Nearly ready,

CONSTABLE'S MISCELLANY,

VOL. LXV.

CONTAINING

JOURNAL OF A RESIDENCE IN NORMANDY.

In the Years 1829 and 1830.

By J. AUGUSTUS ST JOHN, Esq.

EDINBURGH:

CONSTABLE AND CO. 19, WATERLOO PLACE;
AND HURST, CHANCE, AND CO. LONDON.

Impr:- Sign. Frontiny.

CONSTABLE'S MISCELLANY
OF
Original and Selected Publications
IN THE VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS
— OF —
LITERATURE, SCIENCE, & THE ARTS.
VOL. LXIV.

THE KNIGHTS OF MALTA VOL. II.

ALOF DE VIGNACOURT, GRANDMASTER OF MALTA.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED FOR CONSTABLE & Co EDINBURGH;
AND HURST, CHANCE & Co LONDON.
1831.

Gift of
Francis A. Marden,
New York,
23 March, 1887.

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE KNIGHTS OF MALTA.

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AUTHOR OF "TALES OF A PILGRIM," &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED FOR CONSTABLE AND CO.;

AND HURST, CHANCE AND CO., LONDON.

1830.

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THE

ACHIEVEMENTS

OF

THE KNIGHTS OF MALTA.

CHAPTER I.

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THE Turkish Emperor at last grew tired of deceit, and boldly proclaimed his intention of carrying fire and sword into Rhodes. This was a signal to the Grand-master to order the houses and orchards that adorned the environs of the city to be demolished, lest they should shelter the enemy from the fire of his cannon; and the Rhodians beheld, with patriotic resignation, their gay villas and delicious gardens vanish away before the pioneer's mattock and spade. At the same time, all the standing corn in the country was cut down, that no forage might remain for the Turkish cavalry,

while the peasantry of the island were assigned places of refuge to which they were instructed to retreat on the enemy's debarkation.

The Pasha to whom Mohammed intrusted the command of the expedition, was Mischa Palæologus, a Greek renegade, and near kinsman of the last Christian Emperor of Constantinople. This leader, by his talents, and his hatred of the followers of the faith which he had abandoned, had secured the unlimited confidence of his new sovereign. In a reconnoitring expedition, which he made to Rhodes immediately previous to the sailing of the grand armament, he carried with him three notorious renegades, all men of ability, who had furnished him with minute plans of the city, and who aided him with their counsel. These were, Anthony Meligalle, a Rhodian of noble birth, who had once worn the cross of the Order, * but had been expelled for his flagitious debaucheries; Demetrius Sophian, a Greek skilful in negotiation, and believed to deal in the occult sciences; and George Frapan, a German engineer, famed for his geometrical knowledge. Meligalle did not live to see the result of his perfidy. On the voyage he was smitten with a loathsome disease; his flesh dropped off his bones; and the Turks, seeing him a mass of rottenness, flung him alive into the sea. The information Palæologus acquired by this reconnoisance, satisfied him that the knights were duly prepared for an attack, and only to be subdued by invincible patience and bravery. A detachment which he sent into the interior of the island was intercepted and nearly destroyed; and a descent he subsequently made on the island of Tilo, had an equally disastrous termination, though

* Knolles, vol. i. p. 291.

he battered the castle incessantly for eight days, and sacrificed the bravest of his men in an endeavour to carry it.

In the end of April 1480, the grand armament entered the Lycian waters; and the Rhodian sentinel stationed on the summit of Mount Saint Stephen, a hill two miles from the city, notified by signal that the Crescent was in sight. The fleet amounted to an hundred and sixty high-decked vessels, independent of small craft; and the land forces exceeded eighty thousand men. It rendezvoused at Phisco, in Lycia, and on the the 23d of May finally anchored on the Rhodian coast.

The city of Rhodes is situated on the sea-shore, at the base of a gently sloping hill, and was, at the time the Turks sat down before it, encompassed by a double wall, fortified by thirteen towers and five bastions of great strength and beauty. It possessed two ports of surpassing commodiousness, secured by almost impregnable defences. These defences were the three great towers of Saint John, Saint Michael, and Saint Nicholas, all erected at the extremity of moles, the first and last of which jutted far into the sea, while that of Saint Michael closed the inner port. On the rocks which confined the inner harbour, tradition describes the famous Colossus to have stood.* Two small gulfs flanked the harbour, one of

* The city of Rhodes was famous of old for a colossal statue of the Sun, which was cast in brass by Chares of the city of Lindus, who learnt his art under the famous Lysippus; it was seventy cubits high, and the stride was fifty fathoms wide. This statue was thrown down by an earthquake; and the brass of it, which was carried by a Jew to Alexandria (932 years after its erection), is said to have loaded nine hundred camels.—*Pococke's Des. of the East*, vol. ii. p. 237.

which, termed the Port of the Gallies, was completely shut up by the tower of Saint Nicholas. This tower, which occupied the extremity of a magnificent mole that ran out three hundred paces into the bay, had been built during the grandmastership of Zacosta, and was regarded as the bulwark of the place.* It contained a church, which was of much greater antiquity, within the walls. The city was divided into the Higher and Lower Towns. In the former stood the Grandmaster's palace, in itself a citadel; the inns of the languages of the Order; and a great number of churches, among which that of Saint John conspicuously displayed its magnificent fane. In the Lower town dwelt all the secular persons, craftsmen, and mariners; and in this division the population was of course more dense, and the buildings less splendid. It was a city, in short, to use the words of a writer describing its ancient splendour, which might be, at the same time, fortified against the attacks of war, and ornamented as a palace. †

The Turkish forces disembarked with all the pomp and circumstance of a triumphal pageant. The fleet covered the whole circumjacent sea, and the troops were rowed to land, to the sound of tabrets and trumpets, under cover of an incessant cannonade, which the artillery of the forts briskly returned. The knights, at the head of sixteen thousand well-disciplined soldiers, partly stipendiaries from France, England, Spain, Italy and Germany, and partly native militia, many of whom were Jews, ‡ met them fearlessly on the beach, and even flung themselves, sword in hand, into the sea, to oppose their landing. The waves were dyed with blood;

* Knolles. † Strabo, lib. 14. ‡ Aristides in Rhodiaca.

but the numerical superiority of the Turks was irresistible on the open strand. Descents were made simultaneously at various points; and the Rhodians, seeing the whole shore swarming with turbaned combatants, reluctantly retired within their ramparts, while the Moslems strongly intrenched themselves on Saint Stephen's Mount. Having landed their artillery, several parties made reconnoisances under the very cannon of the ramparts, but were driven back, with slaughter, to the camp. In a vigorous sortie for this purpose, commanded by the Viscount de Monteil, Demetrius Sophian, the Greek renegade, was slain. A cannon-ball having killed his horse, he was dashed to the ground; and, being encumbered by his armour, the Rhodian cavalry galloped over him, and trampled him to death. In the same sally, a body of Turkish Spahis surrounded the Chevalier de Murat, who had dismounted to strip Sophian's body, and cut off his head. †

A narrow scrutiny of the defences of the city having impressed Palæologus with an idea that it was barely pregnable by the usual arts of war, he resorted to corruption, to secure himself a coadjutor within the walls. George Frapan, or, as he was familiarly termed, "Master George," the German engineer—the only survivor of the three renegades who had sailed with the Pasha from the Hellespont—having superintended the erection of several batteries, and given counsel as to the best mode of carrying on the siege, bethought himself of the desperate expedient of entering the city under false pretences, and performing the base duties of a spy. The Pasha readily assented to the project; and

† Knolles.

Frapan accordingly presented himself at one of the gates as a deserter from the Turkish camp, and implored protection. The Grandmaster being made acquainted with the circumstance, ordered him to be admitted, and brought directly into his presence. He was publicly interrogated before the council; and being a man of a noble port and subtle eloquence, several of the knights were inclined to give him credit for sincerity, when he declared, that his heart was torn by remorse for having, for the sake of base lucre, joined the Infidel standard, and that he aspired to suffer all the torments that barbarian ingenuity could devise, should the city be taken, rather than point another cannon against its sacred walls. But the Grandmaster was not to be won upon by the mere speciousness of a handsome exterior and a fluent tongue. He commended the penitent, with a confidential air, for the remorse he manifested, and affected to pay great deference to his advice; but, privately, he regarded him as a worthless apostate, who, for the sake of gain, was capable of violating the most solemn engagements. In this opinion he was confirmed, by the apparent eagerness of the besiegers to malign the German, which they attempted to do by shooting billets fixed to arrows into the town, containing the words, "Beware of Master George!" It occurred to D'Aubusson, that the enemy calculated on these warnings being received as proofs favourable to the deserter, and likely to recommend him to the confidence of the knights; and, to guard against all hazard from treachery, and at the same time to turn to good account the great knowledge of the military art which Frapan possessed, six soldiers were appointed to watch his motions with unceasing vigi-

lance, while several officers of artillery were instructed to note every remark that fell from him, likely to be useful in the defence of the place.

Meanwhile, the Pasha had commenced battering the Tower of Saint Nicholas with his heaviest cannon. The seaward rampart bore the iron shower uninjured, but the landward wall was soon shattered into a mountain of rubbish, into which the balls sank as if it had been a bank of sand. The Grandmaster, regarding this tower as the key of the city, reinforced the gallant band that defended it with the flower of the Order, headed by the commander Caretto, an Italian knight of tried valour; and eventually threw himself into it, along with his brother, the Lord de Monteil. On the 9th of June, two hours before daybreak, the Pasha, aware of the dilapidated state of the landward wall, ordered his troops to advance to the assault. A flotilla of small vessels landed the assailants on the mole, and, lighted by the blaze of the Rhodian cannon, which suddenly opened upon them with murderous precision, they rushed with terrible shouts towards the breach. The pile of rubbish was so steep as to require ladders to surmount it; but the fanaticism of the Turks was roused; and, man after man, they sprung, scimitar in hand, into the deadly gap, to be hurled the next moment, blackened and mangled corpses, into the ditch. In the most perilous part of the breach stood the Grandmaster, exercising the vigilance of a general, and at the same time fighting like a common man-at-arms. In the heat of the combat, a piece of stone, splintered from the rampart by a cannon-ball, struck off his helmet, on which, with the self-possession of a hero, he coolly borrowed the steel cap of the nearest soldier. The commander Caretto, in the name of his brethren, im-

plored him to take more care of his person, as on his life depended the security of the city; but he answered, by claiming the post of danger as his right, and by hinting, that the Order need never despair while it had the power of nominating so brave a knight as Caretto as his successor. Galled by musketry, crushed to pieces beneath huge rocks and beams, and burned to the marrow by blazing naphtha and boiling oil, the storm-bands vanished rank after rank—and still new assailants clambered into the breach. Those who could not reach the foot of the wall, stationed themselves at a short distance; and while some, lighted by the flashing of the artillery, singled out the Christian knights, with their muskets and cross-bows, others threw cramp-irons fastened to cords upon the ramparts, and dragged those soldiers whom they chanced to hook headlong to the ground. In the midst of this terrible combat, several Rhodian fire-ships which lay moored, ready to drop, on a preconcerted signal, into the midst of the Turkish flotilla, were set adrift, and in a short space the Pasha beheld his gallies in flames. The sight of this conflagration revived the courage of the besieged. The cannon of the city discharged an incessant shower of balls on the hostile barks, while the musketeers stationed in the Tower of Saint Nicholas, shot down every turbaned warrior that gained the breach. Disheartened at length by the fall of their bravest leaders, the Moslems abandoned the assault, and, to escape the murderous fire that swept the mole, flung themselves into the sea. Only a small part escaped. The rest were either drowned in their precipitate flight, or struck down by the Christian artillery on the beach.

Foiled in this enterprise, the Pasha altered his

plan of attack. Simultaneous assaults were next made against the city itself; one on the quarter of the Jews; the other on the post of the Italian knights. The latter was merely a feint; but the Jews' wall, though it was twenty-eight feet thick, speedily crumbled into ruin under a furious cannonade. The basilisks and great cannon pulverized the stones to powder; and so tremendous was their roar, that it echoed westward to Lango, and eastward to Chateau-Rouge, a hundred miles over the sea. Enormous stones were thrown into the city, and penetrated the houses to their foundations, scattering death and desolation in their wake. As the women and children were greatly terrified by these projectiles, the Grandmaster prepared a retreat for them, in the quarter farthest from the Turkish batteries. This he accomplished, by roofing a vacant space between the wall and the houses with huge beams, laid tier over tier, from which the stones discharged by the enemy's mortars rebounded without harm. To pay the Pasha in his own coin, an immense wooden machine was constructed, which threw blocks of stone of a prodigious size into the Turkish lines. Whole ranks were crushed by these enormous balls, which frequently pierced so deeply into the earth, as to smother the Turkish miners in their chambers. This engine the knights jocularly named "The Tribute,"—the rocks it projected being the only kind of tribute which the Sultan was taught to expect from them.

The Grandmaster, who had hurried from the Tower of Saint Nicholas to the immediate scene of action, seeing a practicable breach effected in the Jews' wall, ordered several of the houses nearest it to be pulled down, and a broad and deep ditch dug

in place of them, behind which he raised a new fence of brick, sustained by a thick rampart. All the inhabitants, without distinction, assisted in this work. Domestic feuds were forgotten—the Greek and Latin toiled cheerfully in the same trench, and the Jewish matron assisted to carry bricks and mortar, side by side, with the Christian nun. The Grandmaster himself, and the most illustrious and most venerable of his commanders, laboured like common pioneers; and the new defences were completed with marvellous expedition.

The Pasha was not long in learning that a new barrier had risen to defeat his assault; and, exasperated at the obstinate defence of the knights, he is said to have attempted to take off their illustrious chief by assassination. The instruments he employed in this atrocious design were two deserters—the one an Epirote, the other a Dalmatian—who had renounced the Cross, and were known to be capable of perpetrating any deed of blood. These ruffians, who had abandoned their colours during a sortie, presented themselves before the walls, as Christians who had just made their escape from Moslem thrall, and were received back into the city as friends. The conspiracy was detected by the Grandmaster's secretary, to whom the Albanian incautiously unbosomed himself, under an impression that the secretary was discontented with his Prince, and would readily concur in any plan for his destruction. The assassin exhibited letters bearing the Pasha's seal, ensuring immense wealth and the highest dignities to whoever should deliver the Sultan of his enemy; but the secretary, though a dissatisfied and suspected man, had the fidelity to reject the infamous proposition, which he instantly divulged to his master.

The Albanian was arrested, and, when on the rack, discovered his accomplice. They were both sentenced to die, but were torn to pieces by the enraged populace, before they reached the place of execution. *

About the time these two apostates suffered, the Pasha, without suspending his demonstrations against the Jews' quarter, renewed his attack on the Tower of Saint Nicholas. A bridge, framed of planks and cables, was constructed of a sufficient length to reach across the narrow haven that separated the grand mole from that part of the mainland where the Moslems were encamped; and, in the night, a Turkish engineer carried out an anchor to the very base of the tower, where he dropped it among the rocks, with a strong cable made fast to it, by means of which he relied on fixing the head of the floating pont in a favourable position. An English sailor, named Gervaise Rogers, who chanced to be loitering near the spot, and had the sagacity to conceal his proximity, no sooner saw the Turk retire, than, with the characteristic intrepidity of his profession and nation, he plunged into the water and cut the cable, which he coiled up on the strand. The bridge being thus cast loose, was beaten to pieces by the violence of the sea; and the Englishman carried the anchor as a trophy to the Grandmaster, by whom he was honourably rewarded. The Pasha, foiled in this expedient, resolved to tow a new bridge, framed on small boats and lighters, across the haven. In silence and darkness, the head of this bridge was made fast to the mole; and at three o'clock in the

* Vertot. Knolles says, "Janus the Dalmatian lost his head, and Pythius the Epirote was shamefully hanged."

morning, the Turkish soldiery began to file over it to the base of the tower, while a flotilla of light vessels landed a body of chosen troops to co-operate on the seaward side. Palæologus in person, accompanied by the general of the Turkish gallies, the commander of the levies of Anatolia, and Ibrahim Bey, who had married a princess of the Ottoman line—all valiant and redoubted leaders—headed the attack. So silently was the passage of the haven accomplished, that the Turks flattered themselves that the Christians were totally unsuspicious of their project. But the vigilance of D'Aubusson never slept. Anticipating a second assault, he had duly reinforced the brave band that garrisoned the tower; and while the Turks were clambering upon the mole, an intrepid body of musketeers lined the walls, with their matches burning, and every cannon that could be brought to bear on the point of debarkation charged to the mouth with the hail of death. The smothered clank of the Moslems' arms, as they sprung, file after file, on the mole, was the signal for the cannoneers to stand to their guns. In an instant, the profound darkness which prevailed gave place to an intolerable blaze of light; and two tremendous discharges swept down hundreds of the Turkish host. To escape this furious fire, the Pasha ordered his troops to advance to the breach, and the broken wall was instantly crowded with assailants. A sanguinary conflict followed. Both parties fought with the desperation of men who had sworn to conquer or die; and while this struggle took place on the shore, the work of death raged equally fierce on the water. The Rhodian fire-ships, promptly unmoored, grappled with the Turkish gallies that battered the tower, and enveloped

them in flames. Never, in all their wars, had the soldiers of Saint John seen so terrible a fight. Amid the thunder of cannon, the flashing of musketry, grenades, and pots of burning naphtha, mingled with that horrible accompaniment of battle, the groans of the maimed and dying, Ibrahim Bey, the hero of the Turkish bands, found himself alone on the summit of the ruined wall. The last of his soldiers had fallen by his side, and their corpses lay strewn round him like a rampart; yet, though gashed with hideous wounds, he slew several knights with his own hand before he resigned his life. In the act of discharging a fatal blow on a Christian soldier who had just pierced him with his sword, he fell dead on his adversary's body.

