's toadeater? Except madmen! Not Zain's death, but D'Aubusson's was the signal of war, as shall be soon seen.

No prince or grand master was ever so lamented,

relate the historians. And here be it repeated, not in honour of him or order, which would be superfluous, but in justice to the Rhodians. In the funeral procession, first went every religious corporation in Rhodes, next came the Greek patriarch, and all his clergy. Then the order's Latin clergy, a little before the bier, two hundred of the principal Rhodians all in black, and with torches in their hands; and following them the knights carrying their colours down, so as to sweep the ground, the bier with the corpse borne on the shoulders of the priors, and grand crosses of the order; after which marched the long body of deep mourners, about two hundred and fifty, including the deceased's nephew Blanchefort—and loud was the weeping from the windows, streets, terraces, roofs, and the howls and lamentations of the whole populace. Over his tomb was broken the truncheon of command and his spurs, and all the rest of the doleful formalities, with singular testimonies of heartfelt grief. Never was son or parent more bewailed, than he by his people.[1]

Yet failed not the dejected knights to instantly meet (Blanchefort, the deceased's nephew, at their head). And at the election were sworn of the eight and sixteen, Sir John Tong, Commander of

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xvi. 469.

Rebeston, and Sir Robert Dalenson, Commander of Cinghy for England,[1] and after some hours' debate, was chosen for Grand Master Sir Almeric Amboise, Grand Prior of France, where he was then, his brother being prime minister.[2]

But Sir Almeric, the instant the knight came with the news of his election, set off for Rhodes, where he was received with great pomp, the Grand Prior of England receiving him on the beach;
1504 and held a chapter general the very next year, in which the Turcoplier, Sir Robert Daniel, and Sir Adam Letaud, were the English.[3] And the Prior of England being quite a different person, as on most occasions; if those *titres inseparables* were ever concentrated in one, it was only during the two first centuries of the order; and in Rhodes and Malta *inseparable* can relate but to their both being Englishmen.

Among the extraordinaries are to be observed the charge of falcons kept for presents, and Amurath, Zain's only son, who (left an infant in Egypt, for how and when he came to Rhodes is not written) had become Christian, and he and his

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xvi. 471.
[2] Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 471.
[3] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xvii.

family maintained with due state by the order, at thirty-six thousand florins a-year.[1]

In the spring of 1506, a dispute arising about guarding the seashore (very necessary from the Turks), and Sir Robert Daniel, the Turcopolier, affirming it was not his duty to furnish the patrol of above seventy men; and above all he refused to allow any knights to examine his sentinels, and in this he was sustained by the whole English Language; the grand master referred the business to six umpires, of whom three were English, the Bailiff of the Eagle, and the commanders, Sir William Dorrell and Sir William Weston, who settled it.[2] Of another chapter general holden in 1510, nothing is known now, its records being lost.[3] And then too the grand master called his knights by a circular, for scarcely was D'Aubusson dead, when a Turkish war broke out; not probably with Bajazet's wish, for he had been by nature, or had become a mild man, but from the ferocity of his third son and his party. This Selim was a horrid ruffian, and like Nimrod a great manhunter, and in the way of his strength, murderer of his father and brothers; and since his hand was in, and

1506

1510

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xvii. 482. [2] Id.: id., id., 487.
[3] Id.: id., id., anno 1510.

to make the business sure, murdered their wives and children.[1]

Vertot, often inexact, is occasionally grossly so; and refers all that, which in truth took place in April, 1512, not only not to Almeric's time, nor even his successor's, but still later.[2] It had been communicated to Pope Julius II., who died in February of 1513.[3]

Bajazet's eldest son was of a quiet philosophic turn, like his father, and it seems to have been the principal cause of the murder of both; and that it was because of Selim's fear his father would have preferred a son of a nature so similar to his own, or his second, who had some spice of mercy in his composition; so removed all competitors, and assumed rule himself. Yet towards Rhodes he used rather threats, than actual invasion. Except that the order was put to heavy expense, and several naval combats. In one of these, the commander was that Villiers de l'Isle Adam, who was afterwards to be grand master.[4] In another, the knights were abundantly repaid and took a great ship, that

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxlvi.—Sansovino de Turchi, 210.—Pa. Jovius.—Fatti di Selim by Bajazet's own page, Al Utri, a Genoese, 234.—Seb. Paoli : Osservazioni, ii. 568.

[2] Vertot : vii. 240.

[3] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxlix.—Platina: iv. 10.

[4] Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 567.

well deserved her name of Queen of the Seas, on her annual voyage from Egypt and India. She until then had awed off every danger of foes; armed with one hundred heavy cannons, her mainmast so enormously thick, that six men could scarce encircle it, and with seven decks; she contained an immense quantity of silks, spices, and all sorts of merchandise, and money, and one thousand picked Saracen soldiers and able gunners—all vanquished by the bravery of the boarders, who used a stratagem to get close.[1]

The knights, beyond doubt, were reputed far superior to the warriors of several centuries, and bring to mind what surprising (and to common minds incredible) feats Nelson's tars performed in these later days. To a certainty, the knights never counted their enemies, but left that entirely to those who commanded them; which was doing only their simple duty, as excellent soldiers. But what their historian must in fairness confess is, that he has never discovered a single instance of their having swerved from that severe duty. Each of them was considered equal to at least ten of any other military men then in existence. Their utter neglect of their own lives frequently succeeded against

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xvii.

all probability, and they almost never received and not often gave quarter.

It is not, as thought, that Giulio de Medici had been only in boyish years a knight of the order; he having, even now, become Prior of Capua, and was expedited by his cousin, who afterwards became Leo X., to give the precise description of a celebrated battle, then recent, to the vast consolation of his warlike Holiness, Julius the Second, and the terrified Romans; which a boy could by no means have effectuated. He, on the contrary, won his way up to the great dignities of the Hospitallers, before he laid down his knighthood, and began to aspire to the Papacy.[1]

Sir Almeric left our globe on the 8th of November, 1512,[2] and was succeeded by D'Aubusson's nephew, Sir Guido de Blanchefort, then Prior of Auvergne—the same that headed the council on his uncle's death—Blanchefort, who had distinguished himself in the siege of Rhodes, and on other occasions.

1512

At his election were Sir William Dorrel, now Turcopolier; Sir Clement West, and Sir William Corbolly, for England.[3]

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xvii. 498.

[2] Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 471.

[3] However Bosio writes *Quest* and *Corbol*: par. ii., lib. xvii., anno 1512.

And before his arrival, commencement was given to the Council of Lateran, under Julius II., guarded by Knights of Rhodes, whose captain was Fabricius Carretto, their ambassador at Rome, but only by such as were in Italy already; the rest being detained at Rhodes for the Turkish war, according to the interregnum's precise injunctions. Such the pretext; but under those courteous words was hidden a determination not to be lured even by an ambitious Pope into any breach of their sworn neutrality.[1]

But Blanchefort died far too soon to verify the universal hopes of a grand mastery to equal his glorious uncle's, but called away in the midst of his days, only proved his attachment to the order by his heroic death; for being in France when informed of his election, and perceiving the ambitious disposition which had already forced the order to refuse doing what would have been against its sworn duties, which is perfect neutrality between Christians, and so, fearful that if he died in Europe not unseized would be the opportunity of naming a grand master by the Papacy itself, under some decent excuse—he embarked hastily, though unwell, and refused to land in Sicily, when he might perhaps have been cured, but went to expire off

[1] Vertot: viii. 234.

Zante—in spite of all the prayers and exhortatives of the knights who were with him. He gave them his orders quietly, to have a fleet small galley ready, with great force of oars, to hurry for Rhodes the instant breath was out of him, and get the council to meet instantly and at any hour, day or night, and choose a chief before the news of his death could reach Rome. In which be praised not he, but his advisers, says Bosio; yet whose their instructions? That there were three galleys to have a race which should be the first, or insure the arrival of one, was probably the fact;[1] which was executed, and the famous Sir Fabricius Carretto chosen, as D'Aubusson had prophesied.

Such pressing preparations were making for a Turkish invasion of Rhodes, that Carretto had received orders to quit his embassy, and accompany two or three great ships, loaded with corn and other stores, for which he had authority to bind certain property of the order, or even sell it, but to be sure to arrive at Rhodes at latest, in May, 1513; which he did punctually, and was there very opportunely, when the tidings of Blanchefort's death arrived in the night of October 13th.

1513

In the election which immediately took place, were Sir William Dorrell, Turcopolier, and the

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xviii., anno 1513, 506.

Bailiff of the Eagle, Sir Thomas Newport, and Sir Thomas Sheffield, and Sir John Pont; and as for the whole English Language, they then in Rhodes amounted only to thirty-eight knights, the smallness of which number is the reverse of astonishing, the German being but five, the French one hundred, the Provenceaux ninety, the Auvergnois eighty-four, Arragon sixty-six, those of Italy sixty, and of Castille and Portugal together, eighty-eight; the whole body of knighthood of all nations making five hundred and fifty: yet be it ever recollected that every one of those was every way competent to be a superior officer, and often, almost always was, and ready to take any command assigned him, great or small, without demur.[1]

Nor is it left without memorial that in this year the celebrated learned Bembo of Venice, losing his wife, became a knight professed of the order, and eventually had risen to be Grand Prior of Hungary, when made cardinal.[2] But Leo X., now entering his pontificate, his cousin german, Julius de Medici, still an Hospitaller, and Prior of Capua, at his uncle's taking possession of the Lateran, rode, armed at all points, in splendid white armour, with a rich scarlet sopra vest, or short mantle, like that

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xviii., anno 1513, 507.
[2] Id.: id., id.

worn by the knights in battle, having the white cross on every side, and bearing high in the place of honour, over all other banners, even over the Roman in Rome itself, the standard of the Hospitallers; place justly appertaining to the order, but on that occasion subjected to criticism, not unblended with ignorance and envy, says Bosio. The same Julius being made cardinal the next year, took leave of his priory and the order, and preferred what brought him in full view of the Tiara, for the Pope was still king of kings; whereas Julius could have small chance of ever being chosen grand master, and even if he were, it is a station more reposing on personal merit than a mighty sovereignty in itself.[1] Let us not wonder if the Turk sometimes sided with Rhodes, since the Shah of Persia did in 1514, and sent an ambassador, who was obliged to traverse Mesopotamia and other countries in disguise.[2]

1514

Carretto was of an Italian royal family of Saxon origin,[3] and then grand admiral of the order, and in distress for the death of his brother, a cardinal.

Since Rhodes was in expectation every moment of a Turkish siege, his first act was to convene a

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xviii., anno 1513, 509.
[2] Id.: id,, id., anno 1514.
[3] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cliv.

chapter general,[1] whose chief occupation naturally was to augment the fortifications and make proper preparations for defence; amongst which I see a large sum voted for artillery to come from France, as well as another for the maintenance of the hapless Zain's son Amurath.

In 1515, there being an English ship at Rhodes, returning home, the grand master sent a splendid present to Henry, King of England, three of the most magnificent carpets, a case of odours, various exquisite works in silk, and certain bed-curtains in the Turkish fashion, of great value.[2] A letter from Leo X. to Carretto, speaks of their having been on the most intimate and affectionate terms for years. "Etiam atque etiam mi Fabriti, vale!"[3] Indeed there is a whole series of such letters during so short space of time.[4] The less wonder from Carretto being a celebrated linguist, not only in modern tongues, but in what was more in Leo's line, the ancient; rare accomplishment among warriors of that age, and likewise a remarkably kind, mild, courteous man.[5] 1517

The grand master sent an English knight, of high

[1] Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 472.
[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xviii., anno 1515.
[3] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cliii.
[4] Id., id., Id., clvii., ii. 182.
[5] Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 472.

talents, and very valiant and active, Sir Thomas Sheffield, Commander of Beverley, as ambassador to Spain; another English knight, the Bailiff of the Eagle, Sir Thomas Newport in 1518[1] to England.

Selim, on return from his victories over Persia, Syria, Egypt, in September, 1520,[2] died of an excruciating ailment—just judgment of God—in the very room where he had murdered his father. And Solyman ascended the Turkish throne the very same year and month that Charles V. was crowned at Aix la Chapelle;[3] how much the more he wished, so much the rather did not dare attack Rhodes as long as Carretto lived.[4]

But, in January of the next year, the literary and gentle grand master (how beautifully does gentleness sit on a warrior who deserved the admiration of D'Aubusson, even during that awful crisis!) Leo X.'s friend, lay on his bed extinct;[5] leaving Rhodes, however, in a capital state of defence.[6] A very exact model of the city was made in wood, with all the various fortifications and artillery, to be laid before the engineers of Europe, if they could propose any improvements—

1521

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xviii. 515.
[2] Pa. Jovius per Carlo V.: Dei Turchi, 214.
[3] Robertson: ii. 102. [4] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xviii.
[5] Seb. Paoli; Serie, ii. 472.
[6] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xviii. 518.

model that possibly may yet be found in some corner of France, Spain, Germany, or perhaps the Lateran or Vatican.[1]

An eyewitness says nine days elapsed, when eighteen thousand of the population of Rhodes having well discussed the respective virtues and defects of the two (both absent and unconscious) candidates, Sir Philip Villers de l'Isle Adam, Prior of France, and Sir Thomas Docray, Prior of England[2]—the one signal for genius, experience, and friendship with many princes to whom he had been frequently ambassador—the other as a distinguished officer in every walk of military science, familiar with France and Spain, and practised in the affairs of Rhodes, and renowned for every worthy gift and strength of mind and body, and clear of ambition, and eminently impartial, as a magistrate ought to be, and totally without the least tinge of artifice. Long was the discussion; but at length the knights having elected L'Isle Adam Grand Master, the popular shout proclaimed him sovereign of their island also.[3] Seldom have the people so pleasing a dilemma; although possibly one man viewed the

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xviii. 519.
[2] Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 567.—Appendix, Num. xxx.
[3] Fontanus: 343.

sight with satanic malignity.[1] That L'Isle Adam was elected in February, 1521, is all we find in the archives; the rest is lost, and we must have recourse for details elsewhere (says Bosio.) For these he follows Bourbon chiefly; but Bourbon, though a knight of the order, and then at Rhodes, is too jejune to be at all satisfactory. Had he not besides party views? The divisions between France and Spain had already begun ripening into the bitter wars of Charles V. and Francis, and added venom to the soreness of the Languages. Naturally Bourbon exclaims against him of Portugal, and attributes every disaster to his treason, of which we find not one iota of accusation in the documents. Lost? Why, in that case, not give the accused the benefit of it? Lost? But did they ever exist? Bosio says he never saw them, and merely follows Bourbon, who never cites them; the other eye-witness, whose book Bosio seems never to have seen, nor could what contains extracts from it (the Cod. Dipl. Geros.) never mentions the name of the accused at all. So the whole accusation stands upon one single witness. And is one enough? The judge of appeals may have opined not. And such is probably the reason of his silence in the full and detailed relation, where he takes care to inform us

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xviii. 519.

he had examined a grandee most rigidly, without finding any proof of his guilt; but tells us neither the name nor country of that grandee. Fontanus, though not exactly a knight of the order, held high employments under it, and was of one of the principal Rhodian families, and never quitted the island from his youth, until he quitted it with L'Isle Adam for ever. Fontanus' account too, embraces the whole period from L'Isle Adam's election to his arrival at Malta; and throughout all those wanderings, he kept a very interesting journal, writing from day to day what he observed. A most responsible guide then he is, and shall be ours. There were quite causes enough for the lamentable catastrophe, without what may be merely a futile scandal, and no more. From reverence not for Bourbon, but Bosio, it shall cursorily be told at the end, citing who must stand on their own.[1]

[1] Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 570.

## CHAPTER VI.

L'Isle Adam, when at Paris he learned his election,[1] instantly united a body of horse, and rode to take leave of the King of France, then in his camp, on the confines of Burgundy,[2] and hastening to Nice, embarked, and after various perils, amongst which was that of passing unseen through a famous pirate fleet, laying in wait for him by the Turk's (unavowed) connivance, arrived at Rhodes, where spies from the Moslem kept a sharp scrutiny. A physician in Constantinople, a Jew, as he had been accustomed under Selim, also continued under his son, to give him secret intelligence from Rhodes in letters with a Greek acting there as spy, and who informed him that one of the chief walls in

[1] Fontanus: 344.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. xviii. 520.—Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 472.

[2] Robertson: Charles V. ii. 181.

the fortifications had fallen down on the day of L'Isle Adam's arrival; and that a German engineer being sent for to rebuild it, if the Turk assailed Rhodes before he came, it would be easy to take it.[1]

Soon did L'Isle Adam receive a most curious and cajoling letter from the false tyrant, congratulating him on his happy arrival and new principality in that island, which his Ottoman predecessors had always respected as a faithful ally: "Even so, I too mean to cultivate your favour.[2] Rejoice with me, then, dearest friend, that after my father's fashion, who conquered Persia, Jerusalem, Arabia, Egypt, I have taken that strongest of fortresses, Belgrade, during last autumn, and having offered battle to the Giaours, which they wanted courage to accept, I took several other beautiful and well-fortified cities, and slaughtered most of the inhabitants by either sword or fire, and reduced the rest to slavery. Victor, and after sending my numerous and triumphant army to their winter quarters, I myself am back in my Court of Constantinople." In which the sagacity of the grand master saw a declaration of war, and to his council showed both letter and answer, which ran thus:

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xviii. 524

[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. clviii.

"*Sir Philip Villiers de L'Isle Adam to the Turk.*"

"Rightly have I understood what your ambassador presented. Your friendship is as pleasing to me as displeasing to Cortupolo, who tried to capture me on my voyage from France, not thinking I should have ventured into the Rhodian sea by night; so, in his rage at missing me, he endeavoured to kidnap some Venetian merchantmen, but had to fly from the ships that rushed from my port, and even leave behind him what he had robbed from the men of Candia. Good health to you!"[1]

In some places the year ended then on the 24th, and began on 25th of March; so this correspondence, though in the same March, was in different years.

The Turk's reply, in a similar tone,[2] was accompanied by an attempt to inveigle a knight or dignitary of the order, as ambassador; and even selected the individual. But L'Isle Adam interposed a refusal.[3] Ramadan—Solyman's physician
1522 wandering and partial to his master, as Tercier observes, and as is natural in an Arab—says the Sultan's idea was to drive away the knights under whom the Rhodians were becoming a maritime

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. clix.—Appendix, clxxxix.
[2] Id.: id. Id. clx.—Appendix, cxc.
[3] Fontanus: 347.

power, as in the ancient times, to the grievous injury of all Islam; also he acted from a spirit of religion to free the Mussulmen prisoners of war, whom the order kept as galley slaves, "whose sufferings angels and houries pitied, and engaged Allah, at last to inspire our gracious sovereign with the resolution to succour them by conquering the island." All this, however, did not prevent the native Rhodians from sending one of their merchants, an excellent person, who speaking Turkish well, and believing he had friendship with traders of that people, who invited him to dine with them on the coast of Asia Minor, was seized and bound, and carried off to Constantinople; where he was most cruelly tortured, without any regard to the laws of nations, and forced to confess all he knew about Rhodes; which occurrence fortified the high opinion the Rhodians had already of their grand master's perspicacity.[1] In vain he sent embassies to Europe, neither Charles V. nor Francis I.[2] gave a weight to exhortations, but were too busy with their own quarrels to attend to Rhodes.[3]

Three or four times a-day used the grand master to visit the ramparts, from the very beginning—

[1] Memoires de l'Acad. des Inscript., t. xxvi.
[2] Fontanus: 348.
[3] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xviii., anno 1522. 528.

particularly the post of England and Auvergne, where were many working parties; and it being now April, all the barley was cut down a little earlier than usual.[1]

Solyman, born with excellent parts, and who had acquired prudence before a hair was on his chin, saw at once the grand master copied his own artifice, and that Rhodes was ripe for hostilities; so, having tried his troops with an animated harangue, and finding them ripe and ready to follow their young emperor to any attack upon the Christians, proud of his spirit, and the honour of the empire, and the Islam religion, he permitted himself to hold his self-restraint no longer, but wrote what was really and openly a declaration of war:

"Not only to the grand master and his knights I direct my warning, but also to the inhabitants at large, how my pity towards my own people, and indignation at the monstrous injuries you Rhodians have dared to heap upon them, make me command you instantly to give up your town and island, with gracious leave that you may carry off the most precious of your effects, or if you choose to remain under my sway, I permit your doing so, and promise to require no tribute, or anything in diminution

[1] Bourbon: 629. For the title of this book look at Appendix, cxci.

of your liberties, or against your religion; and it is better for you to prefer my friendship to a most desolating war, in which you cannot but be conquered, and will have to undergo the horrid penalty; for neither your own strength, nor foreign succours can possibly avail you, nor the stoutness of your walls, which I will overturn from the very foundations. And if you choose me for your lord, I swear by the God of heaven and earth to use neither fraud nor stratagem, and by the four evangelists, and the multitude of prophets (the greatest of them all being Mahomet, most worthy of adoration), and besides by my own father, and grandfather, and this my living, sacred, august, imperial head."[1]

Yet not one of his oaths did the natives of Rhodes believe, but to them surrender seemed far worse than death. Their fear was of torture, and what should befall their children and females; but no disunion, not even religious, for the two patriarchs, both the Greek and the Latin,[2] were on most friendly terms with each other, at least in this urgent extremity.

The commissaries chosen to examine the knights

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. clxii., ii.—Appendix, cxcii.

[2] The Latin's name was Colossense.—St. Paul according to some (who are in error) meant Rhodians.—Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 569.

of each of the Languages, all drawn up armed before their inns, and in full armour, with their scarlet sopra-vests bearing the white cross on every side, ahead, behind, to left, to right; those of Auvergne were examined by Sir William Weston; those of England, by Sir Claude Chalant, and so on, every Language being examined by a knight not of its own division; and each (whether knight, or servant-at-arms) had to swear, touching his cross, that the armour and arms he wore were his own, and not borrowed for the occasion. In this way the whole review took place in all the different Languages at the same hour.[1] Of the English, only a few names have come down to us.

Sir John Ranson.
Sir William West (written *Tuest.*)
Sir Nicholas Usil.
Sir Giles Rosel.
Sir Thomas Remberton,
Sir Otho de Monteilli.
Sir John Sotu.
Sir George Emer.
Sir Nicholas Rubert.
Sir George Asfelz.
Sir Michael Roux.

But while the review was taking place, thirteen

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix., anno 1522., 533.

knights of various Languages were marched off to the guard of St. Nicholas, of whom two omitted in the lists were Englishmen, *Sir John Baron*, and *Sir Francis Buet.*

These, and the grand cross, Sir William Weston, in the fleet, Sir Nicholas Farfan, of the grand master's suite, Sir John Bouch, Turcopolier, one of the four captains of succour[1]—each of the posts having its particular chief, that for England was Sir William Onascon—each of the bastions having its ditch, and a separate captain, that of the English bastion's ditch was Sir Nicholas Hussey—likewise one of the guardians of the palace, and who kept the key of its postern in the garden, was Sir Thomas Sheffield — these make only nineteen Englishmen altogether. But God be praised that we have a record of even so many.

And to augment the noble enthusiasm of the people, a Greek monk,[2] of celebrated eloquence,[3] was sent by the grand master; while the council's debates as to in what manner the summons should be answered, whether with fair words, or proud defiance, were cut off by an advance of the Turks against the islet of Cos; whose inhabitants, without waiting for orders, resisted and drove back the un-

[1] In which duty he was killed.
[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix., 541. [3] Fontanus: 352.

believers, with much loss, who would have been killed to a man, and every one of their galleys taken, but for the wind, which enabled a residue to escape back to Asia Minor. The Prior of St. Gilles, who commanded there, had his horse slain under him; but his island was saved, and he, coming into Rhodes, joined the siege.[1]

War had begun;[2] treaties were over; the Rhodians (quite as nettlesome as the Turks) forthwith set about pouring destruction on their own birthplace—pulling piecemeal villas and farmhouses and cottages—cutting down trees—rooting up corn, though it was now the 14th of June,[3] and the harvest ripening in that uncommonly fertile island—and carrying everything portable into the city, that the enemy might starve.[4] Nor did any person regret ruin of his lands or dwelling, but destroyed them with his own hands, and readiest alacrity; which enthusiastic process was applauded chiefly by a knight of the name of Pomerolo: "Most magnanimous citizens, brave and worthy men, see what a fleet they have prepared! By whom? Against whom? You know it already! Let nothing of hesitation or supineness in us increase that prodigious strength. The grand master has

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix. 540. [2] Fontanus: 354.
[3] Fontanus: 354. [4] Id.: 354.

ordered that everything should be laid waste, do so then of yourselves, most noble creatures, nor stop at unsparingly extirpating your own property. Let not our most cruel enemies find anything here to sack. Put up with this sacrifice; first of many; for we are all embarked now in one ship. Why conceal anything from you, most valorous people? In these disastrous times you have seen how high-minded and wise our grand master is, and meek and modest with every one, great or little; and has he not shown you the example, by destroying his most beautiful and delightful garden, and converting his palace into barracks?[1] Therefore, I say to you, most generous islanders, to work! to work! and leave the entire of Rhodes, beyond our walls as bare as any wildest wilderness."

