

## BOOK THE THIRD—RHODES.

## CHAPTER I.

WHY a defence of the Templars, triumphantly defended and fully, long since? To go over the ground so nobly trod by Raynouard were at least superfluous. Whoever accuses them after that, it can only be to display his own erudition. Five centuries had not been able to prove their guilt, and now it is utterly disproved, however hard to prove a negative.<sup>1</sup> There is not a reasonable and well-informed man in Europe, who thinks them guilty of any one of the enormities imputed to them. They were perhaps somewhat haughty, and exaggerated their wealth,

<sup>1</sup> Michaud: Hist., v. 428.



accumulated (yet for how short a time, a few months!) in Greece; which was folly, but no crime—crime were a wicked misnomer. I will not say, not challenging disgrace the most opprobrious, and imprisonment, and tortures, faggots, death—for these make one shudder with horror and indignation; but not even the lightest and most mitigated chastisement. Quite the contrary, they merited high praise for their virtuous and valiant actions. Their true and only crime was, their much-overrated riches. But the Templars had faults! Indeed! What a discovery! How profound! Societies of mortals should have none! Whatever their faults, they were not to be mentioned the same day, with their most barbarous murder, but entirely disappear. Their rent-roll was great, no doubt; and now that Palestine was lost, its resolute defenders become resident in Europe, had no longer necessity for expenditure that invariably devoured their income. Far from hoarding money, they had been frequently obliged to borrow by selling, or mortgaging some of their property, or on many urgent occasions during the holy war, accept charity; not for themselves, but for the benefit of the entire body of Franks. If their estates were to be curtailed, could that not be done without such base, hideous, merciless ingratitude? Their amazing



self-devotedness during the last dying struggle—Acre alone—death-rattle of Syria—might have spared them such palpable inventions; even had they fallen into material misdemeanors—which is not proved in law, but the very reverse, far more innocence than could have been expected from soldiers exposed to the numerous temptations of a martial life; nor may it be unfair to consider some indulgences a compensation nearly due to frequent distress and danger. Ascetic heroism is too rare a combination to require. But finally no discreet jury but would have acquitted the Templars. The question for any further trial could be only of what damages, for so slanderous an indictment. But open court, or fair defence, not an atom had they of either. How league with the very Saracens that slew them? Secret friends of who sawed them asunder? Of who hoped to annihilate their order at Acre, and were very near doing so? Had it depended on Philip le Bel, the Hospitallers had fared like the Templars. The Teutonic were safe in their native Germany. But the snare was evidently set for both the others. That ultimate conversation in Cyprus had been their crisis. So the Templars deciding for southern Europe, sealed their destiny, and Rhodes saved the Hospitallers. It is clear the Pope was far from inclined against



the warriors he eulogised as they deserved, at the very moment he was inviting them into his clutches. From which I am far from deducing any malignity of intention in him, but a weak and ineffectual dislike of what he had promised; and therefore he hesitated for a whole year, from when Le Bel had all the Templars through his dominions thrown into prison as malefactors in one day in 1307, which creates a confusion of dates; some historians counting from that kingly, and others from the Papal condemnation. The Pope had weighty displeasure,<sup>1</sup> at what the king had done, seized on the Templars to burn them, and confiscate their property, in 1307; and only in 1308 his Holiness consented to condemn their entire order. Bsovius, Gurtler, and all the annalists of that unhappy body, are of one accord on this point. The miserable Pontiff made several attempts to free himself from his horrible promises; but they had been the price of his tiara, and his abject nature was too eaten up by ambition to descry any way but executing it. It seemed to him necessary; as if crime and injustice can ever be necessary. Not that Clement wished worse to the Templars, or better to the Hospitallers, but, as he condemned one, he would have condemned both—abandoned

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros.—Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, iv. 526.



both to the flames, if required. It might be partly age's feebleness; and piety leaveth to a dotard that not warrantable excuse, but unenviable palliation. At such fearful and extravagant iniquities imputed to his venerated order, well might unfortunate Molay, as full of wonder, make a great sign of the cross, and exclaim that such enormous inventors merited what is inflicted on liars and coiners among Saracens and Tartars. What punishment is that? To have their paunches ripped open, and their heads cut off.<sup>1</sup> They had read what purported to be his avowal, and was not. Even his had been constrained under tortures; sad tribute to the feebleness of human nature, and his imagination tried to relieve him from those horrible agonies of corporal pain; but still worse words had been forged afterwards, and feloniously inserted into that doleful cry; so he boldly denied the whole, retracting what he had pretended, and declaring those other fictions too grossly false ever to have occurred to his disordered brain, and utterly and extravagantly untrue, and invented by them-

<sup>1</sup> Prima e secunda Vita di Clemente V.—Vertot: iv. 132.—Muratori—Platina: iii. 179.—The Templars went by Sicily to Greece, says Bosio. Why that round-about? At all events, what time to get *ricchissimi* in Greece by their savings *d'ogni anno*; since they left Cyprus in 1306, and were in France in 1307? Bosio: par. ii., lib. 1.



selves. But they were the very men who owed him most gratitude in this world, and, far bitterer woe, unworthy chief ministers of that sacred creed for the defence of which he had devoted his whole life to exile and danger; he who wanted neither wealth nor rank, but had them both from birth, as of one of the richest and noblest families in Burgundy. And if he had now become Grand Master, was it a step higher? Had he not been born a prince? Or whither does the Grand Mastery direct him? And not Mahometans his execrable assailants, but Christians. And who will now deliver him to the flames, after all they could to force him to disgrace himself by a false confession, and, what is still worse, succeeded in a certain fashion! But turn from such abominations. Yet what historian whose lot bids his passing that way, but is in honour and conscience bound to fling his tribute of execration on the murdered creature's grisly cairn? How exaggerated had been their wealth and numbers, was soon shown; for though France was the head quarters, and almost home to the Templars, they were found not thousands, but about seventeen score. Nor could it well be otherwise, since only ten got alive from Acre, and when, after a reinforcement from Europe, they lost one hundred and twenty in the Tartar war, it was held to be little



less than extermination;<sup>1</sup> and the property all confiscated to the crown did not much enrich it. It was in almost that kingdom alone, that the truth was put to a proper test; for though a year later, the Templars over the whole world were condemned by the Pope, and their order abolished, yet their estates were variously disposed of, in each different country. Spain passed them over to the order of Calatrava. Many kings shared them between their nobility and clergy. Many confiscated them partly, and partly doled them out in gifts to crusaders. In Germany having who resolutely demanded a trial, they were tried and acquitted.<sup>2</sup>

Woe to the corrupted! Worse woes to the cowardly! That our wicked enemy triumphs is not from our want of strength, but from our arrant cowardice! As the Pope abolished the whole institution, what availed their being proved innocent, except saving those individuals from the flames? As to their estates there, they melted away. Those in Portugal were given to the order of Christ, created on purpose.<sup>3</sup> But no example that the persons of the Templars were subject to any capital punishment, except in France; nor their entire

<sup>1</sup> Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 526.—Forsell: iii. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Vertot: iv. 163.

<sup>3</sup> Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 533.



property confiscated to the crown, except in France. So much astute wickedness at the time renders it hard to affirm whether it was or not with Villaret's free consent; but certainly it has that appearance, and bears his name and signature in full, and those of divers of his chiefs, a power of attorney, with the vote of all the knights assembled in council by the sound of the bell at Rhodes, as is the custom, naming a commission to go to Europe and receive the goods of the Templars.<sup>1</sup> It was in the 1312 second sessions of the Council of Vienna, on the 3rd of April, 1312, that in the presence of the King of France and his brother Valois, and three royal sons, the order of the Templars was abolished, and their property decreed to the Hospitallers;<sup>2</sup> so that whatever occurred up to that moment, could have been but a temporary expedient and almost private transaction in comparison.<sup>3</sup> In England the order indeed was abrogated with a sigh; for England was Catholic, and what the Pope suppressed, it suppressed. But our king decided that 1313 their property should go to their natural

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xxix.—Appendix, cix.

<sup>2</sup> Platina: iii. 190. Note M.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. i., anno 1312.

<sup>3</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. iii. Giun. Vatic. Secret.—Appendix, cliv.



heirs, and that it was for the parliament<sup>1</sup> and judges to declare who were such.<sup>2</sup> And so they did, for on an appeal from a family, one of whose ancestors in Ireland had left a considerable tenement to the Templars, and that family wishing to take it back, the full courts at London sentenced otherwise, and that the lands devolved to the Hospitallers, as in the case of a father who survives his son.<sup>3</sup> And in strict conformity with this is the English sovereign's command.<sup>4</sup> And it is a sign he had some entrails of pity in his composition, that he thought of allowing a daily allowance to the Templars; though it fills us with commiseration to think how gentlemen could exist on so wretched a pittance, and to what severe straits they must have been reduced to accept it. But it consoles a little, and has something I know not what, of sweet mercy, that of all Englishmen he selects the Prior of the Hospitallers for that charity, and ends by entreating him to execute his commission well; for that otherwise he should be much embarrassed to find another capable of easing his royal mind of future trouble re-

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xxvi.—Rymer.—Appendix, cx.

<sup>2</sup> Id. Id. xxx. Id. Id. cxi.

<sup>3</sup> Lodge.—Sir William Betham.—Rot. Bi.:—Rolls and Records.

<sup>4</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xxxi.—Rymer.—Appendix, Num. cxii.



garding those afflicted knights.<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere economy might have been one reason for killing them; for if they lived, could it have been on air? And they who were once so opulent, had now nothing; so that Molay had not threepence to fee a lawyer to defend him. The scoundrels gave him leave to have one, because they knew they had rendered him unable to avail himself of it.<sup>2</sup> While such were the nefarious transactions in Europe, Sir Fulk Villaret had been accomplishing the conquest of Rhodes, rather I should say the liberation of its native Christian population from their lawless tyrants, those Mahometan pirates. What became of the Colossus of Rhodes? Nothing of it was left, the rocks telling where its feet had stood. An earthquake threw it down, and its pieces remained on the beach for about a century, until in an incursion of Arabs, a Jew bought the fragments of brass, and carried them away, nine hundred camel loads. Objections that it would have fallen into the sea, savour of the hypercritical; for strange things are brought about by earthquakes.<sup>3</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xxxiv.—Rymer.—App., cxiii.

<sup>2</sup> Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 532.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. i., anno 1307.—Vertot: iv. 126.