The dawn showed the Turkish commander that his enterprise was desperate. The sea was covered with corpses, turbans, and bows and arrows; and here and there the blackened hulk of a galley lay smoking on the waves. The Christian cannoniers, perceiving the fragile bridge that spanned the haven thronged with Turkish succours hurrying fresh to the battle, pointed their guns at it, and blew it to pieces. This circumstance completed the Pasha's despair. Despite the prayers and menaces of their commanders, his troops recoiled from the corse-strewn breach, and fled to the light barks that had ferried part of them to the mole. They were hotly pursued by the besieged, and many of them slain in the flight. Anthony Fradin, a Franciscan friar, who had greatly animated the Christians by his exhortations, was foremost in the pursuit, following the fugitives shoulder-deep into the sea, and, with his own hand, striking off more than one turbaned head. Twenty-five hundred Turks fell in this battle. The

loss of the Rhodians was also great; and twelve knights were numbered among the slain.

For three successive days after this disaster the Turkish commander remained inactive in his camp. The spirit of his troops was subdued, but the dread of his sovereign's wrath stimulated him to new enterprises, and the posts of Italy and the Jews were again battered. Batteries were also raised against several other points, and between three and four thousand cannon-balls shook the walls in a general cannonade. Breaches gaped on every side: the lower town, particularly the Jews quarter, was reduced almost to a heap of ruins. In his extremity, the Grandmaster bethought himself of Frapan the German engineer, and, after showing him the ruined works, demanded his counsel. The German recommended some additional batteries to be constructed, and volunteered to superintend the cannon planted on them. It is averred that, by this means, he instructed the Pasha as to the weakest points of the city, and that his cannon were invariably pointed wide of the Ottoman lines. Be this as it may, he became an object of suspicion, and was dragged before a council of war to give an account of his proceedings. His judges, detecting some incoherence in his answers, ordered him, according to the barbarous usage of the times, to be exposed to the torture; and excess of pain wrung from him an admission that he had concerted with the Turkish general to betray the place. He was declared a traitor on his own confession; and the Grandmaster himself pronounced the sentence that consigned him to an ignominious death.

The guilt of this man is described by the historians of the siege as incontrovertible; but the evi-

dence recorded against him is, to say the least of it, of a most unsatisfactory complexion. They state, that he pronounced the situation of the city desperate; that he recommended the Rhodians to change the position of their batteries; that they did so, and that the Pasha, in consequence, changed the direction of his fire; that the cannon which he had charge of shot wide of their mark, and that he faltered in presence of the council, when called upon to rebutt these accusations. There is not one of them but might, in a time of such excitement, have been successfully preferred against an innocent man; and this opinion is supported by an historian of note, * who expressly says, that the Turkish general had begun to distrust Frapan, who, aware that the life of a suspected servant is valueless in the estimation of a Turk, instantly threw himself on the generosity of the Grandmaster, and divulged the whole secrets of the Ottoman camp. His confession while under the torture is dust in the balance. Many are the innocent men who have sought a respite from inquisitorial torment in a dishonoured grave.

The declaration of Frapan that the city was indefensible, a declaration which may have rendered his death a measure of policy, in order that the Rhodians might regard it as the false council of a traitor, spread consternation among the populace, and even subdued the courage of the Spanish and Italian knights. These cravens, filled with despondency, held secret meetings, at which they ascribed the Grandmaster's obstinate resistance to a love of temporal power, and argued that he was called upon to agree to an honourable capitulation. D'Aubusson, when

* Knolles.

made acquainted with these mutinous demonstrations, summoned the culprits to his presence, and, after reproaching them sharply for their pusillanimity and insubordination, told them, that he did not despair of being able to defend the city against the whole power of the Turks, without the assistance of such cowards, and that they were at liberty to quit the island, which was not so closely blockaded as to obviate every possibility of escape; but that, if they thought better of the matter, and chose to remain, the first man who spoke of capitulation should be treated as a traitor. This firm course of procedure quelled the mutiny. The knights who had engaged in it, filled with shame and sorrow, and scorning to save their lives by a flight which would have dishonoured them for ever, entreated to be allowed to return to their duty, and afterwards deported themselves with great valour. The only punishment which the Grandmaster inflicted on them was, specially excluding them from every post of trust.

The Turkish general having filled up the ditch that skirted the Jews' wall, so that a troop of horse might charge across it, and beaten down every barrier that obstructed his entrance, solicited a parley, which was held by deputies next day at the breach. The Turkish deputy condescended to compliment the knights on their gallant defence, and entreated them to avert the calamities inseparable from a successful assault. But Anthony Gaultier, Castellan of Rhodes, who acted as the Grandmaster's representative, replied, that the Pasha was deceived as to their situation—that every knight was prepared to die at his post—and that their enemies would find the breasts of Christian men, who had sur-

mounted the fear of death, stronger than walls or bastions.

With this answer the Turkish envoy returned to his chief. The Pasha, humbled in his own eyes at having offered any terms, swore to immolate every living being within the walls. By his orders a great number of sharp stakes were prepared for impaling the knights; and to stimulate his soldiers, he promised them the plunder of the city. Having completed his arrangements for a final assault, he maintained, for a whole day and night, an unintermitting cannonade against the breach—not to render it more practicable, for there scarcely remained one stone upon another, but to deter the garrison from constructing new defences. At sunrise on the 27th of July, the Turks advanced in formidable array to the attack. The Christians, to shelter themselves from the Turkish artillery, had taken post on the inner slope of the rubbish that marked the site of the wall, where, worn out with watching and fatigue, many of them had fallen asleep. This lapse of vigilance allowed the Turks to gain possession of the rampart on each side of the breach without discharging a musket, and, before the Christians were aware of their approach, the crescent waved on the walls. Never had the danger been so imminent. The Grandmaster, conceiving the hour of martyrdom come, ordered the great standard of Saint John to be unfurled, and called upon the knights who thronged round him to accompany him to the breach, and clear it or perish. Five hundred Turks, who had fought their way into Jew-Street, were cut to pieces by the first charge of this devoted band. The stairs that led to the top of the rampart on which the Turkish ensign was planted, were choked with rubbish, and the knights had to

use ladders to accomplish the ascent. The Turks endeavoured, by rolling down huge stones, and keeping up a constant fire of musketry, to repel this assault; but the impetuous valour of the knights was irresistible. The Grandmaster was twice hurled down and twice wounded; yet he was the first to gain a secure footing on the rampart; and the short spear he carried was reddened with Turkish blood, before a single knight had mounted to his support. Several Ozmanlis of note fell beneath his arm; and the Pasha, who watched the combat from a distance, seeing his banner in jeopardy, ordered a chosen body of Janizaries to advance to its rescue, and in person cheered them on to the breach. By his side marched twelve devoted men, who had sworn to pierce the Christian ranks, and immolate the Grandmaster in the centre of his own lances. They found him in the front of the battle clad in glittering mail, and dealing death on every side. Three of their weapons pierced him at the same moment, but the swords of his knights instantly avenged him. Happily none of his wounds were so desperate as to drive him from the breach; but his brethren in arms, regarding them as fatal, flung themselves like tigers on the enemy, and put them to total rout. The Pasha, foaming with disappointment, was carried away in the general flight, and the Christians, with shouts of victory, pursued him to his own lines.

Covered with his own blood and with that of his enemies, the saviour of Rhodes was borne to his palace. The triumph was won—the deliverance of his people achieved—and, before surgical skill had cured his wounds, one of which was in his breast, the invaders abandoned the siege, and betook themselves to their ships. Their departure took place on the

19th of August, the siege having lasted eighty-nine days; and they carried off fifteen thousand wounded, and left behind nine thousand slain. While the embarkation was proceeding, two Neapolitan ships hove in sight, and prepared to enter the port with succours, in defiance of the Turkish fleet. The Pasha ordered all the cannon that remained ashore to be pointed against them; but the wind being unfavourable for the co-operation of his gallies, one of the Neapolitan vessels ran safely into the harbour, and was received by the Rhodians with shouts of joy. The other was assailed next morning by twenty Turkish gallies; whom she beat off after an action of three hours with the loss of their admiral, though she had been seriously crippled in her rigging the preceding day.

Three churches were built at Rhodes, commemorative of this glorious defence. One dedicated to Saint Mary of Victory, was specially endowed, that prayers might be offered up in it for ever, for the souls of the slain. The meanest soldier who survived the siege, received from the Grandmaster marks of favour; and, to relieve the peasantry of the island whose lands had been laid waste, they were subsisted from the public granaries till the next harvest, and exempted from all taxes for several years.

In the first paroxysm of rage at this defeat, the Sultan contemplated punishing his recreant general with the bow-string; but this sentence was commuted to loss of dignity, and banishment to Gallipoli, which the disgraced vizier hailed as a clement decree. In the following year, 1481, while planning the subjugation of Italy, in which Achmet, his most redoubted general, had already planted his standard, death closed Mohammed's sanguinary reign. He

died at a petty town of Bithynia; and at his own request, the epitaph inscribed on his monument recorded only the conquests which he had projected, and left uncommemorated those he had won.

The vast empire which Mohammed left behind him was contested by his sons, both of whom aspired to become his successor. Bajazet, who is generally esteemed the elder, was a prince of studious and voluptuous habits, while Djem or Zizim, the younger, was ambitious, and impatient to emulate his father's warlike renown. They were absent at their respective governments in different corners of Asia Minor when Mohammed died, and the great men of the capital were divided as to which of them should ascend the throne. The influence of Achmet Pasha, Mohammed's greatest captain, who had just returned from planting the Ottoman banner on the Italian shore, decided the succession. He declared himself in favour of Bajazet; and Zizim, who had started for the capital the moment he heard of his father's death, was informed, while on the journey, that his brother had assumed the crown. This intelligence made him return to his government at Iconium, where he proceeded to levy a great army, in order to secure the sovereignty by force of arms. Defeated by the redoubted Achmet in a pitched battle, and reduced to the condition of a friendless outlaw, he fled to Egypt, from whence, after a great deal of futile negotiation with his victorious brother, he repaired to Cilicia, and stirred up the tribes of Mount Taurus to espouse his cause. The league which he formed with several Mohammedan princes, whose independence was menaced by the gigantic power of Bajazet, was countenanced by the

to cruise against the Turks off the Caramanian coast. But in a second battle, Zizim's prospects were again blasted; and, hunted from rock to rock, and from cave to cave in the recesses of Mount Taurus, he was at length reduced to the necessity of soliciting an asylum in Rhodes. The Grandmaster, with the concurrence of the council, who held it politic to encourage dissension among the Ottoman princes, consented to receive him; and a Rhodian squadron, under Don Alvarez de Zuniga, Grand Prior of Castile, was despatched to his rescue. Zizim, hotly pressed by his pursuers, reached the shore, and, to escape a detachment of spahis, flung himself into a small bark, and put to sea. The spahis arrived on the beach a few moments afterwards; and the prince, snatching up his bow, drew an arrow to the head, and shot it into the midst of them, with a billet fastened to it, directed to "The King Bajazet, his Inhuman Brother!" In this letter he took God to witness, that his brother's injustice alone had driven him to seek an asylum with the irreconcileable enemies of his race, and at the same time invoked the retributive vengeance of heaven on him and his descendants—an invocation which filled his persecutor with dismay, and was held in terrible remembrance in after days when trouble bent him to the earth.

The Rhodian squadron picked up the fugitive at sea, and he was received at Rhodes with the distinction due to a sovereign prince. An eye-witness * describes him as exceedingly unprepossessing in his person, being middle-sized, thick-set, paunchy, jolter-headed, and having an inveterate squint, a nose so hooked as almost to touch his lip,—in short, in every

* Mathew Bosio.

respect the air of a remorseless and intractable barbarian. Yet, notwithstanding this repulsive exterior, Zizim was a prince of a noble soul, deeply versed in Oriental literature, master of several languages, including the Greek and Latin, and famous for his deeds in war. Feasts and tournaments celebrated his arrival; but while the city rung with sounds of revelry, the Grandmaster was racked with inquietude at the dilemma in which he foresaw he should soon find himself placed, by the presence of this sinister guest. His gloomy anticipations were not long in being realized. Turkish spies found access to the island, on various pretences, chiefly of a negotiatory nature; and D'Aubusson, dreading that the Turkish prince would be murdered in his custody, or forcibly torn from him by an Ottoman army, resolved, with the concurrence of the council, to send him to France. Zizim acceded, with a sinking heart, to a proposition which he had not the power to gainsay. Prior to his departure, he invested the Grandmaster with unlimited authority to treat with Bajazet on his behalf; and also made several acts in favour of the Order, engaging, among other things, in case he were ever established on the Ottoman throne, to maintain perpetual peace with the knights, give their fleets free access into his ports, liberate annually three hundred Christian slaves, and pay into the treasury an indemnity of a hundred and fifty thousand crowns of gold. This done, he went on board the Chevalier de Blanchefort's galley, and sailed for Europe, to find there an exile's grave.

The Grandmaster having thus rid himself of the presence of a man whom he stood pledged to protect, and yet did not see how he could safely shelter,

was won upon by Bajazet to enter into a solemn treaty of peace, the grand condition of which was, that the Order should detain Zizim in a sort of honourable captivity, independent of the jurisdiction of any Christian or Infidel prince; for which good service, the Emperor engaged to pay the Order a pension of twenty-five thousand ducats of Venice every year. Of this compact, it is impossible to speak but in terms of abhorrence. It is indeed averred by a contemporary historian, William de Jaligni, that the Grandmaster never guaranteed safe-conduct to the fugitive, nor even passed his bare word that the Order would stand between him and his brother's wrath; and William de Caoursin, Vice-Chancellor of Saint John, another contemporary writer, argues, that the Grandmaster had no alternative but to accede to this base arrangement, or bring down the implacable vengeance of Bajazet on Rhodes; but these are the apologizies of men evidently not over-scrupulous in forming an estimate of moral duty. The Grandmaster had virtually become bound to shield the fugitive who had thrown himself upon his generosity. If he trembled to give him shelter, he ought at least to have sent him chainless away. The treaty that made the knights jailors to the Sultan, is the foulest stain that lies upon their fame; and all the renown which the Grandmaster D'Aubusson won in that memorable siege in which he proved the victor, and in which he so lavishly shed his blood, is effaced by the mercenary policy that induced him to violate the rights of hospitality, and consign the wanderer to a cruel durance.

Zizim, on his arrival in France, was sent to the Commandery of Bourgneuf, on the confines of Poitou and La Marche, where he was constantly at-

tended by a guard of the Order. He appealed to Louis the Eleventh; but that selfish king only mocked him with a promise of assistance in case he abjured his faith. Rage and despair overpowered him, when he learned that the knights of Rhodes had bartered his liberty and their own honour for Turkish gold; and his attendants trembled, lest he should terminate his sorrows by a voluntary death. It was at this juncture, when Christendom rung with his wrongs, that the Kings of Hungary, Sicily and Naples, and several other princes who contemplated a league against Bajazet, entreated that Zizim might be put at the head of their army, to secure the co-operation of his Asiatic adherents; but the Grandmaster rejected their petition, on the insincere argument, that, should the war end disastrously, the exiled prince might be delivered up by some perfidious potentate to his implacable foe. Pope Innocent the Eighth, who made a similar application, was more successful; for the deference of the knights was still as profound as ever to the edicts of the Holy See. The Grandmaster, indeed, made a feeble effort to repel the Pontiff's petition also; but the latter was inflexible. He engaged, by way of compensation, to unite the minor Orders of Saint Sepulchre and Saint Lazarus to that of Saint John, and to confer a cardinal's hat on the Grandmaster. By this treaty was the custody of the captive prince again made a matter of mercenary speculation; and Zizim was removed from Bourgneuf to Rome, where he was received with considerable pomp, and had reason to congratulate himself on a change which secured him the external respect due to royalty, and agreeable communion with enlightened and illustrious men. But the death of Innocent, who

had calculated on using his captive as a firebrand in the East, sadly reversed the wanderer's destiny. Cardinal Roderigo de Borgia, who succeeded to the pontificate, by the title of Alexander the Sixth, was one of the most unprincipled men that had ever dishonoured Saint Peter's chair; and, atrociously venal in all his transactions, he withdrew Zizim from the custody of the French knights who acted as his attendants, and threw him into close durance in the castle of Saint Angelo, for the purpose of disposing, to the highest bidder, of his liberty and life. Bajazet was again the purchaser; and the triple-crowned tyrant, by engaging to keep his prisoner constantly immured, secured an annual payment of forty thousand ducats. The arrival of Charles the Eighth of France before Rome, at the head of a victorious army, compelled him to transfer the custody of the Turkish Prince to that monarch. Zizim was given up to Charles; but poison administered by the agents of the Pope, on the eve of his removal to the French head-quarters, cut him off almost in the same hour that he arrived in the presence of the King; and his murderer received from Bajazet three hundred thousand ducats, as the price of his blood.

It were well for the honour of the Order of Saint John, if the chronicler could pass over in silence this black page in its annals. Horror and shame humbled the gray hairs of D'Aubusson in the dust, when he learned the tragical termination of his victim's life; and the circumstance of being compelled to conceal his detestation of the murderous act, gave additional poignancy to his grief. Trouble, too, began to menace the Order from the same blood-stained hand that had cut short the days of the Turkish Prince; and, but for the representations of the King

of Arragon and Castile, who supported the knights in their protest against papal usurpations, their privileges and independence would have been seriously invaded. Startled at the abhorrent spectacle which he presented to the Christian world, the unworthy representative of Saint Peter endeavoured to recover himself in popular estimation, by preaching a crusade. A league was formed by the principal sovereigns of Europe against the Turks, and the Grandmaster was nominated Generalissimo of the confederated army. D'Aubusson, who placed little reliance on the Pope's sincerity, would have declined the honour; but the Council represented, that it would be derogatory to the Order, if it remained inactive, while the standard of the Cross was unfurled by the European Kings, and on that argument he accepted it. But the league was ultimately dissolved, without any signal achievement being performed by the combined squadrons. A French fleet under Philip de Cleves-Ravestein made an unsuccessful descent on the Island of Mitylene, and the Venetians took the Island of Santa Maura; but with these successes the war ended. Several princes of the league made peace with Bajazet by separate treaties; and the Rhodians at last beheld their own ensign once more the only belligerent flag in the Levant. A squadron under the command of the Chevalier de Villaragut, captured a fleet of Turkish and Egyptian vessels richly laden, and bound from Alexandria to Constantinople; but this prize, though of great value, was but small consolation to the Grandmaster for the desertion of his allies; and he was glad to deprecate the vengeance of the two potent adversaries whom he had defied, by a tacit suspension of hostilities.