By the grand master's orders, says Bosio, wells and waters outside of the city and near it, were corrupted; and if poisoned, it seems to have been unconsciously, and as it were accidentally, by throwing into them the hemp and flax seed, which they had pulled up in the fields.[2] And the Greek archbishop, a man of the holiest life, and much wisdom and persuasion, got up into an elevated place in the open air, opposite an image of the Virgin Mary, and holding out a crucifix in one

[1] Fontanus: 355. [2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx, 541.

hand, and with the other pointing to the image of our Lady, he stood for several minutes in silence, and then, with sweet and penetrating unction, addressed a numerous auditory in these words:—

"Best and most generous of citizens, I cannot but say to you, in even the worldly sense, that the impending war brings with it not only sorrow, but also great joy. Indeed, it is hard to say which predominates. When I reflect on the fleet, the army, the strength, number of the enemy, I shudder; but, raising up my mind to hope and recollection of the marvellous feats of the Latins, and of the renowned fortitude of the Greeks, I feel myself changed, and another than I was; and from being dejected come to have my spirit at ease; and from timid and fearful, bold and audacious; and not humbled and doleful, but gay and content, in the assurance we shall utterly overthrow our most cruel invaders. But Christians, His most blessed mother, before whose image I am speaking, will assist us infinitely better than that human philosophy I was talking of. In her, and her Divine Son, then, is my stand, and trust for victory. The Creator will sustain this republic; no doubt of it, my dearest children. Nor you, most glorious knights, whose deeds were never surpassed, nor perhaps even equalled by Greeks or Romans; you never knew fear; but you

will allow us Rhodians to look upward, that likewise our terrors may pass, by dwelling on those lofty thoughts of religion, far superior to artillery and bastions. Bold and religious hearts are preferable to the most impregnable of walls. My words shall be as free as always not to lessen your worth, most martial knights, nor yours, my dear Rhodians, but. to tell the naked truth. The infidel, I am sure, will try to make the Italians rebel and conspire against you. But, men of Rhodes, do you be firm, and constant, and listen to me. Fellow-countrymen, you are aware I have studied many books; well it is not of the weak Italians (who are merely not to be thoroughly depended upon) that I complain so much, as of the Turk, who will do his utmost to make them his instruments and deceive them. All history bids you to be on your guard. In the olden time too, Rhodians won victories for the lord of the capital and provinces, which he lost, and was as ungrateful to us, as untrue to himself. Take care it be not the case now also. O most valiant Rhodians! only keep your eyes well open, place your confidence in the Almighty. Remain with the steadiest, most constant firmness, attached to the grand master as formely to D'Aubusson. If the Divine pity granted you, under D'Aubusson's auspices, so cele-

brated a triumph, so honoured a victory, you who of all Christian populations are reputed no ways inferior to the heroes of ancient Greece, what will not that good God do for you now under his servant L'Isle Adam, whom you know yourselves to be truly a most excellent and noble prince? And those your most sanguinary of enemies! Anciently it was a great honour to be born a Rhodian, and many pretended to be Rhodians who were not. And why should it not be now? What you were in the late siege, you will be in the present. And that is the best way to show you are nowise degenerated from your renowned ancestors. Really not imaginable is your recompense, much less can it be said! Yes history, tradition, faith, all lead to the same glorious result, which your high priest predicts to you, happiness both earthly, and, what is infinitely more, eternal! O my bravest, and my most magnanimous children!"[1] These and similar are no imaginary speeches, but taken from a journal made by a most trustworthy eyewitness, writing on the spot fresh, day by day, what he himself saw and heard. They are in substance facts. Not at all embellished, but much less than the truth; and shorn greatly of their strength now by coming through my pen.

[1] Fontanus: 352.

Wood, corn, domestic animals of every sort, roots, vegetables, ploughs, spades, instruments of agriculture of every kind, fowls, and peasantry came pouring into Rhodes, with the most terrible confusion; and countrywomen with their hair all in disorder, and scratching their cheeks, as is the custom of the place,[1] and weeping sore and supplicating their Lord and God, with their tiny children lifting up their joined hands towards Heaven, praying Him to have compassion on them, and defend the city from fire, and sword, and preserve the Rhodian women and their little ones from every harm. This immense human inundation infected the air wofully. But it was far worse when famine ensued among the unfortunate animals, that all perished of hunger, when their carcases causing a stench, brought an epidemy whereby many people died. The more, that the water had been rendered nauseous and bad, by hemp thrown into it, or rotten flaxseed, whether by design or accident. The water got worse every day, so that its deadliest effects were reserved for the victors themselves after the fall of the city. Some ships of the infidel appeared off the port, but were soon prevented from entering it, and retired after suffering considerably from the artillery, with no loss to Rhodes. So

[1] Fontanus: 355.

seeing the tranquillity of L'Isle Adam and his frequent devotions, that mixture of valour and religion produced a great feeling of security, and many of the Rhodians thought it all a dream or idle fiction; and that the enemy would never dare to come, from the efficacy of their grand master's vigilance and prayers.

Of L'Isle Adam enough can never be said, exclaimed the Rhodians. And strange it is, but the very truth (add they, anticipating their own narrative) that during the whole siege, never once did that same quiet placid look, sweet, and almost a smile, desert him, whatever was the hurry, or difficulty, or peril; but he was always gracious and kind to every one, so that none but loved and revered him; and could not avoid admiring his Christian-like deportment and most valiant devotion, and often did we see him kneel down, in some pause from his high functions as commander-in-chief; laying aside only his helmet, and sometimes, perhaps, yet very rarely, his cuirass. Invariably he acted on every occasion both as captain and soldier. And eating with the common soldiers occasionally, always took a personal and most active part in all the most ferocious combats without any distinction whatever; not seldom was on guard after midnight, as if an ordinary sentinel.

Nor for all his devotions and all his popularity, did he ever allow any determination to be taken without his precise orders; nor ever did any one of any class cease viewing him with profound respect. His merest word was a law, for he had won the hearts of all men, at the same time that they avowed his intelligence and vast knowledge. Most people seemed to see something superhuman in him.[1] But early on the morning of the 26th of June, the whole Turkish fleet was seen by a sentinel from the top of St. Stephen's hill, as they advanced towards the eastern coast of Rhodes, and only about a mile off, who hurried to inform the grand master of what to him was nothing new. But through the city bitter were such tidings,[2] and naturally created a great commotion.[3]

Little indeed in substance differs Ramadan's account from our own. Mustapha Pasha was the person chosen to prepare the expedition, who (relates the physician) laid in the only provisions he judged necessary—garlic, onions to correct the water, cheese, vinegar, dried fruits, fish, salt meat, and jars to hold water; and embarked on the first of Regeb of the 928th Hegira (at the end of May,

[1] Fontanus: 355.
[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix., anno 1522., 542.
[3] Fontanus: 356.

in 1522), the fleet then carrying two thousand troops to be landed, eight thousand mariners, and a huge quantity of cannons, and muskets, and utensils for digging. Which agrees pretty well with the Christian description of the strength of the first expedition. No one knew whither it was bound for. The object was to take Rhodes by surprise. Our crescent stopped a week at Gallipoli; three days at Chio, thence to the beautiful island Sousouna Adesi in Turkish, but not laid down in Turkish maps; after that to Stanchio, fortress belonging to the Rhodians, where we were fired on, so had to sail to Rhodes direct, and on the 26th of June, appeared there. The fleet had gone on increasing prodigiously, for thirty sail, leaving Constantinople, it showed at Rhodes one hundred, which soon became two hundred and eighty. If we suppose the land troops to have increased in the same proportion with the shipping, they fully amount to the great numbers at which Christians estimate them. As to the two hundred thousand men who came by degrees during the siege, from Syria and Turkey, according to Bosio, neither then, nor at any time does Ramadan give the number of the whole Moslem forces. He only admits they were extremely formidable to work the heavy artillery, to discharge the tremendous vollies of fusillades he continually speaks of, and

to employ those multitudes of spades and pickaxes. "Rhodes is surrounded (says Ramadan)by walls as high as Sultan Mahomet's minarets, and as wide as the streets of Constantinople. The fortress in its configuration, differs from all others in the world. It does not appear to be a fortress, but rather a sheep-cote"(from its roundness he means, and in the famous maps of Sauson it is represented quite circular, as Bosio likewise remarks); "but not from ignorance," (continues the medical Arab), "but that the infidel built it in that shape with design to strengthen it. This Rhodes is not exactly like the ancient, which was erected three hundred years before Constantinople. Two very deep ditches gird Rhodes all round. As to the island, it was commanded by seven kings" (meaning certainly the grand master, and his chiefs the conventual pillars, but he disfigures their names so as to be wholly unintelligible), "the palaces of which kings stand within the capacious hold, and contain the treasures of all the European Giaours, and the greatest part of their wives and children. There are also subterranean magazines in it, full of houses, and inhabitants, and every sort of precious merchandise. As for the grand master and his knights, less reasonable than the wild beasts, inasmuch as they despise all sexual delights and the tenderness and pleasures of love, they let those

beautiful ladies waste away in pining for paramours. Within the city are two harbours, before you can get to those inmost celestial palaces, and those harbours defended by two tremendous chains—each heavier than that of the damned, and sustained by six beams stronger than the vault of a bath. No key can open those chains—except the best key, an order from the sultan, and the might of his brave troops. In those gorgeous palaces pant those ladies not at all fearing you, but wishing for the Moslem conquerors, who will free them from the golden cages, in which the sweet palpitating birds lie. Those sultanas of the Giaours sparkle with gems, but more with every warm desire, and languishing for the true belief they are ready to learn from their ravishers. Rich are those royal palaces, with all precious stones, and gold, and jewels, and silk; all that is valuable in profusion, each palace with as many cielings as those of Galata, and ornamented with most finished paintings, and the air perfumed with many sweet scents — rose-water continually thrown over the floors. The women and maids of Rhodes are always drest with the greatest care. The divine odour they exhale can make age young, and give life to death. All days are for them days of festivity. Nothing can equal their beauty, or the elegance of their toilet. Loving the

society of men, they do not occupy themselves in the works that become their sex, but rather from their infancy are taught the art of pleasing their temporary mate-fellows. Were I to describe their libertinism, I should not have time to write this history," says the uncourteous Arabian doctor, whence we cannot but conclude that if a learned professor allowed his imagination to get so heated, how much worse so must have been the wild soldiers he misled and roused up to furious excitement, and even frenzy for the assault![1]

It was the octave of the feast of St. John, during which they from old were used annually to make a procession every one of the eight days, nor would the grand master allow them to begin abstaining from it, precisely on that morning, but had his orders banded through the streets, bidding all the Rhodians leave off gazing, and flock to St. John's Church; so high mass was sung publicly as usual with due reverence, and after it they went in procession round the church once, as was the custom, with as much solemnity, pomp, and quiet, as if the city was at profound peace. And the grand master approaching the altar, and having mounted its steps, took the ostensorium and host, and lifting it high in his hands, facing the congregation, prayed to God

[1] Tercier: 753. Memoires de l'Acad. des Inscript: t. xxvi.

in behalf of the universal people; that He would deign to give strength and happiness to the Rhodians, chosen to defend His holy religion, and most high name; turning away all the slaughter, and injury, and fire, and sword, and rapine from them, and against their foes. Thus by ceremonies, and prayers, just as before, having quieted the popular mind, and replaced the blessed sacrament tranquilly in the tabernacle, he had St. John's doors suddenly shut, and every Christian to his post.[1]

On that very day a messenger had arrived at Rome, with what gave rise to conjectures that were too true; as we see by a letter from the cardinals assembled there to the then King of England, dated Rome, 26th July, 1522—that a messenger had just arrived with the news how on the 14th of the preceding June (for he had been a month on the voyage) war had been declared by the Turks, and on the 17th, the Turkish fleet had got under weigh, so that there is every reason to be sure that Rhodes is at this moment closely invaded. The sacred college therefore beseech his majesty to send some succours to it instantly, and since haste is urgent they write instead of waiting a few days for the Pope, who will no doubt also write. But they beseech his majesty not to delay for other princes,

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix. 543.

who will perhaps follow his example if in time; but that lose an hour and the bulwark of Christendom is inevitably and irreparably lost.[1]

Notwithstanding every effort, extremely inadequate were the defenders in number, though all had been called in from the islets, and admitting of no defalcation for the decrepit and infirm. On quitting the church, he returned to his palace in his ordinary dress; and hearing the hostile ships were quite near, ordered the city gates to be closed. Then issuing in splendidly-gilt armour at the head of his guards, with many knights riding round him, and three close to him with three great banners, attendant on his person during the whole siege, whether on foot or horseback, on each side and behind—1st, the grand standard of the order; 2nd, another sent from Rome in D'Aubusson's time; 3rd, one where the white cross was quartered with L'Isle Adam's own coat of arms; all three having their standard-bearers, to whom they were solemnly delivered, the third being a young English knight, named Sir Henry Mansel, of the magisterial household; and when he was killed soon, a French knight bore it thenceforth. Thus the grand master mounted; and after a loud flourish of drums and trumpets, in order to habituate the people to the

[1] Cottonian MSS.—Appendix, ccvii.

sounds and hubbub of war, he commanded all to proceed to their assigned places. Then could you observe a mighty instance of what effect military intrepidity has on a crowd; for the sight of so many intrepid warriors from every nation made that confusion and wail utterly pass away, and in its lieu, calm confidence ensued. And in the same instant were hoisted a great quantity of flags from towers, inns of the different languages, stations of command, along walls and bastions, fair and superb sight! This and the various martial music, not a little exhilarated the people; and crowded were the terraced roofs, and the most elevated spots all around, to see the Mahometan fleet advance, also a magnificent, though terrific view! For not a child or old person, male or female, that day remained in all the city in any occult corner, but went, or were borne out. No season when people cannot stay in the open air at Rhodes; for never is any disagreeable extreme of cold or heat there (says Ramadan), but all the year through appears a perpetual spring, which agrees well with its abundance of flowers and sources of the purest and most limpid water.[1] What sorrowful admiration! That fleet was above four hundred sail, the army it brought of two hundred thousand, of whom sixty thousand

[1] Tercier: 755.—Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscript: t. xxvi.

were miners and sappers from Vallachia and Bosnia, and an immense assortment of every kind of ammunition and wonderfully heavy artillery.[1] Scarce had night closed in, when a Christian slave (a Piedmontese) escaped from the Turks, and swimming round to St. Nicholas's Tower, and keeping afloat until morning—a great exertion, besides the distance of between six and seven miles—was at daylight brought to the grand master, and gave the above particulars of the enemy's force; and also that there was considerable ill-humour, chiefly among the Janissaries, not at all relishing the attack on Rhodes; and that the infidel relied chiefly on the mines; and that therefore they had brought workmen in such abundance, all which was corroborated by other Christian deserters. A little later, the greatest engineer of that time, Gabriel Martinengo of Brescia, was tempted away from the Venetian service in Candia by Anthony Bosio, of the historian's family, which when the knights saw, and that he gave up all his worldly prospects to join them at such a perilous moment, they received him at Rhodes with much joy; and as he was un-

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix. 544.—Besides these, another body of one hundred thousand came by degrees during the siege. Nor astonishing, seeing the nearness of Asia Minor, and the facility of transport the Turks had.—Bourbon: 9.

married, took him into the order, making him a grand cross at once, and assigning him a large income.[1]

On what is called Bo by the Rhodians, and is a promontory from Stephen's hill stretching to the east, and not far from the city, those of the Turkish troops who landed first drew up; but were soon dislodged from that position by the Rhodian artillery, and their ships also driven back. "I was told there was a way to burn the whole Turkish navy proposed then by an excellent Florentine, Captain Girolomo Bartolini; but that plan (like many other plans that went against the infidels) was not approved of by an officer of the treasury, whom his colleagues followed. Therefore the disembarking of troops and battering trains went on quietly, and the enemy took up their stations; while ours of the city employed themselves, as much as ever they could, in various hard labours, without distinction of rank, age, or sex. And the grand master sent ambassadors into Spain to Charles V. and to Rome, and cardinals and knights of Italy, and to France and the French knights, imploring assistance for the unhappy city besieged by land and sea; and that it was the duty of all Christians to aid the Rhodians, foremost in defending the

[1] Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 571.

common religion of all Christendom. But our lot befel otherwise.[1]

Martinengo, during the siege, is said to have mined fifty-five subterranean passages, countermining those of the Turks, who put ours to that laborious necessity up to the very walls. Under his directions, the first thirteen days of Turkish inactivity enabled the Rhodians to make a number of countermines near the ramparts; and soon was experienced the great utility of such anticipations.[2] Rhodes, already that lovely island, recovered from the ravages under D'Aubusson, was rich, salubrious, and diversified with beautiful uplands and lawns, remarkable from its quantities of roses, whence probably the name. On the top of a plain in the north-east, stands its capital, also called Rhodes, as round as if drawn by a compass, nor unlike the full moon, when partly in light and partly shade—the side of the port, where the water bathes the foot of the houses, being in shade, and the city, the part in light, glittering like gold. And in the still mirror of the port (which itself is also a round) is the best place possible to observe the lunar reflection at that ecstatic moment. Note, however, it is only one side (the eastern) has the sea, and that

[1] Fontanus: 356.

[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix. 547.

commodious port, and three the land. This, in its varieties, had rising ground and hillocks, some of them close to the ramparts; and as far as the eye could reach, even from the steeple of St. John's, the view was loaded with orchards, gardens, villas, and most splendid forest trees, and waving corn and vineyards, and pastures full of well-bred cattle and fine fleet horses. But even Fontanus, from the outset, saw that Eden much ruined; for its own children had worked foremost at its destruction, as recounted, which the Turks shortly finished, and never since has it been remedied. Still, notwithstanding all, it has a little of its pristine beauty to this day. Not everything that nature did for it could be wholly eradicated. Though the purest air may at last be contaminated by ages of unclean, reiterated slaughter, and the works of art have no spontaneous root; nevertheless so excellently built were the edifices erected by the order, so hard the white stone and marble, so charming the climate and dry, that in spite of cannonades, time, and what is worst of all, the neglect of the Turks (since reverence for Rhodian valour is said to have withheld them from wanton destruction), some fair fields, and trees and roses, and no bad fruit, are still to be found there; and St. John's yet stands—as a mosque indeed—and some remnants of streets

and ramparts with their old names, and dwellings of the knights, with their coats of arms in relief over their doors, and offering useful studies to European genealogists. Up to the period I am treating of those now lifeless streets were full of a stirring commercial people.

The port was landlocked and protected by two of the most massive towers, planted with heavy artillery, and stronger than in the former siege, one on one side of the mouth, and the other on the rock of the mole; places where, true or untrue, it is affirmed the famous Colossus had its feet; which is not only improbable, but Fontanus seems of opinion that the ancient Rhodes was not at all on the same site with the Rhodes then extant,[1] notwithstanding his "curious Greek book, which tells of the Colossus, one of whose feet stood where the tower of St. Nicholas now stands."[2] However that be, the port of his time looked due north; almost every house in the city had more or less a westward aspect. "As to military discipline," says he, "I do not think there ever, in any town in the whole world, existed one where it was kept up with more severity and punctuality than there, and was during the whole of my time." The walls round it were double—thirteen very lofty towers, five fortresses

[1] Fontanus: 357. [2] Id: 359.

—where the enemy could do most harm. The defence of what was then most threatened—the landside, was thus: Provence, Auvergne, and all the French, commanded by Sir John Aubin, forming a line directly in face of the head-quarters of the tyrant or his vizier, occupied from the Tower of France to the Ambrosian Gate, and in most exquisite symmetry did they stand. From that gate to the Gate of St. George, were drawn up the Germans, with the imperial standard; then the Spaniards, then the English, with the grand master at their head. The last in place, "but the first in hardihood, were the Italians," to make front to the fraud and power of Pierri, the most dangerous of the pashas, and the tyrant's favourite; and the Italians had for support the Navarre auxiliaries, under their daring captain George Morgat.

There were rumours of treason from the very beginning; one plot being discovered in time, the conspirators were put to death. That conspiracy was got up by a Mahometan woman, though it would have become the most resolute and boldest and wickedest of men. She was a slave to one of the principal citizens ; and her design was no less than simultaneously to set fire to the town in several different spots, at a distance from each other, so that while the garrison hurried off to

extinguish the flames, the Turks could take advantage of the opportunity, and penetrate into the city. "It was the mercy of Heaven that saved us. The infernal virago was very near succeeding."[1]

No really dangerous attack yet; but under cover of a light cannonade, an immense body of (they say) not less than 50,000 peasants, fellows fitter for the plough than the sword, were set to dig drenches and raise mounds round the city, whose first operations being slow and slothful (for which some had their heads chopped off), this caused them so salutary a fear, that not to be suspected of laziness, they performed things nearly incredible, cutting through the hardest rocks, and converting hills into plains and plains into hills; altering the whole form of the ground; whereat the Rhodians made fierce sallies with loud roars, and smart fights ensued. And when workmen and military, sent to oversee and protect them, fled alike, it increased the courage of the Rhodians. And this coming to pass frequently, our citizens got bolder and bolder. But at last the grand master interfered; and, unwilling to consume any part of his forces in petty encounters, but matters of moment, whereas skirmishes, however glorious, were of small consequence in the main, and as there

[1] Fontanus: 357.

were always a few of us slain, orders were given to desist. It was no fair trial; for a loss of a single individual was more to ours, than a hundred to the foe; and our little body would be soon worn out. So the infidel peasantry might attend to their work during the night (not to provoke a sally by day) were it not for our artillery, which played on them with sharp execution.

The first real attacks of the Turkish artillery were on the 4th of July, against the posts of England[1] and of Provence. But soon were the Mahometan guns shattered by the English and Provençals. Then with new batteries were assailed the posts of Spain and of the other wing of England, but with the same ill-success. Whereat with invigorated spirit, issued a sortie from the gate of St Anastasias, and slew many of the circumcised workmen (severe butchery) before their soldiery moved to protect them; and on their coming on at length in great force, the sortie retreated slowly; so as to decoy them into beneath the fire from the English and Spanish, whose volleys covered the whole plain quickly with infidel

[1] So destructively on the English, that it is recorded the self-same cannon ball killed nine of them, and then carried off the right arm of one of their leaders. Bosio: par ii., lib. xix. 547.

corpses. Still it was judged better for the future to keep rigorously within the walls, and leave the Barbarians to erect their tiers of heavy cannons as they pleased.[1] Indeed they were all during the whole siege principally directed against these four posts, England, Spain, Italy, Provence, says Bosio.[2] And to terrify the citizens, they planted above sixty huge mortars between their battering pieces, to bombard their city within. But several of the said mortars were soon silenced by our guns. And now came a body, which made the enemy little less than three hundred thousand strong. It was no fair play, no kind of equality. He might choose his ground leisurely. He had already erected tents and stables just at his pleasure. This abstaining from sorties had another natural evil consequence, that it cut us off from all news of what was going on in the Turkish camp. But a daring seaman volunteered a remedy, if the grand master permitted him to go out in a boat, which being acceded to, he selected sixteen companions, who, like himself, spoke Turkish well; and shaving their beards, and in Turkish dresses,

[1] It was necessary; yet its immediate effect was highly favourable to the infidel; since he thus might plant his batteries, and various works, and machines, at discretion, wherever he pleased.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix.

[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix. 547.

they by a stratagem inveigled two real Turks, who, before they could look about them, were seized, and, at the boat's return into the port, tied hand and foot, and carried to the knights, who had already been furnished with orders what to do. That remarkably astute, resolute, and trusty knightly triumvirate were to work as much authentic information as they could out of the infidels, and then act as seemed best.[1] Having now reached the top of the steeple, the blindfolded were relieved from their handkerchiefs. "Look round quietly; and let the dazzle pass from your eyes, and prepare to answer our questions truly. I will ask you, Sir,—and let your associate be careful and interpose when you are wrong. If we catch you in any contradiction, down you both go."

"Not by the inner stairs we clambered up," subjoined another knight, who, as an Irishman, might be a bit of a wag; "but this is a famous airy place for such as know how to fly!"