<sup>3</sup> Anciently, to be a Rhodian was a distinction, and some called themselves such who had not been born there. Bosio: par. ii., lib. i., anno 1309.



ancient tapestry of D'Aubuson showed terribly fierce assaults. More would be certain about the taking of Rhodes, were it not for the great fire in the archives there.<sup>1</sup> Next was to reduce, or rather visit (for that was enough) its dependencies, the islets of which there are several, the principal being the ancient Coos, country of Hypocrates and Apelles, since Lango, at present Stanchio, erected into a fief in favour of persons who had distinguished themselves in the last Rhodian war, not without commensurate obligations and charges regarding galleys and troops. At its conquest in 1314, it was confided in administration to the Langue of Provence, though afterwards, by the general chapter held<sup>2</sup> at Avignon, in 1356, opened to the whole order.<sup>3</sup> Nor is it not to be observed that this is the first time Langues are spoken of, and seem to have crept in clandestinely; for neither at Jerusalem, Acre, or even Cyprus, are they mentioned. Nor did they fail to produce bad crops from their very beginning, though only seven at first, while most dignities were common to the whole order, at least in 1318.

Calamo, renowned for its honey, had two ex-

<sup>1</sup> Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 492.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. i.

<sup>2</sup> Id.: Notizie, ii. 498.

<sup>3</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. i., anno 1317.



cellent ports and abounded in fresh watersprings, and, to Villaret's surprise, showed a tolerable commercial town close to the ruins of a fine city. Calchi was fertile, with a strong castle to keep off corsairs. Lero gloried in its quarries of marble. The soil of several of those islets was rich. One was splendidly wooded. Another famous for wines. Another drove a good trade in sponges brought from the bottom of the sea by divers—nor could any youth be married, until he was able to remain a certain number of minutes deep under water. But chiefly one was prized for its ship-carpenters, who had the art of building light craft renowned for swiftness all over the Levant, sail, oar, or both ways. One of the smallest islets, though designated as magisterial, because considered more peculiarly assigned to the grand master, as forming part of his private domain, St. Nicholas del Cardo, is by Bosio called Palma, and in another place, Palmosa, and that is Patmos.<sup>1</sup> ("Patmos, now Palmosa, where St. John wrote his revelation.")<sup>2</sup> And if it be so, however sterile, it is interesting to a Christian. Or are there two islands of the name of Patmos—one near Stanchio, and one

<sup>1</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. i., anno 1314. His words are clear; "Lisola del Patmo, modernamente detta Palmosa."

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Geogr., ii. 12.



close to Samos?<sup>1</sup> The question then is, which was of the writer of the Apocalypse? for that is the one which belonged to the Hospitallers.

Nizara (Porphyros), famous through all the Levant for its mill and building stones, had been likewise noted for its hot baths, and for its delicious fruit of all sorts, soon became as it were a second Rhodes, having a beautiful town, ornamented with marble columns and statues, in signal abundance; and afterwards a grand cross of the order resided there, and it rose to be a bishop's see, suffragan of the Rhodian Archbishopric.<sup>2</sup>

After which review, in the company of Anthony De Beck (who it is doubtful whether he was or was not a member of the order, but then Papal legate, and at one time Bishop of Durham),<sup>1</sup> Villaret returned to Rhodes eager to indulge in a life of luxury and repose from his devoirs. But that was not yet to be, and the pirates who had escaped, had roused their Mahometan brethren of Asia Minor—among whom a thriving Tartar horde, and it is possible with some Comnenian blood. Yet the celebrated Ottoman had to retreat; although the

<sup>1</sup> As in Mr. Murray's recent Map to his "Handbook in the East."

<sup>2</sup> Seb. Paoli: Notiz. Geogr., ii. 502.

Cod. Dipl. Geros, ii., Num. xviii.—Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 527.



knights were not given time to erect walls. New proof that valiant hearts and hands are the best of fortifications, and need none. But though Ottoman was driven from Rhodes, he attacked the other adjoining islets and ravaged them; and an obstinate and fierce war ensued, during which the knights are said to have received much assistance from Amadeo V. of Savoy, and that, to perpetuate the memory, his descendants have ever since worn the white cross; and, as device, the word *Fert* meaning *Fortitudo ejus Rhodum tenuit*. And why may it not be quite true?<sup>1</sup> To write devices by initials, was the custom then. As to the cross, indeed they bore it long before; probably from the first crusade; but they may have continued to bear it more exclusively, not using much any other, whether eagle or lion—the rather that they had become sovereign and independent princes, and wished to show it; and, as Menestrier observes truly, at that time amongst the Italians the cross in an escutcheon was a sign of freedom and independence, and hoisted by any municipality as a proclamation of liberty. It was the cap of liberty of the period.<sup>2</sup> Thus Florence had a cross half

<sup>1</sup> With some difference of date; but in the main Bosio agrees with the usual opinion about F. E. R. T.; par. ii., lib. vi. anno 1444.

<sup>2</sup> Art. de Blason, cap. vi.



white and half red, with the word *libertas*.<sup>1</sup> And the small town of Macerata having declared itself independent, displayed a cross and rebelled against its former government.<sup>2</sup> Undoubtedly since Amedeo was in England in 1309, and at Rome in 1310, he could not be at Rhodes in 1310; but he could very well be there in 1315, true date of his succour, in question.<sup>3</sup> It is surely strange to find a vacancy in 1315. But so it is. In 1306 he is in Dauphiny, in 1307 at the royal marriage in London, in 1308 at Montmellan with his son and Beatrice of Savoy; in 1309, at the coronation of the King of England; in 1310 at Chambery, and with the emperor on his passage into Italy; in 1311 he is to be traced at Vercelli, Milan, Rome, until his return to Piedmont in 1313; in 1314 in Dauphiny; but there we would have a stop, if it were not that he was at Rhodes in 1315. These particulars, because other historians have decided that Amadeo's visits to London and Rome precluded the possibility of his Rhodian feats. But on the contrary, it is very near proof certain that this chronology is correct, since it coincides with the year he could be at

<sup>1</sup> Borghini : Dis., ii. 143.—Appendix, cxiv.

<sup>2</sup> Appendix, cxv.

<sup>3</sup> Buffier : Hist.—Nice foro Gregorio, vii.—Laonico Calcondela, 1.—Villani.—Appendix, cxv.



Rhodes; whereas, if it followed the vulgar error of placing the attack on the islets in 1310 (as for many other reasons no extremely attentive reader can), then indeed the whole ancient Piedmontese tradition were indubitably a fable. As to Amadeo's ancestors having worn the cross before him, that is no impediment to his having gone to Rhodes. Even the coin alleged may have been by the Louis, Baron of Vaud, who died in 1350; just as well as by his uncle of the same name, who died in 1301. And the *Fert* and the dog's collar on the tomb of the father of Amadeo V. prove nothing; for though very ancient, who knows when it was erected? If in the latter years of Amadeo V. himself, it would be a flattery to assign his device to his father. Such things are not uncommon in the fine arts. Virgil has several anachronisms. And in Raphael's great painting, the School of Athens, are there not cardinals and friars as auditors of Socrates, and companions of Plato? Therefore, registered as historic be what the learned diplomatist has high Piedmontese authority for, if his own were not more than sufficient. The knights  
1315  
were enabled by Amadeo V. in 1315, to expel  
the Ottoman invaders from the islets, so that Rhodes might leisurely rebuild itself and fortify. But a few months were enough for quiet and luxury to



breed indiscipline. Villaret, blinded by his glory, was unable to withstand the temptation of success. Instead of giving good example to his young knights, quite the contrary. They had in him an excuse for every excess. And it appeared that valour and luck legitimated vice.

*Langue* was a word of division regarding the order, but of union between conspirators. If that was too harsh a term to be applied to those young knights then, it was quickly to suit their mutinous conduct. Nor were the riches, supposed flowing into the treasury from the downfall of their former companions-in-arms without offering a veil of sanction to every wild and ruinous expense. In vain one of the elder knights exhorted them to beware, that it was the very same turbulence and vanity that led the Templars to destruction; that their enemies desired nothing more than to be furnished with an excuse to ruin them; that it was not from love of Hospitallers that Philip le Bel burned the Templars; that if the Parliament of Paris<sup>1</sup>, and even Rome herself, declared the Hospitallers were to possess all the property, yet that was only in show, to fling the odium on them, and the King of France in fact seized every stiver of it in his dominions for himself; and that the Pope

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xxviii.—Appendix, cxvi.



well knew how, in despite of all his fine words, the different sovereigns and their greedy nobles would in some way or other contrive to get most of the rest of it; that no reason whatsoever to expect that the cardinals and Papal prelates would not do, as with their oily discourse they had always been in the habit of doing—namely, under various pretexts, wriggle themselves, they or their relatives, into the richest commanderies and other benefices of the order, and dispense graces to favourites at no allowance, and in substance pursue with ungrateful pertinacity their own best defenders; and even the worse ill-treat them, the more they are sure of their devotedness, and that they would submit to any injustice, rather than rise against their spiritual chief; that they ought not to close their eyes against what he had just received, this copy of the French king's letter to the Pope, by which it is evident he desired to extinguish the Hospital as well as the Temple, and he read to them his true expressions.<sup>1</sup>

“ Now if by reform that same was purely meant, you know I should not object; but it is that I know he means reform such as he used with the Templars. Clement praised those unfortunate gentlemen to the last, until they were entrapped into destruction.

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xxvii.—Appendix, cxvii.



Under pretence of reforming us, or uniting us to a new military order, the intention is to destroy us, and deprive us of all we have, and merge our name even (which has become too glorious for safety) in another from some unknown vocabulary, to serve its turn, and shortly be abolished. Yes, had our ancestors and we all acted less nobly well, we should not now be in so dangerous a predicament. Yet, at the very moment when prudence the most consummate is so requisite, you draw down the reproaches of censorial hypocrites. It is to ruin you and us all."