It is painful to record the last acts of D'Aubus-

son's life. In the memorable siege in which he acquired so much renown, the Jewish part of the population contributed in a most essential degree to the defence of the island; yet he ungratefully lost sight of the services of that proscribed race, and, on the assumption that they were the hereditary enemies of the Christian faith, given to usury and addicted to odious crimes, cruelly expelled them from their possessions. Time had shaken the mighty mind, which, at a perilous crisis, had been the salvation of the Order; and his latter days were dedicated to the enactment of sumptuary laws, of which some historians speak in terms of laudation, but which appear to have been the futile edicts of a dotard. His deathbed was embittered by the intelligence, that the sanctified assassin, who had deprived Zizim of life, had resumed his iniquitous usurpation of the specific privileges of the Order; and, in open contempt of its authority, was bestowing the richest dignities on his minions. At eighty years of age, Peter D'Aubusson died; and, notwithstanding these shades on his otherwise illustrious character, the tears of his knights followed the saviour of Rhodes and the "buckler of Christendom" to his grave.

Emeri D'Amboise, succeeded D'Aubusson, as Grandmaster (1503.) In the same year Pope Alexander the Sixth, a monster who had too long harassed the world with his crimes, perished by inadvertently quaffing the contents of a poisoned goblet which he had drugged for the purpose of shortening the life of one of his particular friends. On hearing of his death, D'Amboise, who was at the court of France at the time, employed in negotiations calculated to protect the Order from the unjust infractions to which it was exposed from papal rapacity,

abandoned his diplomatic labours as useless, and repaired to Rhodes, carrying with him, as a present from the French King, the sword which Saint Louis had worn in his crusades. He found Rhodes menaced by the Turks and the Egyptians. Amurath, son of the unfortunate Zizim, hunted from Egypt, in which his mother and brethren had found an asylum, threw himself, like his father, on the generosity of the knights. Bajazet, in revenge, ordered every corsair that scoured the Levant to harass the Rhodian coast. Amurath, subsequently became a Christian, and had the Castle of Feracle in Rhodes assigned him as a residence, where he led a tranquil and exemplary life. The Turkish pirates, combining under Camali, a famous commander, made descents on Rhodes and its dependencies; but in every instance without success. Lero, a mere rock, was saved by the presence of mind of Paul Simeoni, a young Piedmontese knight, who lined the walls of the castle with peasants and women habited as knights, at the sight of whom the Turks hastily retreated to their ships. Seven flutes—long vessels with low decks, and provided with oars as well as sails, which Campson Gauri the Sultan of Egypt had equipped, were still more unfortunate. It was the intention of their commander to attack Lango, and he despatched two of his vessels to reconnoitre that island, but they were intercepted and driven ashore by two Rhodian gallies. The crews landed and hid themselves in the island, while the knights promptly remanned the deserted barks with Christian soldiers and mariners, and sent them out against the main body of the Egyptian fleet. The Egyptian admiral, seeing his cruisers returning, unsuspiciously permitted them to come within gunshot, when

they instantly opened a furious fire; and at the same moment two well-manned Rhodian gallies swept round a headland, and poured in broadside after broadside into the Egyptian line, which induced the whole of the squadron to surrender.

In the same year, a single Rhodian galley commanded by the Chevalier de Gastineau, captured a magnificent Egyptian carrack, which the Egyptians boastingly termed the Queen of the Sea, bound for Constantinople with immense wealth. This vessel, which had long been watched by the knights, was of enormous bulk. The mast of a common galley barely rose the height of her prow; it took six men to embrace her mast, and she had seven tiers or decks, two of which were under water. For defence, she carried a hundred guns, and a thousand soldiers, independent of her crew. Gastineau, lay in wait off Candia for this vast bark, and, when within cannon-shot, sent his long-boat to summon her to surrender. The Saracen captain returned a proud and insolent answer; and the Rhodians, who had dropped close to the carrack during the parley, suddenly opened their guns. The first discharge killed the captain of the carrack and several of his bravest officers; and the survivors, rather than sustain another broadside, pulled down their flag, and struck. The crew were afterwards redeemed at an immense ransom.

Three years afterwards (1510), inflated by the remembrance of these triumphs, the Grandmaster prevailed on the council to send a squadron to the coast of Cilicia, to harass a colony of ship-builders whom the Sultan of Egypt had despatched, with the consent of the Turkish emperor, to fit out a new armament in that richly wooded country. The command of this fleet, which consisted partly of gallies

and partly of high-decked vessels, including the great carrack, was intrusted jointly to Andrew D'-Amaral, a Portuguese knight, and a French chevalier, Villiers de l'Isle Adam. Both these knights were brave, and well skilled in maritime affairs; but inordinate pride and conceit obscured the military virtues of the Portuguese. The two admirals came to issue while at sea respecting the mode in which they should attack the enemy. L'Isle Adam wished to lie in wait to intercept the Egyptian fleet on its homeward voyage, while D'Amaral was for running boldly into the gulf in which it was anchored, and giving it fair battle. The debate waxed so hot that the disputants were on the point of deciding it with their swords; but at length the good sense of L'Isle Adam induced him to give way, and the fleet entered the bay prepared for action. The Egyptian admiral, who had crowded his vessels with land forces, rather invited than shunned an engagement. By dint of superior seamanship, the Rhodians gained the wind of the enemy, and for three hours the fleets maintained a sanguinary fight. At the end of that time, the Rhodians boarded their adversaries. Several Egyptian ships surrendered, while the crews of the others deserted them, and fled to the shore; but their admiral, who was young, and a near kinsman of the Sultan his master, died honourably on his own deck. Eleven ships and four gallies were captured by the knights, and the remainder destroyed. The runaways were pursued on shore, and many of them taken and made slaves; while the timber which the Egyptian carpenters had framed was set on fire and burned. This victory, at once replenished the treasury, and shed a lustre on the last days of the Grandmaster D'Amboise. He died in 1512,

at the mature age of seventy-eight, having enjoyed the supreme dignity nine years.

Guy de Blanchefort, the same French knight who had been intrusted with the custody of the unfortunate Zizim during his captivity in Europe, succeeded to the grandmastership. Blanchefort was in France at the time of his election; but a rumour being prevalent that the Turks contemplated another descent on Rhodes, he instantly embarked for that island, though the state of his health was such as to incapacitate him from sustaining the exertion incident to the voyage. Off Trapani in Sicily, his illness assumed a fatal aspect, and his attendants entreated him to land; but he persisted in prosecuting his voyage, on the ground, that, were he to die so near Rome, Julius the Second, one of the most ambitious pontiffs who had ever sat in Saint Peter's chair, and who had for some time been industriously exerting himself to secure the co-operation of the Order in his warlike projects, would usurp the privilege of the council, and nominate the next Grandmaster. Off the island of Zante, death closed Blanchefort's career; and, at his own request, a fast-sailing caravel was despatched to Rhodes, with injunctions to the council to lose no time in electing a new chief. On the day subsequent to its arrival (December 14, 1513), Fabricio Caretto, Admiral of the Order—the same illustrious Italian knight who had fought side by side with D'Aubusson, amid the ruins of Saint Nicholas' Tower—was chosen Grandmaster in his stead.

The reign of the Emperor Bajazet had terminated in the preceding year. Poison, administered through the agency of Selim, the most warlike and ambitious of his sons, cut him suddenly from the

earth; and his murderer ascended a throne stained with his father's and his brothers' blood, to harass the world with new alarms. The Shah of Persia, routed by him in a pitched battle, was glad to solicit the alliance of the Knights of Rhodes; and in the league which was formed between them, Campson Gauri, Sultan of Egypt, was included, at his own special request. Syria had long been harassed by the Turks; and the Egyptian foresaw, that the moment the Ottoman banner came to be firmly planted in the Holy Land, the main bulwark of his independence would be swept away. His anxiety to avert this event accelerated its arrival. Selim, finding it impossible to disengage him from the Persian league, turned his whole forces against him; and in the course of four years, Syria, Palestine, part of Arabia, and all Egypt, were prostrated at the Ottoman's feet. The dominion of the Mameluke princes was completely subverted by these conquests; and two traitors, who had abandoned their Sultan in the hour of danger, were installed as governors of the subjugated states. Having thus avenged himself of his Egyptian adversary, Selim began to make preparations for conquering Rhodes, when, in 1520, an acute disease prematurely terminated his reign.

Solyman the First, surnamed the Magnificent, Selim's only son, succeeded to his crown and empire. This prince, the most illustrious of the Ottoman line, was, in the course of his long and glorious reign, the contemporary of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, Francis the First of France, Elizabeth Queen of England, and Mary Queen of Scots—all of them sovereigns whose names occupy a distinguished place in the annals of Europe. Solyman had barely arrived at manhood, when he was elevat-

ed to the throne; and Gazelles, the Mameluke governor of Syria, conceiving the opportunity favourable for shaking off the Turkish yoke, rashly unfurled the banner of revolt. Aware of the mighty power with which he had to contend, he applied to the Rhodians for military stores. The Grandmaster, delighted to see disunion separating the hereditary adversaries of the Order, not only granted the ordnance and ammunition solicited, but sent along with them several skilful officers to superintend the guns. But the Mamelukes were defeated in their first encounter with the Turkish troops; and Gazelles, after performing prodigies of valour, died on the field. His death put an end to the insurrection, and left Solyman leisure to mature his plans for the reduction of Rhodes, the conquest of which he held to be a tribute due to his father's manes. Policy, however, induced him first to disperse a war-cloud which had risen on his northern frontier; and while his army was engaged there in besieging Belgrade, the Order of Saint John lost its Grandmaster.

CHAPTER II.

Election of L'Isle Adam—Correspondence with the Emperor Solyman—New declaration of war between Turkey and the Knights—Defensive Preparations—Arrival of the Turkish Armament—Gallantry of Prejan de Bidoux—Opening of the Turkish Trenches—Arrival of the Sultan Solyman—His stratagem to reanimate his Troops—Attacks on the Tower of Saint Nicholas, and Bastions of England, Italy, Spain, Provence and Auvergne—Severity of Solyman towards his Generals—Renewed assaults on the Bastions—The Chancellor D'Amaral accused of Treason—His Execution—Sanguinary struggle at the Bastion of Spain—Offers of Capitulation rejected—The City declared untenable—Pacific Negotiations—Renewal of Hostilities—Capitulation—L'Isle Adam's interview with Solyman—Departure of the Knights from Rhodes.

CARETTO died in 1521, and three candidates aspired to the vacant dignity. These were, Andrew D'Amaral, Grand Prior of Castile; Sir Thomas Docray, Grand Prior of England; and Philip Villiers de L'Isle Adam, Grand Prior of France. The arrogance of D'Amaral so completely disgusted the Chapter that he was unanimously rejected, and the votes were divided between the English and French knights. The Englishman possessed considerable natural abilities, great experience in diplomacy, and had, moreover, a princely revenue to recommend him; while in point of mental qualifications alone was his

rival his equal. The great preponderance of French influence, however, decided the vote, and L'Isle Adam was declared Grandmaster.

L'Isle Adam was in France when he was elected, but he lost no time in repairing to Rhodes. He sailed from Marseilles in the great carrack, and had only been a day or two at sea, when, through the carelessness of one of his attendants, the vessel took fire. The seamen, panic-struck by the fury of the conflagration, were for deserting the ship, and making to the shore in four feluccas which bore her company; but the resolution of L'Isle Adam, who prohibited every man from leaving his post under pain of death, restored subordination, and inspired the crew with energy to extinguish the flames. Scarcely was this peril surmounted, when a new one beset them. A furious tempest rose; and while the carrack, at all times cumbrous and unmanageable, was labouring through the mountainous waves, a thunderbolt fell on her stern, killed nine men, and shivered the Grandmaster's sword to pieces in its scabbard. The mariners, in all ages and countries a superstitious race, regarded the latter circumstance as a presage of dismal import; and even the attendant knights spoke of it as a disastrous omen. L'Isle Adam alone scouted these womanish alarms. He ran into Syracuse to refit; and the moment his ship was in a condition for sea, resumed his voyage, notwithstanding he had advice that Curtoglu, a noted corsair, lay in wait for him off Cape St Angelo, with a superior force. By judicious seamanship, the carrack doubled the perilous headland under the cloud of night, without encountering an enemy, and arrived safe at Rhodes, to the great joy of the Order.

In the summer of 1521, Belgrade, the bulwark of

Hungary, surrendered to Solyman; and he found himself at leisure to complete his arrangements for the conquest of Rhodes. Notwithstanding the divan, which he always consulted, was divided as to the propriety of the enterprise, he could not bring himself to abandon it. Mustapha Pasha, a young and ardent soldier, who had married his sister, and Curtoglu, the pirate, were the principal advocates of the project. In order to guage, as it were, the abilities of the Christian knights with whom he was about to enter the lists, in an arena from which the legions of one of his most warlike predecessors had returned covered with disgrace, Solyman, before unfurling his standard, addressed the Grandmaster by letter in the following terms.

"*Solyman, by the grace of God, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Most High Emperor of Byzantium and Trebizond, Most Mighty King of Persia, Arabia, Syria and Egypt, Supreme Lord of Europe and Asia, Prince of Mecca and Aleppo, Master of Jerusalem, and Ruler of the Universal Sea,—To Philip Villiers De L'Isle Adam, Grandmaster of the Isle of Rhodes, greeting:*

"I congratulate thee on thy new dignity, and thy arrival in thy dominions. Mayest thou reign there long and happily, and obscure the glory of thy predecessors! I offer thee our friendship, and entreat thee not to be the last of our allies to give us joy for our triumphs over the Hungarian King, whom we have stripped of the strong fortress of Belgrade, after having wasted his territories with fire and sword, and carried away many of his people. From Constantinople—Farewell."

The Grandmaster, who saw in this letter only a hidden menace, and who had just seen several mer-

chantmen enter the port, after being roughly handled by the pirate Curtoglu in the neighbouring strait, returned the following answer:—

"I understand right well the meaning of thy letter. It is as pleasing to me to be called thy friend, as it will be displeasing to the pirate Curtoglu to learn, that thou hast tendered me thy friendship. That corsair sought to make me captive on my voyage from France; but, failing in the project, he has since stole by night into the Rhodian waters, and attempted to plunder several ships and barks belonging to our ports. The gallies of the Order, however, have driven him homeward, and torn several prizes from his grasp in the moment of flight. From Rhodes—Farewell."

The Grandmaster, not caring to trust one of his knights in the power of a prince who sat on the throne of the "Manslayer," and whose native magnanimity was yet unknown, forwarded his answer by a Grecian messenger. This breach of etiquette led to some further correspondence, which terminated in open defiance. The Rhodians suspected that the main object of these letters was to entrap some knight of renown in the capacity of ambassador, and wring from him by torture a full account of the defences of the city; and the following circumstance proved the accuracy of this suspicion. While the intentions of the Sultan were yet dubious, or at least not distinctly avowed, signal-fires were kindled on the Lycian shore; and the Rhodians, who knew them to indicate a wish on the part of the Turks to hold a parley, despatched Mennetou, a French knight, with a well-manned galley, across the Strait. Mennetou carried with him a Rhodian named Jaxi, who spoke the Turkish language, and

had acquaintances on the mainland, with instructions to ascertain, as far as practicable, the Sultan's designs. On nearing the hostile coast, Mennetou descried a group of Turks, apparently merchants, congregated near a fountain, with abundance of merchandise spread out around them. These men earnestly invited the Christians to land, and sent on board a richly dressed Turk, as a pledge that their intentions were amicable; whereupon Jaxi was put ashore; but no sooner was he fairly in the midst of them, than the false traders, who were in reality soldiers in disguise, made him prisoner. On witnessing this act of treachery, Mennetou bore away for Rhodes with his hostage, who, instead of a grandee, as his garments betokened him, turned out to be an ignorant peasant, decked out for the occasion. Jaxi was hurried to Constantinople; and, after being exposed to protracted tortures, divulged all he knew regarding the defences of the island. The atrocity of this act rests less probably with the Sultan than with his minions. Be this as it may, the depositions of Jaxi encouraged him to make an immediate declaration of his designs on Rhodes; for he had risen so far superior to the brutal usages of his forefathers, as to scorn to steal tiger-like on his prey. Signal-fires were again kindled on the Lycian coast; and the galley which was despatched to answer them, brought back a formal annunciation of war. With the pomp of his race, the Sultan called upon the knights to surrender their strongholds, in which case he solemnly pledged himself to grant them a safe and honourable convoy from the island; but, in the event of their resistance, he swore to immolate one and all of them at their guns, and to level the

walls and bastions with the grass that grew at their foundations.

