

## CHAPTER VI.

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus: 344.—Bosio: par. ii., lib. xviii. 520.—Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 472.

<sup>2</sup> Robertson: Charles V. ii. 181.

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. xviii. 524

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

*“ Sir Philip Villiers de L’Isle Adam to the Turk.”*

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. clix.—Appendix, clxxxix.

<sup>2</sup> Id. : id. Id. clx.—Appendix, cxc.

<sup>3</sup> Fontanus : 347.

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

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

<sup>1</sup> *Memoires de l'Acad. des Inscript.*, t. xxvi.

<sup>2</sup> *Fontanus*: 348.

<sup>3</sup> *Bosio*: par. ii., lib. xviii., anno 1522. 528.

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Bourbon: 629. For the title of this book look at Appendix, exci.

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

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

The commissaries chosen to examine the knights

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. clxii., ii.—Appendix, cxcii.

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

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

Sir John Ranson.

Sir William West (written *Tuest.*)

Sir Nicholas Usil.

Sir Giles Rosel.

Sir Thomas Remberton,

Sir Otho de Monteilli.

Sir John Sotu.

Sir George Emer.

Sir Nicholas Rubert.

Sir George Asfelz.

Sir Michael Roux.

But while the review was taking place, thirteen

<sup>1</sup> Bosio : par. ii., lib. xix., anno 1522., 533.

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> In which duty he was killed.  
Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix., 541.

<sup>3</sup> Fontanus: 352.



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

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

<sup>1</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix. 540.

<sup>2</sup> Fontanus: 354.

<sup>3</sup> Fontanus: 354.

<sup>4</sup> Id.: 354.

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus: 355.

<sup>2</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx, 541.

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

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus : 352.

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus: 355.

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

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus: 355.

<sup>2</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix., anno 1522., 542.

<sup>3</sup> Fontanus: 356.



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

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

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Tercier : 753. *Memoires de l'Acad. des Inscript* : t. xxvi.

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix. 543.

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Cottonian MSS.—Appendix, ccvii.

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

<sup>1</sup> Tercier: 755.—Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscript: t. xxvi.

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

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



married, took him into the order, making him a grand cross at once, and assigning him a large income.<sup>1</sup>

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

<sup>1</sup> Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 571.

common religion of all Christendom. But our lot befel otherwise.<sup>1</sup>

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus : 356.

<sup>2</sup> Bosio : par. ii., lib. xix. 547.

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus: 357.

<sup>2</sup> Id: 359.

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

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus: 357.

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>2</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix. 547.



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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix. 550.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Tercier: Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscript. t. xxvi.

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus : 358.

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

<sup>1</sup> Bosio : par. ii., lib. xx. 571.



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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus : 359.

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Cottonian MS.—Appendix, ccv.

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus : 360.

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Bosio : par. ii., lib. xix. 561.

<sup>2</sup> Fontanus : 360.

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus: 362.

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

<sup>1</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. xix. 555.—Bourbon.

<sup>2</sup> Fontanus: 362.

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus : 367.

<sup>2</sup> Bosio : par. ii., lib. xx. 572.



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 578.—Jehan du Bin dit Malicorne: Bourbon, 13.

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

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

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

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

the sensation of the beaten. You are accustomed to victory, and feel like victors."<sup>1</sup>

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus : 363.

<sup>2</sup> Id. : 368.

<sup>3</sup> Bosio : par. ii., lib. xx. 573, 578.

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



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

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 573.

<sup>2</sup> Id.: id. id., 579.—Bourbon says the Barbacan, (the Spanish) was lost on the 17th of December.

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus : 365.

<sup>2</sup> Id. : 366.

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus : 365.



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

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus: 367.

<sup>2</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 579.—Bourbon: 14.

<sup>3</sup> Tercier: Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscript, vii. 26.

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Bosio : par. ii., lib. xx. 583.

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Bourbon : 19.

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Bosio: par ii., lib. xx. 584.

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

<sup>1</sup> Yet this is denied solemnly by others.

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Bourbon : 25.—Bosio : par. ii., lib. xx. 587.

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Bourbon: 26.

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



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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Bosio : par. ii., lib. xx. 588.    <sup>2</sup> Appendix, ccvii.

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

<sup>1</sup> Bosio : par. ii., lib. xx. 588.—Bourbon : 25.

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus : 374.—Bourbon : 26.

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

<sup>1</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 589.—Bourbon: 27.

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

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

Then L'Isle Adam answered thus:

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Bosio: par. ii., lib. xx. 590.

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



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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Bourbon : 28.—Appendix, ccxiii.

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

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> January 1, New Year's Day.

<sup>2</sup> Bosio : par. ii., lib. xx. 591,—Bourbon : 29.

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Fontanus: 375.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

† Appendix, cciii.