Yet what could be done, when Villaret, with his own debauchery, publicly warranted that of his subjects? This, and his monstrous favouritism, and occasional haughtiness and undue severity, and still more undue indulgence, caused tumults, which ripened into revolts, and even attacks upon his life. So that he had to throw himself  
1317 on the Pope's protection; and we have Papal documents to this day of those disgraceful scenes. First, comes a letter of recommendation brought by a person who may have been a spy, *to console and advise*,<sup>1</sup> and next the brief. "We are sorry to know you have been assaulted, and obliged to fly from Rhodes by your own knights into a

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xlii.



fortress in another part of that island ; and although their demeanour appears to have been most improper, yet you are accused of having partly occasioned it ; so that we cite both them and you into our presence, to investigate the affair, and decide on due information." This parchment, like so many others, has just escaped out of its hiding-place, and appears in history for the first time.<sup>1</sup> Rumours went of one of Villaret's confidential menials having been bribed to poison, or otherwise murder his master, upon whose flight the rioters elected as *locum-tenens* the old knight Sir Maurice de Pagnac, who hardened them in their resistance to despotism ; and that, little by little, such as Villaret would end by erecting an absolute tyranny instead of the order's primitive free institutions. To answer which, the Pontiff at the same time wrote a brief to Pagnac, calling him likewise to Avignon,<sup>2</sup> and another, naming a vicar of the order.<sup>3</sup> Assuredly a new Pope, whatever internal dissent he may have felt from his predecessor's policy, followed it in the main, not sorry at this opportunity for a reasonable intervention, under cover of which he could deprive the knights and their grand master

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xliii.—Appendix, cxviii.

<sup>2</sup> Id., Id., Id. xliii.—Appendix, cxix.

<sup>3</sup> Id., Id., Id. xlv. and xlvi.—Appendix, cxx.



of all independence, and dispose of his dignity himself, which eminently agrees with the mysterious terms wherein he writes to the King of France,<sup>1</sup> as well as that appearance of pleading the Hospitallers' right to the property of the Templars in the bull to the King of Sicily; but finishes by approving of his Majesty's determination, though he could not but have known full well it was to confiscate the  
1318 chief part of it to the Sicilian crown, as indeed he did.<sup>2</sup> Nor is not the same evil intention observable in the bull to the King of Spain, in which he assents to the formation of the Montese Concordat consigning the Moorish war to another to be chosen, and the Valencian property of the Templars to maintain that new knighthood, and the Arragonese property given to the Hospitallers, with the accompaniment of what was sure to eat it up, the united expenses of that entire operation.<sup>3</sup> Up to this date, it is clear that the commanders were mere administrators, removable at will upon the smallest sign, who retaining the value of their own dress and food, paid all the rest into the common treasure; and likewise it is laid down formally

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., and Num. xli.

<sup>2</sup> Id., Id. Num. xl., xlvii.—Appendix, cxxi.

<sup>3</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii. Num. xxxvii. and Num. xxxviii.



by Bosio, that the *supreme* tribunal of the order is the chapter-general, to which the grand master and his knights and clergy alike submit.<sup>1</sup>

So Villaret, and Pagnac, and some knights, went to Avignon, and Villaret was sentenced to accept a priory, but totally independent of any future grand master, and only responsible to the Holy See, which, to the guiltless order, was a double sacrifice, losing the rent of a priory, and paying a prior in no way obedient to it, and having a grand master either directly named by the Pope, or indirectly chosen under his influence. Nor did his Holiness deny himself the satisfaction of hurrying to direct a brief to the fallen grand master, wounding him more severely from the novelty, and showing him that he was no longer an independent sovereign, but miserably dependent, both in temporals and spirituals; for, after writing to Villaret as a king, and companion of kings, even so far on his journey as Naples,<sup>2</sup> he, within a few weeks, changes tone altogether, and does not give the fallen even the title of knight, as if he were not such any longer, but quite a private person, to whom he doles out a

<sup>1</sup> Bosio : par. ii., lib. i, anno 1321.

<sup>2</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. l. and li.—Arch. Vatic. Secr.—Appendix, cxxii.



priory, in charity, at another's expense.<sup>1</sup> How long Sir Fulk continued to vegetate, is scarce worth notice; yet he remained in that forgotten state for years, never stirring from a castle of his sister's, to which he had retired, near Montpellier, where he was buried.<sup>2</sup> But his station was instantly conferred on Sir Helion de Villanova,<sup>3</sup> by a  
1319 few knights summoned to elect him in the Papal palace itself; which, if an honour, was such a one as induced the belief in many people, that he was not merely favoured by the Pontiff, as he was publicly, but that he altogether received the dignity from him, and not from the order. If so, he testified his gratitude in kind, by selling one of the order's estates to his Holiness, near his native Cahors, where, being sprung from a low family, he was proud to enrich it.<sup>4</sup> The pecuniary embarrassments of the order were real in proportion to its flushed expectations, when promised the exaggerated property of the Templars; but, in point of fact, only just so great as a usurer might wish, or perhaps

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. liv. and lv.—Arch. Vatic. Secr. Appendix, cxxiii.

<sup>2</sup> Appendix, cxxiv.

<sup>3</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. ii., anno 1322.—Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii., 463.

<sup>4</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. ii., anno 1325.—Vertot: v. 185, affirms the said Pope was son of a cobbler.—Grandson of a private soldier, according to an annotator on Platina, iii. 196, Note A.



cause, in order to lend it ready money at an enormous interest, or purchase its lands cheap. The date having been objected to, Seb. Paoli thought it necessary to corroborate it by an unanswerable document—the letter of John XXII. himself, which the perspicacious Bosio had never seen (since coming from the Vatican), but had formed his opinion without it—letter in which Villanova is advised not to abdicate, but accept the place of grand master to which he had been called—letter containing the names of the knights at the election, and dated Avignon, 14th of the Calends of July, 1319.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps in Bosio's time, things were too fresh; but now what harm that we know the secrets of the drama at Avignon, and the name of all the actors, by a document detected in the most secret corner of the archives of the Vatican and labelled secret? Villanova's election was irregular, what of that? It serves only to steady an historian in his path to truth, and enables him to find his way through those remote labyrinthine antiquities. Earlier it might have served malignity, but at present only aids laborious and innocent investigation. What quantity of good or harm the French revolution did, may be matter of opinion,

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. vi.—Gi. Vatic.—Appendix, cxxx.



but that it opened the archives of the world cannot be doubted.

Nor did the vicar cease command at Rhodes; but continued there as the *locum-tenens* of Villanova, who delayed a long time in Europe, impeded by a severe malady, and visiting the establishments in France, where (at Montpellier) he held a general chapter.<sup>1</sup> There Sir John Builbrulx was turcopolier. Does Builbrulx sound like an English name? Yet English he certainly was, and could not but be, since turcopolier. If ever was an exception, it was not at such a period; for then, for the first time, the order was formally divided into languages. The three grand crosses which hitherto had by custom never failed to be conferred on Englishmen alone, Grand Prior of England, Bailly of the Eagle, Turcopolier, were in that chapter-general made the property of the English language. That Builbrulx was at the same time made one of the conventual baillies, is a proof he was esteemed singularly sagacious and upright; for such baillies were chiefs of their different languages, or nations, and obliged always to reside with the grand master.<sup>2</sup> The use had crept on by degrees, and been found convenient; yet did not become legal with unanimity. For

<sup>1</sup> Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 464.

<sup>2</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. ii., anno 1330.



though it was in a distant country, respecting Rhodes, and on treacherous ground, where it was requisite to weigh well every word; with the recent example of the Templars before their eyes *in terrorem*, and supported by high authority on the reasonable plea of equalising the commanderies; still there was no small minority against it, but nevertheless the majority made it a standing law. We for the future shall have to speak of Languages, for the present only seven,<sup>1</sup> exact conformity with Hallam, but soon eight, and of Inns belonging each to a Language. Consider them like what our own Inns of Court once were, European, not Eastern invention. No peculiarity of the order, which in that respect only kept clearly in the wake of custom; not merely for meals, but also for debating, each exclusively in its own language. That at the grand master's and in the chapters being Latin, French, or Italian, or a mixture of all three—a sort of *Lingua Franca*, varying according to time and place. “Unwilling am I,” said a knight, “to find fault in this chapter general, with whatever is the practice. Yet are there many who like me prefer staying here at home in Europe, where there are many occasions of usefully exerting bravery and military skill—where our religious rites can be more

<sup>1</sup> Hallam : *Lit of Europe*, i.



solemnly performed, and whence there may chance to be a crusade—rather than drag a tepid existence in a small island so distant from Palestine, that it appears to several against both the letter and spirit of our profession—as it did to our choicest members at Cyprus—persisting to squander our time, wealth, and force in hostilities against pirates, on that unfaithful element to which we were unused (and worse if we become used to it), instead of backing our own good steeds on a wide continent, not shut up in a paltry ship, but established in some illustrious metropolis, where we can apply to our duty of exercising magnificent hospitality on an extended scale, and curing the infirm of every Christian nation, or advance to battle at the head of the armies of all Christendom. It is this vile Rhodian war that has reduced us to these present embarrassments of finance,<sup>1</sup> and the monstrous interest we have to pay to the Florentines. Thence a division in our order, as is proved by our holding this debate in land not our own, and our order shall dwindle away perhaps, until its very existence shall soon cease. A few may grumble; but here we have our grand master with us, and here let us remain.”

And when riches were spoken of, and the great

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros, ii., Num. liv., lvi. Vatic.—Consideratis oneribus dicti Hospitalis; magnum ejusdem prejudicium.



expenses to which Villaret had put the order by the conquest of Rhodes, it called up a rather aged knight: "Yet we should be rich (though probably for only moments) if the property of the Templars had been given us, as promised. It is not the Rhodian war (nobly employed money), nor was Villaret then other than a deserving hero, and as such his name will go down to posterity; but it was crafty politics that broke down his fine mind, and drove him on dissipation, which was artfully increased by the promises held out to him. I know I am trenching on perilous matters, but nevertheless I had rather say the truth, and be also burned alive, than remain silent before this august meeting of our own brethren, and seem by my silence to consent to throw a blot, through our late grand master, on our whole brave body and their exertions on so many days of glory, at the expense of so much blood, and the lives of so many of our renowned companions. Are not the papers in two mountains before us? And besides what we see, how much is unseen? It is easy to trick warriors. A million times rather tricked than trick. From this basest of wickedness, O Lord, deliver us! I despise their tricks far too deeply to envy them. Much better would it have been for us—a thousand times better—never to have been insulted with



offer of any of the Templars' spoils. A base offer! but worse, a plot to ruin us.<sup>1</sup> Bulls misled us into expenses that indeed are ruinous; effeminate vices (not the Rhodian war) generated the consequent destructive and shameful debts, and were beneficial to none but villanous usurers. Behold the rolls of those royal and imperial folk<sup>2</sup>—whom I cannot much blame, since they possibly act in favour of their own dominions. Rely on those despots, who will! Few of them but take the Templars' property to themselves, under a thousand excuses. So we incur all the odium, and they have all the profit; even so, it is better for us not to have ill-gotten goods. It were a profanation, a desecration, an infamy never to be washed out. Besides I tell you what has been often told you by revered lips, that it is the work of infernal conspirators. Instead of vainly descanting on that, let us bend to necessity, and allow that there is a relaxation of discipline which ought to be amended by obliging all the commanders to leave off loitering in Europe, and remove to head quarters, wherever it be, for at least some years, under pain of losing their com-

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii. Num. xxii., xxiii., xxiv., xxxviii., xxxix., xl., xli., liv., lviii.—Giunt. Vatic., iii., iv., v.—Appendix, cxxvi., cxxvii.