This was language that required no answer from men rallied round a banner which, for four hundred years, had waved proudly in the front of Paynim battle. The Grandmaster and his brethren made haste to complete the arrangements, which had long been in progress, to strengthen and provision the city. Instructed by the example of the Grandmaster D'Aubusson during the former siege, the villas in the suburbs were razed, and all the forage in the island stored within the walls. Three commissioners, Gabriel de Pommerols, John Buck, of the language of England, and the Chancellor D'Amaral, were nominated to superintend the replenishment of the magazines; and vessels were despatched to Candia, Sicily, Naples, and even France, for grain, wine, powder, arms, and men. Anthony Bosio, a serving-brother of great enterprise and sagacity, was intrusted with the mission to Candia, and easily succeeded in shipping the stores he was sent in search of; but he found it a more arduous undertaking to secure the services of five hundred Cretan archers, which the Grandmaster was anxious to obtain. The Candiot governor was apprehensive of drawing down the vengeance of the Turks on his own island; and therefore forbade, by public proclamation, any of his subjects engaging, under pain of death, in the defence of Rhodes. By judicious management, however, and probably with the connivance of the Governor, Bosio not only secured all the troops he desired, but prevailed on Gabriel Martinigo, a Venetian engineer of distinguished reputation, to embark privately in a felucca and join the Order. The Candiots sent two fast-sailing vessels

in pursuit of Martinigo; but Bosio eluded them by an adroit manœuvre at sea, and, passing safely through a Turkish squadron at the dead of night, exultingly entered the port, and presented the Venetian to the Grandmaster. He was received with greater distinction than if he had won a battle; and Martinigo, who was a man of illustrious descent, and full of that generous contempt of danger which prompts the soldier to noble deeds, not only cheerfully engaged to use his utmost exertion to strengthen the works and contribute to the salvation of the city, but in a moment of enthusiasm threw himself at the Grandmaster's feet, and entreated that, as he was determined to share the fate of the Order, let it be ever so disastrous, he might be received as a brother, and thereby enabled to appear in battle with the cross of Saint John on his breast. His election was unanimous; a considerable pension was awarded to him until a suitable commandery should become vacant, and he was named Inspector-general of the fortifications, and admitted into several other confidential offices. Under his superintendance the walls and towers were carefully repaired; the ramparts heightened, ravelins built before the gates, and casemates made in the flanks of the bastions. The counterscarp was mined and primed with gunpowder, ready to be fired by subterranean trains on the first emergency; and trenches were dug, and forts and barricades erected in every street.

But, though the knights manifested a truly heroic spirit, there were among them men whom selfish considerations betrayed into partial derelictions from their duty. The succours which the Grandmaster had summoned from the remote possessions of the Order, were tardily and niggardly forwarded; and

several of the European commanders showed a discreditable indifference to the exigencies of the state. In Rhodes itself, a cabal, fomented by the Chancellor D'Amaral, broke out among the Italian knights. On the argument, that the Pope, Adrian the Sixth, had, to their great prejudice, usurped the patronage of their commanderies, they requested leave to repair in a body to Rome, and represent their grievances. The Grandmaster firmly refused to permit their departure at such a juncture; and the malecontents, exasperated at his refusal, and misled by perfidious advice, seized a vessel, in direct contravention of his authority, and retired to Candia. The Grandmaster instantly proclaimed them rebels and cravens, and, by a decree of the council, they were deprived of the habit of the Order. Unwilling, however, to lose the services of a considerable number of brave knights at a time when the very existence of the state was at stake, the Grandmaster despatched a confidental mediator to Candia, by whose representations the deserters were induced to return to Rhodes, and throw themselves on their superior's clemency, with a protest that they were ready to wash out the stain on their honour with their blood. The Grandmaster graciously forgave them; and they were permitted to resume the habit which they had forfeited, and to take their station once more in the Christian ranks.

A general review of his troops satisfied L'Isle Adam, that his whole reliance was on the spirit that animated them—not on their numerical strength. The garrison with which he contemplated defiance to the legions of Solyman, amounted only to about five thousand regular troops—six hundred of whom were knights. In addition to this force, the mariners of the port formed themselves into an efficient band; and the

citizens also took up arms, but with much less courage than they had manifested in the former siege. The peasants, who crowded into the city, were disciplined to serve as pioneers; and the very slaves were made to work at the fortifications, and contribute to the general defence. The knights, the better class of citizens, and the mariners of the port, were animated by the noblest enthusiasm; and never had the fortifications been in a more perfect condition. As has already been mentioned, the city was encompassed by a double wall, strengthened by thirteen towers, five of which stood within ravelins and bastions, covered by barbacans or *fausse-brayes*, and other advanced works. The principal ditch was wide and deep, the counterscarp well faced and palisaded, and the adjacent country completely commanded by cannon of various calibre. Grenades, fire-pots, and enormous blocks of stone, were piled up for immediate use in every bastion; several ships laden with stones and rubbish were sunk at the entrance of the bay from which the Turks had assailed the Mole of Saint Nicholas in the former siege; and the port was shut by a double chain. From the glacis to the very centre of the city, there was a continued succession of fortifications, none of which could be carried without an immense sacrifice of life; and Rhodes, in these last days of its glory, stood the strongest, as it had long been one of the fairest, cities of the East.

The Grandmaster selected the most redoubted knights to fill the posts of honour and danger. The Venetian Martinigo, assisted by the knights Nueres and Britto, superintended the fortifications; while the command of the artillery devolved on Didier de Tholon de Saint Jaille. The bastion of Auvergne

was confided to the knight Du Mesnil—that of Provence to Berenger de Lioncel—that of England to Nicholas Hussey—that of Italy to Andelot Gentili—and that of Spain to Francis des Carrieres. Raymond Roger commanded in the quarter of Auvergne—Raymond de Ricard in that of Provence—the commander Valdner in that of Germany—William Ouazon in that of England—George Einar in that of Italy—and John de Barbaran and Enard Sollier in those of Castile and Arragon—while Joachim de Saint Aubin, at the head of the flower of the French Knights, was intrusted with the defence of the wall, from the French tower to the gate of Saint Ambrose. The defence of the quarter of Saint Mary of Victory, the weakest point of the fortifications, was undertaken by L'Isle Adam himself; and, quitting his palace, he took up his abode, along with the knights whom he had selected to fight by his side, in a house in the immediate vicinity of that bulwark. The Knights Grand-crosses D'Amaral, John Buck, Peter de Cluys, and Gregory de Morgut, were named Adjutants-general, with the command of moveable corps-de-reserve; while Gabriel de Pommerols was appointed Lieutenant-general, and the Chevalier de Bonneval commander of the Grandmaster's guards. Two corps of six hundred men each were ordered to patrol the city day and night; and their commanders were empowered to judge and punish malefactors with death, under the mere reservation of appeal to the Grandmaster. Twenty knights, and three hundred chosen soldiers, under the command of Guyot de Castelane, a brave gray-haired Provençal knight, were intrusted with the defence of the Tower of Saint Nicholas, which was still regarded as the key of the city; and, lastly, a knight

of Dauphiny, named Anthony de Grolée, had the honourable post of bearing the great standard of the Order. To ensure the fidelity, and encourage the zeal of the citizens, the Latin and Greek metropolitan Archbishops were instructed to enforce, in their sermons, the necessity and merit of a courageous resistance. All the inhabitants of the smaller islands were invited to repair to Rhodes, to avoid the fury of the Turks; and many of these refugees proved themselves valiant and efficient soldiers, by resolutely defending the castles of Lindo, Feracle, and other small fortresses in remote parts of the island.

It was a sight of sorrow to the citizens of Rhodes, to see the peasantry enter the capital laden with their household goods, and followed by their weeping wives and children. These poor people felt that ruin had already overtaken them, and that, in the recesses of a besieged city, privation and death would certainly be their lot. In the course of the siege, the cattle which they brought along with them were famished; and pestilence, generated by their putrid remains, scourged the island long after the war-blast had passed away.

Late in the spring of 1522, Solyman, having completed his arrangements, ordered a mighty armament to put to sea. He named Mustapha Pasha, his favourite and brother-in-law, generalissimo of the land forces, and the pirate Curtoglu, admiral of the fleet. Mustapha had under him Achmet Pasha, an able engineer, and Pyrrhus Pasha, an aged chief of great sagacity, who had been the Sultan's governor, and enjoyed his entire confidence, and who attended the general rather as a counsellor than as a lieutenant. The defenceless islands, which acknowledged the sovereignty of the knights in the adja-

cent sea, sustained the first burst of Turkish vengeance. The fruitful island of Lango was nearly laid waste by a body of marauders; but, through the valour of the governor, Prejan de Bidoux, a French knight, they were driven back with loss to their ships. While the grand expedition was rendezvousing in the Lycian ports, twenty Turkish gallies manœuvred almost daily in the middle of the adjacent strait, in the hope of alluring the Rhodian squadron out to battle; and, when they found the latter too cautious to risk an engagement in a spot where it ran a hazard of being assailed by an overwhelming force, they audaciously ventured within cannon-shot of the port. This bravado almost betrayed the Grandmaster into the snare they had laid for him. His own gallant spirit, supported by the strenuous counsel of the Chancellor D'Amaral, and the noble indignation of many of the knights, impelled him to punish the braggarts in the way they invited; but a dread of weakening the garrison, by sacrificing any of his troops in a voluntary engagement, induced him to reject the defiance. He felt that the Turkish general could, with more prudence, fling away the lives of a hundred spahis, than he could sacrifice that of one man.

Early on the morning of the 26th of June, a signal from Mount Saint Stephen intimated to the Rhodians that the Turkish fleet was in sight. Countless sails studded the Lycian Strait; and tumult and wailing instantly rose from every quarter of the city. The gates were formally shut, and public prayers were offered up in the churches, imploring heaven to grant the victory to the champions of the Cross. This done, the whole population hurried to the ramparts and towers to behold the terrible armament that

threatened them with destruction. Four hundred sail swept past the mouth of the haven with the pomp and circumstance of a triumphal pageant; and on board this mighty fleet were one hundred and forty thousand soldiers, exclusive of sixty thousand serfs, torn from the forests of the Danube, to serve as pioneers. The Vice-admiral Cara Mohammed, when he arrived off the entrance of the bay, ordered his gallies to strike sail, and row into the port. The rowers accordingly stretched to their oars, and the Rhodians, conceiving their harbour in danger, rushed with noble emulation to the seaward bastion. But a few cannon-balls deterred the Turk from persevering in his bravado, and the Rhodians, proudly waving their standards, shouted in scorn and triumph as he bore away.

The main body of the Turkish army debarked in a small haven about three miles eastward of the city. Thirteen days elapsed before the troops, ordnance, and military-stores were all landed; and, in the interim, the Rhodians were greatly cheered by the arrival of Prejan de Bidoux, governor of Lango, who, with the Grandmaster's consent, had evacuated that island, and made haste to throw himself into the beleaguered capital. This brave knight, who had passed his life in war, made the voyage from Lango in a small pinnace, in which, at the dead of night, he passed safely through the Turkish fleet. He was a commander in whom the soldiers placed unlimited confidence. During the siege, he scarcely ever doffed his helmet; and the Grandmaster found him as sagacious in the council, as he had long been redoubted in the field.

The Turks, having completed their debarkation and pitched their camp, debated whether they should

first reduce the minor fortresses in the island, or immediately assail the capital. The General advocated the latter course, and the regular investment of the city commenced. The enemy broke ground beyond cannon-shot; but in a few days the trenches were sufficiently advanced to admit of a battery being raised, which the Rhodian artillery speedily destroyed. To interrupt the labours of the pioneers, the garrison made sorties, in which vast numbers of these defenceless wretches were slain. Dragged from their rustic avocations in the forests of Hungary and Bulgaria, they came unwillingly to the war, and, constantly threatened with flagellation and death, if they remitted their exertions, they threw up works with incredible celerity, under the very fire of the Rhodian batteries. Every discharge from the walls made terrible havoc among these miserable slaves, and the adjacent plain was strewed with their mutilated remains. Every day there was a sally; and every day the trenches in which they laboured served hundreds of Dacian boors for a grave.

The Turks had embarked in the expedition, inflated by their recent conquest of Belgrade; but short experience satisfied them that the reduction of Rhodes was likely to prove a far more toilsome and sanguinary achievement. Dismayed by the terrible precision of the Rhodian cannoniers, and haunted by the remembrance of the Sultan Mohammed's defeat they began to murmur; and symptoms of mutiny developed themselves in the camp. In this extremity, Pyrrhus Pasha held it his duty to report to his sovereign the state of his army. The Sultan's presence alone, he said, could eradicate the seeds of revolt, and reanimate the courage of the soldiers; and Solyman, with the martial ardour of his race,

instantly marshalled a body of fifteen thousand chosen men, and repaired in person to the siege. While this formidable reinforcement was on its march, a female slave, eager to recover her liberty, formed the daring project of firing the city, and, by that diversion, facilitating the entrance of her countrymen. But a hint of the plot inadvertently fell from an accomplice; and a number of suspected slaves were consequently arrested, and put to the rack. Pain extorted from all of them, save the chief culprit, an admission of guilt; but she endured the most acute tortures without flinching. Her judges sentenced her to be hanged and quartered along with her associates, and their severed limbs were publicly exposed, as a warning to the rest of the slaves to beware of cherishing similar designs. This woman, like Frapan the German engineer, who died the death of a malefactor during the former siege, appears to have been immolated on mere suspicion, and probably more as a matter of policy than from a thorough conviction of her guilt. In the present age, men shudder even to read of a woman suffering such a doom. How innumerable are the acts of error, injustice and barbarity, which the annals of the world embrace!

Solyman, after a rapid march through Anatolia, reached Porto-Fischo, on the Lycian coast, from whence his fleet carried him to Rhodes. He entered the camp on the 28th of August, welcomed by salvos of artillery, music, and martial cries; and the mutineers were appalled to hear, that he came to decimate, or put every tenth man to death. The whole army was ordered to assemble unarmed on the plain; and Solyman ascending, with a fierce and stately mein, a lofty and magnificent throne which had been prepared for him, commanded the fifteen

thousand chosen soldiers, who had served as his escort from Constantinople, and who still retained their weapons, to surround the defenceless host. He then addressed the malecontents in contemptuous and wrathful language—reviling them as cowards, and menacing them with instant and exemplary punishment. "I myself," he concluded, "am fully resolved here to conquer or end my days; and if I depart from this resolution, let my head, my fleet, my army and my empire, be for ever accursed and unfortunate!"

The moment he ceased speaking, a signal was given to the armed soldiers, who instantly drew their scimitars; whereupon the mutineers, conceiving that their last hour was come, prostrated themselves on the earth, and implored mercy. Pyrrhus Pasha and the other generals affected to entreat the Sultan in their behalf; and Solyman, who had never seriously meditated a bloody revenge, agreed to forgive them, on the pledge that they would evince the sincerity of their repentance by their valour in the first assault. "I suspend," said he to Pyrrhus, "the punishment of these cowards; but let them seek their full pardon in the bastions and upon the ramparts of our enemies."

This judicious display of severity and clemency combined, completely dispelled the discontent of the soldiers, and reanimated them with a fanatical zeal. They burned for an opportunity of redeeming their character; and the pioneers, protected by strong detachments of troops, laboured so indefatigably, that they speedily carried their works as far as the counterscarp. A treacherous Jew within the city having instructed Solyman that the shot from his batteries

merely grazed the battlements, and flew harmless over the city, his cannoniers, though ignorant of the modern method of lowering their guns, endeavoured to rectify the error. The same spy also warned him, that the knights were able to overlook his camp from the lofty steeple of Saint John; whereupon a battery was raised against it, which beat it down. In order the better to command the city, which was literally buried in fortifications, the pioneers were directed to raise two cavaliers; and in the course of a few days, two immense hills of earth, ten or twelve feet higher than the walls, rose over against the bastion of Italy, between the posts of Spain and Auvergne. As the cannon on the bastions completely commanded the site of these hills, the pioneers were swept away, gang after gang, by the shot incessantly hailed on them; but these poor slaves were of no value in the estimation of their task-master, who recked not how many of them perished, so the place were won. Nor were the Rhodians more careful of their Mohammedan captives. They exposed them, without compunction, to the fiercest fire, wherever their services could avail in strengthening the fortifications; and, on one occasion, a hundred and twenty of them, who were engaged in forming barricades and intrenchments, were assailed, under an erroneous impression that they were in a state of revolt, and cruelly massacred. As in the former siege, several huge guns, called bombards, projected enormous stones into the heart of the city, which, falling on the houses, sank down to their foundations. The Grandmaster narrowly escaped being crushed beneath one of these terrible projectiles, which, however, proved rather objects of terror than of danger, as during the whole siege they only killed ten men.

The sultan's first attack was made on the post of the German knights; but the Rhodian cannon speedily demolished the batteries raised against it. He next attempted to batter the Tower of Saint Nicholas; and here, again, he beheld his guns dismounted, and his batteries ruined, by the fire of the valiant band that defended it. He adopted the stratagem of burying his cannon and gabions in the sand during the day, and replanting them on the platform at night; and by this means a breach was made in the western wall, but not to such an extent as to encourage an assault. Seeing a new wall erected by the garrison, spring up behind the ruins of that which he had just demolished, and aware that the troops of his predecessor Mohammed had been repeatedly foiled in their attacks on this fortress, he again moved his batteries; and day and night, for a whole month, his vast train played incessantly on the principal bastions. In this terrible cannonade, the knight de Barbaran, who commanded at the post of Spain, was killed by a round shot; and John d'Omedes, his successor, lost an eye from a musket-shot a few days afterwards. On the side of the Turks, the Master of the Ordnance, a renegade deeply skilled in military science, had both his legs carried away by a cannon-ball; and, at the same moment, five soldiers were killed by the splinters of a plank which it shattered in its flight.

Hitherto the warfare had been confined to an almost incessant interchange of heavy shot. The enormous battering train of the besiegers had beaten down many parts of the walls, and shattered every bastion; but still they had not gained an inch of ground within the regular defences of the place.