"We have no further instructions,—have we, Bidoux? You probably know, being near neighbour of the grand master's Language?" "The grand master is of no Language; but ceased to be of Auvergne, the day he became grand master; indeed, he is equally father to us all. How clear

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix. 550.

he keeps from preferences of country, is testified by his choice of us, who are not (not one of us) precisely of his; am not I a Provençal, as the head of this triumvirate from Italy?"—"Yet be explicit, Sir Moslem," went on the Kilkenny Knight, "in answering whatsoever we ask you; or our interpreter there can warn you, and the grim faces of those four Christians at the door, that something is ready which I am too polite to name; but which, by the blessing of God, you shall taste if you prevaricate before you take wing." "So," continued Martinengo, "be candid, and you have nothing to fear. Our exposure even shall be mutual; do you explain to me all that lies beyond the walls, and I shall be proud to do you the same favour regarding as much as ever you like of what stands within them. We are on the loftiest of our observatories. The whole lies stretched out as in a map under your nose! Gaze all round! You see our city of Rhodes! How complete a sphere—like our excellent port! Now a little northward. There—the very spot at which you landed! Whose battle is that, close to the water's edge?" "It is our extreme left, and commanded by Curtogli, the Corsair!"—"And those next?"—"The Janissaries, under their aga! There he is himself, with that yellow bag hanging on one side, from his lofty cap!

This is Mosque day, and the hour to ride to it!"—"And north-west?"—"The Beglierbeg of Natolia, in that green turban, heading his troops!"—"And on St. Stephen's, which appears your centre?"—"The high encampment on the mountain yonder is the sultan's!"—"What, is Solyman here?"—"No: not yet; if he were, you would see the Mamelukes! but it was thought he would have come; and his absence has created much mischief. Many of our soldiers being killed, and the rest thinking themselves deceived by their captains, who had told us the army was raised to march against Italy, where there was great prospect of booty, instead of which the pashas only send us here to be regularly butchered: so we accused them of being rash and proud in undertaking a war so arduous—proof of their own imbecility and madness, to dream of taking a city defended by such valiant and daring men, who had so often beaten back the Turkish assaults; especially at present, headed by so warlike a prince as L'isle Adam by all accounts is, and of consummate practice and experience in all military operations; which, added to the wonderful obedience and bravery of his knights, renders the place impregnable. Besides this commonwealth being formed, as is said, of all the Christian nations, the kings

and princes of the same cannot but aid them with all their power."—"None of your flummery," cried out the Irish Knight again; "or, mind, you are on the outside of St. John's Belfry!"—Much of this was believed at the time to be from hopes of ingratiating themselves with their captors; but it turned out to be all very true.—"And continuing the circuit?"—"That is Achmed Pasha with the great golden stirrups and his division."—"And south?"—"There are many other divisions and sub-divisions, we neither of us know; but he in the scarlet boots is Peri Pasha, on his magnificent white Turcoman!"—"And finally the array east, to the sea on the other side of our port?"—"The tent you point out on yonder hill, whose immense green standard waves above that cloud of banners, among which every coming chief leaves his, whence our right slants down to the water, belongs to Mustapha Pasha, captain general of the whole expedition."—"Then the fleet blockades the mouth of the port, so that we are completely surrounded?" —"Even so."—And as to the total numbers, artillery, batteries, &c., they only repeated what was already well known from the various deserters. And in describing the defence of Rhodes, Martinengo could not but glow with lofty-minded pleasure at thinking so small a gallant body could

withstand those barbarian myriads. "Now this knight will see you through the postern; and you may both return to your own people, and freely relate all you have seen."[1]

A seditious spirit among the besiegers (of whom many shut themselves up in their tents, refusing to fight), with famine and distress so grievous, that finally the siege had become unpopular to such a degree, that but for the vizier and pashas (who were afraid the sultan would blame them), it were already raised. Whence Peri Pashah wrote to Constantinople, that it was necessary the sultan should come, and by his gentle omnipotence, remedy dissensions insuperable to everybody else. But on report that St. John's steeple—now taller than in D'Aubusson's time—was the spot whence the Christians had a view of the whole Moslem positions, this (partly also from hatred for the cross that stood there) had the effect of exciting the Turkish guns to be pointed against it as a mark striving to strike and bring it down.

The Commander, Sir Christopher de Waldner, of one of the noblest Alsatian families, led the Germans during the siege, and was wounded thrice, in the thigh, the hand, and the face, so as to have hardly had any hopes of being cured under six months. In

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix.

that state he wrote to his relations some very interesting, though short and hurried letters, still extant, perhaps, and that were so certainly in Tercier's time, since he gives us one of them; but Waldner himself was killed towards the end of the siege.[1]

Instantly had Solyman (incredibly quick and with Cæsar-like intrepidity says Bosio) ridden across Asia Minor, and embarking in a small galley, with only one other vessel, a mere open boat (*a fusta*) with very small, but excellent forces collected in those parts, and now huddled into those two little vessels, disembarked at Rhodes, on a most unhappy day for Christendom. The instant he reached the island he mounted on horseback, and went to meet his army, that with infinite pomp and all its music and standards hastened to salute him, while the whole infidel artillery resounded in his honour; but he, listless of the display, directed himself straight to his quarters prepared on a lofty eminence, about five miles from the capital, and beyond the range of its guns. After a short repose, summoning his pashas thither, and obliging them to render him a strict account of what had been operated during the siege, and who were the chiefs of the sedition, Peri, a noted veteran, to calm his young monarch,

[1] Tercier: Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscript. t. xxvi.

ascribed it rather to fear than malignity, and that such was the obedience to the Ottoman, he had only need of a few words of reproof and all would be over; which not a little assuaged the haughtiness of that proud tyrant, who rising, advanced towards the city, and while that desultory shooting at the steeple still continued, behold on the afternoon of the 24th of August, he arrived nearer the city, "and establishing himself" (says Fontanus), "in my cousin Walter's villa,[1] and finding the entire army full of cowardice and confusion, and most negligent those in command, determined to settle matters immediately; swelling with indignation, not so much against the Rhodians, as his own soldiers. And surrounding these with fifteen thousand of the chosen guards, and those he had brought with him, sat down on the point of a hillock; and after a long silence, as collecting his thoughts, whether he should only have the few chiefs put to death, or decimate all the rebellious regiments—this being rather a conspiracy than sedition—he decided finally for the most merciful course; and proclaiming profound silence by sound of trumpet, raised his voice and called them slaves, and not soldiers—that by their dress he took them for Turks, but found he

[1] Fontanus: 358.

mistook, and that they were not the valorous people he had known, and who had conquered Arabia, Persia, Syria, Egypt, Albania, and even lately Belgrade, but fugitives who had forgotten their homes, oaths, and all military discipline; that they seemed to have imagined Rhodes would have surrendered at the sight of their banners; but so it is not, and that they ought to believe him, who had experienced it, that within that ignoble infamous ditch were dens of most cruel wild beasts, who, however, can be exterminated without any mighty effort, and even without spilling your base blood. We will tame them; for there is not so furious a tiger, but we can tame, and reduce to the most domestic mansuetude. That therefore he had made up his mind either to die or become old on the spot, and swore it by his own head, and his entire empire; and to maintain it, gave orders to begin building him a palace.[1] And desirous of appearing rather clement than severe, he said no more, but pardoned them all; since it was their first fault; but one by one in his presence made them take a new oath of allegiance, and from that day the Turkish circumstances began prospering. Then with greater vigour than ever was the violent cannonade renewed against our defences. Immense projectiles—terrific slaughter!

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 571.

From nine to even eleven palms in diameter were those huge cannon balls! One of them striking a large house, its wind (says Fontanus) threw me on my face, and the stones and splinters killed my Moorish servant behind, breaking his skull to pieces. Nor can I name him without in justice adding that throughout the whole siege the Moors served their masters with the greatest and most faithful love."[1] Why enter into the description of the various works directed against the walls? The Turks repair through the night whatever the Rhodians, or their artillery had broken during the day. But at last we began observing (too late) that we had vainly consumed the main part of our powder, which fourteen of the grand master's horses had ground in five months, under charge of thirty-six citizens; since it was too perilous a time to trust so jealous a care to servants. And to obviate every shadow of suspicion or deceit, the whole was under a guard confided to a French knight; and he killed, to another. On the Mole, St. Nicholas's Tower, within which was a body of thirty of the most noble and boldest of the knights, resisted the heaviest of the Turkish cannons. Every attempt of the Turks against it brought repulse and mighty bloodshed. But by moonlight they brought such heavy pieces to bear on it, that after five hundred

[1] Fontanus: 359.

shot, a breach was made wide enough for a man on horseback; nevertheless the infidels were overthrown at length, subsequent to the severest struggles. Yet about that time a courier got out of Malta with news "that the besieged had now become reduced to three thousand men at most, and three huudred knights —still that the fighting continued desperate, not excepting the female sex, of whom many exposed themselves without the least fear, saying they never could be sure of such a glorious death again. The only provisions remaining in Rhodes were bread and water." [1]

On the other side, the Turks with the most horrible of all mines, undermined the bastion held by the English, and a part of it was blown up with a terrific shock, which made the whole city tremble, that it seemed to many an earthquake—but for the new wall, built by Martinengo, and finished that preceding night with admirable foresight, Rhodes had been then taken—that wall deferred its fate a little. The grand master, with his cuirass on (which indeed he wore during the whole siege), leaping up from his seat in church, where he fortuned to be, while the choir was intoning " Deus in adjutorum meum intende—Domine, ad juvandum me festina"—"I accept the omen," he cried, and facing the knights attending him, hurried out with

[1] Cottonian MS.—Appendix, ccv.

a lance in his hand to the ramparts.[1] Nor he and those he had with him were a vain succour; the impetuosity of his charge at the head of that irresistible corps had the effect of saving the ramparts some instants; but the repulsed infidel soon returned and boldly met him on the breach; and after a fierce encounter, they began to be forced back; but that Mustapha Pasha so reprimanded, and set them such a valiant example, that gathering round him, they rushed anew forwards with an echoing scream. Yet unable to ascend the breach and exposed to the arquebusades, arrows, and cannons of the Rhodians, they again with disordered ranks commenced the retrograde; and Mustapha threatened to mount alone, if they did not once more join him ; which they did ; and both parties being nearly equal, they fought for an hour with atrocious firmness, the officers encouraging and leading them with loud-resounding shouts. And if the barbarians had placed a gun on the side of the ruin, ours too weak to sustain the impetus (prevented by dead and wounded), would never have succeeded in repelling them ; but undoubtedly the enemy had taken the fortress that day. Still with renovated fury and shouts, our clouds of stones, arrows, shots, lances, were an insupportable ob-

[1] Fontanus : 360.

stacle ; and crescents hesitating, turning, dropping off one by one, in spite of all their officers could do or say, were finally put to flight; when the mortars and guns from our batteries made dreadful havoc among their thick retreating masses. Greater slaughter of Turks than in any former assault ; so (Mustapha having been disgraced already by the sultan) Peri Pasha after divers most valiant endeavours, nearly beside himself when he saw his sovereign walk about in deep melancholy reflecting on the myriads lost, and the chief of his artillery, his young favourite, whose corpse was distended there before him—Peri also had a retreat sounded, which his troops heard with satisfaction.[1]

Of the Christians many fell in that conflict. And then came a Spanish lady, as a person of great sanctity, lately returned from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem ; and she going about with naked feet, and a holy demeanour, assured the people that all their sufferings were from the sins of a few of their grandees; on whom if they took vengeance, the Lord would no longer chastise Rhodes in his wrath, but pardon it, as she knew from a revelation—which increased the general perturbation. The crowd were deceived by the prophetess.[2] And to that add worse tidings, sent in a little boat by

[1] Bosio : par. ii., lib. xix. 561. [2] Fontanus : 360.

the knight commanding the principal fortress on the island, near the port (a man of most consummate wisdom and knowledge of the world), that he had received information from certain deserters and prisoners, that some of the Rhodian grandees discovered every resolution taken in the city to the enemy, who were making an underground passage that was to open into St. John's. Which doleful intelligence created a violent anxiety in the popular mind, not being able to know where they were making that trench, nor who were the guilty; and when it was to open, whether in the day, or night, when all was quiet, or during actions. So the population began not so much to guard the walls, as every one armed and solicitous to stand sentinel on his own house; while the incomparable prudence of the grand master offered great rewards to whoever should first discover the traitors, and refused giving their description, in his ignorance of who they were. Which reserve prevented God knows what enormity. For the heated fancies of the crowd might have seen those marks in perhaps the most innocent. But on the fifth day from that attack on the English, came another and a greater; many of the English then being killed, but now many more. The frightful events are given at considerable length by Fontanus. The ferocity of

the seven Turkish standard-bearers, and their chosen cohorts, who were rushing to surprise the Christians, and just about murdering the few guards, stopping at the sight of the grand master and his company, and drawing back in consternation, though superior in numbers, is finely and naturally described, as perhaps none but an eye-witness could.[1]

Still there was a third assault, last, direst the English had to undergo; for in it every one that remained of them was slain. To conceal that attack in some degree, a very sanguinary one was at the same time made against the Spanish battery; not without blowing up a mine under it, which resounded like an earthquake, and overturned a great part of the wall, while the dust that served to hide the stormers, nearly blinded the Spaniards. The head of the English had fallen some minutes sooner than his unfortunate countrymen; if who dies such an irreproachable, pure, glorious death, can be called unfortunate. His name was Sir John Bouch, the Turcopolier, ("dignity conferred on none but the leader of the English," says Fontanus very truly.) Bouch was also Captain of Aid, and one of the Triumvirs of the Treasury; and having always asserted that

[1] Fontanus: 362.

the Turks would venture on the siege and face the Christians' strength, proved his opinions with his death. England's fair fame was there well maintained. After resisting a complete month, until one wall was wholly broken down, and the other much damaged, a mine sent every surviving soul of them aloft. The grand master himself was in infinite danger, for he had come and lodged just under the English bastion.[1] Another of the triumvirs was a Spaniard, who having come to succour the English, died with them. "The third of the triumvirate was destined by God to a more grievous punishment."[2] And this is the only passage in Fontanus which can be construed into an accusation of the Portuguese ; but the judge himself tells us he had been ordered to *question* one of the principal citizens of Rhodes, and did so in the severest manner without the least proof of guilt ; aided by two knights, deputed *ad hoc* (grand crosses as is the custom), one of whom he names, but neither then or ever names the accused—good or bad—(but the context rather implies he was a citizen) waited on the grand master, and found him lying on his bed for a few moments' repose, without

[1] Bosio : par. ii., lib. xix. 555.—Bourbon.
[2] Fontanus : 362.

taking off his cuirass, or any part of his armour, and told him how nothing like confession or self-contradiction could be screwed out of *him*, "though we had spared no means even confronted with his servant, who at first had denied the whole, but eventually under torment had accused him, he called him a weak liar. On which the grand master gave a sigh, and in a suffocated tone—as in deep sorrow—bid me deliver the criminal up into strict custody, and rising, hurried off to the guard!"[1]—Bosio may well wonder why Fontanus, who was the judge who tried him, never mentions him. But it was clearly that he did not think him guilty.[2]

Yet as the English had resisted so long, the Rhodians were finally masters of what was left of the bastion, and the infidels withdrew; which irritated the Pasha Achmet, an excellent soldier, who next day re-invigorated the cannonade against the Spaniards, while he tried to storm that other of the walls confided to those of Auvergne; and more eagerness was shown by the Turks from the expectation of a mine with a large quantity of powder, which was to throw down the defences, and leave them a clear passage into the city; but a counter-

[1] Fontanus: 367. [2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 572.

mine preventing the wished-for explosion, the stormers retired.

Then did the Turks begin to think the knights invincible; a belief that required an harangue from Solyman himself to dissipate. This harangue engaged the Paynim to attack the city on all four sides at once. Awfully tremendous those assaults!

Marvellously valiant the resistance of who held what was left of the post whose valiant owners had been all slain, and the grand master and his entire squadron rushed to assist. Dead fell the aide-de-camp of Mustapha, who was himself in great peril, and still acted pasha, deprived of the vizier-ship. There was not a human being of whatever age or sex in the city, so but come to years of discretion, that failed to take an active part in the struggle that day, and the days immediately coming. The Rhodian women were of most marvellous assistance. Bread, wine,[1] and all sort of refreshments, and words of encouragement did they run about with, to knights, soldiers, citizens, all who fought for the Christian cause. Still was the cross forced to recede. The Janissaries, with barbarous, fierce, bestial ferocity and daring, rushed up the breach in a twinkling, and, in spite of all

[1] Then it appears there was some exaggeration in the messenger's words, or he meant that the little of it he left in Rhodes, must be quite gone before he got to Rome.

the valour and intrepidity of the brave Spanish knights, with harquebusses, lances, various deadly weapons, these infuriated infidels (despising death, and that most horrid slaughter) succeeded in planting thirty or forty stands of their colours all along that portion of the ramparts. But in that conflict the Turks lost fifteen thousand men, according to Bourbon, and twenty thousand according to Fontanus. Still, finally, by amazing efforts of an aid of knights, those colours were torn up, and with their infidel masters were hurled down, and the cross once more replanted on that now defenceless breach. Then the grand master, who, during so many hours had never stirred from the walls, retired—first, in armour as he was, to the church, to return thanks to Heaven—secondly, not to his palace, which he had left from the beginning, to be nearer the scene of action, but to his lodgings, for some food, and a brief repose. The sea was tinged with blood; nor on land could you descry one spot of earth, it was so covered with corpses. Such was the horrible stench, that for eight days there was no staying in the city. Rhodes had still a momentary respite. Not that those eight days were of quiet, quite the reverse; but those, who could not absolutely endure the loathsome smell, had to retire towards the mole.

Dejected and choleric, Solyman, in rage, anger, and despair, condemned Mustapha Pasha to death, who, by flattering the Ottoman, and undervaluing the power of Rhodes (saying it would resist fifteen days or a month, at farthest), had been the cause of undertaking that most difficult of sieges, to the notable discredit of his own imperial majesty, and ignominy and opprobrium of his whole sublime race. This, however, was but transitory ire, a threat not executed; but on the contrary both Mustapha and that other pasha were pardoned. But the sultan shut himself up in his tent for several days, and resolved to depart for Constantinople. Only traitors requested him not to go away, and that Rhodes would eventually be taken. Who those traitors were, was uncertain at the time, and is not of the slightest consequence at present. It were a superfluous crime in him Bourbon accuses. As to the fact of a quarter stuck up in the Italian post, it may be quite true; but was that quartered man guilty? A few written words (no one could prove from or to whom) do not suffice to establish that. Was he guilty? That is the question.

An angle of the English bastion, undermined and sapped clean as it all was, and though the props of timber were burned and fascines, so it should fall, yet did not; but almost stood in the air, and

could not be pulled down by all the ropes and windlasses the Turks had, who walked up it freely, and occupied two-thirds of it—even the least atom of it was glory, and too dear to be surrendered. Later came the proposal to let the infidels occupy it, and then to blow it and them all up. But the humane and nobler triumphed, to hold it out to the last breath; and indeed that excellent French knight, Le Chev. Bin (appointed by the grand master) did hold it until the city itself surrendered. As long as Rhodes stood, that fragment was to be kept to the death; after the rest of the ramparts were lost, in that final extreme it was a chosen band of French soldiers preserved that specimen of what had been the jewel of the order.[1] What? not one single one of the devoted thirty-eight left alive? Not one single one! Nor was it considered a mighty wonder at that time. God be with the heroes; their names for the most part lost. But so are the three hundred of Leonidas. Yet who doubts the fact, who has seen the Thermopylæ?

Then was a council of war held by the Turks, in which it was determined, notwithstanding all, to give another general assault next day, the tyrant

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 578.—Jehan du Bin dit Malicorne: Bourbon, 13.

hoping to vanquish, but fearful of defeat (since to give battle depends on man, but to win it, on what is called fortune), was obliged to trust his people;—victory is a free gift, and the heritage of no one—and walking up and down in his tent, is said to have spoken to his captains thus:—

"Not that you want my words, your own valour is enough, and skill, but the perverse designs of our enemy force me to speak. Though your guns have ruined their walls, temples, houses, and never did besieged suffer so cruelly, still there they are as pertinacious as before; their spirit as stubborn and elevated as ever, and as burning for battle as previous to the war. Then they gain by us the repute of being invincible. And how important is it! Conquest is in opinion, which let us endeavour not to let them acquire at our expense! Then, besides other inducements, I empower you to offer your soldiers the sack of the city and all it contains in my name. It is not a single city they escalade, but in it they take all the cities in Christendom. Our men took Belgrade. But in Rhodes are all the relatives and friends of all the noblest kings, princes, magnates, among the Christians! Also the most distinguished soldiers and commanders of the Christian world. It is not to be endured that those cross-bearers should be allowed

to continue in their caverns and hiding-places. Tell our ranks what vast riches lie within those walls. Divide that infinite wealth out, between your regiments. I leave the whole to you. The sums amassed by those corsairs, let them serve to bind your soldiers to you, and render them faithful and obedient. The artillery and warlike stores will do in our wars against other Giaours. There will remain a large city and commodious harbour, useful in our campaigns by sea or land, in Puglia, Calabria, Sicily, Sardinia."

But the grand master, in armour, visiting the posts, hearing a noise from the Turkish camp break on the silence of the night, felt confident they were preparing for an assault by daybreak. Indeed it was also whispered by a Christian slave below the walls. So the grand master went about encouraging every one, calling them his most sacred warriors, and each by his name. "They trust in their numbers; we, not only in our courage, but in Him. How often have you defeated those you are to meet to-morrow! Recollect the land you were born in, and the fame you have acquired through the universe! The men you are to overcome are as your servants, led on by a foolish youngster. They have the consciousness of defeat, and chilled with

the sensation of the beaten. You are accustomed to victory, and feel like victors."[1]

At dawn the trumpets, and behold at the same time were stormed the whole line of walls; the Italians, Narbonese, French, St. Anastasius's Gate, the Spanish bastion, those of Auvergne, and—no more of the English—they were all corpses, and the most of their bastion a vast ruin, only defended accidentally by the way the stones had fallen. Great was the struggle, and every place full of blood and carnage. "The breach is of width enough for thirty men to ride abreast up it," cried Solyman.[2]

From artillery and musketry to daggers, every mortal weapon was in use. Those choicest of troops, the Mamelukes, three several successive days, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, their assaults lasted.[3] The new grand vizier himself fell dead. Various uncertain conflicts, as full of misery as obstinate. Spoil and empire on one side; on the Rhodian, life and liberty. No order, no distinction, all ages, each sex. Mothers, children, old men, all aided those terrific fights; yet powder being scarce, other means were more recurred to. Nothing, perhaps, of such efficacy to prevent scalers, as boiling oil

[1] Fontanus: 363. [2] Id.: 368.
[3] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 573, 578.

and pitch; for running down the arms and legs, it scalded so terribly that it completely disabled hundreds, who falling down, prone, sidelong, supine, equally impeded the others. In vain, all in vain; every effort of the Turks was vain. During that gleam of hope, an English knight, Sir Nicholas Farfan, a clever and well-informed person, detached before on other business, or he would have been in the English bastion, and blown up, or in some way killed, like his countrymen—was sent to Candia for succours; also other knights to Naples and other Courts. And the name of Farfan made men recollect there in former years had been what now seemed unimportant, some attempt in Rhodes to render more rigorous the genealogical proofs of candidates entering the order, which met with opposition led by an English knight, Sir Henry Farfan, who urged the standing by the old law, the universal law of chivalry, that no knight could be made whose father had not been a knight before—that is, a gentleman; and this law, which was adopted by their founders, in order to prevent improper persons, and of mean birth, from presuming to wear the white cross, had been found sufficient. Still his sensible observation only partly succeeded, and for a time; for though the chapter general refused to alter the established rule, yet was it

permitted to the individual Languages to enact any bye-laws they chose; and so each of them, except that of England, reformed the said proofs, but not uniformly; yet always in the sense of adding to their exclusiveness.

The thirty-eight had every one of them full right to be held of within the inmost pale of England's ancient aristocracy, when not submitted to the superfluous refinements of a later period; not a soul of them but died at their post. The few English that survived the last struggle of Rhodes, were those whom we otherwise know to have been detached to somewhere else, and who are particularly mentioned on that account.

The grand master at that moment aiding the valiant defence of St. Anastasius's Gate, had to hurry off to the Spaniards, said to be losing their bastion. The infidel was already in possession of it, but the grand master's valiant body of young men, though they tried during more than two hours, could not succeed in expelling them, and forty half moons were already planted. L'Isle Adam's signal valour everywhere was most so here; and new succour advancing to the Christians from St. Nicholas, seen by the sultan from his elevated position, a platform on the topmasts of three galleys, he ordered a retreat, to the delight of the

barbarians, but still more so of the Rhodians. Then to our extreme joy arrived a ship with news of a large Christian succour, ready to sail from Naples;[1] but it was false, our last hope. Likewise the former vizier, Mustapha, sailed for his government in Syria, and a third vizier, greater captain, soon won the Barbacan, eventually the loss of Rhodes. Harquebusades then succeeded to cannons, and immense was the slaughter, though not by wholesale, but nearly one by one; no obstacle any more. Yet the Turks did not dare to advance. Already had three detachments of them got within Rhodes, across several streets, and into one of the principal squares, by sapping behind a screen of timber, that they by degrees continued to push on as the Christians retired, and now those Turks were prepared to march out, and draw up in the square, with only that fragile screen between them and us; but they too retreated, in obedience to the trumpet.[2] The Turks, when they came to bury their dead, were dismayed, and covered with galling reproaches by the Rhodians, from what remained of the walls. Between Knights of Rhodes it is invidious, and even wicked, to draw distinctions; they were of all

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 573.