<sup>2</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii. Num. xxvii, xxx., xxxi., xxxii., xxxiii., xxxiv., xxxv., lvi.



manderies; and let such residence be a necessary qualification for any of the high employments. Rhodes will thus cease to be looked on as a place of exile; and idlers, by this removal from infection, may learn some probity and honour. Therefore, most venerated vicar, I beseech you not to think of me—though one of your most dutiful servants—but of what I have said; and allow me to propose a law of that nature to this assembly.”

And so it was proposed and passed, and stands on the statute-books still. But was it executed? It is to be hoped it was, sometimes at least—however feebly.<sup>1</sup> That vicar, or *locum-tenens*, was the De Pins who had been made such in 1317, and still retained the situation, the grand master being absent. Never had the vicar the least pretension to be more, nor is he ever named anything else, in the documents.<sup>2</sup> Vertot has no excuse!<sup>3</sup> Vertot  
is full of errors. Thus he talks of a bull of <sup>1325</sup>  
1323, and upon no such thing being found, he is supposed to have meant that of 1322. Which is however to the King of England, and not to the

<sup>1</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. ii., anno 1331.

<sup>2</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lix.—Appendix, cxxvi.

<sup>3</sup> Seb. Paoli: Serie Chron., ii., 463.—Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xlv.—Appendix, cxxv.



Hospitallers.<sup>1</sup> Or who is willing to believe what he tells us of De Pins (who had been vicar now above twelve years, during which the order went on acquiring naval customs and that vicar himself an able seaman) having put, under whatever plea of expediency, all the able-bodied but unarmed men of a colony to the sword, and permitted the rest and the women and children, to be carried into slavery?<sup>2</sup> Vertot cites no authority for the enormity he relates, and proud am I of my inability to discover any. That John XXII. kept a sharp look out, on at least his noblest spies, is evident from his secret letter to the order's prior at Pisa.<sup>3</sup> Sir Thomas Larchier, who was Prior of England in 1329 and had been for several years before, abdicated; and Sir Leonardus de Tybertis took his place. Why? Was it a single exception at the king's desire? But he might have been an Englishman, though then the order's ambassador at Venice.<sup>4</sup> At all events, Tybertis lived little.<sup>5</sup>

Nor even when Villanova embarked at last in

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lviii.

<sup>2</sup> Vertot: v. 184.

<sup>3</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lx.—Giunt. Vatic. Secret.—Appendix, cxxxi.

<sup>4</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxi.—Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 537.

<sup>5</sup> He was the twenty-second Prior of England. Appendix, xxx.



1332, was it without some difficulty on the score of his health, which was not yet strong enough to support so long a voyage, in the Pontifical opinion.<sup>1</sup> Nor did he find any difficulty to engage the vicar to deliver up the supreme power, nor had there not been transactions during that length of period, chiefly as to adding to the fortifications of the city of Rhodes itself, and the other chief towns of the island, as well as various strong towers and castles round all its coasts, not omitting several fortresses in the environing islets. The shipping too had considerably increased, and now merited the name of a fleet. Just previous to the arrival of Villanova, the King of Castile had attempted to create a new order, and endow it with the spoils of the Templars, but the Pope refused his consent; which did not make any essential change, since they went to Calatrava just the same, which could not but occasion discontent in the Spanish language at Rhodes.<sup>2</sup>

One of the first things which Villanova and his senate had to decide, was whether to enter into a league with France and Venice against the Turk, which that the order assented to

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxxiii.—Vatic. Secret.

<sup>2</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxxii.—Vatic. Secret.—Appendix, cxxxii.



is not curious; nor that Venetians soon left them in the lurch.<sup>1</sup> But what of Sir Deodate and the dragon? St. George and the dragon for a wager! It is about this time! What of that?—What? That it is a fable to be sure. Yet its being totally a fable (as following good authorities, I am prepared to affirm) were no sufficient reason for not relating it. Beyond doubt Livy knew, just as thoroughly as his modern readers, that many of the things he tells could not possibly be true. Yet he tells them nevertheless! For they showed what those times believed. When savages bored a traveller with some wonder of their idol, that he recounts it is no proof in the least that he believes it. No truth surely, in itself; but it is true in this, and thus far, that it demonstrates how over easy they are in credence. Why should the historian be taxed with the fictions he quotes? His business is to inform us how such a nation thought, not how he thinks. Describing a crime, is he for that criminal? But the story I refer to would give a false opinion of those times; as if it could have been entertained then, and I am quite persuaded it could not; but that it was the invention of posterity, when become too prone to accuse their ancestors. Superhuman, perhaps! But this was nothing superhuman, nor even pretended to be.

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxx.—Vatic. Secret.



People had the contrary before their eyes, and it accorded with their every-day experience to resort to facile means of instantly annihilating a hideous wild beast, without any personal exposure of coming to close quarters with it, which would have only been ridiculous in those distant days, as well as in our own. Regulus and his army in Africa, do not apply here. The Romans having but swords, lances, and arrows, how could they manage with a boa whose dried skin measured one hundred feet and more? But not only gunpowder was used a little by the Turks, in 1330; but was so ordinary at that time, that they made use of it invariably and profusely, at every little battle or siege, showed every person what sufficed, at once, to consume any scales, however thick. And, although the generous spirit of the knights might reject it against fellow-creatures; yet naturally they could not be scrupulous concerning a noxious serpent, which had already been fatal to some of their own companions. The Greek fire could be thrown either from the hand in the shape of a grenade, or from tubes, like a rocket, at any mark a considerable distance off; and what could melt and consume iron and brass, could the toughest hide. Or a ball or steel point, if shot from the zembourek, could pass through a stout cuirass of the best steel; and



what greater resistance from a skin, however hard? So there would have been no necessity for a personal combat, on horseback—too pickering round and round as at a regular tourney. The warrior may have had his couple of bulldogs trained in Europe, to attack the belly, which is the weak point in most animals; and on that the whole story seems to have been raised, not by contemporaries, but in posterior ages. So it were doubly erroneous in me to enter into a prolix account of what is probably not only false, but tends to give a false opinion of the times in question.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps I have said too much about it as it is; but I thought it necessary to give substantial reasons for rejecting what cuts such a figure in Vertot, and is, indeed, in great part, an idle tale magnified into undue importance by himself.<sup>2</sup> As to the inscription on the tomb, “cy gist le vainqueur du dragon”—a more than dubious fact—that epitaph avails little, except

<sup>1</sup> Seb. Paoli: Serie Chron., ii. 464.

<sup>2</sup> Vertot: v. 194. Yet as I may have tickled curiosity, which was not my intention, here is the whole substance of the story, warning it dull enough. A dragon in the island of Rhodes, killed several people, and as many knights as went to attack him; so the grand master forbade any more. But Sir Deodate went to France, and returning with his dogs, slew the monster. Instead of praise, he was punished for disobedience; yet acquired the name of Champion, and it is said to have been written on his tomb.



you can tell who was the dragon. What is sure is, that the warrior was noted for his independent boldness of spirit, and that his order had much to exasperate their minds at that period; and even while a mere knight, he was looked upon by his brethren as their champion. They were too much occupied with a human dragon, to have leisure for an inferior class; threatened as the order were with that prodigious expense, the maintenance of the entire Christian fleet,<sup>1</sup> not voluntarily, but against their will, and clearly beyond their ability, in spite of their most oppressive self-taxation; *mortorio* and *vacante* being then first levied, as well as the plate and jewels of the dead, with whatever could be saved by a rigid limiting of the knights' table to one substantial dish, flesh or fish, and pursued by homilies severer than to the Templars, at the very moment those luckless gentlemen had been under sentence of dissolution and martyrdom, it might be expected a like destiny awaited themselves. While they were in a permanent state of war with the Turk, who never left them a moment's quiet—all their heroic efforts did not prevent European slanderers from converting the brightest trophy of their domestic politics, that not a poor man was in their dominions, into a cause of grave reproof; for

<sup>1</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. ii., anno 1344.



at this very date is it recorded, how under their wise government mendicancy had entirely disappeared, there being plenty of labour for every individual in health, and for the sick and invalid a magnificent hospital to retire to, where they found abundant comforts of all kinds spiritual and temporal;<sup>1</sup> confronting which, and the contented mediocrity of commerce and of social luxuries at that time in Rhodes, with the exuberance of wealth, mendicity, discontent and worse, and of colonies and manufactures at present in the most advanced nation in Europe, suggest an intricate question for wiser heads than mine. Yet was this their excellent example of real charity and true statesmanship, turned into an accusation of not giving alms, or rarely and but little. No wonder then, if their most inoffensive recreations were made sins of the blackest hue. Exiles, ascetics, cut off from the enjoyment of society, a sluggard called it criminal in them to have fine dogs and horses—as if it were a holier thing to indulge in curs and bone-setters, forgetting they were not mendicant friars, but soldiers of the noblest houses of Christendom, young barons and heirs to large fortunes, if they pleased.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vertot: v. 192.

<sup>2</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. lxix.—Appendix, cxxxiii.



Sir Philip de Thame was twenty-third Prior of England in 1342, and long before—and a great favourite of the then King (Edward III.), who with difficulty allows of his going to Rhodes, and requires his return quickly, for that his government cannot well go on without him; and that he was an Englishman, so not to quit the kingdom without leave, under a great fine.<sup>1</sup> A violent Turkish campaign rendered the year 1346 more full of fierce conflicts and dissensions than usual,<sup>2</sup> in which the Hospitallers of course took a prominent part; when, in the midst of such scenes, poor Villanova died, to the great grief of the Pope, as was to be expected.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxxviii.—Seb. Paoli writes Thames; others, Thane.—Appendix, xxx.

<sup>2</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxxi.

<sup>3</sup> Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 464.