The bulwarks of Italy and England were reduced to masses of ruin; but wherever the fortifications had sustained irreparable damage, barricades and intrenchments had been constructed within them; and these new works could only be carried by regular assaults. Solyman, who held the lives of his pioneers as of no value, ordered them to fill up the ditch with stones and earth; but the Rhodians, by means of the casemates, removed, by night, the rubbish which their enemies, who laboured under a murderous fire, cast in during the day. Corps of Turkish miners were at the same time busily employed at various points; and the engineer Martinigo is said to have countermined no less than thirty-two mines—the existence of which he discovered by means of subterranean chambers, and other ingenious contrivances. Notwithstanding his vigilance, however, the English bastion was effectually sapped; and on the fourth of September, twelve yards of the wall were blown up, with an explosion that shook the city like an earthquake. The ruins were sufficient to fill the ditch; and several English knights, who manned the bastion at the moment, were overwhelmed beneath them. The Turks, who were under arms waiting the result, no sooner saw a breach laid open, than, shouting their battle-cry, they rushed, sword in hand, to the assault. While the Rhodians were yet struggling in the smoke and dust arising from the springing of the mine, the Moslems gained the summit of the bulwark, planted several ensigns on it, and would have carried it, but for an intrenchment which unexpectedly obstructed their advance. While they yet hesitated on the brink of this defence, the knights, recovering from the panic into which the ex-

plosion had thrown them, and headed by the Grand-master, who rushed from the altar of Saint Mary of Victory, before which he had just been prostrated, furiously charged the Turks within the bastion. Covered by showers of musket-balls, grenades, and other missiles, and grasping a short spear commonly used in scalades, L'Isle Adam fought his way to the spot where the Turkish banner flapped lazily in the smoke of battle, and with his own hand dashed it to the earth. The Turks, quailing before the onset of the knights, lost the advantage they had gained, and, casting themselves headlong down the breach, fled in confusion towards their trenches. They were met in their flight by an avenger not less terrible than those from whom they sought to escape. Mustapha Pasha, who had watched the assault from his own lines, no sooner saw his troops begin to give way, than he hurried forward with fresh battalions to their support; and in his rage slew the foremost of the fugitives with his own hand. This prompt punishment turned the tide of the battle. Mingling encouraging exclamations with bitter reproaches, he led the recreants back to the breach, and the renewed assault became deadlier than the onset. "All mens ears," says the historian, * "were filled with the thundering of the shot, the noise of trumpets and drums, and crying of men." Christian and Turk grappled each other in mortal combat, and the poniard often despatched him whom the sword and bullet spared. Struck down in hundreds by the Rhodian musketeers, and incapable of a more protracted struggle, under the incessant shower of grenades, stones, and fire which descended on them, the

* Knolles, vol. 1. p. 333.

Turks again gave way. In vain did their general lift up his terrible voice. They fled back to their lines in incontrollable panic, and the Rhodian artillery swept down whole ranks in their flight. Upwards of two thousand Turks, including three sangiacks, fell in this bloody assault. Of the Order, there were slain, the general of artillery, Guyot de Marselhac, the Chevalier de Mauselle, who carried the Grand-master's standard, and forty-eight knights,—"all men," say the Chroniclers, "worthy of immortal fame." A musket-ball tore out both the standard-bearer's eyes, and but for the intrepidity of Emeri Rujaulx, a knight of Auvergne, the ensign would have been taken.

The disastrous result of this assault did not deter Pyrrhus Pasha from making a similar effort to carry the bulwark of Italy. Having harassed its defenders for many successive days with a terrible cannonade, he stormed it with a strong body of troops at day-break, on the 13th of September. Overcome with continual watching, the knights within the bastion had relaxed their vigilance; and the breach was carried, and the sentinels slain, before the clanguor of battle awoke on the ramparts. The Italians, on discovering the advantage which the enemy had gained through their supineness, made a gallant effort to regain the ground they had lost. The Turks, however, maintained themselves with great resolution. Pyrrhus advanced in person to the very edge of the ditch, and, while superintending the assault from that exposed position, the governor of Negropont, a young Turkish Emir, renowned for his valour, and in great esteem with his prince, was struck dead at his feet. The arrival of the Grandmaster with a body of chosen knights, decided the strug-

gle. A second attack which Pyrrhus made with a strong *corps de reserve* at a different point, was equally unsuccessful, and his troops instantly retired to their lines filled with despondency and dismay.

These successive repulses, added to the discontent which again began to prevail among the soldiery, made the Turkish generalissimo tremble lest his sovereign, with the sanguinary policy of his predecessors, should make his head atone for the disasters that had tarnished his arms. Holding it preferable to die in the breach, rather than by the bow-string, he concerted a joint assault with Achmet Pasha, which, by dividing the forces, and distracting the attention of the Rhodians, appeared likely to leave both the points which they intended to attack imperfectly defended. Accordingly, on the 17th of September, at the head of five battalions, Mustapha again sallied out of his lines against the English bastion. In the same moment that the besieged discovered his advance, Achmet Pasha suddenly sprung two mines which had been carried under the bastions of Auvergne and Spain, and, favoured by the consternation which these explosions occasioned, the storming parties threw themselves into the breaches, and mounted boldly to the assault. Sustained by the intrepid example of their general, Mustapha's battalions, though galled by a murderous fire, fought their way to the intrenchments within the English bastion, and planted several ensigns upon them. Exasperated at this indignity, the English knights, headed by their commander John Buck, and supported by Prejan de Bidoux and Christopher Valdner, commander of the language of Germany, made a sortie from behind their defences, and forced the foremost of the Turks to recoil. The

arrival of Mustapha with a reinforcement renewed the conflict; and could he have animated his troops with the indomitable bravery that sustained himself in this sanguinary strife, Rhodes would that day have seen the crescent triumphant on her loftiest battlement. But in vain did he fling himself into the thickest of the battle, and cheer on his soldiers to contemn the fatal storm which the cannon of the bastion, the wall-pieces that scoured the breach, and the musketry in rear of the intrenchments, directed against them. They regarded neither his menaces nor his cheers; and in their headlong flight, they dragged him involuntarily along with them over the breach. Achmet Pasha was equally unfortunate in his attack. The mine sprung under the bulwark of Auvergne took vent and did no injury; but that which exploded under the bastion of Spain made a practicable breach, and, through this, the assailants instantly entered. The Spanish knights received them on the ruins, and kept them bravely at bay with musket-shot, until the knight du Mesnil, captain of the bastion of Auvergne, had time to bring his guns to bear upon the very centre of the Turkish battalions. Dauntless as the Janizaries were, they could not support for any length of time this terrible cannonade; and, like their brethren in the bastion of England, they abandoned the assault and fled. This enterprise cost the Turks three thousand men. On the side of the Order, several knights, chiefly of the languages of England and Germany, lost their lives, and, among others, the valiant commanders John Buck and Christopher Valdner. The latter tore two standards from the Ottomans in the brunt of the battle, and retained them till his death. The knight, Prejan de Bidoux, after having killed several Turks with his own hand, received a musket-

shot in the neck, from which, however, he happily recovered.

In a council of war which Solyman assembled immediately subsequent to this repulse, Mustapha presented himself with the port of a man whom adversity had humbled, but who still did not despair of ultimate triumph. He suggested a general assault, and Solyman agreed that it should be hazarded. The 24th of September was the day appointed for this memorable attack; and as a prelude, the bastions of England, Spain and Auvergne, were again exposed to a tremendous cannonade. Throughout the preceding night, the Turkish camp resounded with the clang of weapons and the pattering of hurried and restless feet; and the Rhodians, who knew too well what these signs portended, kept anxious watch with their mail unbraced. The Grandmaster repaired in person to all the vulnerable posts, and exhorted their defenders to keep in constant remembrance, that, though their walls were rent and battered, they had still their weapons, and that, though victory might be denied them, Rhodes, the bulwark of Christendom, would be a glorious grave. To the citizens, whom he found congregated in trembling groups, he spoke of their wives, their maidens, and their inviolate hearths; and the men, gathering courage from his bold port and cheering voice, solemnly bade each other farewell, and, with protestations that the Turks should only enter the city over their bodies, hastened to the ramparts.

With the dawn, the Turkish artillery opened on every quarter in one wild unintermitting roar, and, veiled by the sulphureous haze that enveloped the whole circuit of the ramparts, the Turkish army rushed to the assault, and with savage cries entered

at once the bulwarks of Italy, Spain, England, Provence, and Auvergne. Solyman watched the battle from the summit of a wooden tower which commanded a view of the whole arena; and his Janizaries, aware that they fought under the eyes of their youthful sultan, and stimulated by the prospect of plunder, flung themselves proudly into the shattered works. The Rhodians sustained the attack with equal firmness and pride. Every man, whether priest or citizen, able to bear arms, was stationed on the walls; and those whom age or infirmity incapacitated from serving as soldiers, assisted the women and children in carrying stones, fire-hoops and boiling pitch to be cast down on the assailants. The hoops, girt with wildfire, and skilfully flung into the centre of the Turkish battalions, often enclosed several victims in the same flaming girdle, while the pitch, dashed down in bucketfuls, penetrated to their very bones, and compelled them to fling away their arms, and quit the conflict with yells of agony and despair.

Mustapha Pasha, though he had been thrice repulsed from the English bastion, again led the attack on that post. Its principal defences were in ruins, but the devoted men within it were not to be panic-struck by the destruction of walls and ramparts. The Turkish leader's lieutenant, an officer of high reputation, was killed by a cannon-ball while in the act of planting an ensign on the breach, and the assailants, who were struggling behind him, saw his body roll past them a mutilated mass into the ditch. The posts of Italy and Spain were assailed with equal impetuosity,—the former by Pyrrhus Pasha, the latter by the Aga of the Janizaries. Both the English and the Italians were sorely pressed; and

while the Grandmaster, with his chosen phalanx, was endeavouring to give them relief, a wild cry ran along the walls that the Spanish bulwark was taken, and, to his unspeakable dismay, he beheld no less than thirty Turkish pennoncels displayed upon it. This exploit had been achieved, not by the bravery of the assailants, but by an altogether fortuitous event. The Aga, at the beginning of the action, had directed his operations against a part of the fortifications to the right of the bulwark, under an impression that the bastion itself was too strong to be carried; and the Spanish knights eager to be in the heat of the battle, rushed to the place where the danger seemed most imminent, leaving only a few sentinels to defend their special post. These sentinels, with a similar laxity of discipline, quitted their stations to assist in the removal of some pieces of ordnance to another position; and in the mean time, a body of cowardly Turks, who had sheltered themselves from the cannonade by skulking under the ruined parts of the bastion, hearing all quiet within it, crept out of their hiding place, and, "like tall fellows," says Knolles, scaled the breach. Having gained the summit undiscovered, they cut the cannoniers to pieces, tore down the Christian ensign, and obtained possession of the whole fort. The Aga, informed by their triumphant shout of the conquest they had so unexpectedly achieved, lauding them as valiant men, instantly ordered a powerful body of Janizaries to their support; but the cannon on the bastion of Auvergne so completely swept the breach by which these succours tried to effect an entrance, that few survived the attempt. At the same time, the Grandmaster, followed by a band of valiant knights, scaled the inner face of the bastion, while the Commander de

Bourbon entered it by the casemate, and a band of Cretan mercenaries burst in at a gate which the Turks had neglected to secure. Assailed on every side, the cravens, who had won and held the fort for nearly two hours, instantly gave way. Those who escaped the sword precipitated themselves headlong over the breach; and the Grandmaster, having seen the Christian standard replanted on the bulwark, hastened back to the point where Achmet Aga still pressed that part of the works called the post of Spain. There the conflict continued to rage with unabated fury. New adversaries incessantly sprung into the breach in the stead of those whom the Christians hurled back corpses into the ditch; and the Grandmaster, seeing the troops who had to sustain this desperate attack, worn with six hours' constant fighting, drafted two hundred men and several knights from the Tower of Saint Nicholas to their relief. This reinforcement, rushing fresh into the battle, was the portent of victory. The assailants abandoned the breach, and fled towards their own lines; and Solyman, descrying from his lofty station that the attack had failed at every point, sounded a retreat. In this terrible assault, fifteen thousand Turks, including several commanders of renown, were left dead in the breaches and at the foot of the walls. The loss of the Rhodians, considering the limited strength of the garrison, was also great. Many valiant knights perished; and there scarcely remained a man wearing the Cross of the Order who had not received a wound. The knight John le Roux had his right hand carried away by a cannon-ball, but not till he had struck down seven Turks in fair battle. It is recorded, that, in the heat of the conflict, a Greek female of

exquisite beauty, instigated by anxiety and affection, stationed herself on the bastion in which her protector, a Dalmatian officer, fought, and had the misery of seeing a Turkish ball strike him dead at her feet. In her distraction, she rushed back to the house in which she had left her two children, stabbed them with her own hand, and then, arrayed in their father's habiliments, and grasping his sword, ran wildly to the breach, and fell, fighting with more than masculine bravery. *

The disastrous issue of this assault brought down on Mustapha Pasha the whole fury of his sovereign's wrath. Reviling him as a false counsellor and flatterer, who had advocated the war to the dishonour of the Ottoman arms, Solyman, in his rage, adjudged him worthy of death, and ordered the sentence to be carried into execution in presence of the whole Turkish host. No man durst venture to deprecate the monarch's vengeance, lest it should descend on his own head; and the troops, drawn up in battle-array, beheld the leader, whom they honoured for his valour, led out to die under his comrades' arrows. But at the moment when the signal of death was about to be given, Pyrrhus Pasha, the most venerable of the counsellors of the youthful prince, stepped forward, and earnestly implored him, for the sake of his own renown, to spare a servant who had in nowise merited so rigorous a punishment. Pyrrhus had been the governor of Solyman in his youth, and still retained a great influence over him; but he had overrated that influence, when he imagined that he could coerce him in a moment of furious excitation. Jealous of his authority, and ex-

* Rottier, *Monumens de Rhodes*, p. 136.

asperated to find, that there existed a slave in his empire who had the presumption to impugn his decrees, Solyman spurned the gray-haired suppliant from his feet, and commanded that he should suffer the same death. On hearing this terrible decision, all the other Pashas prostrated themselves before his throne, and besought him to reverse so unjust a sentence. Moved by their intercession, Solyman granted the culprits their lives—Pyrrhus being pardoned ostensibly on account of his great age, and Mustapha for the sake of his wife, who had the blood of Othman in her veins. Mustapha was subsequently appointed Governor of Egypt, and left the camp while the siege was yet in dependence.

Curtoglu, Admiral of the Turkish fleet, was treated with still greater severity—not because he had attempted too much, but because he had attempted nothing. While the land forces were pressing the siege, he lay idly in the mouth of the haven,—satisfied that it was not to be entered with any chance of success, and that he performed his part well, when he furnished a constant supply of provisions and warlike stores for the camp. But Solyman, conceiving that he had not only manifested a disinclination to encounter danger, but had also, through negligence, allowed warlike munitions to be introduced into the city, sentenced him to suffer a cruel death. The mediation of Achmet Pasha mitigated his punishment—if mitigation it could seem in the eyes of a man accustomed to a lofty station, to be subjected to receive one hundred stripes from the lash of the common executioner, on the poop of his own galley, and then to be thrust ignominiously out of his command.

The last bloody assault had sickened Solyman of

the war; and he seriously contemplated a retreat, when the assurances of an Albanian deserter, that the city was not only untenable, but that the bravest of its defenders were killed or wounded, induced him to persevere. To dishearten the besieged, who calculated on the storms of winter breaking up his camp, and driving his fleet into more sheltered waters, he ordered a palace to be erected on Mount Philerme, as if he were resolved to fix himself, at all hazards, permanently in the island. He also, at the suggestion of Achmet Pasha, who succeeded to the chief command on Mustapha's degradation, became more careful of the lives of his soldiers; and endeavoured to achieve, by scientific skill, that triumph which brute force had failed to accomplish. The bastion of Spain continued to be the favourite point of attack; and a furious cannonade, which lasted for several days, reduced it to a complete ruin—nothing being left uninjured, save the *fausse-braye*, or barbacan. In the face of a deadly fire from the walls, the trenches were carried forward as far as this work; and a wooden gallery, covered with raw hides, was erected to shelter the pioneers from the showers of boiling pitch and oil thrown from the rampart, while they ran mines into the heart of the fortifications. In the course of his ingenious attempts to circumvent these operations, the engineer, Martinigo, was deprived of an eye by a musket-shot, which entered a loop-hole through which he was engaged in reconnoitring the enemy's works. His wound was at first regarded as mortal; and, as his military skill had been the chief stay of the city throughout the siege, the prospect of his death struck every heart with dismay. He was carried to the Grandmaster's palace; and, by the

time he was able to return to his post, the struggle was nearly ended.

Assault followed assault, and again and again were the bastions of Provence, Italy, Spain and England, strewed with turbaned dead. So enormous were the breaches in the bastion of England, that a whole battalion could have entered it in battle-array; yet still the besieged presented, with their mailed breasts, an insurmountable barrier to the Turkish lances. Mines exploded into countermines; and, amid these subterranean horrors, man grappled man in deadly strife, perishing as proudly in the bowels of the earth, as on the summit of the ramparts. The Rhodians had dwindled to a handful; but their hearts were still elate. For thirty-four successive nights, the Grand-master had a pallet spread for himself behind the intrenchment on the Spanish bastion, where he lay in the pride of his veteran renown, constantly ready to fling himself into the battle. Truly is it said, that man is very strong and very formidable, when he contemns, in an honourable and just war, all personal considerations.