[2] Id.: id. id., 579.—Bourbon says the Barbacan, (the Spanish) was lost on the 17th of December.

nations. But all people then alive considered the Knights of Rhodes, as a body, to be far the best soldiers in Christendom.

The tyrant had at last changed his mind, and no longer wished to seize what belonged to others, nor desired anything so much as to go away;[1] not that he divulged his sentiments by language, rather stood like a dead man or statue, recollecting so many unhappy combats, so many gallant generals lost, so many soldiers whose blood he might have husbanded for greater wars in Italy; yet even after this there were some attempts made against the city, but assaults there were none. There lay the road quite open. No impediment of fortifications any more. Who would, might take Rhodes.[2] A kind of calm succeeded; but still however the enemy continued in their trenches, and endeavoured by various instigations to persuade the Rhodians to surrender, and separate their cause from that of the knights, saying their enmity was for the Latins; but that as to the Greeks, they might live happily under the sultan, like others of their nation, and even tempted them with high bribes. But autumn setting in, with its rains, thunders, and lightnings, inspired the Moslems on land with dismay, and the sea got too violent for their shipping. So the

[1] Fontanus: 365. [2] Id.: 366.

tyrant perceiving his whole army to be intimidated, emaciated, and pale — as worn with fatigue and hardships corporeally, as their spirits were broken down, called them and said: "I am a witness of your sufferings, generous soldiers, and am ready to send you to repose; but first let us see if that can be done without injury to the dignity of the empire, or your own honour; and brave men having victory in their grasp, whether they should leave it to their foes. If we raise the siege and abandon all our artillery and stores of every description, will the Giaours not pursue us into our own homes, and exhale their vengeance on our fields, houses, and property, and carry off your wives and children into slavery? Will it not be said by the whole world, who have their eyes upon us, that we were unable to pass a single winter under our tents? That what Greeks did during ten winters for a courtezan, Turks could not one for Islam, your own military corps, and their renown, and your emperor. Will men not nickname you *summer birds*; and particularly now that you have an army of allies at hand?—But that is too important a secret to be spoken of at present. I strongly advise you therefore not to think of going away, until you have fully executed what you came for. Our hopes should first have their manifest completion."

He is believed to have said that from craft, that his soldiers might become desirous of knowing what army he meant, while there was none. However he animated them a little, yet only a little. And again he addressed his soldiery, and hallooed them on to the sack. "They are now walking shadows reduced to the last extremity by famine, and too weak to make more than a show of resistance. You can go straight into the middle of the city. The ruins are the sole obstacle to the most delicate foot. What can hinder the timidest? Only a very little boldness, and you have the inestimable treasures of that whole city, and can crush every man of those odious vermin who have made us suffer so much. You cannot be cruel enough towards those most wicked scoundrels. Put every creature of them to death; the more tortures the better!" Indeed, there was no other impediment than that there stood the Christians, armed in array; and to the wonder of the enemy, as high-spirited as ever, without the least appearance of surrendering. Horrible beyond expression became now the infidels' cruelty in firing artillery against a town utterly unwalled; so that the cannon-balls through the holes killed a number of people, and the bombs buried them under their own roof-trees; and that most barbarous cannonade went on for hours.

About and about went the Moslem, but that slender circle of Christians round that part of the town that still remained to them, never once flinched in any part, but awed off the invaders, who prowled leisurely, with loud, howling jests. But some of the knights, having got a few guns to bear, though broken off from their carriages, fired on the barbarians, and turned their jests into wailing. Walls to be sure were no longer, they had been all broken down, which did not dismay those most superhuman heroes, the Knights of Rhodes, though they did not make that desperate defence for home and country like the natives, but for honour and sublime thoughts. Nor did our people fail to imitate that brightest of examples. Not the leaders, but the close followers; not first, but second in that highest pinnacle of glory! and since their town had lost its ramparts, put their own breasts instead. No necessity for commands, at the sound of a bell every one appeared. Each thought on slavery, and a victor's pride, and a death of torture. As for life, mortal life, they were now in a temper of mind to scorn it. Their women beside them, assisting, or praying God with amazing fervour, and with most valiant words encouraging their men to remember they were fighting for their liberty, country, property, homes, and the Christian religion; that death

was not to be feared, but merely a short road to a glorious immortality. "I saw one woman, who had been a poor courtezan, near St. Andrew's Gate, take a sword, and slay several of the enemy in fair fight, thinking thus to purge off her sins. Matrons; some were standing at their doors, expecting death, and quite prepared to share their country's fall. Other matrons were with the virgins in the churches, fervently praying. But all the virtues had hallowed from childhood her of whom I am going to speak" (continues Fontanus). "She was a beautiful Grecian lady, and quite young, though mother of two charming babies; her husband was a Spanish officer, killed in a skirmish that very morning. She, seeing the murderers of him who had won her hand and heart were close, and hearing their shouts, undoubtedly imminent, in that moment of most acute grief, and the intensity of patriotism wrought up to frenzy, and maternal feeling driven to madness,—what wonder insanity sat on her? on many?" (Juries who declare suicide insanity, are they not right? Not a whit more compassionate than just!)—"She, kissing both her infants, and re-kissing, devouring them with most passionate kisses, her last of kisses, perceiving no other way to save them from profanation, even she slew them, with distracted cries, and floods of

the bitterest, wildest tears; that they were too beautiful even in death for a Turk ever to touch, so threw their delicate corpses into the fire, and over them whatever she could find of all her jewels and dearest, finest things. 'It is my bridal sacrifice' (was her cry), 'my duty as a mother, to snatch them from the pollution of an unchristian creed; so entreat our most blessed Mary, her who is all holiness without spot, to receive them in holocaust; and that she, and these innocents, will obtain His all-atoning mercies for their glorious, glorious father, and unhappy me, who do not know what else to do.' Many were the witnesses when she stirred the whole heap to ashes, and then put on her lord's cloak, still wet through and through with his blood, and seizing his lance, rushed to the battery. I beheld her coming" (reiterates Fontanus), "and certainly no great hero ever advanced with sublimer majesty. It was near the south gate, and she faced the Mamelukes with extreme valour, and, after various heroic struggles, fell dead with a multitude of wounds; nor any end could be nobler or worthier of eternal beatitude."[1]

The tyrant, certain of his conquest, considering how useful the repute of clemency, turned his thoughts that way. Yet not to him alone, but to

[1] Fontanus : 365.

a council of war is due that proposal, as well as the spirit that dictated all his offers, according to the absolute affirmation of Fontanus, as learnt by himself when hostage in the Turkish camp; where they might have told him an untruth.[1] Bosio, and general opinion, make it exclusively from the Grand Turk. But however such be, in this all concur that he (not Rhodes), was the first;[2] with however the single exception of Ramadan; but Ramadan, who affirms the Rhodians were the first to ask for a capitulation, is not such a weighty authority in my estimation, as to outweigh all the rest. So I cannot change what is already written on the testimony of more than three grave eye-witnesses of the transactions they relate.[3]

As if to show capitulation were agreeable to Heaven, Divine Providence induced Solyman to propose it; that power which all must obey *constrained* him to it, in spite of his desire of vengeance for all he had suffered from Rhodes; and although he did not thus obtain a signal victory or triumph, as he could now with such facility; nor any reason of state, nor common prudence allowing all the knights and their grand master to go quietly away, knowing them the perpetual, im-

[1] Fontanus: 367.

[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 579.—Bourbon: 14.

[3] Tercier: Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscript, vii. 26.

placable enemies of Mahomet's impious law. It was the work of God alone, and quite as contrary to human wisdom, as to human passions; when the Grand Seignor had a flag of truce hoisted from a church outside the town, on the 10th of December, 1522. And receiving no immediate answer from so desperate a people, he sent one of his prisoners, a Genoese, who wished not for a discourse in public, but to be permitted to speak with his countryman, such a one, who lived in such a street. To which a Rhodian replied, that he detested secrecy. L'Isle Adam, who knew that a city admitting parley, is half lost, had prohibited all such, under pain of death. Yet even so; the mere mention of parley and terms made many people reflect and think that the Genoa man and another from Albania had spoken well. "No wonder" (says Bourbon), "for wherever there be populace, there will always be many who prefer their own lives and those of their children, to honour and love of country." The whispers reached the archbishop, who was entreated to speak of it to the grand master. The majority were for listening to terms, since they came from the enemy. The Rhodians, though ready to die, yet the love of life engaged them to turn again to their archbishop, and through him, tender a supplication to the

grand master, beseeching him over again to save them, however much he hated the very idea of not preferring death, and to recollect they were his faithful subjects, so did not deserve being abandoned after having endured so much with constancy; that he should no longer disdain to consider the enemy's offers; that the city was more than half lost, and little but a heap of ruins; that a great part of its inhabitants were already slain, and all the provisions and military stores exhausted. On which a warm debate ensued, the grand master still maintaining it were better to die with arms in their hands, particularly his knights; yet even these, when asked, replied that it was a different thing in the actual case, where their death would be not merely useless, but highly injurious to their fellow Christians, on whom it would draw down certainty of their being cut to pieces, and their females abused and made slaves, and numberless other enormities from irritated barbarians; that this made a clear exception, and entirely superseded laws, customs, desires of their own, and profession, and rendered it their bounden duty to listen to any honourable conditions, even the harshest; that they had sworn to be ready to die in arms for the benefit of Christendom, and had given full proof of their wish to be true to it; but

now it would be an idle waste and ruin of their own illustrious order, and of the faithful Rhodians.

So the Rhodians, seeing the Turkish flag of truce on a church, answered by a similar pacific sign from the windmill at the Cosquino Gate; and when the grand master's people came to know what was wanted, two Turks stepped forward and presented a letter from Solyman, that he would allow the knights and whatever Rhodians chose, to embark, and go away with their goods and chattels. *Yes* or *no!* an answer forthwith! But if *no*, every soul of you, without exception of age or sex, must fall by the sword, and he swore it by his faith, and his signature was in letters of gold.[1]

A council was instantly convened; but during its sitting, a tap at the door announced deputies from the city, which was like if you won't, we will. In vain L'Isle Adam's expostulations, who wished at least that the good old custom should be kept of calling a chapter general on a matter of such consequence; and so important a decision in so brief a time struck the assembly mute. But answer they must, for the aforesaid reasons, and not to have their companions all over the world blame them as obstinate and unchristian; although most clearly could you observe, says Bourbon, that if the

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 583.

knights thought merely of themselves, or were alone, and had not made common cause with the Rhodians, the resolution would have been quite the contrary. They had instantly to answer, for the Turkish operations were advancing, and every minute entering further and further into the city; therefore out with it, there was no choice for the council when it cried yes. And a truce was made for three days, and a deputation sent of two knights—one a Frenchman, a literary person, and who spoke Greek well, and had been the order's standard-bearer during the entire siege; and the other an old and eloquent Italian—on parley; after receiving three hostages, one of whom was Pasha Achmet's brother, the other a famous Albanian, and the third the sultan's own dragoman, who spoke French, German, Spanish, with great fluency, it being contrary to the majesty of the Ottoman, as well as their country's honour, to know any foreign language. The Turkish hostages were left at the Gate Cosquino, as was quite natural; it being the point farthest from the foes, so it was the first gate bridged and opened.[1]

When these Christians appeared before the tyrant, he seemed not to understand a word they said, but in a rage ordered them to leave his army instantly,

[1] Bourbon: 19.

and take this letter from him to the grand master and Rhodians—"But for my compassion for human weakness, whose ambition is wont so often to precipitate them into the worst of evils, I should not write to you, but put you to the death you so richly deserve, or reduce you to the most terrible slavery. How easy it were, you see. Having already experienced my power, if you are wise, you will now my clemency. You have been sufficiently mad. Return into yourselves, renounce folly, and surrender quickly, as I commanded you. I give you your property, I give you leave to go away freely, or to stay as you like; ask me for nothing else." At the embassy's return, a multitude gathered round the grand master's house, not far from the ruined wall; and having collected the knights and principal citizens, he read them the threatening tyrannical letter—he being far more desirous of dying with honour and a good conscience, than of living. "It is plain," he said, "the bravest have no choice, but to submit or die. My noble brother soldiers, my magnanimous citizens, you have heard the cruel despatch. No doubt every hope of victory is over, or succour from Christendom! If you approve of my sentiment, it is that sword in hand, you defend to the death, every one of you, the faith, the nobility you

received from your ancestors, and that fame in arms which you have acquired during the space of so many years; since to resolute men the end of their glory should be the end of their life!" To many these words sounded bitterer than those of the tyrant. And they stood a long time gazing on each other in sorrowful silence. Several even showed by their moving, and the crespation of their body, what they hid in their soul. Finally, a Greek priest, with a most doleful voice, and every one in tears, said, "Six months ago, Greeks and Latins, we all took arms, and resisted not only our external enemies, but also those within these walls; we did so without foreign aid, without foreign favour. But then we had hopes, however long deferred; but now not a hope. At length, whether from some occult benignity of Providence, or from their wonder at our bravery after such slaughter suffered by them, day and night, our enemies offer us what we ought to desire ardently. They leave you the public and private treasures, gold or silver, and your lives, and your women and children inviolate. The tyrant only deprives you of a ruined city, of which the half is already in his power. O noble grand master and knights! I have experience of your valour and fortitude, not only in our naval wars, but likewise in this siege. But when all hope

is over, I appeal to your prudence and generous clemency, whether the victor, who is in possession of everything, is not to be listened to, when he gives us our lives and portable property; and whether this be not a sort of gain, whereas it is no great loss to leave him this ruined city and island, most of which is already in his hands. Do we not rather win than lose? That seems hard, and so it is; but the Almighty has permitted it. My opinion is, then, that we ought to surrender rather than have wives and children lost, tortured, defiled, murdered. I implore you to submit, if there be any bowels of mercy or Christian piety in your martial hearts, nor reduce to final perdition this innocent people, who do not deserve any evil whatever from you, and whom both Jesus Christ and His most declared enemy wish to save. I speak for truth's sake, and not from mere earthly pity; and you know that never when succours from princes of the earth were spoken of, did I say a word about surrendering during the siege. But at present that every possibility is gone, even not a shot to load our guns, nor powder for a single charge, I am for peace, not war, and any honourable capitulation, rather than nothing."

And as no one rose to contradict him, it is to be supposed the whole city assented. Yet were there

exceptions, and some dreaded the duplicity of the Turk, and to trust themselves to his tender mercies, and (as is usual with the brave) preferred danger, and that the enemy should have a sanguinary victory. And one young man, full of fire and resolution, and the boldness of a juvenile spirit, and the inspiration of what he thought his last moments, in presence of the circle of the citizens, faced the grand master, and with most animated audacity: "O gentlemen, and people, it is indeed my first speech, but we have to do with a most perfidious tyrant. He is within our walls, three hundred feet. Our guest, breathing and conversing with us under the same roof. Not content with so hateful a neighbour, so dangerous a stranger, must we give him up all our house? As for me, I am of a quite different opinion. Forty days has he been guilty of this trespass, and to above one hundred and seventy paces; and now do you want us to invite his farther advance? If we be with the slightest reminiscence of our former heroism, we will suffer no such thing. May the divine ire plunge me into eternal perdition, rather than allow me with these eyes to see the sacred Knights of St. John deliver up Rhodes, this ancient bulwark of the Christian religion, to the worst of the impious Mahometans—contaminated with every vice, and who thirst for

our blood with a truly infidel hate! Constantinople, Negropont, the Morea, tell what you are to expect. Let every person of common intellect join in rejecting the false offers of these most irrational wild beasts! They know neither law, nor reason, nor probity, nor anything good; but only avarice, cruelty, fraud, brute force—to put out and cancel the very name of Rhodians, which they hate. Six months have they shut us up here; they, like us, are exposed to extreme peril. Yet if we must bend to necessity, let us at least betake us to exile then; but first, that is now, let us give them another defeat. After that, we under arms, may bear off the holy banner of the cross from injuries, profanations, and ourselves from slavery and torments. We shall be free and powerful, as long as we belong to ourselves. So shall we acquire eternal glory, prepared among the immortals for those who die for their country." Yet a wise Grecian warrior, who was deeply attended to by both his own nation, and the Latins, opined otherwise; and observed that grief and desperation made many men more eloquent than prudent, confusing the true with the false, increasing bloodshed and useless fury, and persuading to madness. "Constantinople, Negropont, Modon, were all taken by storm, therefore not in our case. The Turks are not so false, as will

appear. Without knowing the interior of the tyrant's mind, let us accept what is beneficial, absolutely necessary to ourselves! What need of investigating the motive of a giver? It is the worth of the gift we are to estimate, when it relieves our distress. Why in palpable necessity express diffidence? Perhaps the tyrant desires to make a pomp of his power and clemency among the nations! Not to be always forced to use fire and sword, and alienate the affections of his people. For this he may give us life and property, and should we be so frenzied as not to accept them? It may be firmly believed that this proceeds from the occult dispensation of our Saviour Jesus; which it is not fit to oppose, if you be religious gentlemen, and cultivate the virtues of sincere and real Christians. Nor is it generous of you, or just, to ruin this people, though you destroy yourselves. Have they not shared your dangers and hardships, with the utmost fidelity, during six entire months? Not only all the cannons are broken, and not only all the powder here gone, but not an ounce to be bought on any of the neighbouring places—Sindo, Lero, Halicarnassus, Cyprus."[1] Nor could the grand master deny a syllable of what that aged Greek affirmed. The Turk had but to wish it, and the remnant of

[1] Bosio: par ii., lib. xx. 584.

Rhodians had to die of famine. For nothing easier for him than to shut both the roads—sea or land, by which provisions could come. Neither art nor fortitude could any longer resist the Turk. It would be an idle outrage to the will of God. Why then expose those poor females to such horrors as a storm? Such an appeal could have moved the stones! Whereupon the grand master who showed well by his looks, his grandeur of mind, and what a mortal combat was within him, having spent most of his night in speaking, dismissed the assembly for every one to hasten to his post of guard, nor replied nor lay down to repose, but went out, merely answering that he would think on what was to be done. Thus throughout four days, there was a sort of armistice full of danger and fear; but a French knight of the name of Fournon, broke it without the grand master's knowledge,[1] and several Turks were murdered; and another European very indiscreetly introduced a ship into the port, which carried only one hundred men, but afforded a pretext, as if it bore succours, an act of hostility, and a tacit breach of faith.[2] The citizens by a boisterous

[1] Yet this is denied solemnly by others.

[2] The ship was Spanish (from Biscay originally), and now bound to England with a cargo of Candian wine, brought into Rhodes by a stratagem not of the fairest.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 586.

show of foolish transient vanity went near turning all topsyturvy, ruining everything. Had it depended on them, the Turk had changed his mind. They sent to implore pardon, but Solyman without deigning even to notice their deputies or speech, wheeling round, ordered Achmet Bey in their presence to erect his batteries anew, and fire away; which he hurried to do, and played on the city with new virulence. On which the grand master (willing enough to recur back to his first idea) would have joined the Rhodians, who had so boldly spoken against the capitulation an hour before, and offered to die with arms in their hands. A good right had he to inquire sharply why they did not come to die with him, as they had promised? But alas! he found them totally altered, on pretence they did not then know their ammunition was out; and owning they had been very wrong and that their city was utterly lost—unless he found a way to save it; he was their father and would do the best he could for them. They left the whole to him, and he might do just as he pleased. And not without scorn for such unsteadiness, he had to give over every idea of resistance; yet it would be a grievous injustice not to add they were only a few giddy exceptions, spurred on by strangers, and followed by the lowest mob.[1]

[1] Bourbon: 25.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 587.

So Solyman's, this subsequent rescript:—"No health to you, O grand master, whom with these my hands I mean to cut into small bits within two or three days. And my soldiers shall have no regard for sex, age, or rank, but oppress your people with sword and fire; that posterity shall see this signal example of Turkish justice and Christian perfidiousness, since these Giaours have violated peace, and received foreign succours, nor were ashamed to murder our soldiers by surprise—not one of whom (believe me) but shall be avenged."

"Thus," said the grand master, smiling, "we are not only besieged, but reviled."

Yet not probably without some spark of undying hope he kept deferring, that succour might have time to arrive, and sent Bajazet's letter to D'Aubusson, in which he cursed whomever of his descendants should make war on Rhodes. But it produced no good effect; indeed it seems never to have reached Solyman; for his Vizier Achmet the instant he saw it, tore it, and stamped upon it—assevering that forty-four thousand Turks had been killed in arms, and fifty thousand died of sickness during the siege. Nevertheless the tyrant despatched word, he would abide by his first decision—which was contrary to his native sanguinary disposition supremely irritated, as well as to prudential considerations.

But the kind Providence was acting on him quite unaware of it himself, and thinking he was following his own will. On the proposal of the grand master's paying the expense of the war, Achmet declared such a thing could not be named to him under penalty of death; for that the sultan esteemed glory and honour above the world together, and that the only reply was, whether the knights would surrender the city, yes or no! For not if all Turkey were to die, would his master flinch a foot from his resolution; but if he took Rhodes by storm would not leave a creature, little or big, alive in it, not even a cat.[1]

Nevertheless forth comes the tyrant, surrounded by his army, and guards all shining with gold, and steel, and pronounced the terms of capitulation, calling God and Mahomet to witness; among the other conditions being this, that the churches should remain inviolate, that no children should be taken from their families, no one forced to become Turk; that who chose to stay, should pay no tribute for five years; that to who preferred exile, ships should be given, and food as far as Candia; that each person was allowed to take as much as he could stow into the ships, of arms, artillery, and warlike stores; that the Christians might go whatever day they

[1] Bourbon: 26.

chose. So the grand master, seeing no further possibility of delay, no resource left from the enemy's violence, had to submit with infinite grief, from compassion for the unfortunate people, though it almost rent his generous, noble heart to surrender on the stipulated terms. It was on the 20th of December, and with the knight, he also sent two deputies from the Rhodians, that they might regulate matters regarding their wives and children, that it might not happen as at Belgrade. Solyman facing the knight, said that he accepted the city, and on his royal word would perform the conditions; and to the deputies declared he would order off the Turkish army, so that no harm should befal their families or property, as their own memorial observed, of which he granted every article; that who remained as inhabitants should be well treated, and who chose to embark with the knights should be allowed to do so quietly; and others of them so minded, might follow at any time within three years. And he ordered Achmet to have the letters patent drawn up, for the surety of both parties, noting as the very first condition, that the churches should remain inviolate as they were; that in case the order's ships were not sufficient, he should give them ships as far as Candia; that twelve days' time were given to embark; that besides their

private property, every individual might carry away as many cannons as could find place in the galleys. These letters patent being signed by the sultan, were sent to the grand master, to be likewise signed by him. Which done, the Turkish army immediately left their positions, ditches, and mines to within the very heart of the city, and retired to about a mile from it.[1]

In the Appendix shall be found a copy of the *original* capitulation, which Tercier asserts he received from the order's ambassador at Paris. Doubtless the very truth—its meaning being precisely as stated in all the order's historians; but the actual document itself now appears for the first time in history, or indeed in any book, easily to be come with—since Tercier's pamphlet only exists in the 26th volume of an immense compilation of 50 vols. in 4to.[2]

But not all these stipulations were observed by the Turk, and circumstances soon occurred that might make him regret what he allowed of, and it was Divine interposition that the terms had been established; for at that time he saw his own army so dejected and terrified, it would have been in vain to bid them return to the assault; whereas two days afterwards fourteen or fifteen thousand fresh

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 588. [2] Appendix, ccvii.

Janissaries joined from Mesopotamia, who had never learned to dread the knights. On the fifth day of the twelve, and precisely on the vigil of Christmas-day, those barbarous Janissaries[1] broke into the city, conducting themselves as if they had taken it by storm, only drew no sword, but sacked, and robbed just the same, when none of the Rhodians were ready to embark; and in flagrant violation of his own words, had St. John's converted into a mosque that same hour, flinging out ornaments, relics, everything, and rooting up the graves of the grand masters in search of treasure, and to erase every memorial of them from the place. That temple was infinitely rich in fine marble, carved with rare art, but they smashed it all on purpose, and only when the walls had been reduced to nakedness, the sultan entered it and prayed. And his Mamelukes robbed the poor Rhodians, who were carrying their things to the ships, forced married women, violated virgins, some of them brides, others mere children. As ill-fared the hospital, where they beat the sick from their beds (whence some of them died, one of the knights was flung from the corridor and killed), bore off all the plate, with which it was so furnished; and refused to admit artillery of any sort to be put on board.

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 588.—Bourbon: 25.