## CHAPTER II.

SIR DEODATE DE GOZON the magnanimous, must have been elected before the latter days of June in 1346; since one of the documents found by Seb. Paoli in the secrets of the Vatican, is the Papal congratulation on his election to the grand mastery, dated the 4th of the Kalends of July, the fifth of his Pontificate.<sup>1</sup>

The story of that courageous and princely Provençal's choice of himself, is quite as fabulous as about the serpent; for Clement VI. in that confidential paper affirms he who was grand preceptor<sup>2</sup> hesitated whether he would accept the dignity of grand master unanimously offered to him, and only

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. viii. Vatic. Secret.—Appendix, cxxxiv.

<sup>2</sup> Bosio has Great Commander, by a slight error of the press, I suppose, or pen; and Bosio had never seen this Vatican document: par. ii., lib. iv., anno 1346.



accepted at length after mature reflection; which diffidence agrees with his two subsequent attempts at abdication, until dissuaded by the highest authority in those days. Yet during his short reign he did much, both as to the Turkish war, and domestic policy; and sent a circular to the Priors of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, lamenting that they had never paid any responsions since the loss of Acre; yet could not but have learned the order was seated at Rhodes, so he cited them formally to send them yearly to the Receiver in Flanders.<sup>1</sup> Responsions were only a very easy head or quitrent on commanderies, leaving abundant sufficiency to the holders—a priory being the aggregate of several commanderies.

Sir Deodate won a sea-fight against the Turks near Lemnos, taking a hundred and twenty of their small vessels, and put to flight the thirty-two largest,<sup>2</sup> and while he kept the order neutral between Genoese and Venetians, when these latter over the former won a victory, celebrated through all that century,<sup>3</sup> he protesting he could not prevent individual knights from siding with either; and that individuals could not do much

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxxii.—Appendix, cxxxv.

<sup>2</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. ii., anno 1347.—Vertot: v. 224.

<sup>3</sup> Platina: iii. 226, Note H.



harm on either side, since they counterbalanced each other.<sup>1</sup> The order was in great esteem then both in Europe and the Levant, most of the chief captains in Spain and Italy being Knights of Rhodes; and as for the Pontifical States (at that time a principal Italian power) nearly all its governors of celebrity, including even the Duke of Spoleto, were of the same.<sup>2</sup> Sir Deodate finding many of his commanders so protected by the Pope and the Kings of France and Castile, Arragon, Portugal, England, and others, that he was unable to reduce them to obedience, he renewed his abdication in too urgent terms to be refused; and while consent (making itself precious) was coming, he employed his hours in the useful toil of adding to the fortifications of the city of Rhodes, when in

1353 December of 1353, he had a stroke of apoplexy, that at his great age was instant death.<sup>3</sup> His successor was Sir Peter de Cornillan,

or Cormelian, a Provençal gentleman, Prior of St Gilles, and remarkable for the regularity of his life, and austere and ancient manners; as the new

1354 Pontiff well observes in his brief to the knights, approving highly of their choice,

<sup>1</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. ii., anno 1356.

<sup>2</sup> Id.: anno 1348.

<sup>3</sup> Seb. Paoli: Serie Chron., ii. 464.—Bosio: par. ii. lib. ii., anno 1353.



sweet as the perfumes of myrrh!<sup>1</sup> In the very last days of 1354,<sup>2</sup> a ship with the Papal banner entered the harbour of Rhodes, and soon was it known that it bore an embassy, at the head of which was the Grand Prior of Castile, who, with the other two commanders, had a stately audience from the grand master almost immediately. "Not only with that letter, dated last August, and which orders me back to Avignon within February next, and if the first part of my voyage has been dilatory, the fault is of foul weather, and not mine; nor shall it be mine in the other half either, for I shall return on board as soon as I have a reply, this very day. But also I am charged by his Holiness to tell the grand master and council how continually he is receiving complaints<sup>3</sup> of the inaction and lethargy of the order; and that they are living too far from Palestine, where they ought to reside, and carry on war against the Turk, as the whole world knows they could; that even if they lived in Greece or Italy, it were better than in this little out-of-the-way island; that the fortifications you are erecting round Rhodes, are totally useless and superfluous, and merely display your own ill-will, and determi-

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., xi. Giunt. Vatic. Secret.

<sup>2</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. ii., anno 1354.

<sup>3</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxxiii.



nation to be of no utility to Christendom; that you ought to be giving battle to the Paynim in some part of the Continent, where success would be of real importance and extremely easy; that it is the public voice, it would be greatly preferable to create a new order, and cut you down as a withered tree, like the Templars; and that, finally, your Smyrna quota should not be allowed to fall into arrear, but be paid annually at Avignon, as treaties duly explained prescribe, and his Holiness commands peremptorily.<sup>1</sup> Which struck the poor old grand master mute, from astonishment and mortification; whence one of the grand crosses rose, and got leave to answer: "You, Heredia, of all men, should be the last to speak thus to him your sovereign, and us your brethren! Why are you Prior of Castile and Castellan of Emposta, one of the highest of our order, and some say the highest private dignity in Europe, and next to the grand-mastery itself? Why are you ambassador at Avignon? Is it not our goodness? Do you not owe it all to us? Why take the round by Avignon? It is with us must be sought what you probably desire! Will you never discern better? Do we not wink at your errors and continual absence? You are certainly

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxxiv.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. ii., anno 1359.



much oftener at Avignon than Rhodes, which ought not to be. Who avoids danger here? Why this is the very post of danger and honour! Reside in Palestine! we heartily wish we could. But could we? How? His Holiness says the whole world knows we could; but I for my part am entirely at a loss to imagine how, except all Christendom jumped up in arms like one man to assist us; but that is neither possible, nor perhaps desired by that Holy See which thinks European crusades far more necessary. The Smyrna quota with us has never been in arrear, nor please God ever shall. It shall be paid strictly, as the treaty says; but not to Avignon, to be eaten up by greedy churchmen; but directly to the furnishers of arms and stores for the Turkish war. The arrears are of the Papacy, that never has paid an obolo. Leave it to the infidels to call them devils, that most brave, most barbarously ill-treated garrison.<sup>1</sup> We entreat the Pontiff to pray for their souls; for unless Christian succours bestir themselves, the choice of our chivalry may every hour be cut to pieces—as indeed their profession inculcates—nor will they shrink from it! But should we calumniate or disregard them? Fortifications superfluous? Would they may not

<sup>1</sup> Diables enrages.—Chereffedin Ali.—Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 539.



be found not strong enough! Why threats and reproofs towards such honest servants? New order is but the usual scarecrow. Glorious fools like us are not so easy to find. What are we, if not too devoted and too patient?"

Limited as were Sir Peter's days, he had a chapter holden at Rhodes, not living as long, as with his usual inexactitude, Vertot pretends, much less nine years as Foxans, but twenty-two months as Bosio,<sup>1</sup> or rather until about mid autumn of 1355, as Seb. Paoli decides.<sup>2</sup>

His successor was Sir Roger de Pins, likewise of the language of Provence, and related to that Sir Odo de Pins, who had been the twenty-third grand master in Cyprus. This Sir Roger held a chapter at Rhodes likewise, in which many excellent statutes were made for the administration of commanders, and forbidding servants-at-arms to wear exactly the same cross as the knights. Prince of the utmost courtesy and most merciful feelings, at the same time a rigid disciplinarian, and of generosity and propriety of conduct, he reigned candid during ten no candid or quiet years.<sup>3</sup> Of the most splendid devotedness was the conduct of the  
1355 knights, at Smyrna, in universal opinion,

<sup>1</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. ii., anno 1355.

<sup>2</sup> Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 464.      <sup>3</sup> Id.: Id., ii. 464.



including that of their declared enemies; yet did it draw down a reproach from him<sup>1</sup> in whose service they were dying with a heroism that the rest of the world celebrated. They had declared the post untenable, but when ordered to hold it, 1358 they died in the attempt. What more could mortals do? “Honore tamen super omnia preservato,” says the describer of that siege.<sup>2</sup>

This twenty-ninth grand master had the statutes, which were written in French in 1300, translated, the cream of them, into Latin, and with the conventual seal to them, sent a copy to each priory.<sup>3</sup> It was some compensation for the injustice, 1360 where least to be expected, that a tribute of grateful respect was paid by the north of Europe, by a donation to the order, from the Marquises of Brandenburg and Lusatia, “High Chamberlains of the Holy Roman Empire,” of a kind of island between the Elbe and the Weser, and comprising several districts once a bishopric, afterwards a principality, and modernly a part of Lower Saxony. Its date is Taengermunde and Vranckenvorde in die *beati Marcelli Martyris*, 1360.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxxiv.

<sup>2</sup> Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 540.—Beltramio, quond. Leonardus de Mignanellis, de Senis tunc in illis partibus commorantis. M.S. di Siena.

<sup>3</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. iii., anno 1357.

<sup>4</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxxv.



The thirtieth grand master, if by descent a Spaniard, was a Provençal by birth, in line from the Counts of Barcelona, sovereigns of Catalogna, certainly, and perhaps of Italy.<sup>1</sup> Whatever blaze of glory he inherited from his ancestors, Sir Raymond de Berenger showed his were qualifications to add to its lustre. After taking Alexandria by surprise, and burning the piratical fleet in its port,<sup>2</sup> a very bold and necessary exploit, though at the expense of one hundred knights killed, and a great  
1365 loss of horses (for those pirates spread destruction throughout the Christian shores of the Mediterranean), his return to his island was instantly followed by a letter to the procurator general for all the receivers to be commanded forthwith to send in all the responsions, and arrears, and debts, they could possibly collect, with whatever they could get on credit, to enable the order to resist the invasion of Rhodes that was on the point of ensuing by the Sultan of Babylon, in league with the Turks;<sup>3</sup> so that in this most urgent danger the monies were absolutely requisite to its very existence, and this official note bearing the date of

<sup>1</sup> Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 466.

<sup>2</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. iii., anno 1365.

<sup>3</sup> Id.: Id., anno 1366.



the twentieth of March, 1365,<sup>1</sup> demonstrates how expeditious Sir Raymond was, to have planned and executed such a feat in two winter months. A few weeks later he wrote letters to the Pope, the Emperor, the Kings of France, Hungary, England, Scotland, Arragon, Dacia, Poland, the Queen of Naples, the two Archdukes of Austria, and the Doge of Venice, to each a separate letter in Latin, imploring their aid for Christendom.<sup>2</sup> But what did that noble commencement avail? The letters were unattended to, and worse still, the division into Languages began already to produce its dreadful effects. That between the Languages of Provence and of Italy had got high, so began his doubts of his own ability for the grand mastership, and that another of more skill would succeed better, and he wished to abdicate; but the Pope refused his consent.<sup>3</sup> Do not ask what the Pope had to do with it; for the Pope was their spiritual head, and then stood very high in the estimation of all men.