In this, as in the former siege, the excited minds of the populace were constantly on the alert to detect treason within the walls. Prior to the general assault on the 24th of September, a Jewish physician, who had been discovered shooting an arrow, with a letter tied to it, into the Turkish camp, and was afterwards tortured into a confession of guilt, suffered an ignominious death. Now suspicion, exaggerated by the imminence of the danger, looked round for a nobler victim; and the Chancellor D'Amaral was the object it selected. A constitutional arrogance tarnished the character of this unfortunate knight, who had grown gray in the battles

of the Order; and the moment the finger of detraction pointed him out as a traitor, every minion whose pride he had outraged eagerly applied himself to discover proofs of his guilt. Blaise Diaz, one of his attendants, was observed to repair, day after day, at unseasonable hours, with a bow in his hand, to the post of Auvergne; and this being reported to the Grandmaster, the menial was arrested, and his conduct subjected to a judicial scrutiny. His judges, dissatisfied with his answers, recommended the torture; and at the first twitch, he confessed that he had been employed by his master to throw treasonable letters into the Turkish lines. On this evidence the Chancellor was imprisoned in the Tower of Saint Nicholas, and brought to a formal trial before two Grand-crosses and the civic magistracy. He was confronted with Diaz, who persisted in his deposition; and a Greek priest, a chaplain of the Order, confirmed it so far, as that, on one occasion, he had observed the Chancellor and this man skulking in a nook of the fortifications, with a cross-bow, and quarry or square arrow, having a paper fastened to it, as if anxious to shoot it into the enemy's camp. Diaz moreover swore, that it was entirely at the instigation of D'Amaral that the Sultan had invaded the island; and that he had been in secret correspondence with the Turks from the day in which L'Isle Adam was elected head of the Order—an assertion which obtained the readier credence, from the circumstance of D'Amaral having been heard to declare at that time, with the bitterness of foiled ambition, that Rhodes would never have another Grandmaster. D'Amaral repelled these allegations with scorn.

Diaz, he protested, was a false villain, who, because he had been justly punished for a series of delinquences, sought, out of revenge, to swear away his life. He admitted the expression that had been resuscitated to his crimination, but ascribed it solely to his want of confidence in the courage and abilities of the knight who had rivalled him in the estimation of the Order. Notwithstanding his intrepid port and honourable station, his judges subjected him to the cruel indignity of the rack; but it only extorted from him a proud declaration, that, after forty years of honourable service under the banner of the Cross, he would never, to escape a few bodily pangs, stain his renown by attesting himself capable of so base a crime. His appeals were made to men who were firmly persuaded of his guilt; and both master and servant were adjudged worthy of death. Diaz was hanged, but the Chancellor was sentenced to the more honourable doom of decapitation. Judgment was passed on him in a full assembly of the Order; after which, he was stripped of the habit of a knight, and consigned to the secular authorities, who, next day, carried him publicly in a chair to the place of execution. He met death with the fortitude of a martyr; and there exists not, in the whole records of his tragical story, a single circumstance that discredits the inference, that he filled a martyr's grave.

Hitherto the Rhodians had been supported by a hope that the Kings of Europe would not leave them unsuccoured in their extremity; but when the winter drew near, and the navigation of the adjacent sea became dangerous, they found themselves necessitated to admit the bitter conviction, that on their *own* efforts alone were they to place their trust.

Europe was agitated by the wars of the two greatest Potentates of the age—Charles the Fifth of Germany, and Francis the First of France; and, with sanguinary tumults so much nearer home to occupy their attention, the Christian Princes unanimously left Rhodes to its fate. The Cardinal Julio de Medicis made an effort to interest Pope Adrian the Sixth in behalf of the forsaken knights, but without success. Adrian, though a good man, was a weak Prince, entirely devoted to the Emperor, who had advanced him to the Papal chair; and, instead of sending such forces as he could spare to uphold the banner of Saint John in the Levant, he marched all his troops to assist his benefactor in chasing the French from Lombardy. Disappointment, too, attended the attempts of the knights-commanders of the Order resident in Europe, to relieve their besieged brethren. Two ships, laden with stores from Marseilles, were lost in the Tuscan Sea; and, in the same storm, a vessel with succours from England, commanded by Sir Thomas Newport, was also cast away. Several other disasters of a similar description conspired to dishearten the garrison, who ccused the very elements of being in a league ainst them.

In the mean while, Achmet Pasha, on whom Soman had devolved the direction of the siege, reented his batteries against the Italian and English tions, and completed their destruction. Having anced his trenches to the base of the walls, and ed a covered way with huge beams of timber, er which his pioneers wrought in safety, he ran nines so deeply into the works, as to demolish intrenchments, by which means he permanently lished himself on the platform of the Italian

bastion. To obstruct his further advance, the Grand-master demolished the churches of Saint Pantaleon and Notre Dame de la Victoire, and formed new defences out of their ruins. Several sanguinary but indecisive combats followed. At length, a mine was sprung, with fatal precision, under the bastion of Spain; and to prevent the knights from raising new defences in rear of the vast breach which the explosion effected, incessant discharges of round-shot were poured into it for twenty-four successive hours. Next day (30th November), the Turks advanced in great force against the bastion. Their ensigns glittered brilliantly in the morning sun, and they cheered each other to the onset with warlike shouts and songs of victory. A similar attack was made on the Italian bastion; and the Turkish fleet, at the same time, sailed proudly to and fro before the haven, as if about to assail the seaward defences. Warned of their danger by the tolling of the bells and the roar of the cannon, the Rhodians rushed to their posts with the fury of despair. The Turks had no longer walls to surmount; but they found in their stead a rampart of devoted breasts, against which they vainly dashed themselves. In the midst of the conflict, the sky was overcast, and the clouds poured down torrents of rain upon the combatants. Happily for the Rhodians, the flood washed away the shoulder-work of the Turkish trenches, and exposed them to the cannon on the bastion of Auvergne. The destructive fire which immediately opened from this post, supported by the deadly vollies of the musketeers who covered the breach, speedily choked it with mutilated bodies. The Rhodians, who believed the last day of their liberty arrived, fought with the desperation of men who had sworn not to

outlive its extinction. The whole city awaited in trepidation the issue of the conflict. Every house resounded with woman's plaintive cries, and every altar was watered with her tears. The Turks had commenced the assault confident of victory, and ever and anon their fierce war-shouts mingled with the roar of the battle. Dreadfully galled by the Rhodian fire, they at length recoiled, and the knights shouted exultingly in their turn as they saw them retire. Not even the certainty of instant destruction could drive the Ottomans from the breach, chased by that derisive cry. Once more they turned their lances towards the corse-strewn gap, and entered it with impetuous bravery; but again the same deadly shower struck them down in bleeding heaps. Achmet could support the scene of slaughter no longer, and, with a heavy heart, he ordered the retreat to be sounded, leaving in the breach and ditch upwards of five thousand men.

This repulse filled Solyman with such despondency, that for several days he refused to be comforted, and shut himself up in his tent. Achmet, though trembling at the hidden face of his prince, relaxed not his efforts to work his way into the heart of the city. The Rhodians, he saw, were prepared to fall to a man; but even on that desperate condition he knew he might calculate on the victory. He kept the besieged constantly occupied with skirmishes and alarms, while at the same time, multitudes of pioneers laboured incessantly within the works which he had taken, and gradually ran their trenches so far into the town, that the Rhodians gave up the defence of their shattered walls, and pulled down the houses behind them to make new fortifications. Still, even the bravest of the Ottomans shrunk from at-

tempting another general assault; and at the suggestion of Pyrrhus Pasha, who had resumed his influence over the Sultan, Solyman agreed that the besieged should be invited to capitulate. Hieronymo Monilio, a Genoese, who chanced to be in the Turkish camp, was intrusted with this service. He presented himself before the bastion of Auvergne, and, on being recognised as a Christian, was requested to declare his mission. He refused to deliver it openly; * but stated, that he would make it known verbally, or by letter, to Matteo de Via, one of the principal citizens of Rhodes. Upon hearing this, Francis Fornovi, a French knight of a choleric disposition, who is reputed to have shot, with his own harquebuss, from the top of Saint George's Tower, no less than five hundred Turks during the siege, moved with indignation, bent his deadly tube on the envoy, and, telling him that the knights of Saint John never treated with the Infidels but sword in hand, warned him to abandon all hopes of any such conference. Monilio retired; but two days afterwards he again presented himself before the walls, as the bearer of a packet from the Sultan to the Grandmaster. The Grandmaster, aware that many of his bravest soldiers had begun to speculate on the propriety of a surrender, refused to receive the letter, lest his so doing should strengthen the desire for negotiation. The sentinels were instructed to pay no regard to signals of parley, but to fire on every person who approached the fortifications from the Turkish camp.

Had the maintenance of this heroic position rested solely with the Grandmaster and the majority of his knights, Rhodes would have been their grave. But

* Knolles, vol. i. p. 399.

sooner did it come to be generally known in the that the enemy were disposed to negotiate, than getic representations were made to the Grand-er that the offer should be accepted. The po-te, being chiefly Greeks, held mutinous cabals, in h they agreed, that, though it might be perfectly ming and proper for the knights to perish at their , it was better for the citizens to save their lives fortunes, by submitting to the Ottoman yoke. y empowered their metropolitan to remonstrate the Grandmaster in their name; and that pre-accordingly pointed out, in very moving terms, lesolation that would inevitably fall on the city, the knights to hold out until the Moslems en- it over their lifeless remains. The Grand-er, in reply, dismissed him with the declaration, he and his brethren were resolved to be buried breach and in the last intrenchments; but next ther deputies renewed the remonstrance with a station, that if he longer neglected the preser-n of the inhabitants on such terms as the foe to offer, they would adopt measures of their to ensure the safety of themselves and families. led by this menace, the Grandmaster referred matter to the council; and three merchants pre-d to that assembly a petition, bearing the sig-es of all the principal citizens, praying that their and children might not be exposed to the fury rutality which invariably characterized the Turk-ldiery in successful assaults. The council, be-answering this petition, ordered the command-of the principal posts to report as to the state e defences; and, in particular, the engineer Mar-o, who had recovered from his wound sufficiently able to resume his duty, and the Grand Prior of

Saint Giles, were required to deliver a candid o
nion. Both these knights agreed that the place
no longer tenable. The Turks, they said, were
ready established within the walls—the flower of
Rhodian forces had perished—and a dearth of p
visions and ammunition would speedily compe
surrender, even though they should determine to p
tract the struggle by making every house a bulwa
—in short, it was their decided conviction that
next assault would be triumphant. This declarat
determined the council in favour of negotiation. T
Grandmaster alone stood up in the midst of the
sembly, and entered his protest against it, on the
gument, that it was their duty, as the sworn ch
pions of the Cross, to court a holy and glori
death. This the whole members of the council
mitted to be true; and, with one accord, procla
ed their readiness to lay down their lives in hono
able battle for the cause to which they were solem
devoted. But they maintained that they had
title to expose the citizens to certain slaughter,
their wives and maidens to violation and bonds
Overcome by this affecting consideration, the Gra
master bowed his venerable head in silent acqui
cence; and it was decreed that the overtures of pe
should be accepted.

In accordance with this determination, the n
friendly signal from the Ottoman camp was answ
ed by a corresponding one from the city; and t
Turkish officers of rank instantly presented the
selves at one of the gates, and silently delivered
the Prior of Saint Giles and the Bailiff Marti
go, who advanced to meet them, a letter from
Sultan to the Grandmaster. Solyman, while
held out proffers of clemency, provided the pl

e immediately surrendered, menaced a general
sacre in case he were compelled to enter it at
point of the sword; and the council at once
ed to exchange hostages and receive his propo-
. Anthony Grolée, standard-bearer of the Or-
, and Robert Perrucey, Judge of Rhodes, both
en of great gravity, and skilful in the Greek
gue," were despatched to the Turkish camp;
e the Turks, on their part, sent into the city a
kinsman of Achmet Pasha, and Solyman's
f dragoman. As the dragoman, notwithstand-
his office, knew no language save his own, he
accompanied by an Epirote renegade, a man of
p wit, and completely conversant with the Greek,
kish, and Italian languages. Solyman received
Christian deputies with proud courtesy. He
ged himself, in the event of Rhodes and its de-
encies being surrendered, to permit the knights
depart with the honours of war to a Christian
ntry; and with this answer Perrucey was sent
to the city, while the standard-bearer was de-
d and treated with marked distinction in Ach-
Pasha's tent. The message of Perrucey in-
d the council to send two other deputies to the
kish camp, who demanded three days for consi-
tion; but the Sultan, dreading the arrival of suc-
s from Europe, returned for answer, that they
t either accede to immediate negotiation, or pre-
for a fresh assault. Some historians assert that
man acceded to the truce, and that it was broken
he impetuosity of the French knight Fornovi,
, in a fit of rage at seeing the Turks lounging in
e companies under his guns, discharged a volley
und shot into the midst of them. On this, se-
Christian prisoners deprived of their hands, ears,

and noses, were sent back to the city with a messag to the Grandmaster, that for this iniquitous violatio of the truce, he should be similarly mutilated a an example to posterity. This terrible mission w followed by successive discharges from the Turkis batteries, and the Rhodian cannoniers also resum their fire; though, for lack of ammunition, their gu were but lazily worked.

Meanwhile, a sort of reaction had taken place mong the inhabitants of Rhodes. A band of youn Greeks presented themselves in a tumultuous mann before the Grandmaster, and demanded that the n gotiations should be broken off. They preferred p rishing, they said, with arms in their hands, to bea hewn to pieces after capitulation, like the citizen of Belgrade. The Grandmaster, who knew well ho to estimate this vain-glorious language, answere gravely, that he was rejoiced to find so many bra men of his own way of thinking, and that he trust they would not forget that they stood pledged t bury themselves in the ruins of the city, when th hour of doom arrived. When the Turkish batteri began to play again on the shattered walls, the braggarts were summoned, by the sound of a trumpe to repair to the advanced posts, and to remain the constantly under pain of death. One craven wh disobeyed this order was hanged, as an example t his companions; and from that time discipline w more easily maintained.

On the 17th of December, the Turks made an a tempt to dislodge the Rhodians from a position whi they still maintained in the *fausse-braye* of the Sp nish bastion. After a sanguinary conflict, which las ed nearly a whole day, the enemy were once mo driven back to their lines. Next day, however, th

Ottomans renewed the assault; and, borne down by numbers, the knights were at last compelled to abandon the bastion, and retire into the city. Filled with consternation at the immediate prospect of having their hearths violated by a merciless soldiery, the citizens forgot the momentary ardour that had induced them to resume their arms, and implored the Grandmaster to renew the negotiations. L'Isle Adam, who saw that longer resistance would only bring down indignity and destruction on the trembling multitude, consented to adopt their suggestion; and deputies were accordingly despatched, with full authority to arrange the terms of surrender. Solyman received them, surrounded by his Janizaries, all cased in glittering armour; and it reflects imperishable honour on him, that the conditions he imposed were of the most magnanimous and clement description. The principal stipulations were,—that the churches should not be profaned—that no children should be taken from their parents—that the citizens should be allowed the free exercise of their religion—that every person, whether knight or citizen, should be at liberty to quit the island—that those Christians who remained, should pay no tribute for five years—that the knights should depart in their own gallies, and be supplied with additional transports from the Turkish fleet, if they required them—that they should be allowed twelve days from the ratification of the treaty, to embark their property—that that property should include relics, consecrated vessels, records and writings, and all the artillery employed on board their gallies—and that the Turkish army should, in the interim, retire several miles from the city, and only four thousand Janizaries enter it. In behalf of the Turks, it was simply conditioned, that

Rhodes and its dependencies, including the Castle of Saint Peter on the continent, should be surrendered; and that, in pledge of his sincerity, the Grand-master should deliver up as hostages, twenty-five of the principal citizens, and the same number of knights. On the subscription and ratification of the treaty, the hostages repaired to the Turkish camp; and the Aga of the Janizaries, at the head of a chosen body of troops, entered the city, and planted his sovereign's banner in the stead of the Christian standard.

While this humiliating ceremony was taking place, a mighty fleet was descried in full sail for the island; and, for a short space, the Rhodians were tortured with the idea that they had voluntarily delivered themselves into the hands of their enemies, at the very moment succours from the West were about to befriend them. The Turks, impressed with dread that the fleet in sight was really a Christian armament, stood to their arms; but, as it drew near, the Sultan recognised his own flag, and remembered that, in a moment of despondency, he had summoned fresh troops from the frontiers of Persia to press the siege. Had this reinforcement arrived at an earlier period, the Rhodians could scarcely have made so honourable a capitulation. Had it been a Christian expedition despatched to their rescue, the hour of their surrender would have been embittered, by the consciousness that another week's resistance would have placed them in a condition to contemn the fiercest assaults of the Turkish host.

