

## 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 1396 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.

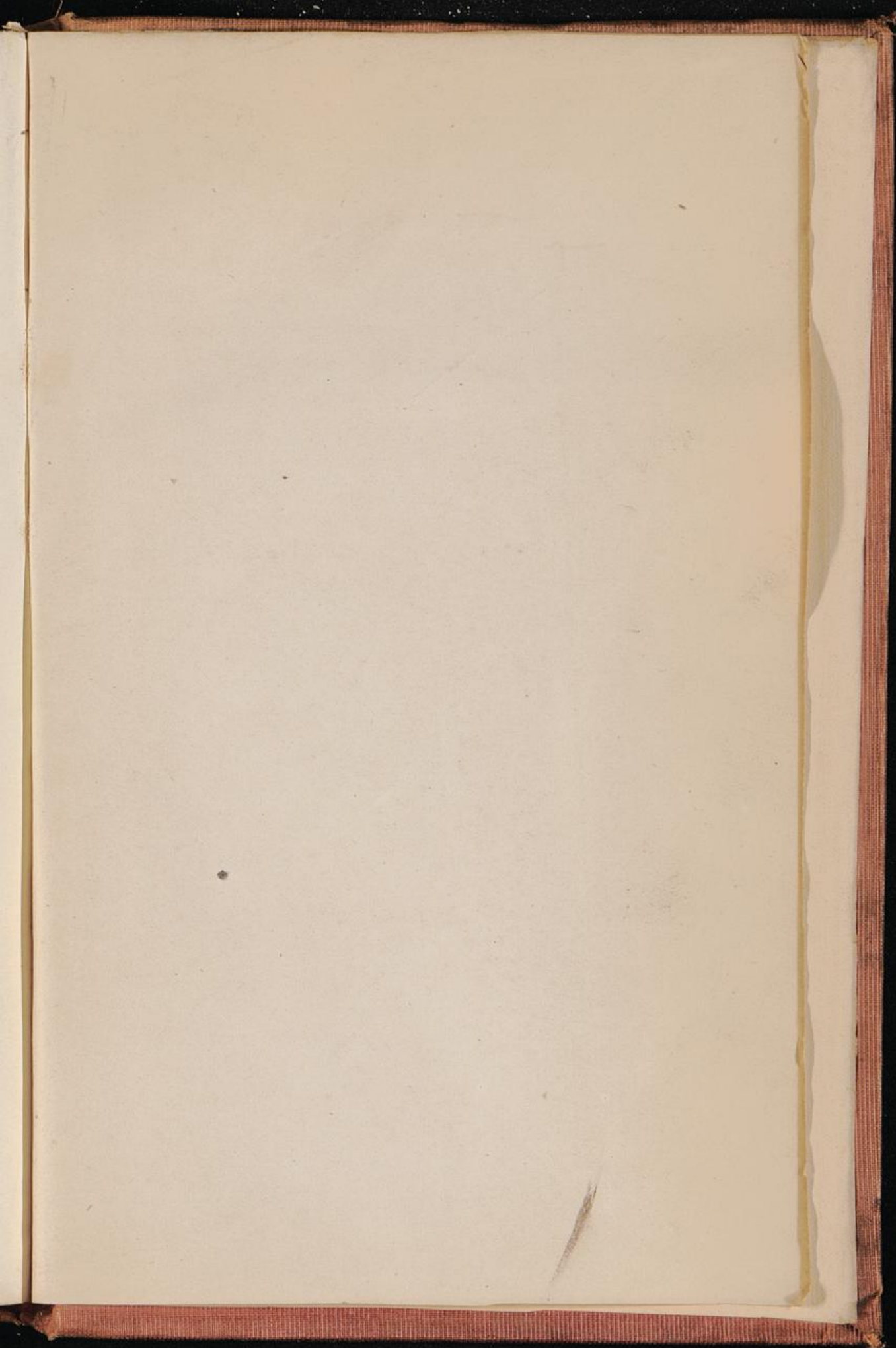
<sup>2</sup> Id., ii., Num. lxxxv.

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















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