In 1366, some refugee Armenians were permitted to establish in the island of Samos, and we see what industrious Bosio could not have seen; a brief to

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxxvi.

<sup>2</sup> Bosio : par. ii., lib. iii., anno 1366.

<sup>3</sup> Id. : Id., anno 1373.



the emperor instigating him to assist the Hospitallers.<sup>1</sup> In the same 1366, the order sends to buy horses at Naples to take to Rhodes, where, also, a chapter general met, in which the turcopolier was a Sir William Middleton.<sup>2</sup> Fact is we find the grand master at Genoa, with Urban V., and the Admiral and Prior of Rhodes, and many knights of the order, all of them lodged in its house in that city, in 1367.<sup>3</sup> Not that Gregory XI. did not remove the Papal Court from Avignon, passing by Genova, a little later, but also Urban V. had done the same, but returned and died in France.<sup>4</sup> In the disputes between Provence and those of Italy, an appeal was made to his Holiness, who deputed two cardinals to hear and decide; so that Languages had too soon the result of trials out of the order,<sup>5</sup> and if followed up had superseded grand masters and general chapters altogether, and completely undermined the first basis of its independence. What was it but not to be governed by themselves, or representatives, but by another?

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., xii. — Giunt, ii. 405.—Appendix, cxxxvii.

<sup>2</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. iii., anno 1366.

<sup>3</sup> Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 465.—Bosio.—Petrarch.—Append., Num. cxxxvi.

<sup>4</sup> Platina: iii. 242.

<sup>5</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. 3, anno 1372.



In 1373, Smyrna was again in the hands of the Christians, and threatened with a mighty invasion of Turks by sea and land, the then Pope writes to the Hospitallers to guard it well, since to their care it was confided.<sup>1</sup> This in February, but in June he begs the grand master not to assist the Genoese, who were going to attack Cyprus.<sup>2</sup> And at that very same day and place, but probably at a late hour, he receives and answers an embassy from the grand master, and blames his knights, and that Raymond himself ought to restrain their freedom of speech, and that besides this written brief, which he sends by a trusty ecclesiastic, there will also be another ecclesiastic, who will let him know 1373 the same, still more seriously, by word of mouth.<sup>3</sup>

Early in 1374,<sup>4</sup> there was a chapter of the order holden at Avignon, at which Berenger did not attend, for "*his great age*,<sup>5</sup> but in which, though its being not in Rhodes, but on a foreign shore, testified it lay under foreign influence, nothing improper

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xiii.—Giunt. Vatic. Secret.

<sup>2</sup> Id., Id., Id., xiv. Id. Id. —Appendix, cxxxviii.

<sup>3</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xv.—Giunt. Vatic. Secret.—Appendix, cxxxix.

<sup>4</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxxxi.

<sup>5</sup> Seb. Paoli : Osservazioni, ii. 465.



or disagreeable to him was enacted, so that his death was preceded by a gleam of content. He expired in the spring of that year; for then he was succeeded by Sir Robert de Julliac, Grand Prior of France, elected in Rhodes, but at that time in his priory. So passing by, he did his homage to the Pope, from whom he received the charge  
 1374 of Smyrna, in the name of his order, with an assignment on the tithes of the kingdom of Cyprus of one thousand livres annually, to maintain the garrison.<sup>1</sup> Not, certainly, of the hardest, yet hard, at first sight, to find *Alis* for Hales—Sir Robert Hales, who became the twenty-fourth Prior of England, towards the close of Edward the Third's reign.<sup>2</sup> The Scotch as well as the Irish commanderies formed an integral part of the English Language, and its grand priory the grand priory of England. Only the first of the Irish commanders was indulged with title of prior, in courtesy. Scotland did not think an empty ambiguity worth having, though its kings squabbled about it.<sup>3</sup>

Julliac indubitably was alive in August, 1376,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 466.

<sup>2</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. iii., anno 1376.—Appendix, xxx.

<sup>3</sup> Id.: Id., anno 1376.

<sup>4</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxxx.—Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 466.—Appendix, cxl.



since we have it under his own hand in the document inserted in the bull: so that at all events they are a little in error who died in the preceding June.<sup>1</sup> But be it permitted to add, for my own part, that he continued grand master some days after March, 1377, date of the bull which still calls Heredia Castellan d'Emposta; who, however, became elected to the grand mastery before the 21st of August next ensuing, of which he is the *fili Magister*.<sup>2</sup>

Gregory XI., as Vertot has it, with some not unusual want of exactitude<sup>3</sup> as to dates—to disdain which may in his time have passed for genius—sailed from Marseilles, reached Genoa on the 18th October, 1376, landed at Corneto, and spent the Christmas there, and entered the mouth of the Tiber early in January, when Heredia, then Grand Admiral of the order, Castellan d'Emposta, is described as a hale old man with a white beard, holding the ship's helm,<sup>4</sup> and, as ambassador of the order, bearing its standard—real Gonfalon of the Church—on the entrance into Rome on the 17th of

<sup>1</sup> Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 466.

<sup>2</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxxxii.—Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 541.—Appendix, cxli.

<sup>3</sup> Vertot: v. 289.

<sup>4</sup> Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 466.—Appendix, cxlii.



January, in 1377.<sup>1</sup> His election in the next spring or summer at Rhodes made him instantly set out; for until then he had been a resident at the Papal Court as the order's ambassador, and Governor of Avignon and the contiguous country for the Pope. Also he went on extraordinary embassies to France, England, Spain, his native country; but however frequent, his usual residence was Rome.<sup>2</sup> If it were to convert an able dangerous opponent into a zealous friend, it was surely wise policy; since, though a knight of the order, he was at all times ready to sacrifice its interest to that of the Court he served; which being the central point of Christendom at that time, and he its prime minister, he had acquired the personal esteem of nearly every noted statesman in Europe; and having added great opulence to his elevated birth and mental qualifications, he was considered a personage of extreme distinction. The misfortunes of his latter years notwithstanding, the Knights of Rhodes chose well, and he will for ever be cited as one of the best and most worthy of their noble grand masters. That his brother was Grand Justiciary of Arragon, and their ancestry of the most illustrious of Spanish grandees, is little to what he was himself. Before

<sup>1</sup> Platina : iii. 251.—Muratori : Note D.

<sup>2</sup> Bosio : par. ii., lib. iii., anno 1376.



leaving Rome, he may have been given the bull LXXXI. to regulate his conduct at Rhodes; which he did not reach,<sup>1</sup> since on his way he aided the Venetians to take Patras, and afterwards in an incursion into the Morea<sup>2</sup> with the Christian army, he, near Corinth, fell into an ambush, and was made prisoner by the Turks; who, on his refusal to allow his knights to pay a considerable sum as they offered, with three priors as hostages for the payment, he, thanking them, opposed it as contrary to the statutes and injurious to the treasury, so that, if ransomed at all, it should be by his own family, not by the order; for that though it was by a stratagem, in no fair battle, yet in whatever way, a knight imprisoned is a knight dead. On which the infidels carried him into the Albanian mountains, where he underwent the harshest slavery,<sup>3</sup> not however for several years, as pretended; and his family must have sent his ransom the instant they heard it, since he had got to

<sup>1</sup> Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 467.

<sup>2</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. iii., anno 1378.

<sup>3</sup> Yet not improbable is Bosio's version, quoting Foxanus, that the grand master was at last persuaded to abide by the first agreement, and left three hostages while the money was coming from Rhodes, which it did immediately, and in every likelihood was repaid as soon as it could come from Spain. The hostages (who all three volunteered), were, the Prior of England, of St. Gilles, and of Rome. Bosio: par. ii., lib. iii., anno 1378.



1381 Rhodes before the 28th of March, 1381, which is the date of his letter to the order's captain general in Smyrna to take and try for high treason not a knight, but an officer in the pay of that town, and if found wholly or in part guilty, have the condign sentence put into execution instantly.<sup>1</sup> In a chapter general during his absence, it was ordained that the knight or servant-at-arms, who did not keep his horse and a man to groom him properly, and who had not his arms in order, and did not exercise himself frequently in shooting, should neither receive food from the order nor money.<sup>2</sup>

If a senex in 1377, what was Heredia four years older? Yet no doubt this command alone suffices to show he had the promptitude and decision of youth. He was moreover a fine example that a lofty mind does not become penurious from age; quite the contrary, as indeed should always naturally be, for the longer man lives, the more he sees how passing little is what can be bought with money, speaking merely of this world—nor love, nor friendship; nor anything of the honours worth having—much less wisdom or things truly valuable have their price in gold; fair fame, peace of mind,

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxxxii.—Appendix, exliiii.

<sup>2</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. 3, anno 1380.



one moment's tranquil sleep, can money buy them? What veritable dross then is money! Money-maker as he had been in his youth and manhood—even to upwards of fifty, and consequently enormously rich, and *crescit amor nummi quanto ipsa pecunia crescit*, he showed himself generous and splendid, the very reverse of avaricious, from the moment made grand master; as careful of the order's interests and privileges, as before neglectful of them; and parsimonious as to its treasury, was most liberal of his own; and his splendour and generosity always went on increasing to his last breath, and he ended by becoming remarkable for something not unlike prodigality! And so it is without the least wonder, as to the brightest-minded; because the longer they exist, the clearer they discern the petty value to be put on human wealth—what a trifling portion of happiness it can purchase, if any; how shallow, fleeting, utterly insignificant, are what the purse-proud term riches! But finding the majority of his order in favour of Urban VI. as legitimately Pope, however personally tyrannical and finally odious.<sup>1</sup> The great

<sup>1</sup> Very ferocious; accused of having had five of the suspected cardinals tied up in as many sacks, and thrown into the sea during his voyage from Naples to Genoa.—Bosio: par. ii. lib. iv, anno 1384.



schism beginning in 1379, Urban died, and other Popes too, but the schism went on and lasted forty years, with infinite evils to all Christendom, and doubts and disputes among the best men.<sup>1</sup> Naples, Savoy, France, Arragon, Castile, taking one side, and Germany, England, Hungary, Poland, and the greatest part of Italy, the other, Heredia resolved on going to Europe, to endeavour to restore peace; yet, before he left Rhodes, took an oath not to give any place or exert magisterial authority in any way or dispose of the public property, till back on the island, according to a statute made in the late chapter convened in his own name; and carried several of the chiefs of the order with him to observe his conduct, of which they could on no occasion disapprove, for it was always in the highest degree disinterested and eminently noble. What passed in his interior, none can say; but if he rather inclined to the country he was native of, and that in which he resided so many years, it was no marvel; and if he avoided exposure to the violence of party, his companions never objected to that prudence; and in retiring to Avignon and his old friends, he appears to have renounced politics entirely, and taken a resolution to keep exclusively in

<sup>1</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. iii.; anno 1379.



private life. Never more do we hear of his meddling with the world's affairs. Others used his name indeed, but he remained perfectly passive. It is probable he abdicated about 1383, though we have no decided proof,<sup>1</sup> but he is said to have lived until 1399; and during those final years, sent two ships at his own expense for the Smyrnian war, as well as large gifts of money to the order's treasury several times, without inquiring what party reigned, or who governed at Rhodes. Farewell then, brave and glorious Heredia! Farewell, high-minded nobleman. If thou didst take the wrong side, yet so did also a large minority of thine order, eight cardinals, and many of the finest countries in Europe, including the whole of thy native country, Spain, and dear, lovely France! Hard for thee to decide!