Historians differ as to the manner in which the treaty of capitulation was observed. It appears to have been neither strictly kept nor grossly broken, but to have been infringed in a few trivial particulars by

Turkish soldiery, whose insolence even the dread
eir Emperor's vengeance could not entirely re-
n. On one occasion, a body of Janizaries, ac-
d by a desire for plunder, committed several
ly outrages; but a threat from the Sultan, that
Aga's head should answer for their insubordi-
n, prevented a general spoliation. Glory was
man's idol; and there exists no doubt that he
anxious that the knights should propagate over
stendom a favourable report of his clemency
inviolable faith, as well as of his warlike renown.
days after the treaty was ratified, the Grand-
er was invited by Achmet Pasha to repair to
Turkish camp, and be introduced to his con-
or. L'Isle Adam at first refused to subject him-
to so painful an interview; but, holding it un-
to incense an enemy who, by a single word, might
rminate the Order, he, after some hesitation,
on a plain habit befitting a vanquished man, and
nted himself, with a few attendants, before the
erial tent. The day was tempestuous; and
kish pride exposed the heroic old man to the
emency of the weather for several hours, without
ing him the smallest refreshment. At length,
rds evening, a splendid robe was flung over him,
he was admitted to the Sultan's presence. For
ne, the two warriors eyed each other with pierc-
glances. The venerable and majestic port of the
ndmaster, won the admiration of the youthful
ot; and he magnanimously requested his inter-
er to console the Christian chief with the as-
nce, that even the bravest of men were liable to
me the sport of fortune. He invited him, at
same time, to embrace the Mohammedan faith,
enter his service, since the Christian princes,

who had abandoned him in his extremity, did not merit the alliance of so redoubted a chief; and, by way of a bribe, promised to advance him to the highest dignities in his empire, and make him one of his chosen counsellors. The Grandmaster answered, that were he to dishonour his gray hairs by becoming a traitor and renegade, he would only show how unworthy he was of the high opinion which his conqueror entertained of him; and that he would far rather retire into obscurity, or part with life itself, than be accounted a recreant and apostate by his own people. Solyman dismissed the venerable knight with honour; and his attendants carried back with them each a magnificent garment, in token of the Sultan's favour. Some days afterwards, Solyman entered the city, and repaired to the Grandmaster's palace. L'Isle Adam, overcome by this unexpected condescension, attempted to humble himself at his feet; but the generous Moslem declined the homage, and graciously saluted him by the title of "Father." L'Isle Adam acknowledged the honour, by thanking God, that, since Rhodes had fallen, it had fallen before the arms of so merciful and noble-minded a prince. As Solyman left the palace, he said to Achmet Pasha, who was in attendance, "It is not without regret that I drive this unfortunate old man, full of sorrow, from his home."

The departure of L'Isle Adam, and the small body of knights who survived this memorable siege, was expedited by a report that the Sultan was about to quit the army for his capital. Dreading to be left at the mercy of the officers whom he might leave in command, the Grandmaster ordered the knights to repair on board their vessels without delay. The *embarkation* took place at night; and four thousand

Christian natives followed the Order into exile. The moans and lamentations of these wanderers resounded throughout the city—even the sternest knights were overwhelmed with grief at bidding an eternal farewell to the sacred walls which, for upwards of two hundred years, had presented an impregnable barrier to the Ottoman arms. L'Isle Adam alone had sufficient fortitude to hide his grief. Amid the confusion that prevailed, he issued his orders with the same tranquillity as if he had been despatching his gallies to gather fresh laurels on the waves. Amurath, son of the unfortunate Zizim, who had long resided in Rhodes as a pensionary of the Order, expressed the greatest desire to accompany the expedition; but, though he made several attempts to elude the vigilance of the Turkish emissaries who were in search of him, he found it impossible, and the Grandmaster had to leave him to his fate. He was subsequently arrested, with his four children, and brought before his puissant kinsman. It was Solyman's ardent desire that the world should consider him a clement king; but the fratricidal spirit of his race was not thoroughly subdued, even in his magnanimous bosom. He demanded of his prisoner, whether he were still numbered among the Faithful; and when Amurath intrepidly answered, that he and his children were followers of Christ, he sternly ordered the hapless apostate and his two sons to be strangled. They were executed in presence of the whole army, to prevent successful imposture in their name in after times; and two girls, whom this sanguinary act left orphans, were sent to Constantinople, and immured in the old seraglio. There is but too much reason to conclude, that Amurath and his family were purposely excluded from the benefit of the capitulation,

and that they fell victims to a cruel policy, alike dishonourable to the vanquisher and the vanquished.* History, however, has failed to chronicle the fact, from a desire, probably, to transmit the laurelled name of L'Isle Adam to posterity without a stain.

L'Isle Adam, like a true father, embarked the last of his sorrowing band. He fixed his head-quarters on board the great carrack; and on the morning of the 1st of January 1523, the fleet, consisting of about fifty sail of all descriptions, put to sea. It was an hour of wo, but the wanderers departed not unsolaced. They looked their last on the shattered towers from which the fate of war had driven them, supported by the consciousness, that, though Rhodes had passed from under their sway, their protracted resistance had conferred the fame of victory even on defeat. The Turks, in token of respect for the vanquished, refrained from defacing the armorial insignia and inscriptions on the public buildings of the city; and, to this day, they venerate it as place worthy of being held for ever holy and illustrious in the estimation of mankind.

* Rottier—*Monumens de Rhodes*, p. 140.

ıe Order; and the moment the finger of detrac-
pointed him out as a traitor, every minion
ɜe pride he had outraged eagerly applied him-
to discover proofs of his guilt. Blaise Diaz,
of his attendants, was observed to repair, day
day, at unseasonable hours, with a bow in his
, to the post of Auvergne; and this being re-
d to the Grandmaster, the menial was arrested,
his conduct subjected to a judicial scrutiny.
judges, dissatisfied with his answers, recom-
led the torture; and at the first twitch, he con-
d that he had been employed by his master to
v treasonable letters into the Turkish lines.
this evidence the Chancellor was imprisoned in
Tower of Saint Nicholas, and brought to a for-
rial before two Grand-crosses and the civic ma-
ıcy. He was confronted with Diaz, who per-
l in his deposition; and a Greek priest, a
ain of the Order, confirmed it so far, as that,
ne occasion, he had observed the Chancellor
this man skulking in a nook of the fortifica-
, with a cross-bow, and quarry or square ar-
having a paper fastened to it, as if anxious
ıoot it into the enemy's camp. Diaz more-
swore, that it was entirely at the instigation
'Amaral that the Sultan had invaded the isl-
and that he had been in secret correspond-
with the Turks from the day in which L'Isle
n was elected head of the Order—an assertion
h obtained the readier credence, from the circum-
ɜe of D'Amaral having been heard to declare at
time, with the bitterness of foiled ambition, that
des would never have another Grandmaster.
maral repelled these allegations with scorn.

tenable position, and maintained, that any garrison that might be sent thither would certainly be delivered into the hands of the Moors of Tunis, if it escaped starvation. These were not very encouraging pictures; but the prospects of the knights did not warrant the rejection of the Emperor's donation, however repulsive and perilous the exile to which it consigned them.

To the details furnished by the commissioners, it is almost unnecessary to make any addition. Malta —the Melita of Scripture—lies in the bosom of the Mediterranean Sea, about fifty miles southward of Sicily, the nearest point of Europe. Its first inhabitants were of Carthaginian origin; and, to this day, the Maltese language, which is a corrupt dialect of the Arabic, blended with Italian, is supposed to bear an affinity to the Punic tongue. From the Carthaginians it passed to the Romans, who, in turn, gave place to the Goths, and these, again, to the Saracens. In 1090, it was recovered from the Infidels by the Norman adventurers who had settled in Calabria. It afterwards became an appanage of the German Emperors, from whom it was taken by Charles of Anjou, King of Sicily, who, in turn, was dispossessed of it by the troops of Spain; and, after being repeatedly bought and sold for the convenience of its rulers, was finally granted to the Knights of Saint John, by the Imperial act of donation. These transferences, conjoined with its exposure to the descents of the Saracen and Turkish rovers, had completely desolated the island and its dependencies, and the impoverished inhabitants could barely provide themselves with the necessaries of life. In the year 1516, only fourteen years prior to its cession

to the Knights of Saint John, all the revenue which the Imperial governor could wring from it, was forty-one ducats.* Under these circumstances, the generosity of Charles appears of a very niggard description; and when it is considered, that, by planting the champions of the cross on these sterile rocks, he threw a buckler of proof between the Infidels and his Sicilian possessions, his benefaction dwindles down into a selfish and contemptible gift.

On the confirmation of the grant by the Pope, the Grandmaster despatched two distinguished commanders, to receive investiture from the Viceroy of Sicily, which was conferred in the Emperor's name. These knights afterwards proceeded to take possession of the new territories, along with six commissioners nominated by the Viceroy, who installed the commander, Aurelio Botigella, temporary governor and captain-at-arms of Malta. The castle of Saint Angelo, which commanded the most commodious port of the island, was delivered up to the commander Piton and a company of infantry; and, soon afterwards, a small squadron carried a number of knights to Tripoli, which was intrusted to the government of Gaspar of Sanguessa, a veteran knight, who had rendered himself renowned by many heroic actions.

While these matters were in progress, the Grandmaster, at the head of the convent, removed from Viterbo to Syracuse in Sicily, as a preparatory step to the final transportation of the Order to its new asylum. The return of the commissioners was a signal for him to expedite his departure; and he was on the point of embarkation, when he learned, with dismay, that the Viceroy of Sicily was instructed

* *Boisgelin.*

not to permit the necessary supply of corn t
shipped, without paying the full exportation du
and that, at the same time, the privilege of co
money in his new possessions did not come w
the limits of the Emperor's donation. A
former restriction was a virtual sentence of st
tion on the islanders, who found it impracti
to raise grain, and the latter a type of b
age, the council was disposed to spurn them
the islands together; but the Grandmaster,
his usual prudence, despatched two ambassado
discuss the subject verbally with the Emp
and, through their exertions, supported by th
presentations of the Pope, Charles was pre
upon to concede the points to which they obje
This matter adjusted, the Grandmaster and hi
lowers, including the remnant of the Rhodian
who had accompanied the convent in its wa
ings, and were subsisted from the treasury o
Order, embarked for their new country. Th
the Maltese channel is barely fifty miles wide
fleet did not cross it without danger. A d
ful storm overtook it on the voyage—one galle
dashed to pieces on a reef, and a carrack was st
ed. The Grandmaster's fortitude almost des
him, when he beheld the sterile and miser
peopled rock to which a hard destiny had
him, and which contained no edifice superio
fisher's hut, save a dilapidated and almost u
able fortress. The natural riches of Rhodes
corn, wine, and oil—its forests—its fleets—its nu
ous rich dependencies, dwelt on his memory
painful tenacity—making his new retreat look dr
from the contrast. Nevertheless, he had passed thr
too many vicissitudes to sink into despair. He

mediately threw up a few defences round the insignificant casal which had risen under the guns of the castle of Saint Angelo, and at the same time marked out a position for his future capital. Thus, in the end of 1530, after a pilgrimage of seven years from their expulsion from Rhodes, were the soldier-monks of Saint John deported to an inhospitable rock in the bosom of that sea which had for centuries borne their victorious flag; and henceforward were they most popularly known as the Knights of Malta.

It was at this time, while L'Isle Adam and his knights could not refrain from bewailing the severity of their lot, that the project of surprising the town of Modon in the Morea was revived. The commander Bosio, with whom it originated, had, before his death, secured the connivance of two Greek renegades who held appointments of trust in that city; and the correspondence with these men had never been entirely suspended. Though the treasury was but ill able to fit out an expedition, the Grandmaster, supported by the hope that victory would put it in his power to transport the convent permanently to the Morea, strained every nerve to render the armament effective. His age, and the necessity of his remaining to superintend the works in progress at Malta, prevented him from personally assuming the command; and he therefore devolved it on the knight Salviati, Prior of Rome. Besides the flower of the Order, the armament included a considerable body of veteran mercenaries, hardened in all the atrocities of the Italian wars. The squadron was reinforced by a galley from Sicily, and another from Genoa; and also by two armed vessels, commanded by a famous privateer called the Viscount de Cicala. A young Greek named Scandali, son of one of the

renegades on whose co-operation the knights relied, was also employed in the enterprise.

The Prior of Rome put to sea in the middle of August 1531, and arrived without disaster off the island of Sapienza, which covers the port of Modon. As had previously been arranged, his little fleet, striking their masts, ran into a secluded roadstead; and two spies, disguised as merchants, were sent into the town, and soon returned with the two renegades. Notwithstanding these traitors spoke sanguinely of the enterprise, the Christian leader held it prudent to have better authority that it was practicable, than their bare asseveration; and three knights, disguised in the same manner as the first messengers, accompanied them back to gain information. Scandali, one of the renegades, who commanded a tower built on a mole for the protection of the harbour, introduced the spies into that fort, and showed them not only how it might be taken, but how, with the connivance of his brother-traitor, one of the city gates might also be secured. The spies returned to the fleet with a favourable report; and on the following evening the attempt was made.

At sunset two feluccas, one of them commanded by young Scandali, stood boldly into the harbour. They were apparently laden with timber; but under the planks, which were intended to assist the debarkation, were concealed several knights, and a number of soldiers. Through the contrivance of Calojan, one of the renegades, who was superintendant of the port, they entered it without molestation; and the elder Scandali having succeeded in intoxicating the few Turks who garrisoned the tower of *the mole*, it was occupied by the Christians, while

several of the Janizaries were put to death without alarm. At daybreak, a gate of the city was forced. The drowsy guards, who had just opened it, were cut down; and the Christians, to the amount of about three hundred, rushed into the place, when one of the feluccas instantly fired a signal gun, to warn the Maltese general to hasten to sustain the assailants with all his forces. Had the three hundred men, who thus flung themselves into the heart of the city, availed themselves, with common discretion, of the advantage which surprise gave them over the slender garrison, Modon had been taken. But, instead of pressing onward to the castle, where the governor was stationed, the soldiers, fancying the city already in their power, and accustomed to the predatory character of Italian warfare, instantly dispersed, to indulge in pillage and rapine. While thus engaged, the governor, speedily instructed of the insignificance of their number, assailed them at the head of all his troops, and, at the same time, despatched swift messengers to summon succours from a distance. A sanguinary combat ensued; both parties fought with desperation; for the knights, though the odds were fearfully against them, relied on the timely arrival of their admiral to the rescue. Unhappily, a tempestuous wind had prevented the signal-gun from being heard by the fleet; and it was past noon before Salviati, informed of what was passing by a fast-sailing bark, despatched by young Scandali, unmoored and stood into the harbour. He found the conflict still raging; and his arrival so far decided it, that the governor was driven back into the castle. The knights were preparing to cannonade that fortress, when several squadrons of Turkish cavalry, who had been summoned

from a distance, threw themselves into it by the la
ward gate; and information was at the same t
conveyed to the Maltese leader, that six thous
infantry were advancing from a camp in the inter
This intelligence, followed as it was by a despe
sally from the castle, determined him to abandon
enterprise; and his troops, infuriated by their
pulse, gave themselves up to outrage and plun
In this spoliation, the knights themselves, to t
dishonour, did not scruple to share. The booty
ried off was immense, and several hundred wo
were torn from their families and made slaves.
Turkish girl, of exquisite beauty, fell into the ha
of the rover Cicala, who carried her to Sicily, wh
he had her baptized, and made her his wife. F
this union sprung Scipio Cicala, a renowned adv
turer, who, after passing through many vicissitu
assumed the turban; and, as a Turkish comman
amply revenged the sack and desolation of his
ther's home.

The unsuccessful issue of this expedition, wh
entailed a serious pecuniary loss on the Order—
the booty was appropriated entirely as private
perty—determined the Grandmaster to settle per
nently in Malta; and henceforward he devoted h
self assiduously to the improvement of that isla
The standard of Saint John, however, did not l
remain furled. Though a serious misunderstand
subsisted between the Pope and the Emperor
Grandmaster, in regard to the nomination of a c
didate to the vacant bishopric of Malta, wh
led to much acrimonious debate, the whole th
concurred heartily in the propriety of a desc
on the Turkish coast; and a powerful combi
fleet, commanded by the famous Andrew Do

Prince of Melfi, accordingly put to sea. The squadron of Saint John was commanded on this occasion by the Chevalier Salviati, the same knight who had headed the unsuccessful attack on Modon. On the arrival of the fleet off the coast of the Morea, Salviati, eager to wipe away the disgrace of his late defeat, urged Doria to storm Modon; but, as plunder was the grand object of the expedition, and indeed the only security the soldiery had for pay, the proposition was scouted, on the ground that the place had been too well gutted the preceding year; and it was determined to assault Coron, the ancient Corone, a weakly fortified city, situated on the gulf of the same name. Doria, accordingly, ran into the gulf, landed his troops, and moored his great ships and gallies abreast of the place, the walls of which quickly crumbled down before his cannon. Two land-batteries having effected a breach, a Spanish regiment advanced to the assault, but was repulsed, and three hundred soldiers left dead in the gap. Reinforced by the Priors of Rome and Auvergne, at the head of two hundred knights and five hundred stipendiaries, the remnant of the Spanish battalion again rushed to the attack. The ladders, which the knights planted against the walls, proved too short; and they had to scramble into the breach on each other's shoulders—galled the while by musketry and cross-bows, missiles and Greek fire. Shouting the name of Saint John, their favourite war-cry, they gained the top of the wall, and displayed on it the great standard of the Order. It was the signal of victory; and the whole army rent the air with an exulting cry, while the inhabitants, regarding the city as taken, hung out a flag of truce, and agreed to a capitulation. The Turks were ex-

empted from pillage; but by a cruel, yet, in th days, not unusual clause, the houses of the J ish part of the population were abandoned to troops. The conquest of Coron, in which] ria left a garrison, was followed by that of Pa and of several minor fortresses on the western c of the Morea; after which the combined fleet parated, and the different squadrons returned to v ter in their respective ports.

Early in the following year (1532) the squadr reunited, and steered directly to the relief of Co which a famous corsair had blockaded, by Solym orders, while an army invested it by land. Cove by the guns of the great carrack of Saint Jc which led the battle, an attempt was made to th succours into the place; but it proved futile, brought on a general engagement. For a time, issue of the conflict was extremely doubtful. Turks fought with great fury, and repeatedly bos ed the ships and gallies of their adversaries. length, victory declared for the Christian flag; after destroying or dispersing the Turkish fleet,] ria threw into Coron the necessary supplies with further molestation.