If they did not invade whatever was already in the galleys, it is rather to be ascribed to forgetfulness, or ignorance, than good faith. Every Christian in the streets was more or less injured, some with blows, and like beasts of burden, obliged to carry their own property to the quarters of their robbers. Not even ransom would pay. Pay it—and worse for you! "I," says Fontanus, "having ransomed myself with several pieces of Venetian money, all the cash I had, another set of barbarians, finding I had nothing to satisfy the voracity of their avarice, beat me till I fainted, and was to all appearance dead."[1]

The grand master by the advice, or command of Achmet Pasha, clad himself in most lowly weeds, like an humble petitioner, and waited on the tyrant in his tent with some of his knights, who, after six months of fatigue, during which they supported all that human bodies can support, wounded, and without arms, or corporeal strength, but driven by dire necessity, delivered themselves thus up to their most proud and scornful foe. The grand master aged as he was, and who had tasted nothing that morning, was forced to stand at the tentdoor under the rain, like a mendicant, or the meanest servant, without a bit or sup, until the

[1] Fontanus: 374.—Bourbon: 26.

afternoon, before admitted into the presence, where he was rather graciously received at length! On his entering, he and the tyrant looked on each other as astonished, and remained some instant, gazing mutually in silence; at last the grand master saluted him, and the miscreant, permitting him to kiss his hand, said, "Although I should have a right to break the conditions on account of your most villanous knights and the Rhodian people—and chiefly yourself, my deservedly detested enemy, with whom I am not obliged to keep faith, or oath, being as I am your incontestible victor by every law; nevertheless I prefer to be not only merciful and clement towards those who do not merit it, but also most generous. Therefore, if you amend the errors of your past life, I promise to leave your order's magistrates, your empire, and your armies, and the right of peace and war, at home, and abroad. I recommend you not to reject this offer, on account of your present state of misfortune. To lose states and kingdoms, is a common disaster from the instability of all humanity. Wherefore take it not too much to heart! With regard to letting you and your knights and people depart free, put your mind at perfect ease; for infallibly shall every one of my promises be observed.[1] I

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 589.—Bourbon: 27.

speak of you individually, and advise you to quit the Christians, who are the cause of this war, which you undertook with noble intentions—and rather a regard to its principle than end. They indeed deserve their punishment. What forbids your leaving those, who all abandoned you, and by their treasons produced your defeat? Why not rather recur to the perpetual fidelity, and favour of your most powerful and benign conqueror?"

The only hypothesis that can account for fickleness so rapid and strangely excessive, to one unwilling to accuse him of duplicity, is, I think, that a conflict, he was unconscious of, was going on within him, between his good angel, or genius, and his bad; and that on the former's relaxing ever so little, the latter resumed its habitual sway, and the tyrant relapsed into his hardened and now almost native perversity—Divine Providence at one time pulling forward by its grace, and he, at another, driven backward by his own malignant disposition. Yet the world called him Solyman the *Magnificent*. Did he deserve it? Let us hope he did!

Then L'Isle Adam answered thus:

"O most potent, most clement of Emperors, I, amongst all these your highly illustrious and able captains, am not by any means worthy of the post you deign to offer me. Fate nor my deservings

towards you are such that I have the daring or right to refuse; yet it would be no proper return to your magnanimity for me to shrink from apprising you of a difficulty. Your sublimity of character makes it the more incumbent on me to open my mind freely to you, though the vanquished am I, and you my victor. Of your clemency I never despaired, of your good faith never doubted. It is that since I have lost my state, I prefer finishing this sorrowful life, since I should pass for a deserter, and men would always speak of me, not as conquered, but dishonoured. To be conquered does not depend on myself; and is no dishonour, if conquered by such as you. But to desert one's cause, and change sides, is, in my opinion, a base perfidious action, and full of shame."

The sultan in amaze at the greatness of mind of the silver-haired prince in a situation so extremely trying, commanded silence, and sent him away with consummate integrity, and escorted by his own guard of honour to his palace, within the city; and made a rich present to every one of the knights who accompanied him.

Nor did Solyman appear to think he by this had fully satisfied his sense of what was due to the virtue and wisdom of the magnanimous grand master, but the day following returned his visit,

and alighting suddenly at the magisterial palace, and walking up to the saloon, where he was told he usually dined, sent for him to where he was packing up to depart, and on his attempting to bend his knee, as is the custom, the sultan would not allow of it, but gave him his right hand, and raised the imperial diadem a little from his head; a ceremony the Ottoman sovereign uses with none of earthly kings—not even of the Mahometan, much less of the Christian persuasion, "nor in truth with any but in naming God or Mahomet," says Fontanus. Not that there were many witnesses, but some, nor of the infidels but his vizier and his page; the sultan himself having ordered all his other servants out. This was the substance of the conversation which then took place between those high parties: by his sovereign's command, Achmet said to him in Greek, that the grand seignor told him to be under no doubt whatever, but to do things gently and at his leisure; for that if twelve days were not sufficient, he was willing to agree to any delay the grand master asked; who to this replied that he thanked him, and only supplicated him to wait and keep his promise. And Solyman again assured him it was *inviolable*, and should be maintained at all events,[1] and in his salutations the sultan called the grand master what

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 590.

means most beloved and most revered father, and when the interpreter talked over the articles of capitulation, L'Isle Adam, as freely as previous to the surrender, observed, "Had I had as much good fortune as hardihood, I should not have lost Rhodes; but, since lost, I am content the sultan won it; nor is it little praise to have won it and pardoned. Men will long tell of your power and clemency. I am confident you will be true to the articles which you granted from clemency, and we accepted from necessity. I shall be an eternal example of the Turkish valour and clemency, much more than if I had yielded Rhodes from the beginning. My pertinacity, and your glory and mercy, shall be famous amid the nations."—"Most freely then I confess the truth," replied the tyrant, "it was for glory, and fame, and immortality, I fought, and not lucre, or to dilate my empire; therefore it is I let your people depart with all their gold and similar valuables." Yet, says Fontanus, he spoke quite the contrary to what he felt, and it was the grand master's wondrous ability that lit up that momentary spark. Not that the grand master had spoken to him otherwise than quite naturally, according to his own native dignity of mind, and totally unconscious of the effect he was producing. But it was God's will that what was simple, wrought like

the deepest policy, and perhaps nothing else would have had that, however transient, power over the tyrant.

Then the sultan left, and after walking on foot to St. John's Church, mounted his horse, and descending the long high street that leads from the castle towards the sea-side, and passing through the great square, returned out by the Cosquino Gate, to his royal pavilion.[1]

Yet had he beforehand given orders to his officers to seize all the Christian ships as soon as laden, and carry them off to Constantinople. As the rumour went about, not only among the chiefs but private persons, it having reached L'Isle Adam's ears, he had to apply to the pashas, and engage them not to break their word, and a capitulation sworn so solemnly; and, by Achmet's orders, a guard of Janissaries were sent to drive the ruffians from the ships, which had been provisioned too by the Grand Turk, who likewise insisted that as much artillery as could be got on board the shipping, should be allowed, as stipulated. But since he was to depart for Constantinople within two days, the Christians were desirous of getting under weigh first, lest his promises should be nowise adhered to by his soldiery; so many necessary guns remained behind

[1] Bourbon: 28.—Appendix, cxciii.

in the hurry, and those pieces, only, which were of most importance were embarked. Thus grand master, and knights, and Rhodians, huddled their things on board, as well as they could, in that brevity of time. And after dinner the 1st of January, 1523, the former mounted on horseback, to take leave of the tyrant; who told him to go, and wished him a good voyage, and to sail at once, and ordered another ample safe conduct to be given him to take with him by sea, in case he fell in with Turkish corsairs, to permit him and his whole fleet to pass without hindrance. So Bourbon says, who was present; but also Fontanus was present, yet, as more among those Rhodians who emigrated, knew they believed it was Solyman's intention to kidnap the grand master, and knights, and all at sea, and take them to Constantinople; but the fact is unlikely, as the Moslem could have done it more easily and publicly at Rhodes. Still it is very likely that among the terrified Rhodians such was the rumour universally; which was therefore written as the common belief, as it was, without any slur, whatever, on Fontanus's historic integrity. 1523

On board being all of the Rhodians, male and female, fathers, mothers, children, and what they could take with them, some of them the richest and

most powerful nobility of that place, who lovingly preferred that horrid exile with the government that had treated them so gently and wisely, than remain under the cruel bitter Turkish tyranny; the usual kindness of the order to their subjects having won their affections for ever. So a little previous to nightfall the grand master went on board in one of the galleys, and had it towed out of port, and about nine o'clock the great karack also left to join him. The order's galleys, and several belonging to individuals, replete with incredible sorrow, fright, and vexation, formed fifty sail. Yes it was on our Lord's circumcision,[1] a few minutes before midnight toll, that, after embarking suddenly and hastily in the dark, we turned our prows westward.

The renowned, splendid, beautiful island of Rhodes, and its ancient and most noble capital, which the order had acquired with so much generosity and boldness, and maintained their state there for two hundred and thirteen years with marvellous vigour, liberality, gentleness, and mighty expenses of gold, and defended with an infinitude of blood, had now passed away, to beneath the Paynim's harsh rod. "O my unfortunate country! Oh, left to what perfidious despotism!" exclaims Fontanus.[2]

[1] January 1, New Year's Day.

[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 591,—Bourbon: 29.

Of the tyrant then follows a description, from which be only selected that he was of middle stature, and rather handsome features, a little brown, with black eyes, that denote cruelty. "But he was on horseback, when I saw him, and it was but once, and for a moment," says Fontanus.[1]

Nor he, nor these documents speak about the Portuguese accused of having been an arch traitor, and found out and put to death; but Bosio does, who were himself an authority, if he had not told us Bourbon was his only one.

Sir Andrew de Merail[2] had risen through all the gradations, from simple knight (for he was of illustrious nobility) to the second post of the order, when, because he was not elected to the first, he changed (all at once), being then rather above sixty, and until that moment reverenced by all who knew him, actually holding the offices of grand chancellor of the order, as well as Grand Prior of Castille, head of the triumvirate of the treasury. But on L'Isle Adam's election, he is said to have burst out towards a Spanish commander of his acquaintance, an excellent noble-

[1] Fontanus: 375.

[2] Bosio and the Italians have Amaral, whence some think it an old way of writing, and that he was a noted admiral, the rather that he had distinguished himself in various naval actions. Grand Admiral he could never have been, since that dignity belongs to the head of the language of Italy. Gouvernement, Vertot: v. 354.

man, "Then he shall be the last Grand Master of Rhodes," and sent a Turkish slave of his with a letter to Solyman, imploring him to come and besiege the town, and that he would be his spy; that so he continued giving information to the Turks, to the very last, the high esteem in which he was held keeping him from being ever suspected; so that when he was discovered, it was too late to save the city, and most of the knights already slain. His servant was tried and hanged; after which De Merail himself was condemned and deprived of the habit, and expelled from the order in St. John's Church with all due ceremonials; and was then put on his trial as a felon, and sentenced, subsequent to a free and minute defence, before a fair jury, not one of whom was ever before or since even suspected of prejudice. What definitely was his end? Swollen and all dislocated (as he was certainly from the torture) he persevered to his last breath in a declaration of utter innocence. To no one else of the knights was any participation in his crime ever imputed. Fontanus clearly acquitted him, if not for no other reason, at least from want of proof of his guilt. In tears his companions urged him in vain to confess, and that he should be pardoned, and not die guilty; that for them it was the same, their moment too was at hand. Yea, to be slain,

or worse, since Rhodes was evidently lost. Yet, with haughty demeanour, and swearing he was innocent, he with the most valiant composure, and without complaining of any one, bent his head to the fatal stroke—and received it.

If he was not guilty, though pronounced so by a fair jury of his peers, what may be said, but that it only shows the inevitable imperfection of the best of human institutions. Trial by jury, if defective, proves no more than the defects of all humanity. Nearly everything mortal is imperfect. None should rail, but all should be resigned. A fair jury is the best human lot. That even the best is liable to error, is only an idle repetition, a threadbare truism. Why not *a tacit submission*? Judicial error may be as inevitable as to die. What use of complaining? In popular cries juries may perhaps be inefficient. In Rhodes were rumours that may have carried too easy a conviction. But it would be very cruel towards his contemporaries to affirm his innocence. Rather feeble men did as well as they could; and after all, it is to be hoped his sentence was reversed in another world.

In that supreme emergency, when many of his fellow knights had been already slain, and all expected to be so within a few hours, that they gave him even then all the formalities of being deprived

of the dignities, and tried by his peers, does them much honour, no doubt.

Writers at this distance may allow him the advantage of whatever loss of papers, or rather proofs; and own they find no evidence strong enough to condemn him. Tercier does not mention the unhappy nobleman at all, no more than if he had never read Bourbon (as he takes care to tell us he had), or observed the silence of Fontanus. Is it not fair to conclude that neither did Tercier believe the accusation any more than the conscientious lawyer whose careful taciturnity he imitates?

Not that Bourbon might not have intended well (like many of the judges of Byng), hurried along by the public voice, in all likelihood unconsciously. On certain occasions the best of us are over-liable to grievous weakness. It is very remarkable that nothing corroborative has ever turned up against the gallant Portuguese, while little by little, all vestiges of the accusations in the archives, if they ever existed there, have totally disappeared; which, added to his constant denial to the end, and the glory and conspicuous candour of his antecedent conduct during a long life, prevent the possibility of tarnishing his memory at present. But if Bourbon be erroneous on

that one point, it makes an exception, and on every other he deserves an implicit confidence, as having been present at Rhodes during the whole siege. He is short; but agrees perfectly not only in general, but likewise in what details he gives, with Fontanus, whose relation and Bosio's he fully verifies.

Amurath, unfortunate Zain's son, could not escape with L'Isle Adam, or any of the Rhodians, ardently as both he and they wished it, and he tried various disguises, but the tyrant's wily spies always discovered him.[1]

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. i. 4. Not that Bourbon could intentionally have said one thing for another, and accused capitally a man he did not believe guilty, but that he believed too easily. The heat of that time came over many. Bourbon was ready to believe all evil of Spaniards, and though Merail was a Portuguese by birth, he was of the Language of Castille.

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*Note.*—In the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh are various papers relative to the Hospitallers in that kingdom,* by which we see that the Courts of Law had laid it down 1442 there, as far back as the 14th century, that those military knights were laymen, and paid taxes as such, and were no more subservient to the Pope than any other temporal sovereign. Their Commanderies or Preceptories are not properly Benefices, but only a resemblance of them. How frequent the intercourse between Rhodes and Scotland in 1442 is evidenced by a deed of Grand Master Lastic granting an annuity to an impoverished gentleman of the name of D. Scott, to be regularly paid out of the order's property in his native country, where he was then living, and appears never to have left it.†

* Twenty-five copies of some of these documents were printed lately—but not for sale. Appendix, ccii.

† Appendix, cciii.

## ABEYANCE THE THIRD.

DRIVEN from our darling homes,[1] forlorn exiles suddenly, and nearly naked, without the least one of those comforts to which human creatures are used, tossed into the wild waters in the depth of winter, in small crazy vessels, pell-mell we went rolling about in a dark tempestuous sea, without knowing where we were, or whither we were carried, during ten whole days. Few were the knights of the order that outlived that dreadful siege. The vast majority of the fleet were Rhodians—the greater the resemblance to Æneas—yet had not L'Isle Adam neglected to send for the knights in the islets, St. Peter's of the Freed, and fortresses, and forts, to join him in Candia.

1523

At last some of us, on the seventh of January,

[1] Fontanus: 376, &c., &c.

some a few days later, and some much later, reached Sittia, in the island of Candia, where our largest ship ran the utmost risk of being broken to pieces, though after casting anchor; and the large galley, commanded by Sir Jerome Carmagnola, lately knighted for his heroism in coming a volunteer to Rhodes, drove on that part of the coast where the infidels were tented, and he and all on board perished miserably. The salt sea had the lives of so many of our shipwrecked fellow-citizens—and the Mahometans, whatever our poor men had been able to convey with them. The stormy ocean and barbarous Saracens went shares. The artillery that went down was esteemed at forty thousand crowns.[1]

Nearly similar was the fate of another of our ships, which only escaped pirates to strike against a rock. Most of the ships were little sea-worthy, from having lain uncareened six months in the Rhodian harbour; scarcely looked to, all hands being called off to the siege, their keels and sides never cleaned properly, and they came away too much in a hurry to be caulked; even the great karack, not having time to weigh, left three anchors in the port of Rhodes; and with others the same. So it was a miracle half the vessels were not lost.

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. i. 1.—Bourbon: 29.

And still more horrible, the grand master's own galley (for he had kept with the people), and the other galleys with him, which had been driven off Scarpanto, shared the like tremendous danger, and tarried; but by the Divine assistance, in ten more days their small hulls, with wide Lateen sails, after great struggles, and many losses, arrived.

On their arrival, the grand master made the muster, and to four thousand amounted the Rhodians, or similar from its islets, who, flying the impious cruelty of the Turks, preferred being his followers into exile over the dangerous frightful sea in that tremendous season; nor in the four thousand are included any of the soldiers in the order's pay, or any one in their hire. The now poor Rhodians were the principal nobility, gentry, and citizens, all reduced to subsist on the charity of the order; most of them having lost not only all their landed property, but even the few things they had been able in the flurry to bring from Rhodes; so that few had now even a change of clothes, their trunks having gone overboard in the disastrous passage through stormy seas, considered hardly navigable in winter. Many were most miserably clad, and half naked, trembling with cold and hunger; so that the grand master had to dole out alms to them, as he did, putting with his own

piteous honoured hands into theirs the sum that was to purchase their necessary raiment and food, he less a benign prince than most tender father; they, who as naturally took the sorrowful precedence of embarking, and suffering, as once of social consideration and refinement in their own sweet home, full of gratitude and wild affection, they knelt in crowds to kiss his hands; and he, who had been remarkable for never having shed a tear during all the calamities he had endured, and seen others undergo in the late frightful scenes at Rhodes, he, that impassable, but gentle white-haired stoic, burst into a loud flood of weeping. No doubt at that moment the whole accumulated miseries were thrown on his mind at once; and if he did not break down under such an awful load, he shuddered with a bitter gush that refused to be mastered, and every part of his frame quivered. The death of so many he had loved, the infinitude of carnage before his eyes, the probable utter ruin of his revered order—and his faithful, devoted vassals, to see them fallen into this sad plight—what sadder did human creatures ever exhibit?—And what is to become of them? How could he refrain from dissolving, diamond as he was? How could they not but doat on him the more? That was in a remote angle of the Isle of

Candia; and he did not know how he might be received. Nevertheless he sent to the capital to ask permission to victual and refit his fleet and army from who commanded there for Venice, a republic that had acted no friendly, if not a hostile part during the late siege; but in return came a most courteous and affectionate letter, assuring him of every service and all possible succours. So he and his ships proceeded to the port of Castel,[1] about seventy miles west of Sittia. A Venetian nobleman, accompanied by the Duke of Candia and the chief magistrates and nobility of the island, came to the beach to meet him (Sunday, 18th January, 1523) with all the honours that could be given to the mightiest sovereign; for had he not firmly sustained with such constancy and valour, a long siege against the forces and personal efforts of the most powerful monarch in the world? To which the afflicted and high-minded grand master replied, that he had only tried to preserve Rhodes to Christendom, but failed, though he had given full time for Europe to come to his aid.

In Candia he heard with grief that poor Zain's son had been seized by Solyman, and he and his boys strangled, and the females of his family sent

[1] Bourbon calls the capital of Candia, Castel; others Candido, the present Khania.

to the Constantinopolitan seraglio. It was evident the Turk's kindness had ended with the order's departure, and that no further hope was to be placed in that quarter.

In Candia, not to have even the appearance of declining an accorded privilege, the grand master assumed all civil and criminal jurisdiction over his own people, and held a chapter general, where among other things, in place of the Turcopolier Sir John Bouch, slain at Rhodes, that dignity was given to Sir William Weston, as well as the command of the great karack, and that of the Pearl of the Sea to the Commander Sir John Maringo Farfan; which proves both these Englishmen to have been excellent naval officers for those times. The grand master also sent to Messina to stop the succours; for that Rhodes was already lost. At which the knights, congregated there to embark, were struck with immense grief and disappointment. All the princes began to regret. Who but envied the bright fame of having fought at Rhodes by L'Isle Adam's side, and his immortal glory? And it was then that Charles V. exclaimed to his warriors: "Nothing has ever been well lost but Rhodes."

The same chapter general, taking into consideration that their grand master's rentroll was almost all from Rhodes, and that his position re-

quired vast expenditure to sustain the proper decorum of his high office, after they had passed in review the whole property of the order all over the world, voted him a large income, to be calculated from the day of the Turk's coming to Rhodes; for from that day his means had commenced declining. He accepted not at all for himself, but as necessary for his order and his unfortunate Rhodians; and for that assembly's eternal honour in such an extremity, the law was proposed, fully debated, balloted for, and passed in one calm and short sitting, and without a single dissent. And to make some return for the noble Justinian's kindness, his son—whose birth might have been wanting in some formality, if put to the usual proof—was, without it, knighted with the due ceremonies, and insured the succession of the first commandery that should fall vacant in the Priory of Venice, with consent of the whole Italian Language, which highly pleased the grateful father; this and other largesses agreeing with what has been always the order's highly honourable custom, ever to testify its thankfulness and well remunerate any favour. Nor is it far distant from sublimity that it was in this pitiable state it was decreed, all the warehouses of the order should in every county be thrown open to the knights; and that whatsoever they took out they should not be called to

pay for then, but only by instalments in future years; perhaps the earliest real example of a nation's lending to its members or *vice versa;* and which indeed, as mainly a domestic transaction, deserves not so much the name of public debt, as of a strict bond of union between the several individuals composing the community.[1]

And magnanimous, wise, and noble was likewise the Governor Trevisan, whither he had been sent by Venice with sixty excellently-armed galleys while the Turks were besieging Rhodes. Nor did he treat the grand master with other than signal affection, and respect the profoundest. The entire of the knights of the order remained in that city until the first day of Lent, settling their things and affairs with the utmost care, and with diligence the most sorrowful repairing their vessels, and furnishing them with new seamen and soldiers, seeing that nearly all their best men had been killed during the siege. "Yet were our ships deficient in artillery; since the greater part of the guns had been brought on shore during the siege, and lost, and their crews slain, serving like soldiery in the bastions."

We anew embarked, by order of the grand master and of his appointed captain of the fleet, the peerless, most experienced of seamen, Sir William

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. i. 7.—Bourbon: 29.

Austin,[1] on the 12th of March, observes the judge; and, long tossed about by contrary winds, we nevertheless at length madeCerigo,where the great karack, and other large ships, might wait for a fair wind, and then stand straight to Messina across the open sea that rolls into the Adriatic; leaving the grand master with his charge, the Rhodians, to continue in the little galleys and lesser craft shoring along. Never do such pigmies venture far from land, but creep close under it; and frequently entering various harbours of Morea, Albania, Zante, Cephalonia, Corfu, and disembarking, it were difficult to say with what honours he was received everywhere by people and magistrates; still these marks of kindness and universal sympathy were necessarily far surpassed by the various sufferings and multiplied hardships travellers in our sad situation had to sustain. At last many of the sailors, of the soldiers, even of the knights, fell sick; in truth, we all so sickened, that we had to be disembarked at Gallipoli for physic and refreshments, the number of sick going on increasing always, and their maladies getting worse. During our halt, the grand master wrote signifying his arrival both to the Pope and the emperor. At length again did we re-embark; but soon sickened anew, and in a forlorn state did

[1] Englishman from his name.

part of his galleys reach Messina. The strongest among us found himself unequal to such reiterated hardships, and when sickness fell on persons unprovided with remedies or comforts, and already reduced by famine, drought, and fatigue, it proved dreadful; from this dearth and these ails sprang a variety of diseases that afterwards developed themselves with violence when on the shore wished for so ardently. Many whom war had spared, and had survived all the hardships and sickness of the voyage, went to the other world as soon as they got safe to land at Messina; and our little fleet separated, from the weather, some of the galleys, as mine (says Fontanus) reached it long before the rest. I, of the number, ascribe my recovery to no human, but Divine help, after being apparently quite dead. Yet hapless exiles as we were, and in a strange land, supported by the charity of strangers, we suffered far less for our own misery, than for fear of the grand master having come by some disaster, which grievously tormented us; and every day our anxiety increased, seeing none of his ships reach Sicily, and for three mortal weeks were we without tidings of him. We began to be afraid his galleys, unable to make any good defence, had been taken by the Moors, who in their piratical feluccas infest the Sicilian seas. Some thought his galleys had foundered in the waves,

others that the plague had broken out in that division of his marine, and that therefore he was prevented from coming near us. Everything went wrong and upside down, as always is the case with doubt and sorrow; every one kept imagining a calamity of his own. Different misfortunes, one worse than the other, but all frightful. At last, in the beginning of May, we were greeted with his attaining port.