Sir Richard Caracciolo, a Neapolitan gentleman, was made the thirty-third grand master; but 1383 appears never to have been at Rhodes. And all recounted of him is, that in 1391 he established a house of Hospitallers at Florence; nor could any of his acts have been of high worth, since they were

<sup>1</sup> This is the critical date according to some, when the nomination to various dignities, which until then had been conferred by the chapters general, was allotted to the grand masters in council.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. iv.. anno 1383.



all subsequently annulled and forgotten.<sup>1</sup> And as he was born in Italy, there too he died in 1395, as his sepulchre testifies on the Aventine.<sup>2</sup> Of Caracciolo's grand mastery no one has a right to demur, leaving him out, like Vertot; since the inscription had the authority of the Holy See *ipso facto* by permitting it, and a cardinal renewed it when almost worn out by time.<sup>3</sup>

Then Sir Bartlo Caraffa bore the title of *locum-tenens* for a few months, as his tomb—also on  
1395 the Aventine—shows; of whom we know little, except that he was a lover of young lions, and two years before his death, had a letter from the Common Council of Florence excusing their not being able to send him any, the cubs having died that winter of the cold; but promising him the next litter, that republic having the breed.<sup>4</sup> Yet since not he, it must have been a *locum-tenens* of his, though under the name of grand master, who was at the unfortunate battle of Nicopolis, where Bajazet, previous to his conflict with Timour, had to withstand the united strength of France, Venice, Papacy, Hungary, Greece, Germany, and the Knights of

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros, ii., Num. lxxxiv.

<sup>2</sup> Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 467.

<sup>3</sup> Id., Id., ii. 467.

<sup>4</sup> Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 542.—Gian. Villani: x. clxxxv.



Rhodes. The Venetian, Papal, and Greek fleets acted under Moncenigo; but French, Germans, Hungarians, came overland.<sup>1</sup> And the knights, always ready for action, either on sea or sod, as if amphibious, left their galleys with maritime efficiency to increase the Christian army, and disembarking their horses, marched with their grand master at their head, and joined the allies; who undertook the siege of what has since been called Previsa, but then Nicopolis.<sup>2</sup> The valiant Turk who held it made frequent sallies; and the camp of Giaours, besides extreme debauchery, fell into the carelessness which dissoluteness causes; the officers continually with lewd women, and the privates drunk.<sup>3</sup> The French were composed of the first heroes of France, including Marshal Boucicault and two princes of the blood. The Christian allies, amounting in all to a hundred thousand men, of whom there were sixty thousand horse, the choicest body in Christendom. The German knights under Zollern, and the Hungarian Hussars under their king. There was good reason to be proud of that army; yet finally it but produced a new Mansourah. The French, with uncalculating bravery, and puffed up

<sup>1</sup> Michaud: Hist., v. 210.

<sup>2</sup> Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 591.—Appendix, cxlvii.

<sup>3</sup> Vertot: vi. 323.



with the indiscipline of free-livers, allowed themselves to be surprised; and then a most splendid charge of the cavalry, headed by the Count of Nevers, but contrary to prudent advice, and not irresistible, as he flattered himself, was followed by an overthrow the most complete. The van of the Turkish forces, composed (as usual) of their worst troops, Nevers easily breaking it, imagined he had broken the whole Moslem army; but upon reaching the top of the hillock, saw them in full array and vast numbers; the Janissaries nearly intact. It was too late for a retreat; so the fierce lions became timorous hares,<sup>1</sup> and were cut to pieces. Little quarter. Of the Christians most slain, the rest taken; and if the King of Hungary and the grand master got into a boat, it was by the greatest exertions of his knights, who in effecting it were every one killed; and the boat down by the canal reached a galley, that conveyed the pair to the island of Rhodes. As for the few prisoners, they were called up the next day and massacred, except twenty-five of the French leaders, from whom an enormous ransom was expected.<sup>2</sup> And when the ransom came, and the Duke of Nevers had an audience on

<sup>1</sup> Vertot: vi. 330.

<sup>2</sup> *Annales Mediolensis ad annum 1395.*—Andrea Gataro: *Storia di Padova*, ed. Muratori.—*Bib. Crois.*, ii. 638.



his liberty, the fierce conqueror refused to accept his word not to make war on him, and with the utmost pride exclaimed: "On the contrary, the sooner the better; you will find me always prepared, and ready to win a second Nicopolis."<sup>1</sup> The Christians in truth lost the battle and twenty thousand men. In 1396 was thirty-fourth grand master, Sir Philip de Naillac, of Aquitain; and to reconcile all the extreme parties, it was then that Heredia died.<sup>2</sup>

Naillac went to Rhodes, where his conciliating manners did much good; and thence sent trusty ambassadors and agents, and one of the ablest knights, to prepare a desperate defence against a more terrible than Bajazet; and the Tartar, not from fanaticism (for of no religion was he, whatever the Persian pretend), but from sheer despotism, and because he wished to domineer over every other sovereign, and could not bear that not only Greek Constantinople, but also a small island, was defended by the water from his authority, resolved to attack Smyrna, the rather that it had resisted the Turk triumphantly for years; and that a despotic punctilio was uppermost in Timour's mind is clear

<sup>1</sup> Bosio : par. ii., lib. iv., anno 1397.—Froissart.—Michaud : Hist., v. 213.

<sup>2</sup> Seb. Paoli : Serie, ii. 468.



from his declaring he would be contented if his banners were set on the hissar, or citadel, which is indeed the upper Smyrna. But the knight commanding there, could of course assent to no such thing.<sup>1</sup> So, subsequent to various attempts, Timour got on horseback, though it was the very depth of winter, and undertook the direction of the siege himself; he being a great captain, according to the Arabian Ali, and indeed an incomparable hero—at least equal to Cyrus, Alexander, or Cæsar, according to his French biographers;<sup>2</sup> and after divers mines had been ineffectual, a breach was effected in the ramparts, communication with the sea cut off, and the town taken by storm, and the hissar as well, with a tremendous slaughter of every human creature within its walls—many in the heat, more in cold blood—murdered, man, woman, child. Even razed the place itself, in a considerable degree. That those of the order who were there were slain, is not surprising, though mournful. To their devotions at daybreak, and ere noon corpses. They captivated their will to obedience unto the death, doubly their duty, both as soldiers and as knights. Most valiant to the last. They fell for their own honour, and the protection of Christendom. A

<sup>1</sup> Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 539.

<sup>2</sup> Sainctyon: Hist. du Grand Tamerlan, ed. 1679.



statute of theirs expressly forbids them any sign of lamentation. Still their historians may complain of the apathy of the persons who left them in such straits. Those persons had the excuse of the communications cut off. But why did they wait for that? Shame on Europe's miserable parties and ingratitude! Yet the noble defence is said to have a little deferred Constantinople's evil day, and perhaps saved the rest of Christendom. The Turks were bad enough, but far worse the Tartars. Timour himself may in several things have been superior to his countrymen. The "iron cage" and all about it may be mere fable; but if it be true, as universally related, that he had Bajazet's favourite son butchered, did he not share their sanguinary disposition? A young man of no conspicuous family having entered by the dispense of one Pope, and being sent by another with an injunction to make him shield-bearer of the whole order, the knights did so, though grumbling at what they declared contrary to their statutes—growing pretensions, which, if they almost always allowed, it was always with remonstrances and regret. John of Perusia was a noble-hearted person, and well worthy of promotion, whatever his birth; for from the moment of their profession, all the knights were on complete equality, nor was it allowed even



to recur to past proofs, and preceding rank was waived. His converse with the choicest spirits of Christendom, and to be accustomed to the best tastes and customs of the whole civilised world, soon put him quite at his ease with his companions. We are wrong in thinking there was no civilisation at that time, because so near to what are forsooth called the dark ages. There was, but restricted to a few. And who were those few, if not the highest-bred families in Europe, of which Rhodes contained the choice? Their aristocratic youth might surely lead the fashions, and practise whatever of civilisation existed. That they used table plate we have seen, and very costly foreign furs and embellishments for their houses, horses, arms, armour; and two centuries earlier, we find their grand master sending a courier from Jerusalem to Bohemia, with the keys of one of their fortified castles, to King Wratislau, in order that he and his might rest in it as long as they pleased, for that it stood on the road he had to pass from Asia Minor into Syria. Now what more splendid hospitality? Would it not be a grand thing at present from England to France? But then it was from south of Jordan to north of the Danube. If travelling enlighten the mind (as it does), who travelled more than those knights? Why, they



were always travelling. Their head-quarters displayed the best of different customs, and had all the chief tongues then spoken in Europe, and others that are dead there, or were never living there. If gold forks were used by the fine ladies in Constantinople, let us recollect that at that exact time one of the knights was its emperor. Who had them, if not he? And the famous Frederick I. of Germany, did he not delight in saying he was their equal? And the royal houses of France and England, we may be quite sure there was nothing finer in either than with their near relatives, the Knights of Rhodes. If it be learning to be versant with all that remained of old Greece and Rome, and to be excellent in various sciences, but particularly such as relate to war, and not deficient in whatever of literature Europe or modern Greece offered, they had fairer opportunities than then existed anywhere else. If their table was reduced to a single dish, that was at a moment of great exertion, and even then related only to themselves, not to their guests; of whom they had generally more than one imperial or royal personage to maintain in beseeching grandeur. That they had young lions domesticated, hounds trained in France, hawks, and field sports, has been shown, and quite natural. Enough of their do-



mestic architecture remains at Rhodes to shame even our present mansions; and their buildings were only a reminiscence of Palestine, a poor miniature; as Famagosta of Acre. They appear to have been no great writers; but that resort of nations was in itself an academy. Soldiers have occasionally plenty of leisure to study. But Perusia soon closed his career; for he was ordered to Smyrna, where, after that brilliant defence, he and the entire garrison perished to a man. Vertot mistakes the Persian, who only says some of the inhabitants escaped by swimming out to the ship as they did; but the sad truth is, the knights were all killed. Timour's black banner had been hung out; the first day's white meaning *surrender*; the second's red, *blood of a few*; the third's black, *universal destruction*. As to the heads, the difference between Christians and flat-nosed Tartars was patent. Total destruction was the delight of the Tartars. The description of the state in which they had left Hungary about this time makes one's blood curdle. "We began to visit those deserts so lately such populous districts; the steeples were all we found in part standing; so we plodded from steeple to steeple, our only landmarks; for leagues and leagues not a house; high weeds and brushwood everywhere; some remains of roots and



onions, nothing else, in what had been the gardens of the peasantry, only food we could find, and glad to get it; but too generally we had to live on air. We never met a living soul for a long time; we had to sleep beneath no roof, for not one did we ever find; after eight days we entered what used to be a town, but there too, not a single living creature, but only bones and heads: at last the King of Hungary arrived with some knights of Rhodes, and then we were assured the Tartars were gone."<sup>1</sup>