Oh heavens, (exclaims the jurisconsult) how delighted we should have been to see our beloved prince, and his valiant Rhodians come back triumphantly, laden with hostile spoils! But instead of that, what had we to behold? He stept from a most miserable vessel all broken—it, as well as those in its company, all with their sails pieced, dirty, torn, their masts for the most part fallen, or only some bits of them standing, their upper works swept away, or wofully in wreck; some without their bowsprits, and with large holes in their stern or sides, foul, crazy, anchorless, rudderless, powerless to ride out the least squall, without half their oars, and showing a large blackish weather-beaten tattered flag, bearing what was intended to be a picture of the Virgin in tears, with her divine dead Son in her arms, and above in cubital letters: "Afflictis tu spes unica rebus," such as no poorest Corsair would have deigned to take. So at seeing him in

such a wretched state, he dressed in deep mourning and all his people too in the same weeds, beholders involuntarily burst into tears. Every kind care and all sorts of honour they experienced on approaching beloved Messina. A prince so good, so grand, so valiant, of such benevolent and unspotted fame, and his company of the flower of the most noble and illustrious families in all Christendom! The mixture of wonder and compassion produced mighty effects in all ranks. The first sounds the hapless navigators could distinguish coming from shore, were sobs and bitter weeping. Mixed with the grandees from Messina, were seven hundred knights of the order, who had gathered there from every part of Europe, to sail for Rhodes, but too late! They were only in time to read his despatch from Candia.[1]

Scarcely can be described the reverential sorrow of the people waving round him, when he landed. The weeping was universal, and not to be calmed except by knights sent by himself to persuade the multitude. And besides all these demonstrations of grief and love from the people, most ample were the respect, honour, and favour, displayed by the chiefs of the Sicilian nobility, and particularly the viceroy, both by letter and person; for with the Archbishop of

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. i. 8.

Messina, and a knight of the same family, Pignatello, Prior of Bari, all three went together to receive him on the beach, and taking him by the hand embraced him, and kissed him on both cheeks most affectionately; and, accompanied with a crowd of most noble and illustrious personages, conducted him into the city. The Prior of Bari had come with two thousand youths of the choicest in Naples, to go and assist Rhodes; not from any obligations, although he belonged to the order, but merely from his own elevation of mind and compassion. For he had been only commanded to victual the Rhodian fleet, which he did with the utmost diligence and care. And to announce him, had sent his own nephew to Rhodes, and that Navarese knight, who was so famous for making the best gunpowder—both had been remarkably popular and rendered numberless services during those unhappy struggles. But what could they effect in our desperate situation, and with none of the European sovereigns to protect us, except lay down life in the most heroic individual efforts? They were both of them killed in the siege. Yet why should we now complain when it is idle? Yet is it certain those princes wished the Rhodians well, and Charles V. gave leave, through all his dominions (both the Sicilies, Spain, and Germany) for soldiers, arms, provisions

to go free of all costs to Rhodes, to the value of ten thousand ducats, and embark them in the ships of the Italian confederacy. But if, instead of sending us money, each had sent a few stout armed galleys, even without men (for we had brave men) they might have changed matters, and I believe Rhodes now would have the Turk not lording it, but in prison. And Francis I. (most Christian both in name and fact) wished to send us a large succour, but was prevented by his barons; because of his wars in Lombardy, where he was losing. Still he despatched La Tremouille with several French knights, volunteers; who sailed from Marseilles with six ships of war to assist Rhodes. But they were found at Messina by the grand master with the Spanish and Italian knights and succours.

In the viceroy's most affectionate and respectful address to the grand master, he supplicated him not to leave, or let his order leave that friendliest of cities and most beautiful and convenient harbour, until he should have resolved where to take up his permanent residence; and by the viceroy's care, large and commodious lodgings for the knights, and a palace with proper saloons for the grand master, and an excellent hospital for the sick, and comfortable habitations for the Rhodians, were furnished.

Great the expense, and holy and pious the charity. What a mischance! Had those succours come, they were quite enough to have made the Turks raise the siege of Rhodes! And the grand master had been advised of it previously, but that the letter never reached him.[1]

"Who were they, who defrauded their own order of such immense honour, such eternal glory?"—thus the grand master with grave and severe voice in a chapter general immediately holden. "If you have anything to say in your excuse, say it before your brethren, who will judge you. Each of your leaders plead his own cause and exculpate himself from this delay publicly, in a regular wise judicious speech rigidly proving it exactly true!" And these conscious of meriting praise, not blame; these deputies from every Christian nation, desired at once to be strictly examined and judged by those who had been at the siege. And so indeed was done, and after an acute process, they were all found not only innocent but faithful and industrious servants. Most incontestibly was it proved as clear as noonday, that every one had set out three full months before the siege; of the preparations for which men spoke over the whole world, and that they were all driven back or impeded by different inevitable dis-

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. i. 9.

asters. No mortal was to be blamed, but evidently the whole to be attributed to our own unhappy destiny. Nothing could be more explicitly and searchingly investigated, more satisfactorily established by irrefragable testimony. Such was our fate, that it could not be avoided. How not rather impute to misfortune than to perfidy or ignorance of sea affairs, that the large first-rate of the Genoese, the Pharaoh, full of provisions, stores, arms, and men miserably went down in a calm within the port of Modon? The three hundred French knights had shipwrecked, and hardly saved themselves in Messina.

The Bailiff of the Eagle, Sir Thomas Newport, with the English knights, and a chosen body of English troops in their pay, incorporated into a legion, besides a large sum of gold and silver, as well as stores of all sorts, was driven by a furious tempest out of his course and into a creek where the whole cargo and every soul perished.

A sworn document related to his having been seen from the top of the cliff near Dover. That he was riding very fast, for now it was his last half-mile to the water which was quite calm, but he might have observed a very small red cloud in the distant horizon. He had landed from duty as he returned. His boat waited him on the beach all ready!

and his ship was tacking about two miles off. But scarce had he got on board, when the squall burst, and she instantly was dismasted, and lost her rudder. And now fell into the current, with which the wind drove her furiously and unmanageable on the rocks, where she was shattered to atoms, and every creature went down. It was said to have been an earthquake under water. Certainly on land it did not blow hard until several minutes later, and even then I (swore the beholder) could continue to look on the wreck in the sea beneath.[1]

Sir Anthony de St. Martin, Prior of the Order of Spain, aged man, brought up to arms from his childhood, a military Nestor, who had sailed with the knights from Arragon, Valentia, Navarre, in a great galeon with arms and ammunition of every kind for Rhodes, fell into an encounter with Moorish corsairs, whose assaults he withstood for an entire day and at last beat off, but a tempest ensuing so damaged his ship, that he with great difficulty escaped foundering, and to get to Sicily required his best skill, with no possibility of continuing the voyage in time.

Nor fared less badly the Prior of Castille, worthy son of the illustrious Duke of Alva, a young warrior, whose spirit was as remarkable for prudence and

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. i. 10, M. S. D.

every virtue, as his exterior for rare beauty, and bore the Castillian and Portuguese knights, had to combat off Barbary with pirates, who struck the vessel between wind and water with their weighty cannon several times, and most dangerously; so that though the Christians finally were victors, yet it was with extreme difficulty they got to land in the little port of Coviza, and with all his efforts, he could not make Messina before the 24th of October.

The Tuscan and Lombard knights had been inevitably detained by the sudden death of their captain near Pisa, and on account of the civil wars hard was it to communicate with the Receiver of Lombardy; so that if it were not for Cardinal Medici, they should never have reached Messina.

Also the Priors of Germany and Bohemia exonerated themselves completely of any dilatoriness.

At which with vast consolation did the grand master continue: "Brethern revered, dearest associates, I was too austere, instead of embracing, thanking, rewarding you. But consider, and you will perceive that mine was not severity, but useful diligence and necessity; for not only in conscience, but likewise on the theatre of the world, by the law of knighthood, honour, reason of state, we are responsible to all Christendom, and obliged to jus-

tify our conduct at this immensity of disaster. It was more than becoming of you and me that we should at the same time in justification leave authentic juridical proofs, that we did all we could, all that to human force and judgment was possible. And if the just grief I feel that so mighty a calamity has befallen our order in my time, and none could be greater except utter extinction (which I hope in God never shall take place) has made me seem unjust and transgress in terms, most lovingly do I beseech you to pardon me, and attribute it to no bad intention. And I am not a little proud both of you and myself that it was no fault or inattention of any of us. Then be His holy will done! Therefore to place our sacred order in some new residence not unworthy of it, assist me with your united wisdom and efforts!"

With that he embraced the grand crosses, and gave his hand to kiss to the knights, until the head esquire called out, "Let all who are not of the interior council retire." Then were the financial questions entered into, and by way of farther rewarding Martinengo dreadfully wounded, and deprived of an eye at the siege, he was named to the Priory of Pisa just fallen vacant; which opened to him a fine field for promotion, that shortly he succeeded to Barletta—richest dignity in the Italian Language.

The Bailiff of the Eagle, Sir Thomas Newport, having perished in the shipwreck off England, he was succeeded by the Commander Sir Thomas Sheffield, a person of great parts, and therefore of the magisterial household; and several other promotions were made.

The *Draperius* of the order having valued its entire wardrobe, it, with a few other items, produced a sum sufficient to pay up the two years' arrears to several individuals in grievous want. At the same were discharged almost all the soldiery in its pay, and seamen and ships, keeping only as many as were absolutely necessary for the use of government and its followers. Superfluous expenses of every kind were retrenched or abolished.[1]

Such a reunion of the order now at Messina,[2] and likely to remain for some time, and the plague occupying so much the minds of men, it was thought wise to try to preserve the Rhodian exiles from falling into that mishap likewise; and therefore with paternal anxiety did the knights look out for a spot of most salubrious air for them to retire to. By common consent the kingdom of Naples was chosen as beautiful, wholesome, and fertile above every other part of Italy.

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. i. 12.

[2] Thence a knight of the name of Roberts wrote a letter to Lord Surrey, with some account of the siege of Rhodes. App. cciv.

We sailed for Pozzuolo; but fear of the plague (which had indeed broken out at Messina, and summoned off several of the knights) made the inhabitants refuse to let us land. Nor did the disconsolate grand master well know whither to go, ready for any spot where he might be properly purified, and then towards Tyber.[1] So two having died on board his own ship, we were forced to have recourse to Baia, near which we remained twenty-six days in strict quarantine.[2] Into Baia itself we could not venture—the Prior of Navarre having died of the plague the very day we arrived off its mouth. Where we were not allowed at first; and when it was left to the conscience of the grand master, he of course refused to land.[3] Finally allotted to us were the Cumæan Sybill's caves, about two miles from any town; and we had to live on provisions procured from Naples or Pozzuolo, and they were distributed by a knight who had been tribune of the soldiery during the siege of Rhodes; and to keep off robbers were forced to surround our little camp with light artillery from our galleys, as if facing the enemy. Purification of the ships; all the clothes of the poor Rhodians burned, and clad anew at the order's expense. Every suspicion

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. i. 16.
[2] Bourbon: 30.
[3] Id.: par. iii., lib. i. 17.

of plague was at length over; not an unhealthy person in our company. The viceroy of Naples deigned to speak to us in the Chapel of the Madonna al pie della Grotta.[1] But the sulphury smell of Pozzuolo, pungent to unaccustomed nerves, causing headaches and sickness to several, our dear and grey-haired leader (who had been expelled his throne and the country of his choice) thinking he could have recourse to no one so justly as to the thrice-sacred Church of Rome, to inform it of his calamities went, by the concordant advice of his followers, to Civita Vecchia, where a Spanish bishop received him with the due salutations in the Pope's name, handing him a letter from the Pope which had missed him at Messina, and been remanded; which letter told him to do what he had already of himself resolved to do, and was doing;[2] and that his Holiness expected a visit from him and his knights—which should be of congratulation, that by God's grace he and they had got alive from the rabid Saracen—that his Holiness hoped before his death to give an honourable seat and pacific city, where he and his order and the dispersed Rhodians could live at ease.

[1] Bosio : par. iii., lib. ii. 18.

[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. clxiii., ii. 184.—Appendix, cxciv.

So the grand master after a few days went to Rome, leaving his knights and army under command of a locum-tenens. How and with what honours the grand master was received by the Pope[1] is not for a person of little eloquence like me to say; and the shortness of this small book (says Fontanus) prevents me even attempting it. The cardinals came out beyond the walls to meet him (as is seldom the case, save the Pope alone); and several of the Roman barons and princes, and the diplomatic corps, amongst whom the French ambassador Anna de Montmorency, afterwards Constable of France, his own nephew.[2] As to the procession within the metropolis, came the rest of the diplomacy, and archbishops, bishops, prelates, the various degrees of the hierarchy. The grand master rode surrounded by the Papal guards, all Swiss, with their music and halberds, exactly as that ferocious nation advance to battle. There was also a numerous squadron of cavalry, and the prince of the city with his whole court, and all the magistrates on horseback. That the gray-haired grand master was the universal admiration and wonder, with grand discharges of artillery from Castle St. Angelo as he passed it, and was conducted

[1] On the 1st of September, says Bourbon: 30.

[2] Bosio: par iii., lib. ii. 20.

to the Vatican, and lodged there in a magnificent apartment, is only to hint at what actually happened. Had I inherited the power of Cicero, or even of that Rhodian who with most burning and fluent eloquence animated his countrymen to battle, when a ball hit and killed him, I might undertake a description of that day, and how Hadrian, though decrepid and sick, rose nevertheless, and advanced several paces to receive our grand master; and on his sitting down himself, bade the other sit near him, along with the cardinals. Hadrian, most excellent of ancient men, and as it were more divine than human, if the Almighty had granted him life even for a little longer, I am persuaded he would have placed the Hospitallers in their former position. But he was in his last sickness. At his arrival he had got up to receive him, and then returned to bed. But on the morning of the third day, finding himself a little better, he had the grand master called from his rooms in the Pontifical palace, for lodged in it were his, and much more he—who soon found himself fourth in the Pope's bedchamber —the other three being his Holiness on his couch, and on each side of it an assistant—where solemn was the Papal promise to do everything possible towards aiding him. But alas! the Pontiff from that moment got worse, and never spoke another

word, and expired in about eight hours.[1] It is to be hoped that what he left undone Clement VII. will do. As an earnest, the grand master was made Captain of the Guard of that conclave; during which he merited the trust of all the cardinals, and lived in familiarity with them; courteous to them all, but partial to none, as became his high post.

In the chamber called *Bussola* how many of his knights were painted in their scarlet sopravests, by the great Raphael d'Urbino, may still be seen, says Bosio; not that the knights themselves composed the guard, but had two thousand hired troops under them at the expense of the Papacy.[2] No one probably will blame my having had considerable satisfaction at finding in the British Museum what proves how accurate the chronology on which I had determined—consistent with it neither could L'Isle Adam have written a letter to the King of England from Rome, much before December, 1523, or later than the 25th of January immediately next, when he left that metropolis. Taking up the Cottonian, I knew I was on sacred ground, only dangerous for weak eyes like mine, from the minute, crabbed, and nearly obliterated writing. But what my delight at finding there (discovery all my own) the original letter of L'Isle Adam, dated Rome 26th

[1] Bourbon: 30. [2] Bosio: par. iii., lib. ii. 21.

of December, 1523, in a fine, clear, quite legible state, though in antique letters of course. It evidently had lain all those ages unobserved, except by such as touched it with reverence. It shall of course be in the Appendix; and my exact researches would not have been ill repaid had I been even much longer. Now then for the first, does the hero's letter favour the press; and possibly it may embalm my book, which might otherwise be found undeserving of life. But at present it may be saved for containing that memorial of a personage in honour almost everywhere.[1]

Nor did L'Isle Adam, for all the Papal favours, cease going about as a private person; and one day towards vespers, walked into St. Peter's Church, where was a great crowd, as expecting the Pontifical display; on which he walked up to one of the masters of ceremonies, and asked what place he was to occupy, as he saw many places prepared. So the functionary, astonished at so unusual a question from an utter stranger, a private gentleman, referred to his superior, who demurred and looked on the stranger, and would have interrogated him, whom the Pope seeing, with his hand signalled the head master of ceremonies to approach the Pontifical throne, where he was then sitting, and bade

[1] Cottonian MSS.—Appendix, ccviii.

him assign him a part of his own throne—the right-hand part of it, as seat, where he should be invited to sit at all times, whether the Pope was present or not—a seat on a perfect level with the Pope himself, and above all others; where he might sit or stand as he pleased, and not like other princes, who were obliged to stand leaning against the wall. All which the said three functionaries, for their own discharge, set down from the *oracular living voice* in a regular legal document now before me.[1]

1524

"And one of the earliest fruits of Clement's benevolence, is that he has given him Viterbo, the most delicious city of the Papal dominions, and the most magnificent, after Rome, to be his residence, and that most accomplished knight at the head, and of his household, has just gone to prepare his master's habitation, while I am closing this journal," says Fontanus, whom I quit with regret. But here the noble-minded lawyer closes his unpretending, most persuasive narrative.

Various, too, had been the embassies to the several Courts of Europe; those to England being confided to the Turcopolier, Sir William Weston, and another English knight, whose name is not mentioned. The Pope having once been of the order, and having spent, not indeed his childish,

[1] Appendix, cxcv.

but all his best years in it, *i suoi piu fioriti anni*, says Bosio, its quick re-establishment was considered certain. Yet not so; the Pope did all he could. But his was an unsteady position. The temporal decline of the Papacy had already begun. The banner of the order still had the place of honour, as at the procession of Leo X.; only it was now borne by another Prior of Capua. But though appearances remained the same, yet neither what waved, nor he for whom it waved, were in reality so potent as then.[1]

Fearing that in difficult times distinctions from the Pope might be misinterpreted into a charge of breach of neutrality between Christians, the grand master determined to remove to Viterbo, under pretext of his presence being required at the chapter general.[2] Viterbo was lent to him as a mixed jurisdiction, where he might preside as captain general of the army, and governor for the Pope, while left supreme authority over his own people.

He therefore quitted Rome on the 25th of January, 1524, his knights marching first, and after them the Rhodians, and with great joy and honour was he received by those of Viterbo, both nobles and people.[3] At Viterbo, then, the order remained

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. ii. 29.
[2] Id.: par. iii., lib. ii. 29.—Appendix, cxcvii.
[3] Id.: par. iii., lib. ii. 29, anno 1524.

some time, not without severe suffering from the plague, which had crept into the miserable Rhodians, many of whom died, in truth the greatest part of them, from poverty and famine also; so that even no few of the knights had to stoop to menial crafts, which they were allowed to do by a dispensation from their grand master. Yet there was no instance of any individual of them seceding from their rule, or denying their usual obedience to their grand master, who was at least exempt from this grief, of seeing any indiscipline in his order. Nor did he spare himself, but notwithstanding his age and infirmities made long journeys, and is said to have visited every Court in Europe several times.[1]

In the meantime the Bailiff of the Eagle, Sir Thomas Sheffield, dying there, the Commander, Sir Alban Pole, succeeded; and in the trying predicament, it was voted necessary to have recourse to the two thousand marks of pure silver, left by a former Prior of England, to aid the order in any extraordinary disaster, most formidable and inevitable; proof that those good ancient dignitaries were accustomed to execute their wills themselves, before their last sickness, since he had deposited the money with his own hands, in the way he liked.[2] Elba, Candia, Cerigo, had been mentioned, but ended

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. ii. 29, anno 1524.

[2] Appendix, cci.

in smoke, and also Rhodes, whose inhabitants, highly disgusted with the Turkish government, kept inviting the grand master to return, and for a long time contrived to nourish what he and his so ardently desired, the recovery of that captivating spot; but all attempts that way were quite ineffectual, and void of the least hope.[1] Various traces of his prodigious activity in travels.[2] As to Malta, after many discussions, Charles V., 1525
who, as well as Francis I., of France, seems to have been ashamed of having allowed Rhodes to fall, or wearied out by the perseverant petitions of L'Isle Adam (at one time his knights began to be afraid their grand master was about retiring altogether, and going to lead a quiet life in[3] France), or by female cleverness, or Clement VII., the celebrated emperor offered the island of Malta to the knights, and the Pope advised them to accept of it.[4] This did not depend entirely on the 1526
grand master, but on the chapter general at Viterbo, where it decided to send a commission of eight to visit the island, previous to accepting;

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. ii. 29, anno 1524.
[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. clxv.
[3] Bosio: par. iii., lib. iii., anno 1526.
[4] Id.: id., id., anno 1526.—Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. clxvi.

that is, a commissary by language; and the one for England was Sir Nicholas Hussey, who may have owed his life to having been posted not *on* the English bastion, but *in* its ditch; so was only severely wounded, not slain like his countrymen that day at Rhodes.[1]

At Viterbo, France and England continued appealing to the order, regarding their own internal affairs, as before, at Rhodes;[2] the former declaratory of the order's not being Churchmen, but voluntarily subscribed, in this instance, for the king's ransom;[3] the latter regarding the exchange of an English commandery to convenience Oxford.[4] Malta, though no doubt it seemed generosity to Charles V., yet, coupled as it was with Gozo and Tripoli, it was nowise flattering to the order. In the discords between Austria and France, it was hard to assemble a chapter general. It, however, at last met, and was often prorogued. Again in Viterbo, when the grand master had arrived, in February of 1527, the chapter general heard his account of his journeys, and agreed to the emperor's terms, without naming Tripoli. As

1527

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. ii. 28.

[2] Appendix, ccii.

[3] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. clxix.

[4] Id., ii., Num. clxx.—Bosio: par. iii., lib. iii. 26.—Appendix, cxcvii.

to the annual falcon, they declared that in yielding it, they understood it, not as feudal obligation, nor sign of subjection, but only as a courteous and perpetual memorial of the gift. But so unfavourable was the account of the commissioners, that notwithstanding the want and horrible plight of the order, it would never have accepted Malta, if it had not been for reverence for their grand master.

That Malta itself, about sixty miles in circuit, was but an arid rock, covered in many places with sand, and in a few with a light scattering of earth, brought from the neighbouring continent, or Sicily; that it had neither river or rivulet, nor spring, or any other fresh water for the most part, save rain preserved in tanks or cisterns, except a few wells, rather brackish; that it produced little corn, not half enough of anything to feed the scanty population; that it would be a very unpleasant residence, particularly during the summer; violently, nearly intolerably hot, with not one forest tree, hardly a green thing to repose the eye on; and a sort of ill-walled town, called its capital, in the middle of the island, at a considerable distance from the sea; that however its stone is not hard, but rather *tufo*, or soft, and easy to be cut into any shape; that the people speak a dialect of Arabic or Moorish, and are noted for their fruga-

lity of living; that, for the rest, harbours may be rendered good, and that what are termed Casali are miserable villages, or shocking huts, rather befitting fishermen and pirates, than the renowned Hospitallers; that as to Gozo, it was too little, though, in comparison of Malta, fertile and pleasant. And, worst of all, Tripoli, on the coast of Africa, utterly impossible to hold; its fortifications bad, and that it would require much time and expense to render it in any respect tenable, and never could be strong, with whatever prodigious outlay; and that to send a garrison of brave knights there, would be sending them to a butchery. Such was the relation of the commissioners, besides several papers in proof, full of the most accurate details. Yet when the chapter general asked them categorically, if the order ought to accept, they replied that notwithstanding all of disagreeable in Malta, yet in want of better, if the emperor would allow of free and quite illimitable permission to export victuals without any duty, as the Maltese have done hitherto, they were of opinion it might be accepted; but that as to Tripoli, they positively believed it ought not to take it on any terms. On which the chapter general applied to the Pope to engage the emperor to modify his resolve as to Malta with Gozo, adding, that if it were under such feudal condi-

tions as seemed a breach of neutrality, it could not but produce the irreparable destruction of the order, and then must not be accepted; and that as to Tripoli, the knights were in far too feeble a condition to undertake to defend it.

By his nephew Montmorency's advice, corroborated by that of Pope Clement, the grand master had sailed on the 25th of June, 1525, for Marseilles, there to take up the Duchess d'Alençon, and conduct her to Madrid,[1] to visit the hapless French king, who was a prisoner there, since his fall at Pavia. She was at once admitted to him; but L'Isle Adam went to Toledo, to have leave from Charles V., who, if he had been misinformed by his agents in Italy, soon perceived the grand master's honest and holy intentions, and told him to try to reconquer Rhodes, as the Duke d'Alba advised; but if his Rhodian expedition failed (to which Charles subscribed a large sum) then Malta, Gozo, and Tripoli, were at his disposal. And then he on the grand master's request allowed him to retire to Madrid and visit the king. Francis received him with the utmost joy, and not allowing him to kiss his hand, caught him in his arms instead, calling him repeately, "My most honoured father," and always treated him as such. Nor

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. ii., anno 1525.

could it not but be highly interesting to L'Isle Adam to hear the details of disaster from the royal lips (for he too was French), nor did he forget he was listening to his own native sovereign, who told him how his horse had been killed under him; so he necessarily fell himself, his own little wounds in face and one hand being not dangerous; how it required five soldiers, who did not know him, to take him prisoner; how sick and pining awhile, thinking himself neglected, he now, at the sight of his dear sister, recovered health and spirits in some days. When the grand master full of desire to liberate Francis, hastened back to Toledo, he there found no difficulty in persuading Charles, who asked him to accompany him to Madrid and be himself a witness of their reconciliation. As Francis had been all along in the imperial palace, it is not requisite to add it was fine, all the Spanish royal residences are fine; but now, at their first dinner as friends, in the emperor's apartment, the latter stopping at the door to let Francis take the lead, he did not, but stood straight up; and for all the emperor's courteous invitations would not stir, evidently from politeness; so Charles V., turning to L'Isle Adam, " Do you decide, you who are father to us both!" (and indeed they both had the custom to address him by that loving and revered name,

and the grand master was the only prince in Christendom whom Charles permitted to sit on the same dais and under the same canopy with himself when his throne was erected), and this was his decision: "Would to God that there never had been a harder question to settle between your Majesties!" and looking towards the king, "It is clear, sacred and most Christian Majesty, that to the Imperial all that is regal in the world, even the greatest, are obliged to yield as to their chief; so your kingly majesty ought to obey the emperor, the more so that it testifies his benevolence in his own house." And by this ingenious and discreet reply, he both pleased the emperor's pride, and obtained for his own natural monarch a highly distinguished honour.

It was early in 1527, that L'Isle Adam had his last audience of Charles, when they sat together and communed at some length. Of the emperor's short and pithy remarks, an idea may be formed from the grand master's answer. "It is all very well for those quietly at home to talk of the *God who made all men*, but we in the East say *God of the Christians*, and refer Paynims to Tartarus; and our body being formed of Christians, are held to be brethren—and that though from different nations, they are all individually on a perfect par, and owe allegiance to their order alone; so that a knight

born in France, is no more a subject of the King of France, than of your imperial Majesty, who by giving us a fief can certainly have no idea of reducing us to feudal servitude. Whence our neutrality between Christians is extremely ticklish. Dearly as we appreciate your Majesty's gift of Malta, our commissioners are fearful it may be too signal, too partial, calling for special gratitude; and liable to be considered an attaint on our neutrality, and in that case are forbidden to accept it. Truly we are soldiers, not competent to theological disputes. Not that we have squandered blood, but shed it in defence of Christendom —then self-defence, which is legitimate and honourable. From what has been observed, your Majesty will see we are exactly and individually equal; if a body to others, we amongst ourselves are individuals, and have a right to be counted such; even our subjects being never many, are objects of individuality, and this individualising is I dare say one of the means of attaching them to us more than probably any government in the world; to judge from the poor Rhodians who accompanied us, every Christian inhabitant of that island would now follow us the same if they could, as these late letters tell me. What after all are our knights, but self-devoted defenders of all Christian populations?

What were they founded for, and whence they draw their name hospitality, which is charity and love, does it not oblige them to defend their guests? Or who may become their guests? What are our grand masters, but tribunes of the people? If your imperial majesty smile, what are we all, highest and lowest of Christians, but equals in the sight, not indeed of man, but of eternal truth?"[1] However, by a solemn letter the grand master and entire body accepted Malta and Gozo,[2] but do not name Tripoli, although it appears to have been the sly wish of Charles V. to have Tripoli garrisoned at the expense of the order. On which particular his diplomatists continued their iniquitous insisting, although it was repeatedly urged by well-informed persons, Tripoli could not but quickly fall, perhaps with much superfluous slaughter, as indeed was experienced in the sequel. This too the order had to put up with.

In the spring of 1527, when Bourbon advanced to the sack of Rome, Viterbo was saved by the quiet intrepidity of the grand master, who took the riotous squad for unbridled colts. Bourbon's furious undisciplined soldiery crying out, they were friends with no other order than that of the knight-

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. iii., anno 1527.
[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. clxxi.

hood of Rhodes, as useful and necessary for defence of the Republic of Christendom; though they reverentially passed Viterbo itself without attempting to enter it, yet sacked the next town and like wildfire from heaven burned down all the neighbouring churches and left gentry, citizens, artisans, priests, peasantry stark-naked, and without food or a penny to buy it.[1]

But a few weeks later the order was driven by the plague from Viterbo (which they returned unsacked and undefiled) to Corneto, and arriving there, had tidings of the death of SirThomas Docrai; the Grand Priory of England was then given to Sir William Weston, whose Turcopoliership fell to Sir John Ranson, until then Prior of Ireland, which latter dignity was conferred on Sir John Babington; and all those three gentlemen got leave for England; a report going that the monarch of that country intended to give the priory to a favourite of his own, and send all the knights of the English Language to garrison Calais, and their incomes serving for the place's maintenance, he permitting no part of their funds to leave his dominions in future.[2]

During the plague at Corneto, L'Isle Adam was not without some consolation, for a very wise

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. iii. 52. [2] Id.: id., iv. 59.

and holy man said to him, only in another tongue, "Rhodes, nor any in this world is thy lasting city? Why run about?" Yet he determined nevertheless to go to England, as it was his duty, but to be resigned to whatever was the Divine will.

At last the order, having lost several knights of the plague at Corneto, were forced to embark on the 3rd of August, 1527, at a haven about a mile from it, with such beautiful regularity and precision, that not an infected person or thing went on board; but also with such charitable care, that four healthy knights remained to tend the sick, without distinction between knights and Rhodians, with provisions and money during the malady, and to pay their journey to join in Piedmont when healed.[1]

So the fleet, after a cruise, wore for Villa Franca in October, where the Duke of Savoy received them favourably, with the compact that they should be allowed to rest neutral in the fierce and cruel wars of that time between Christians—that the grand master should have a separate inappealable jurisdiction over his people, as in his former halts—with food free of duties, and shambles, mills, ovens, and such other requisites of their own. The grand master and suite being lodged in the castle,

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. iv. 61.

but the other knights in divers private houses, which were now most of them vacant, from the plague having raged there, though it had ceased completely. However, in November they removed to Nice, where a magisterial palace, an hospital, and inns were regularly prepared. And thence were written letters to the absent knights to convene, and they came arriving every day. Among them returned the ambassadors sent to England, who related that they had been unable to effect anything, the king being evidently prejudiced against the order, and for pretext adducing that the grand master had not come to visit him, as he had the Emperor and King of France; so L'Isle Adam determined to set out forthwith for London. Nor was it easy, in the depth of that remarkably rigorous winter, at his age. He, leaving a locum-tenens with the minutest instructions, nor at all forgetful of his poor Rhodians, he nourishing hopes to raise a considerable sum by selling the order's forests in France, and that if he died absent, a new grand master should be chosen by the order in its own residence, that is, wherever the seals used in sealing the magisterial decrees should happen to be; he embarked for Antibes on the second of January, 1528,[1] and thence traversing France in its

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. iv., anno 1528.

whole length, and despatching Sir Anthony Bosio as his precursor, to announce him, got a most courteous and flattering invitation to the English court, in a letter from the king himself, in Latin, and another from Cardinal Wolsey, protesting his ardent desire to see the order re-established in its former flourishing condition, so that he had engaged the most potent king, his master, to subscribe twenty thousand gold crowns as a beginning, and to set the affair in motion. Nor do I think it needful to give more in the Appendix than a very brief extract from the Italian version of the king's letter, dated "London, my own house, 25th January, 1528," though not in Rymer since given at full in the book I cite.[1] 1528

Clement indeed appears to have been his sincere well-wisher, and took care of his order, acting towards it almost as executor of his last will, in case so aged a man died on his journey to that distant kingdom of England.[2]

While Bosio had been in England, L'Isle Adam was doing his business in France with full success,

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. iv., anno 1528, in March.—Appendix, cxcviii.

[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. clxxii.

and when the former came back, the latter was ready to pass the Channel, as he did at once; but before entering London, held a general assemblage of his English knights in the Commandery of St. John, head of that priory, at which were present Sir William Weston, Prior of England, Sir John Ransom, the Turcopolier, Sir John Babington, Prior of Ireland, and Sir Alban Pole, Bailiff of the Eagle, these being the only grand crosses in that kingdom. But besides them there were several English knights, and Scotch and Irish; Scotland, Ireland, and England, forming the English Language. With curious foresight! There was it announced that Henry assented to the new prior, only that he was to pay four thousand pounds a-year to the king. Then did the grand master make his entry into London, escorted by most of the great lords of that kingdom, and received with a profusion of honours by his majesty, and lodged in his own royal palace. And the king had him to recount the whole siege of Rhodes, and questioned him regarding the smallest details, speaking enthusiastically of its recovery, giving his opinion, and confirming his promise of twenty thousand gold crowns towards it, but expressing his content at the order's accepting Malta, in case the attempt on Rhodes miscarried. And he listened to the old

warrior's supplications respecting Sir William Weston, and yielded the annuity of four thousand pounds, as also his claim on the property left by the late prior, and took off the sequester, and anew pledged himself to uphold all the order's privileges. After a short debate, every difficulty ended. And when he took leave, he had the most affectionate assurance from both king and queen, and many fine presents, amongst which a most splended lavabo of gold, and its golden ewer adorned with jewels of immense value, which its grand master placed in the order's treasury;[1] and what finally became of it may be inferred from Botta.

So, having received a very kind letter from Pope Clement, he, in obedience to it, hastened his return to Italy.[2]

Towards the end of August in 1528, the grand master got as far back as Lyons, when he fell sick of a severe malady, that for a long time totally precluded him from any further progress, and his convalescence was gratified with a most affectionate letter from the emperor, sending twenty-five thousand gold crowns for his quota towards the Rhodian expedition; and that if it did

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. iv. 65.
[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. clxxiii.

not succeed, he again offered Malta, Gozo, and Tripoli. Clement, with real tenderness, fearful that if the recovery of Rhodes missed, the order might divide, and dissolve itself perhaps, under pretext of Malta's being accompanied with incompatible conditions, aware, as he was, that the French knights were sorely against accepting it, wrote to urge proceeding immediately to the aforesaid island, and there wait the news about Rhodes. Wherefore, on the 18th of July, 1529, the grand master sailed for Malta, with intention of touching at Sicily.[1] Soon, however, the certain information that the whole design had been discovered, and the attempt on Rhodes for ever disconcerted, agreed with an ancient prophecy mentioned by Diodorus, Varro, and others, as found in the old Temple of Minerva, at Cos, that Rhodes was to be destroyed by *serpents!* and that it meant the Turks, was the general comment in the middle ages. The continual delays extinguished the projected recovery, and would have alone sufficed if the Turks had found out nothing; the same with the conquest of Modon in the Morea (dreams dissipated, to L'Isle Adam's great grief), and Bosio had finally to recur to the emperor, and hastened to him at Bologna

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. iv., anno 1529.

in Italy, where he then chanced in October, 1529. But early in 1530, a large English ship came into Messina, with Commander Sir John Sutton, containing nineteen most beautiful bronze pieces of artillery, and one thousand and twenty-three big iron cannon-balls, sent by the King of England as a present to the grand master and order, who, with infinite thanks replied, that as the recovery of Rhodes proved abortive, the guns should be erected on the walls of Tripoli in Africa, as an eternal memorial of the royal donor; and at length, since neither the recovery of Rhodes, nor the conquest of Modon in the Morea were dreams of any duration, on the 24th of February, 1530, Charles V., who had on that same day accomplished thirty years of age, dictated the minute of donation, abating little, in substance nothing, of his original supreme stipulations of Malta, Gozo, and Tripoli, that is, on the only attainable terms.[1]

The not very generous Charles V., by a regular deed of donation, written out fair from the minute, and officially signed and sealed by his imperial majesty at Castel Franco,[2] in the Marca Trevi-

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. v., anno 1530.

[2] Castel Franco, now a small miserable village, contained then a fine palace.

giana, on the twenty-third of the next following month, on his road to Germany, gave them Malta, Gozo, and Tripoli in Barbary, as a free and sovereign feud, holding under Sicily, with the yearly payment of a falcon.[1] Bosio has given that document at its full length in an Italian translation, Vertot in a French; others are too rare; so my Appendix shall contain a short specimen of the original Latin.[2]

1530

This was likewise confirmed by a Papal bull,[3] and another bull exempts all the Rhodians, who had followed the grand master, from any subjection to the Bishop of Malta, but subject to only the conventual prior of the order.[4]

Moreover, in consequence of some backwardness to acknowledge the change of masters (which shows no small patience, since it was the year after), Charles V. expedited a warrant for immediately giving the knights possession, of which warrant a scrap shall be given in the Appendix.[5]

1531

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., clxxv.
[2] Appendix, cxcix.
[3] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. clxxvi.
[4] Id., id., Id., clxxvii.
[5] Id., id., Id. clxxix.—Appendix, cc.

Malta is a place where the knights shall be at least their own masters, and may receive the presents sent by nearly all Christendom.

Thus the order in a somewhat vagrant course, and out of its orbit, but not far out of it, wheeled its third revolution of above two centuries with considerable glory, under twenty grand masters.[1]

END OF BOOK AND ABEYANCE THE THIRD.

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., 563—472.—Appendix, ccix.

# FOURTH BOOK, OR MALTA.

## CHAPTER I.

A LETTER from Charles V. to his viceroy in Sicily,
1531 directs him to let provisions go to Malta as usual.[1] The Turcopolier, Sir Clement West, got into squabbles far too unimportant to be registered in history, were it not that the unquiet outrageous conduct of that man led to this of good, an official sentence still existing declaratory that the order from the most ancient times, above all other Christian princes, has always had for its chief protector the most serene King of England, and that it was for the improper words of West, as disgraceful to himself as to the order, that the chapter general sent him to prison, and deprived him of

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. clxxviii.

the turcopoliership, and not at all for what he pretended.[1] With this despatch Sir William Sullan went back to England.[2] But though such matters were settled, yet remained what was every day getting worse at Rome, and by repercussion menaced Knights of Malta, the great religious question, which, however it went, could not but be calamitous for at least a time to Christendom, inasmuch as it promised to create divisions among Christians, all of whose aristocracies were represented in the order, which consequently might baffle their best efforts at neutrality, and trammel their wisest proceedings in a thousand ways. The good old grand master was never able to console himself, and foresaw that the Castillian rebellion, the loss of Rhodes, and the utter ruin of the English language, were to be contemporaries, and all take place in his time. West's barfaced calumnies, diabolical untruths, struck him with surprise and horror. Indeed, it ended as he apprehended.[3] On the sack of Modon, the Pope had written, "Beware of the irritated Turk," as early as 1531,[4] and L'Isle Adam to the same on the same misfor-

[1] Condemned by even his great protector the Duke of Norfolk. Appendix, ccx.

[2] Bosio: par ii., lib. viii. 129.

[3] Id.: id., id., 130.

[4] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. clxxx.

tune,[1] avowed it in 1533. Thanks for the knights succouring Coron, was only presage to its loss.[2] England had almost as much right in L'Isle Adam, as France, for if born when Normandy was French, yet was he of the old Norman race, and nearly allied to the English sovereigns.[3] Few the months he lived after this disturbance. The date on his tombstone is August 22nd, 1534, being that of his solemn funeral, but his insides had been buried the day before by his faithful French auditor.[4] L'Isle Adam on his death-bed had recommended his knights to elect Sir A. del Ponte for his successor; as in truth they did, and Sir Richard Brown was the English deputy at that election. Del Ponte was a literary man and eloquent. Celebrities of every description were knights of Malta, as Bembo, the historian of Venice, and Ponce de Leon, the Spanish warrior;[5] like the Florentine Strozzis and Dorias of Genoa. Instead of joy at his own election, Del Ponte wept at thinking how much the order had lost. Of an ancient family in Asti, Del Ponte was

1533

1534

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. clxxxi.
[2] Id., ii., Id. clxxxiii.
[3] Pantaleone, x.—MS.—Lodge: Ireland, iv. 77.
[4] Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 473.
[5] Bosio: par. ii. 135.—139.

in his bailiwick in Calabria, when knights came with news of his election. He, after a thoughtful and melancholy pause, protested he must in conscience abdicate as an honour totally superior to his abilities; but when some hours later Sir C. Gesgalli brought doleful tidings from Africa, Del Ponte changed his mind, and in the disasters of his order, bent his head in resignation, accepted, and instantly set out for Malta, where he died, at seventy, in November of the next year, as his epitaph proves.[1] 1535

The knights near Tunis were forty, and when they presented themselves to Charles V., he said some words in praise of the order, and admiring their beautiful armour, and survests, and their soldierly appearance, and asking the name and nation of each, he stretched out his hand to his cousin, the Prince of Portugal, and shaking hands with him cordially, exclaimed in Spanish, "These gentlemen, Sir, are your brothers, of whom, if we had many, then indeed very sure would be our victory!" It cannot be denied that Charles V. showed himself a most valiant captain. Not that his valour, however great, merited much encomium of itself alone; but why not speak of *his*, if we speak of his rival's? Only if on a par in even that respect, then was

[1] Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 473.—Appendix, ccxii.

Francis the most unfortunate of human beings. The white cross in a scarlet field, was first in the assault, and in an instant dashing through the tremendous cloud of musquetry, cannon shots, arrows, stones, whirled from the capultas, broke the Turks, and planted St. John's banner on the highest point of the bastions, surrounded by white cross warriors.

The great karack of Rhodes having been burned down by accident, the new one built at Nice came off Barbary, and was examined with wonderful admiration, not only by the Moors, but by Charles V. himself; for it truly was a marvel, and would be even now for many things, its salubrity particularly, and that it rivalled with our life-boats in this, that however pierced with multitudinous holes, no water could sink it. When the plague was at Nice, and the mortality so frightfully huge that the stench of the corrupted air made the birds of the sky drop down dead, not a man was ever sick on board it, which is attributed to the great quantity of fires kept by the workmen—chiefly the quantity of smiths—to supply the requisite screws, nails, and other irons, while vessels full of earth had cypress, or orange and lemon trees, and flowers, like small, but delicious gardens, in that ship, which had eight decks or floors, and

such space for warehouse and stores, that it could keep at sea for six months without once having occasion to touch land for any sort of provision, not even water; for it had a monstrous supply for all that time of water, the freshest and most limpid; nor did the crew eat biscuit, but excellent white bread, baked every day, the corn being ground by a multitude of handmills, and an oven so capacious, that it baked two thousand large loaves at a time. That ship was sheathed with six several sheathings of metal, two of which under water, were lead with bronze screws (which do not consume the lead like iron screws), and with such consummate art was it built, that it never could sink, no human power could submerge it. Magnificent rooms, an armoury for five hundred men; but of the quantity of cannon of every kind, no need say anything, save that fifty of them were of extraordinary dimensions; but what crowned all is that the enormous vessel was of incomparable swiftness and agility, and that its sails were astonishingly manageable; that it required little toil to veer or reef, and perform all nautical evolutions, not to speak of fighting people, but the mere mariners amounted to three hundred; as likewise two galleys of fifteen benches each, one galley lying in tow off the stern, and the other galley drawn aboard; not

to mention various boats of divers sizes, also drawn aboard; and truly of such strength her sides, that though she had often been in action, and perforated by many cannon balls, not one of them ever went directly through her, or even passed her *deadworks*.

At the fall of the town a noble Moorish lady, Aysa, however lofty her birth, far loftier her mind, refused to be bought back from captivity, but spat at the King, Muly Hassan, who had capitulated, instead of resisting to the death, calling him "Wicked Hassan, who, to keep your kingdom, hast had the cruelty to betray your country, and give it in prey to the stranger, and send so many of its unhappy citizens to slaughter;" and when notwithstanding he wished to ransom her, it only kindled her ire: "Away with thee, tyrant! by Allah! I will not have thee, nor be liberated by thee; on the contrary, I will remain true to my poor native land, and prefer slavery and death!"— That excellent veteran Del Ponte, in his last moments recommended concord to his knights, for that discord produces ruin.[1]

So disastrous were events in England, that scarce any property remained to the English Language, which therefore had to be supported at the ex-

[1] Bosio: par. ii. 146.—153.

pense of their companions. In vain the grand master gave back the Turcopoliership to West, against all right reason, and Ranson, like a good knight, contented himself with the Bailiwick of the Eagle instead, when vacant by the death of Sir John Babington.[1] Good old Del Ponte had only reigned fourteen months and two days. About three hundred knights of all nations were the electors, of whom the English named are, Sir Clement West, the Turcopolier, and Sir Beril Rose, Commander of Templebower, and Sir Richard Brown, Commander of Mount Sanjo. Sir Clement West was also made president of the election. The chaplain to represent the clergy, was French; the servant-at-arms to represent that class, Portuguese; the Prior of Thoulouse, where he then was, Sir Desiderio di S. Jalla, became elected 1536 grand master,[2] mere justice after the signal bravery and ability he had shown during the siege of Rhodes. Yet never did he reach Malta, but expired at Montpellier, on the 26th September, 1536. Nor is there any further memorial of his at Malta, than the coat-of-arms of his house, set up in the fortifications of Castel S. Angelo, by a locum-tenens

[1] A Sir John Babington, of Chillwill, in Derbyshire, died in 149.—MS.—Lodge: Ireland, iv. 104.

[2] Bosio: par. ii. 156.—Appendix, ccxiii.

during the few days preceding the next grand master,[1] who was a Spaniard, Bailly of Caspe, and Knight of Arragon, of the name of Homedez, who, though not in the island, had an active agent in a knight who wished to get his baillywick, by getting him lifted to that promotion, and gained his point against Homedez's two rivals, the Bailiff of Pisa and the Bailiff of Lango. But Homedez had likewise great real merits, though he turned out less vigorous than perhaps he should have been.[2]

Charles V. having driven Barbarossa from Barbary, the villain fled to Constantinople, to engage Solyman to come and attack the Christians. This was known at Malta, but not whether he would begin with Africa, or the stronghold of the Hospitallers. So it was uneasy living in that island. The more from the absence of both grand master and his locum-tenens at first. No government, and almost every night brawls, chiefly attributable to the unquiet spirit of West. And at last the grand master's death, and at a new election with about three hundred and sixty knights, of whom the English named were Sir Egidius Russell, Sir Richard Brown, Sir Beril Rose. The three distinctive merits given Omedez by his partisans, were—first, that he was a Spaniard, most fitting for the order at that time.

[1] Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 474.—Appendix, ccxiv.
[2] Id.: Id., ii. 474.

Secondly, that he had been honourably known at the siege of Rhodes. Thirdly, that he had lost an eye there, and endured all the mishaps of the abeyance. Henry VIII.'s severe versatility made the order be deprived, perhaps for ever, of that rich, noble, most principal of its members (as always has been held), the venerable English language.[1] Religion ought to stand quite apart from politics. These are too human, that too celestial. Of all petty things, petty politics are the most odious. Such vile matters it is detestable to mix them up with what is far too sublimely fine for any such desecration. Something of the kind was creeping among the Christian heroes on the coast of Barbary. What the commissioners had foretold was too true. Tripoli was to be a butchery for the Order; yet many a valiant struggle did it maintain.