Naillac in person led a party against the fort, held by some Tartars left stationed there by Timour when he returned to Samarcand; and, having exterminated them, built a new, very strong fortress on what is supposed by many to be the precise site of the ancient Halicarnassus, and called it St. Peter's of the Freed; and about 1399 it became the sole asylum for all enslaved Christians to escape to along that coast of Asia Minor. The knights kept there a famous race of very large watch-dogs, who learned to distinguish men, with an instinct at least equal to that of those of the Grand St. Bernard. A Christian refugee, having thrown himself into the bottom of

<sup>1</sup> Joannis Thurocz: Chron. Hungarum.—Bib. Crois., iii. 215.—Rogerii Hungari Chron.



a well, or rather cistern, to avoid the Turks, who pursued him, he must have died of hunger, but for one of those sagacious and faithful animals, who, during several days, threw him down the greater portion of the bread given to him every morning for his own nourishment; until the servant, who dealt out the breads, surprised to see the dog got leaner every day, set to find out what he did with his food, and discovered the truth to his astonishment. So the good mastiff acquired his niche in history; of which who shall deprive him?

This celebrated fort had seven lines of bastions and walls landward, and on that side might be really inexpugnable; whoever got within it, must have passed seven gates. Over the inmost, however, was inscribed an avowal that to keep it, required more than human ability: *Nisi Dominus custodierat, frustra vigilat qui custodit*; but towards the sea was the point of attack; yet to take it, you must first have taken Rhodes itself. *Saint Pierre de Libertini* was now its name, and its site was won the very same year that Smyrna fell—1399.<sup>1</sup>

Later, Naillac's wise policy preserved Cyprus

<sup>1</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. iv. — Seb. Paoli: Notiz. Geogr., ii. 499.—Appendix, cxlviii.



from a civil war, of which Venetians, Genoese, and French, were blowing the coals.<sup>1</sup> 1403

The despot of the Morea—a Porphyrogenitus—wishing to sell his dominions, got the stipulated sum from the order, partly in money, and partly in jewels; but the Spartans refused to be sold, or let the magisterial commissaries into the town at all. So the bargain had to be broken, and the value refunded; but the imperial swindler having spent or hidden the bulk of it, the order had much trouble to obtain back their own, and only by quotas and after years.<sup>2</sup>

Much praised then at Rhodes, chiefly in a peace between the emperor and other Christian powers, as the foremost of the pacific diplomatists, was a Sir Peter Holt, Turcopolier;<sup>3</sup> and eventually he became Prior of Ireland.<sup>4</sup>

Naillac returned to Europe for the Council of Pisa, in 1409, and the conclave there which he guarded.<sup>5</sup> The Papacy subsequently revoking

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxxxv.

<sup>2</sup> Id., ii., Num. lxxxvii. — Bosio: par. ii., lib. iii.

<sup>3</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lxxxviii.—Appendix, cxi. —Bosio: par. ii., lib. iv.

<sup>4</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. iii. p. 82.

<sup>5</sup> Appendix, cxliv.—Platina: iii., 293, etc.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. iv, anno 1409.—Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii., 468. Y. Z.



much—perhaps as much as it conscientiously could—he undertook various long voyages and journeys, including to England, where the crown gives a safe-conduct for him, and a suite of a hundred persons, and their horses, goods, and harness, on the 8th of March, 1410; and finally at Ancona in Italy, in the last days of 1419, he pleaded the aforesaid revocations, and persuaded all he could assemble of his till then refractory knights, to recognise the reigning Pope (Martin V.), which put an end to the schism; and pardon was promulgated, and a seal on the past.<sup>1</sup> Back at Rhodes, after an absence of eleven years, he convened a chapter general there in 1420; where divers statutes of great moment were made, amongst which particularly deserving of notice are:—

1.—That no knight under what pretext soever can cite a companion before any other tribunals, ecclesiastical or civil, than those of his order alone.

2.—That none but a member can be present at its chapter general. And in three months after it he died in June, 1421.<sup>2</sup> Able prince as his diplomatic labours show, having been ambassador for

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. xcii.—Bosio : par. ii., lib. iv., anno 1420.—Appendix, cxlv.

<sup>2</sup> Seb. Paoli : Serie, ii. 468.—Statuti Tit. vii. 10, 41.—Bosio : par. ii., lib. iv. 138.—Vertot : vi. 377.



both the King of France and Duke of Burgundy in the Levant, and for the Papacy at the Courts of Paris and London;<sup>1</sup> and Naillac too it was that negotiated the treaty of peace between Genova and Cyprus,<sup>2</sup> and brought to pass other laudable matters.<sup>3</sup>

END OF VOL. II.

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros.

<sup>2</sup> Id., ii., Num. lxxxv.

<sup>3</sup> Id., ii., Num. lxxxvi.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. iv.,  
anno 1414 and 1418.



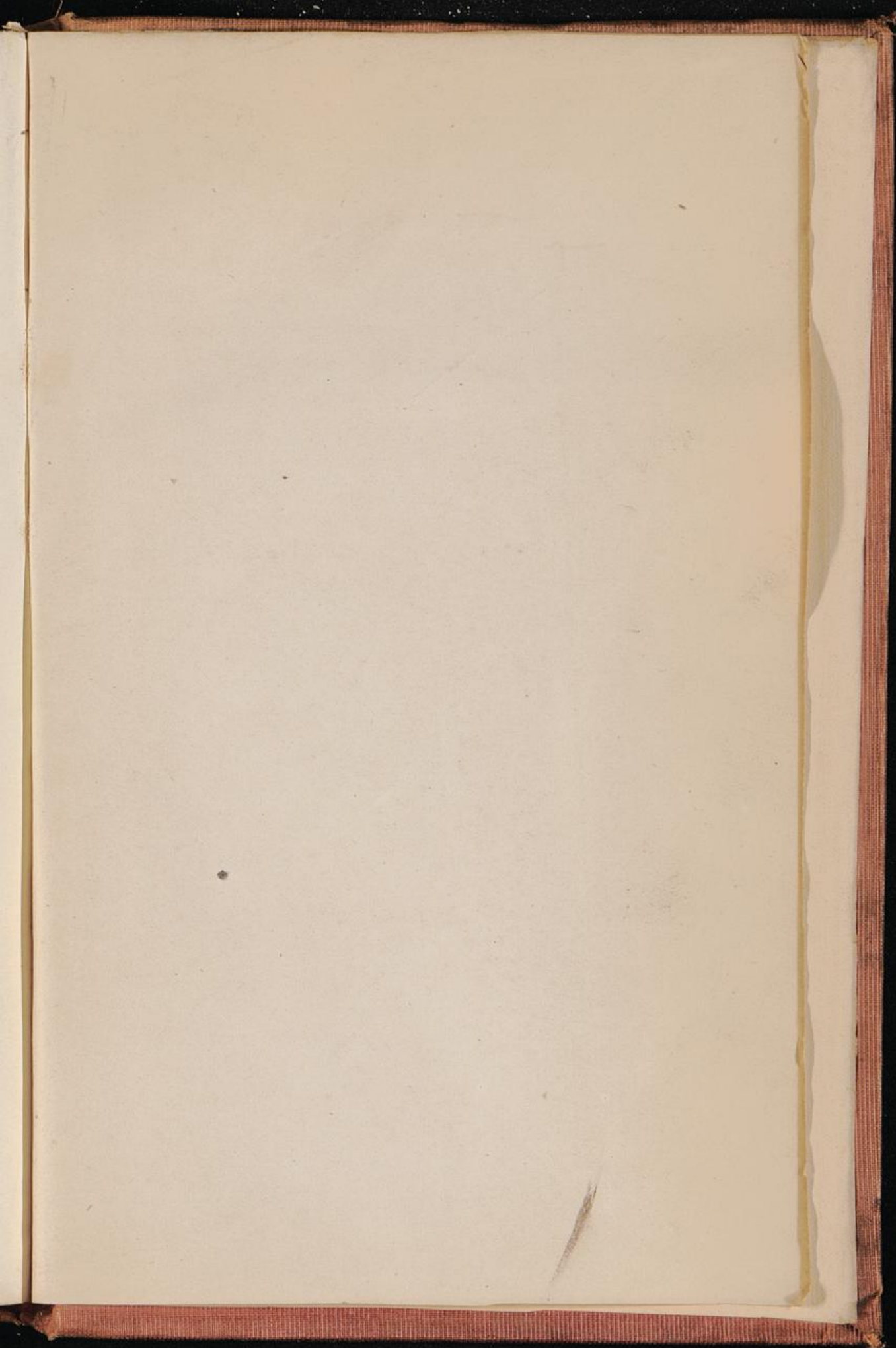
both the King of France and Duke of Burgundy  
in the Levant and for the Papacy at the Council  
of Lyons and Avinion; and finally, too, it was that  
negotiated the treaty of peace between Geneva and  
Cypria, and brought to pass other valuable  
matters. He died in 1511, aged 70.

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