In 1539, a chapter general was holden at Malta, where the Lieutenant of the Turcopolier was Sir Egidius Russell, with several other English knights. Yet some complain that the Turcopolier, Sir Clement West, was ill-looked on by the grand master, through whose means the 1539

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. viii., anno 1536.—"Cosi ricco, nobile, e principal membro come sempre era stata, la venerabile Lingua d'Inghilterra," are his precise words.

council had condemned him to keep his room for three months, whereas, the truth was, it was for his having, with his usual indomitable fierce arrogance, spoken disrespectfully of the councillors themselves, in their official presence, and it was prison he richly merited; and he having been condemned from the first by a chapter general, could not be declared innocent by an inferior tribunal, the grand master in his privy council; so divers knights now petitioned the chapter general to declare null and void all the proceedings in West's favour, under the late grand master, and confirm the former sentence, depriving him of the turcopoliership, on which commissaries were named to instruct; and subsequently to their opinion a month later, the final confirmation of the sentence of privation was pronounced, with this adjunct, that the said West could not only never again wear the grand cross, but that for the future was to be denied admission into any of the order's assemblies. Example worth noting, and justly pregnant with severe mortification towards a disposition so irritable and scornful.[1]

As L'Isle Adam, on the approach of the siege of Rhodes, was given dictatorial power by that chapter general, so this one towards Homedez, in considera-

[1] Appendix, ccxv.

tion of the approaching contest with Solyman, and as complete supremacy over the treasury, with the sole obligation, that of every sum he received, a note be taken in three several books, one kept by himself, the second in the box of three keys, and the third be used by the treasury's writer; powers to last, until the next chapter general, to be convened in 1540. Likewise the particular income of the grand master was fixed at twelve thousand crowns a-year, which he reduced immediately by two thousand, and that he would not accept more than his predecessors, ten thousand.[1] As long as Charles V. acted against the Mahometans only, in Germany, Hungary, Africa, everywhere the Knights of Malta aided him by land and sea most heroically. The famous seaman, Andrea Doria, on that most urgent of occasions considered the karack of itself a match for the whole Turkish fleet, knowing, as he knew well, that it would sail through the middle of them without much risk, for that one thousand cannon balls might pass through it without sinking it.[2] Again did the order apply to the emperor regarding Tripoli, and that it was best either to dismantle and abandon it, or to aid the knights to fortify it in a proper modern

[1] Bosio: par. ii. 185, anno 1539.
[2] Id.: id. 186, anno 1539.

manner; for they began fearing they should incur blame, through Christendom, if that fortress should be taken; few being aware it would argue no fault of theirs, but that it could not be defended in the present state of its fortifications, wholly antiquated and unsusceptible of defence. But Charles V. had too many expenses with such rebellions in Flanders, and elsewhere, to have money.[1]

Sir William Weston, last Prior of England, whose consummate prudence contrived to save some small part of the order's property there, had died in 1539, deathblow to the English Language. In vain did the grand master send two knights, one a Portuguese, and the other a Frenchman; their irrefragable reasons were unattended to, avarice counted Christian sufferings at little. Violent was the blow that deprived the order of a Language which produced such an abundance of honoured and virtuous knights. The knights of England had always held the first place in universal esteem up to that hour, even at Malta! The order had been always so proud of them! The English knights then at Malta resolved to sell their plate and all the valuables they had there, and go home. But the grand master, accustomed to bear adversity with signal constancy, forbade the sale and their departure, con-

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. ix. 188

soling them with a father's loving charity, for that they should be assisted in every way by their common treasury; and he put his hope in the great God, and seeing the lessening of the order's revenue by the English confiscation, he sought to decrease its expenditure by disarming the karack, real and noble cause for what malignant tongues loved ascribing to other vulgar, shallow occurrences undeserving serious mention.[1]

He seems to have erred in not attending to the remonstrances of the most famous engineers then in Europe, who frankly assured him, after a diligent inspection, that neither the Borgo nor St. Angelo in Malta were capable of fortification; the latter being too narrow, and the former commanded by the neighbouring hills. Useless expense in either case, particularly from the Turks being accustomed to erect most formidable batteries themselves, were not to be kept off, except by the strongest works; but that a capital fortress might be erected on St. Elmo, to defend the two harbours. However the grand master grudging the cost, in all likelihood from feebleness of mind, clothing it with a plea that there was not time, and the Turks so impending, that to oppose them was of urgency, besought the engineer to fortify them the best he could as a

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. ix. 199.

temporary expedient for immediate use.[1] How valiant Charles V. was! Something of Julius Cæsar in the admirable quiet of his reply to Doria just before embarking at Marseilles, on his last African expedition: "My son" (thus the silver-haired admiral, with his habitual phrase, by command of the emperor, who always called him father), "do not sail in this weather! By Heaven, we may all be drowned!" "Nevertheless let us sail." Charles had promised, and could not bear the thought of breaking his promise. So sail they did; but were obliged to run into La Spezia, just in time not to be wrecked. And looking from shore to where ships were navigating through the hurricane, and some people asking who those fearless creatures could be: "The Hospitallers certainly" (was the imperial reply in Spanish), "for no other galleys than theirs can brave such a tempest."[2]

Homedez's chief foible a little later, was that of age, which permitted the chapter of 1542 to be so often prolonged, that its sittings became nearly per-
1542 manent during the rest of his life, reigning under who suffered them to reduce him to a mere cypher, and whose leaders are accused of taking to themselves and adherents all the high

[1] Bosio: par. ii. lib. ix., anno 1541.
[2] Id.: id. id. 204.

places of the order, and of enriching themselves at the expense of their brethren—though grand masters are meant to be active, as their frequently being entrusted with dictatorial authority proves. They could never be young, for great experience was an essential quality. Books are no excellent school, nor any second-hand experience, but only personal. No education, however good, can compensate for the unique, in their predicament. But love of care is nearly always the fault of age. No doubt there are some bright exceptions, like D'Aubusson and L'Isle Adam; but perhaps Homedez was not of these illustrious few. Yet had he still a little of the energy of his honoured manhood, an aftergrowth of what he had been at Rhodes, and during the hardships of wandering exile and poverty, exposure to multitudinous perils, storms, wars, plague. The English had only to praise him as long as master of himself in his rights intact.

A brief from Paul III., calling upon the grand master to assail the Turks, proffering also his own galleys, which probably the knights had no great reliance on,[1] is well answered by an expostulation that the Turkish and French fleets are so united, that there is no distinguishing between them; so that it would be a breach of the order's 1543

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. clxxxv.

sworn neutrality between Christians to go to war with France; and also several French knights are in the order's ships, and ought those gentlemen to be forced to fire on their own countrymen, and perhaps near relatives?[1]

The Portuguese round the Cape of Good Hope, by depriving Egypt, Constantinople, all the Levant and Venice, of the Indian commerce, enraged Solyman so amazingly that he prepared a fleet to attack Lisbon. For the very same reason, to show in what estimation the Arabs then held the order of Malta, and more particularly the Commandant of Tripoli, who spoke and wrote Arabic well, I too mean to follow the Swiss physician Pantaleone, in giving in the Appendix a Latin translation of the original letter from the Moslem sovereign of those parts to that aged German Prior in 1546.[2] In 1543 Sir E. Russell, penultimate of the Turcopoliers, died, and Sir Oswald[3] Massingbert made only Lieutenant of the Turcopoliership, to give him a seat of honour in the chapter, through consideration for that ancient dignity, which, after remaining some years unoccupied, was finally conferred on Sir Nicholas Upton. Some spark of existence was in the English

[1] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. clxxxvi.

[2] Johannitarum Historia, 307.—Basilea, 1581.—Appendix, No. ccvii.

[3] Bosio: par. ii., lib., ix. 206.

Language still; and on the death of Sir John Ranson, Prior of Ireland,[1] Sir Oswald Massingbert quitted the lieutenancy for the aforesaid priory, on the condition of never wearing the grand cross until put into possession.[2]

Also to Charles V. the Hospitallers were recommended by Paul III., with his usual vehemence, in a brief dated October 12th, 1548. But that Pontiff's successor, foreseeing the imminent fall of Tripoli, exhorted Homedez not to wait to be carried off by the ferocious Turks, but to depart instantly, with whatever knights he had about him, for Sicily, and to let the Turk do what he liked with Malta.[3] 1548

This, on the 11th of September, 1551; but on the 15th it is followed by another condoling brief, for it appears that in the interval[4] the grand master had transmitted to him an official relation of the loss of Tripoli; since too truly, after hard and most glorious struggles, and far more

[1] Yet it could be only honorary, or of recent creation; for when a great chapter met in England, it is distinctly stated that the English Language, which comprised Ireland and Scotland, had only three grand crosses, Prior of England, Bailiff of the Eagle, and Turcopolier.

[2] Bosio: par. ii. 250, anno 1547.

[3] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. clxxxviii.

[4] Id., ii., Id. clxxxix.

romantic feats than is here room for (so bright that
1551 all the northern coasts of Africa were in a blaze), the beleaguered heroes to their eternal honour, made a splendid defence during years, within walls reputed indefensible, and which certainly were rude and inefficient, and never made to resist cannons, but built before the use of gunpowder, and now tottering from age in many places, and very firm nowhere. Finally Tripoli fell, with an infinite fame and slaughter of our knights, early in August, 1551, and on the 18th of that month, towards evening, the French ambassador arrived at Malta with the distressing news, which not a knight remained alive to carry; but the foreign diplomatist, then off Barbary, on his way to Egypt, did not an instant doubt but it would please his government that he should unhesitatingly diverge from his course, and, in spite of the war, seize that opportunity of serving the sanctuary of all the Christian nations.[1]

The Sicilian was then very wrong to recount as truths, nasty calumnies, and the King of France might have spared his letter; were it not that it renders still more certain, upon authentic, judicial, infallible authority, that fraud or misconduct were utterly out of question, and that, at Tripoli, all

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xv. 314.

was done which human efforts and the rarest valour could do.

A few weeks later the wicked corsair, Dragut, with whom the Turk was not ashamed to be in league, attacking Malta, and reputed a van of the whole Paynim army, on which supposition all the fortifications of Borgo were partitioned out between the several Languages, with great care, Sir Nicholas Upton was elected Turcopolier, with the command of all the Christian cavalry, heavy as well as light; and the English property being all gone, it is clear it was only his character for signal ability and bravery that merited him that post. And so effectual was his energy, that with a very small force he won a complete victory over the somewhat numerous Mahometan horse; but Upton expired that very evening, of his fatigues, and he who had been Russell's, and afterwards his successor's lieutenant, now represented a vacancy. For Upton was last of the Turcopoliers, and died as became his illustrious rank, just after having gloriously and successfully done his duty; for intimidated by his loss, Dragut hastened to re-embark the remainder of his troops, and sailed off. Sir Oswald Massingbert soon left his insignificancy for what seemed higher rank, but was quite as nominal, and much

more distressing, by coupling his name with distress for ever.

Much that was matured under Homedez, did not befall until after his death, on the 6th of September, 1553, who was then near ninety, and so decrepit in mind, that he was unsusceptible of pleasure, when came the illusive momentary hope of re-establishing the English Language, and one Captain Ormond was sent to Malta, to inform the grand master and his council that the Priories of England and Ireland, the Turcopoliership, the Bailliwick of the Eagle, and all the commanderies of the kingdom, should be re-established in *statu quo*, as was indeed Queen Mary's futile dream; which, though it delighted her, could not him it would have delighted most, notwithstanding he shortly after had an ultimate flicker, on the third or fourth of September, 1553,

1553 when rallying his spirits and bodily strength, he got himself drest in his richest magisterial robes, and seated on his throne, in the state chamber, in presence not only of his council, but of all the knights that could then be found in Malta, addressed the assembly with the most perfect placidity, telling them he should expire in a day or two, and in pious prudent words, exhorted them affectionately and paternally to concord; and he forthwith made his will, nominated an extremely worthy person to

be his *locum-tenens* during the hours he might yet live, and at once betook himself wholly to his spiritual affairs, and expired on the 5th,[1] and for simplicity and purity of intention, walked in the way of God. The defects in his administration may fairly be imputed to the chapter general's encroachments, which that he allowed them, proceeded rather from physical weakness, consequent on longevity, than moral.[2] His love of chapters general was, at worst, a fault on the right side—that of liberty.

From their various heroic expeditions about this time, in Barbary—not from any vain wish to recover Tripoli, but to curb the pirates all along those shores of the Mediterranean (for though they could not extirpate yet they reduced them to a defence of their own lairs, which prevented their infamous invasions upon quiet maritime towns and Christian islands and inhuman work on all Christians at sea) only cull this, because it proves that the precise obligation of a knight was in no possible case to abandon the order's banner, but rather die honourably than live a degraded wretch, deprived of cross and uniform, and expelled from all knightly society; a prey to ignominy and remorse.

[1] Seb. Paoli: ii. 475.

[2] Bosio: par. ii. lib. xxii. 340.

So Cassiere, who bore it, not a mere youth though young man (nor could have been appointed to a post of such trust, as standard bearer, had he not acquired military experience already somewhere; but truly had become a celebrated warrior in the service of his native country, France, years before this Barbary exploit), he seeing the Christians in utter remediless rout resolved at first to fling himself into the sea with the banner, but on reflection that both it and his body would probably be soon thrown on the beach, determined to die where he was valiantly fighting to the last breath; but Verdale (another knight, also a Frenchman) stood by him, and with incredible prowess they sustained the Paynim fury, from arquebusses to pikes, from pikes to swords, from swords to daggers, and when all these failed that glorious couple, they had recourse to their fists and corporal strength. And strange to narrate that the deaths they dealt, not only proved their own incomparable intrepidity, but partly succeeded in holding back the savages for a moment; of which Verdale took advantage, and perceiving everything fallen into the very abyss of desperation, and promising Cassiere never to leave him but aid him to the utmost, made him change his determination of dying on shore, like so many of their companions (which would be leaving the banner to be

carried off in triumph from his corpse), but on the contrary try to carry it to the galley; whereupon the valiant Cassiere flung himself into the roaring waves, taking care to hold the banner upright, followed by Verdale and others of their knighthood, who rallied round to assist and with monstrous danger struggled through that deep and stormy tide for above one hundred yards, far out of their depth from the very first, none of them knowing how to swim; nor if they did, could they or any have swum with their weighty armour, which they had no time to unbuckle, and they would have been instantly slain in attempting it; while waves beat there darkly, fearfully profound on the rocks, although another ledge on the bar showed such boiling surf that day that no boat could possibly pass out or in; yet often dipping under water, but rising again, and never ceasing to keep the banner up in the air, until they at length reached the bar and got over it, where a boat laboured waiting them; when what immensity of satisfaction, of glory was theirs and eternity of honour, no need of saying. Generous young heroes, they never ceased through their no short after lives to be examples of every knightly virtue; and both in turns, arrived to the supreme height of their pro-

fession.[1] When Homedez lay on his bier, there were about four hundred knights at Malta, but those of England were circumscribed to one alone, Sir Oswald Massingbert, Lieutenant of the Turcopoliership; so to represent the English Language recourse was had to two foreign knights. While the various ceremonies went on, clearer and clearer it became that there would be no contest; but the recommended concord be strictly preserved. The election of Strozzi, Prior of Capua, was considered certain. And well both his antecedents and his late and present conduct justified the choice, quite unanimously. One of the most remarkable men of his age, and in the full bloom of manhood, admiral of France, where he had served with much distinction; and when he left it openly for the pure purpose of transferring the homage of his sword and the bright fame he had won to the corps to which he belonged, and whose rights over him he flew to acknowledge, he too being a knight of Malta, the whole world applauded his noble resolution; and to this worth and magnanimity corresponded his whole bearing ever since he had come to Malta. The cordial obedience he had always displayed to his superiors in the order and his liberal dashing popular manners that made him universally

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xvi. 330.

beloved, all things rendered his election secure; and so he thought himself no doubt. His presence fortified his cause, for without soliciting, the very brightness of his look testified he had no objection. Not a dissentient whisper. But just prior to the voting, up the grand conservator rose, and these his words:—"Illustrious gentlemen and brothers, to tell you what I think of this election, it appears to me that you have already come to your decision; but in my opinion wrongfully. You believe it for the public good, I the contrary. Therefore although without hopes of what I say producing any fruit (for are we not forbidden to change our opinion lightly?), and also well aware I risk raising against myself a potent mortal enmity, as the whole assembly cannot but perceive; nevertheless it will be of use to me in the Divine eyes to have spoken the truth and cleared my conscience; and the world too will honour me with the fair fame of being manifestly above corruption. Nor indeed will I deny the Prior of Capua is a virtuous and most valiant knight and worthy a diadem. Nay I own him a most able statesman and excellently qualified to sway the sceptre in any other realm, however mighty—far mightier than ours. Still not in ours. All the requisites I have enumerated are not enough for me, reflecting on the

tremendous oath we have just pronounced to satisfy the debt and obligation of incorruptible electors; chasing from us all love, all hate, prejudice, partiality, fear, hope, favour. Insufficient is it to have chosen the bravest, wisest, most virtuous; it is moreover to be maturely weighed before we place any personage on this magisterial throne, not only whether he be worthy of that dignity, and competent in himself, but likewise if our choice be consonant with the peace and general satisfaction of all the different Christian princes, who are all bound to the conservation, quiet, and progress of this our sacred republic. And if it be true, as it is most certainly, that it would be of little advantage to us to have a saint for a grand master, who knew nothing of the affairs of this world; and as it would on the contrary be highly dangerous to have the most superhuman of warriors for our chief, who might set us all furiously divided; in the same way blind and senseless should we be reputed, or infinitely worse, most ungrateful of children and arch-enemies of our own order, if we delivered it up into the hands of Prior Strozzi. For besides having for irreconcileable enemy the great prince Cosmo de Medici, Duke of Florence, as you all know; and the prior having always before his mind's eye that terrible verse left written

by his father Philip Strozzi in the prison where he committed suicide, '*Exortare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor*,' most certain thing it is that his aspirations of vengeance, along with those of his brother Peter Strozzi, who they say has already obtained from the King of France the title of *alter ego*, and captain general of his army in Italy, and Governor of Sienna, under pretext of restoring liberty to his country, he could not but plunge us into a war that would lead to our ruin. Very far from applying his fine intellect to calm us down, and govern mildly as a grand master should, with a matured, quiet, reposed, most religious rule, and above all a temper from which are rooted out every private feeling of partiality or prejudice, that he may wish to know how, and be able to preserve the friendship of all the different princes in Christendom, on whom our properties entirely depend—the Prior of Capua, on the contrary, would use all his power, and authority, and substance, and industry, to foment our passions, and direct them to his own private designs, whence would derive the utter overthrow of our order. Neutrality between Christians, in all their contentions, is, and always has been, the basis of our institution, as we all know, and that against the infidels alone we can draw our swords. With such a grand master,

most necessarily would it follow that he would incur the ill-will of the said duke and all his confederates, and what is most of all important, of the emperor himself, our benefactor and protector. And it would end, perhaps, that we should have to depose him with grievous scandal and danger, having universal disorder for sequence. For my part, if this your election be effectuated, I begin from the moment to mourn over the proximate downfall of our order, and protest I do not consent to it, and that such tumults and excesses are no fault of mine."[1] This sufficed to upset the tables, and on voting, the choice fell on a distant person, according to the usual practice, and who was nowise conscious of what was being done. Sir Claudius de la Sengle, a French gentleman, then at Rome, ambassador to the Pontificate, who, on his arrival at Malta, gave audience to the envoy of Charles V., offering the order Mehediah, which he had just conquered in Africa, but which De la Sengle refused as too hard to keep, and expired unexpectedly about the middle of August, 1557, and was succeeded on the twenty-first of the same month by the Prior of St Gilles, called Parisot, from his father's fief, but better known by his family of Valette, Sir John de Valette, famous by the

1557

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xviii. 358.

siege he endured, and the city he founded.[1] At the election I find but one knight of the English Language, Sir James Sunderland.[2] Mary's protection was not sufficient. She recognised Massingbert as Prior of Ireland, and his lieutenancy passed to another, and for assisting her in this affair, she gave one Nuzza the Bailyhood of the Eagle.

Valette's first act was to commence the foundations of the projected city, getting a wooden model of it previously from an excellent engineer.[3] From his spies at Constantinople, convinced he would be attacked in the following spring, he sent circulars to summon his knights, and on the 1538 26th of February, 1538, descended from St. Angelo, and took up his residence at Borgo, to be as exposed as his people in case of a siege, and if not, near to superintend the works on S. Elmo. Nuzza, whose country may have been uncertain, though secretary to the Empire of Germany, when he landed at Malta, wearing the grand cross, the Arragon knights present were so enraged, that they scarce refrained from killing him; declaring he had no right to it whatever without a magisterial decree, which he had not. As to a Papal

[1] Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 475.
[2] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix. 392.
[3] Id.: id., id. 395.

sanction he had obtained in passing through Rome, it was valued by them as so much waste paper, or rather nothing. Queen Mary indeed had made him an English citizen. But what of that? Was he such? The magisterial sentence was, that he might wear it at the chapter general, but nowhere else; which merits a demur as uncandid and unsatisfactory, as such half measures usually are. If no bailiff, he had no right to wear it anywhere; if a bailiff, to wear it on all occasions. He brought with him three real English knights, Sir George Dudley, Sir Oliver Starkey, Sir James Shelley, brother to the Prior of England, Sir Richard Shelley.[1] And a few others being already at Malta, as Sir Henry Gerard, now Lieutenant of the Turcopoliership, and Sir Edward Burrough, Commander of Henly, they set up a regular English hostelrie, or Inn and Language, expecting more knights from England. But such dreams soon vanished, for in November of that year Mary died. Nevertheless, when Valette sat on his throne in the chapter general, with the

[1] This Prior is not however in the list before me, Appendix xxx., which in Queen Elizabeth's reign, declares the last Prior of England was Sir William Weston, perfectly agreeing with the Cod. Dipl. Geros., and Seb. Paoli's Observations.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix. 396.

grand crosses right and left, Nizza appeared as Bailiff of the Eagle, and Sir Henry Gerard, as Lieutenant of the Turcopoliership. The knights of the English Language, thinking better not to be present, petitioned to be represented by proxies; but the chapter general objected to any innovation. Philip offered each of those exiled knights a small pension, which they almost all refused, and the order undertook to feed them gratis, under the hope that England one day or other would make amends for her injustice.[1] Then farewell to even this faint similitude of a body once so deservedly honoured above all their contemporaries, the renowned English Language, that at no time ought to be left to expire, and whose memory defies death. For the glorious past is the treasury of treasuries, and what is there laid up, is safe. Exult at man's menaces, despise his scorn and cruel jokes; your aspirations are in the angel's coffer, nor shall ever be displaced through all eternity.

Neither Henry VIII. nor Edward, however they had sequestered it, appear ever to have confiscated the order's property in their dominions; but Queen Elizabeth and her parliament perhaps did (for although no documents remain stating it exactly, yet from this in Ireland may be fairly concluded,

[1] Losio: par. ii., lib. xix. 398.

that she had done the same in England already), naming a commission to take possession of it from the Prior of the Hospitallers in Ireland, Massingbert[1] not without secret manœuvres, that caused murmuring. "Likewise let all their papers, parchments, documents, wherever situated, be noted in the Irish Rotulary, and then expedited to me here, Westminster, June 3rd, 1559."[2]

1559

Not but the same year afforded some consolation to Valette, by the Prior of Bohemia and his community applying by an embassy to reunite with the order; submitting to its rule as of old, by a voluntary subjection, presenting the grand master with a written declaration to that effect, signed by the aforesaid prince, and all his knights, and that they would willingly go in person, if it was possible; that the grand master might dispose of the priory and them, as any other priory of the order; that they aspired to no favour, but only to be treated like the order's other priories; expecting however to be allowed all the usual immunities and prerogatives—and that only it is to be considered that the distance is great, and that to go to Malta and stay there some time, and return, is a serious business.

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xvi. 296 and 317.

[2] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. clxxxx.—Appendix, ccxii.

So the grand master and council accepted the obedience of prior and commanders, and ordered that the paper signed by him and them should be registered, and placed in the archives. And the grand master signed an analogous deed, sealed with the leaden seal, on the 11th December, 1559.[1]

A great authority to some people, and no small one to any in that age, proclaims that perhaps the Hospitallers form the only society of men that have never declined from the principle of their foundation, but continue spending their property and blood in defence of Christendom. Most beautiful then and pious, and as it were necessary above all other military orders, is that Christian bulwark, that hedge of hedges to the vineyard.[2]

Here are many documents to prove their right to the first place in danger, which only testifies how ardently they sought for that station of honour. No sign they had as yet fallen off much from their distinguished thirst of glory; that weakness (if a weakness), of the brave. Yet is there date of this and some succeeding years.[3]

Solyman, still irritated against his old friends of Rhodes for their recent enterprises in Africa, de-

[1] Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. [2] Id.: par. ii., lib. xxiii. 468.
[3] Id.: par. ii., lib. xxiii. 477.

termined on immediately effecting what he had been so long making preparations for, the invasion of Malta.[1] Nor was this resolve not invigorated by his eunuchs, and wives, and concubines, all more or less interested in the predatory galleon lately taken by the knights; besides these Giaours much injured the pilgrimage to Mecca, for which it was the duty of every true Mussulman who could to punish them. Vengeance shrieked the sultanas. So night and day was he urged on towards his desire. To divide the emperor from the order, a wish for peace with him was feigned by the Grand Seignior, who sent diplomatists to treat in Hungary while he himself remained in Constantinople, visiting the arsenals every forenoon, and in fine, dedicating his person entirely to the preparations against Malta. Of all these transactions the grand master was informed, with the utmost exactness and fidelity, and diligence, by his secret emissaries in the Turkish capital; and instantly despatched a most trusty person to reveal the whole to his Imperial Majesty, who, as young and warlike (Maximilian) was extremely moved at such duplicity; and naturally benefiting of the warning, and rejecting the uncandid Ottoman overtures, a diet was

[1] Funditus delere, the knights of Malta, was his execrable intention, says Pantaleone, xi. 326.

held, and measures accordingly taken by those Christian powers.[1] Nor slack was Malta in getting ready for resistance. Every day some new weapon or contrivance was suggested that might be of use in the coming siege. Above three hundred idle mouths were sent out of the island. All the male population was divided into platoons; all the army taught their stations. Sir Oliver Starkey, the now Lieutenant of the Turcopolier, was one of the three named to places of great consequence.[2] A prudential spirit breathes in the observations with which the grand master meets all the Papal invitations to the noted council; that all his time and that of the order is occupied, day and night, on warlike expedients to resist the Turks,[3] 1564 which entirely precludes the possibility of their attending at Trent.[4]

END OF VOL. III.

[1] Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxiii. 482. [2] Id.: id., xxii. 460.
[3] Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cxcii.—cxciii.
[4] Id., id., Id., cxciv.