While the combined fleet was contemplating conquests, the Maltese squadron was recalled to p tect its own territories, which were threatened, common with the coasts of Sicily and Malta, w a piratical visit from Barbarossa, one of the n redoubted corsairs of Barbary, who, with an ar ment of eighty-two gallies, scoured the circumjac sea. At the Grandmaster's suggestion, the recc of the Order were sent to Sicily as a place of gre safety; but when the council, out of considerat for his advanced age, proposed that he also sho

retire to that island, the illustrious old man nobly answered, that he would never set so base an example to his knights, for the sake of adding a few days to his life. Happily, Barbarossa's attention was diverted to a different quarter; and the Grandmaster was enabled to prosecute his plans for the improvement of the island, and the better regulation of the Order, which nearly eight years of wandering had somewhat disorganized. The chapter which notified the necessity of immediate reformation, however, was dishonoured by a brawl which ultimately involved the whole brotherhood in a disastrous contest. A Florentine gentleman, one of the prior of Rome's attendants, having quarrelled with a young French knight, challenged him to fight, and slew him. The uncle of the deceased, who was a knight commander, conceiving his nephew to have come unfairly by his death, collected a few friends, and, having encountered the Florentine along with others of the Prior's suite, drove them at the point of the sword into their patron's palace. The Prior's whole establishment, which amounted to sixty persons, instantly espoused the Florentine's cause, and sallied forth with arms in their hands to avenge him. The French knights were indiscriminately assailed; some were slain at the first onset, and several wounded; and the broil soon became a declared war between the language of Italy and the languages of France. The latter demanded justice at the hands of the Grandmaster; and the Prior of Rome was ordered to punish the guilty; but Salviati, proud of his influence with the reigning pontiff, who was his near kinsman, and disposed to regard his adherents as the injured party, contented himself with sending the most unruly among them, under arrest, on board his galley. The

French knights, exasperated at this proceeding, set discipline at defiance, and, boarding the Prior's galley sword in hand, sacrificed four of the culprits to their wrath, and returned with shouts of triumph to their quarters. This was an outrage which the pride of Salviati could not pardon; and he not only rallied round him the whole of the Italian knights, but secured the support of the languages of Arragon and Castile. The French knights, warned of this confederacy, besieged the Prior's palace, and were received with discharges of musketry by the inmates. The Bailiff of Manosque, at the head of a strong body of troops, ultimately suppressed the tumult; and next day, twelve of the ringleaders were publicly deprived of the habit of the Order, while several of the more turbulent and stubborn, who contemned the authority of the council, and manifested a disposition to perpetrate new outrages, were thrown alive into the sea. *

The loss of Rhodes itself scarcely affected the venerable L'Isle Adam more than this domestic warfare; and, oppressed with melancholy, his health rapidly declined. To increase his despondency, Henry the Eighth of England, having come to an open rupture with the Pope, in consequence of the Pontiff's steady refusal to countenance the divorcement of Catharine of Arragon his queen, commenced a fierce and bloody persecution against all persons in his dominions, who persisted in adhering to the Holy See. In these circumstances, the Knights of Saint John, who held themselves bound to acknowledge the Pope as their superior, at whatever hazard, did not long escape his ire. The power of the Order, composed as

* Bosio.

it was of the chivalry of the nation, while the Prior of London sat in parliament on an equality with the first baron of the realm, for a time deterred him from openly proscribing it; but at length his wrath blazed forth in an ungovernable flame. The knights Ingley, Adrian Forrest, Adrian Fortescu, and Marmaduke Bohus, refusing to abjure their faith, perished on the scaffold. Thomas Mytton and Edward Waldegrave died in a dungeon; and Richard and James Bell, John Noel, and many others, abandoned their country for ever, and sought an asylum at Malta—completely stripped of their possessions. In 1534, by an act of the Legislature, the Order of Saint John was abolished in the King of England's dominions; and such knights as survived the persecution, but who refused to stoop to the conditions offered them, were thrown entirely on the charity of their brethren at Malta. Henry offered Sir William Weston, Lord Prior of England, a pension of a thousand pounds a year; but that knight was so overwhelmed with grief at the suppression of his Order, that he never received a penny, but soon after died. * Other knights less scrupulous became pensioners of the crown.

L'Isle Adam received the English refugees with the tenderness of a father, and generously offered them that consolation in their proscription of which he himself stood in need. But the care and

* Sir William Weston was buried in the chancel of the old church of Saint James, Clerkenwell, where an altar-tomb, in the architectural style of the age, was erected over his remains. He was represented on it by an emaciated figure lying upon a a winding-sheet, (Vide Malcolm's Londonium Redivivum); and in 1788, when circumstances occasioned the grave to be opened, his mouldering remains were found in a state not unlike the figure upon the tomb.—*Brayley's Londoniana*, vol. i.

anxiety to which the rigorous measures of the King of England gave birth, bent his gray hairs in sorrow to the grave. A violent fever deprived him of the little remains of vigour which were yet left him; and on the 21st of August, 1534, he expired. In him the Order lost the most illustrious Grandmaster it had ever possessed. His reign of thirteen years, was marked by a continued succession of perils and disasters; but his bravery, his wisdom, his fortitude, his clemency, and his devotion to his Order, threw a radiance even over reverse. The knights laid him in the dust, with filial sorrow; and the simple epitaph, "Here lies virtue triumphant over misfortune!" was inscribed upon his tomb. *

Peter Dupont, a Piedmontese knight, succeeded L'Isle Adam as Grandmaster. He was resident at his bailiwick of Santa Euphemia in Calabria, at the time of his election, and, being stricken in years, was with difficulty prevailed on to accept the dignity. The honour was indeed a burdensome one for infirm shoulders; for a series of revolutions had occurred among the piratical states on the coast of Barbary, which threatened the nearer shores of Christendom with desolation. To explain these, it is necessary to give a brief outline of the history of two remarkable men, by whom they were principally effected. Horuc and Hayradin, surnamed the Barbarossas or Redbeards, were natives of the island of

* As an instance of the mutability of fortune, it is worthy of note, that the noble family from which L'Isle Adam was descended, continued to exist in France at the end of the seventeenth century, but so reduced in circumstances, that a gentleman of the name became a common carter in the neighbourhood of Troye in Champagne, in order to support his father—*L'Art de verifier les Dates.*

Mitylene, who, in their infancy, had abandoned the humble home of their father, and devoted themselves to a maritime life. At first, a single brigantine was all their fortune; but a succession of daring and infamous piracies soon enabled them to equip a small squadron, which, swelling by degrees, ultimately became a potent fleet. The fame and success of these redoubted brothers, whom nothing could disunite, and who, scorning alike the alliance of Frank and Moslem, boasted that they were good friends to the sea, and enemies to all who sailed on it, drew to their flag all the rovers of the Levant. A civil war having broken out in Algiers, they interfered as mediators and allies, and, by treachery and the bowstring, despoiled the reigning prince both of his kingdom and his life. Horuc, supported by his troops, took upon himself the title of King; and to secure his usurped dignity, offered to hold it as a tributary of the Emperor Solyman—an offer which that potentate, who had long been desirous to extend his supremacy to the coast of Barbary, eagerly accepted. Stimulated by this triumph to attempt other conquests, the pirate prince carried his arms with equal success into the adjacent territory of Tremezen, which was under the protection of Spain, but was, in turn, besieged in the capital of that principality by the Spanish governor of Oran. The Spaniards, exasperated at the injuries inflicted on their vassals, speedily reduced the fortifications to ruins; and Horuc, seeing further resistance impossible, stole from the city by a subterraneous passage, and endeavoured to escape into the desert at the head of fifteen hundred men. This flight was instantly discovered by the Spaniards, whose hot pursuit he tried to slacken, by scattering the trea-

sure with which he had provided himself in their route. Nevertheless, his pursuers overtook him on the banks of the river Huexda, where, scorning a pusillanimous surrender, he turned on them like a lion at bay, and, after slaying several Spanish officers with his own hand, fell, like a warrior, with all his followers round him (1518).* Hayradin, his brother succeeded him as King of Algiers; and his name, in common with those of his lieutenants, Sinan a renegade Jew, and a Caramanian, known by the strange cognomen of *Devil-driver*, soon became the terror of the whole Mediterranean. Struck by the fame of his exploits, the Sultan Solyman conferred on Hayradin the command of his whole fleet, as the person best able to compete with Andrew Doria, the admiral of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and the greatest naval captain of the age. Devil-driver, imitating his superior in his exploits, surprised Tachora, a town in the vicinity of Tunis, and became in some measure independent. From thence he carried his arms to the walls of Tripoli, and raised a fortalice within cannon-shot of that fortress, and in such a position as completely to overlook the harbour. Enraged at this insolence, and the loss of two brigantines which he had captured, the knights, who garrisoned Tripoli, combined with the Moorish prince of Tunis, to expel him from his new conquest. Tachora was besieged by their united forces, but without success;

* It is worthy of remark, that the government of Algiers continued till its recent subversion by the French (1830), virtually the same as that established by the Barbarossas. The ranks of the regular military force or Janissary corps, were filled exclusively with Levantine Turks and Christian renegades, and no native was ever permitted to enter it; while, from the *fierce adventurers* of which it was composed, the Dey was *invariably chosen.* 1

and the Order had to mourn the death of the chevalier de Harlai, who, with the detachment he commanded, fell into an ambuscade and was slain. Soon afterwards, Barbarossa, in accordance with a scheme of conquest concerted at Constantinople, availed himself of the intestine divisions that prevailed in Tunis, to enter that port with a powerful fleet, when he expelled Muley Hascen the reigning prince, and took possession of the city and adjacent territory as the Viceroy of the Ottoman Porte. Such was the state of affairs in Africa, when the Grandmaster Dupont arrived in Malta to assume the duties of his new office; and the danger appeared so imminent, not only to Tripoli, but to Malta itself, that he lost no time in imploring the Emperor Charles, whose Sicilian and Neapolitan territories were also endangered, to send into Barbary an army sufficient to arrest the progress of the intrepid corsair, who had brought nearly the whole of it under his dominion.

Had the security of the Order of Saint John been the only argument employed to stimulate Charles to undertake this expedition, he would in all probability have turned a deaf ear to these representations. But the danger impending over his own territories, combined with the complete interruption given to commerce in every part of the Mediterranean by the terror of Barbarossa's name, induced him to submit the matter to his council; while, at the same time, he covertly endeavoured to bribe the corsair into an amicable alliance, by a promise of recognising him as king of the whole of northern Africa, provided he would consent to hold the sovereignty as a tributary of Spain. The ambassador who carried this proposal to Barbarossa, had also secret instructions to as-

certain the disposition of the Tunisians, and, if p
ble, to enlist some of the most influential of the
favour of his master, whom he was authorized
present as the ally of their banished prince.
this negotiant soon rendered himself suspecte
the corsair, who, scorning the laws of civilized
tions, put him to death. This outrage decide
question of peace or war; and Charles, withou
ther hesitation, invited the knights to join him
attempt to humble the arrogance of the barbari

The Christian armament put to sea in the
of 1535, and rendezvoused at Cagliari in Sar
It consisted of upwards of three hundred sail
the troops, including two thousand horse, amo
to nearly thirty thousand. * Volunteers from
part of Christendom, many of them of illus
lineage, and eager to distinguish themselves like
fathers in Paynim war, were enrolled under th
perial banner. The Grandmaster strengthene
expedition with four large well-equipped g
eighteen armed brigantines, and the great ca
which had long been the hope and pride of th
der. The commander Botigella was named ad
of this squadron, and Anthony de Grolée, the
ant knight who had borne the great standard of
John at the siege of Rhodes, commanded the
carrack and the land-forces.

The expedition arrived at Porto Farina, th
tient Utica, without adventure. Barbarossa,
of the storm gathering round him, spared no
tions to place himself in a condition capable o
fying it. He stored his granaries abundantly
provisions, and his arsenals with munitions of

* Robertson's Hist. of Charles the Fifth.

and, denouncing Muley Hascen as an infamous apostate, who had become the vassal of the Christians, he stirred up all the petty princes of Barbary to support him in the contest, and even allured into his service fifteen thousand mounted Arabs from the desert. The Emperor landed without opposition, within cannon-shot of the Goletta, a fortress about six miles from Tunis, and four from the site of ancient Carthage. The Goletta commanded the mouth of the canal, by which the sea communicates with the large but shallow lake on which Tunis is situated; and Barbarossa, who regarded it as almost impregnable, had thrown into it a garrison of six thousand chosen soldiers, under Devil-driver and Sinan, and left the greater part of his navy in port, under the protection of its guns. The Emperor having pitched his camp in the vicinity, at the expense of seven hundred men whom the Turks massacred in their sallies, and thrown up batteries against the fort, caused it to be cannonaded with great fury both from the land and the sea. As at the siege of Coron, the great carrack of Saint John, moored astern of the fleet, kept up from her lofty decks an uninterrupted fire, without doing the least injury to the low-built galliss in her van; and several knights in the command of vessels, distinguished themselves by the promptitude and intrepidity with which they manœuvred them. At the end of twelve hours, the Emperor seeing a breach effected, ordered an assault. The knights claimed the honour of leading the attack on the seaward breach, and were rowed in small boats to the foot of the rampart. The boats grounded at a distance from the shore; whereupon the Chevalier Cupier, who carried the standard of the Order, leaped into the waves with the banner in

his hand, and, followed by his companions, rushed, amid a shower of balls, to the beach. The Turks stood the onset with great resolution; but the Christians gradually fought their way from the bulwarks to the Cavalier, and, at the end of an hour, the place was won. Many brave knights perished in the attack; and scarcely one engaged in it escaped without a wound. The garrison evacuated the fortress as the conquerors entered it, and retired to Tunis, hotly pressed. This victory, which put the Emperor in possession of the chief stronghold of his antagonist, encouraged him to advance instantly against Tunis. Barbarossa, preferring the hazard of a pitched battle to being shut up in a city, the population of which was hostile to his government, advanced at the head of his army to fight the invaders. His troops made a gallant onset; but no sooner did the Spanish artillery open fairly on their dense masses, than the Moors and Arabs were thrown into confusion and fled, followed by their General and his Osmanlis, who, with the indomitable bravery of their nation, were ready to perish, but whom he did not think it prudent to sacrifice.

Previous to marching out to battle, Barbarossa had debated with his lieutenants, the propriety of immolating ten thousand Christian captives; but Sinan prevailed on him to postpone this inhuman sacrifice; and he was content to leave them in a prison, the subterranean apartments of which were filled with gunpowder, ready to blow the whole into the air, the moment he should give the order. On re-entering the city as a fugitive, he made secret preparations for abandoning it; and commanded that the train should be fired. But before the hour arrived for executing this atrocious act, a revolution

took place, which put the captives in a situation to defend themselves. In the prison was a Maltese knight, called Paul Simeoni, for whom Barbarossa had repeatedly refused to accept a reasonable ransom. This knight, who had signalized himself in many enterprises against the Infidels prior to the surrender of Rhodes, particularly in defending the little islet of Lero against a superior Turkish force, bribed two renegades, who acted as gaolers, to enable him and his companions in durance to burst their chains. This done, they stormed the armoury, cut to pieces the Turks who garrisoned the citadel, and displayed a white flag on its highest tower, to notify to the Christian army what had happened. Barbarossa, when he attempted to burst the gates, was saluted with a shower of musket-balls, and instantly abandoned the city to its fate. The Emperor, advised of the victory achieved by the slaves, advanced promptly to their assistance; and Simeoni, at the head of six thousand of his companions, welcomed him into the place with shouts of joy. The Emperor embraced Simeoni, in testimony of his admiration; saying, as he did so, "Brave knight, blessed for ever be the valour which enabled you to break your chains, to facilitate my victory, and increase the glory of your Order."

The Christians disgraced their conquest by the foulest atrocities—and, as usual in such cases, outrage fell heaviest on the sex least able to bear it. Moorish maidens of the most illustrious birth were reduced to the basest bondage by the fierce Spanish and German soldiery; and no sanctuary escaped profanation. It is told, that Muley Hascen, the exiled Prince of Tunis, who re-entered the city under the shadow of the Christian banner, seeing a

beautiful Moorish girl, whom he knew to be of noble extraction, unfeelingly treated by a Spanish officer, offered to purchase her of her captor; but the proud Moriscoe, regarding him as the origin of the war which desolated her native land, and overwhelmed with despair, scornfully spit in his face, and protested that she would never have a tyrant and traitor for her deliverer. *

The restoration of Muley Hascen to the sovereignty of Tunis, as a tributary of Spain, with the understanding that the Emperor should retain a garrison in the Goletta, to be paid by the Tunisian prince, terminated the expedition; and Charles returned to his European territories, as did the squadron of Saint John to Malta. Christendom resounded with the Emperor's fame; for the captives whom he had emancipated, and whom he sent well clothed, and furnished with the means of travelling, to their respective countries, spread his renown far and wide. The principal knights who had served in the war were honoured with special marks of the Imperial favour; and the privilege of receiving all sorts of provisions and military stores from Sicily, duty free, was permanently conferred on the Order.

* Bosio.

CHAPTER IV.

Successes of the Knights against Devil-driver—D' Omedes elected Grandmaster—Leo Strozzi—Unsuccessful Attack on Susa—Grand Expedition against Algiers—Its disastrous Issue—Exposed State of Tripoli—Dragut the Corsair—Conquest of Mehedia—Descent of a Turkish Armament on Malta—Its Repulse—Goza Ravaged—Loss of Tripoli—Unwarrantable proceedings of the Grandmaster—His persecution of La Vallier—Unsuccessful attack on Zoara.

THE Grandmaster Dupont lived long enough to see his flag return in triumph; and Didier de Saint Jaille succeeded to the vacant dignity (1535.) In the following year, Devil-driver, who still remained master of Tachora, and of the fort called Alcaide, which he had erected in the environs of Tripoli, made an attempt to surprise that place, by scaling the insufficient wall that encompassed it under cloud of night. Happily, the garrison, which was commanded by Schilling, a German knight, were aware of his intention, and repulsed him with great slaughter; and, by way of reprisal, an armament was despatched from Malta, with instructions to raze the obnoxious fortalice. The conduct of this enterprise devolved on the commander Botigella, who had rendered himself renowned as a naval captain all over the Mediterranean.

He landed at Tripoli, at the head of five hundred knights and seven hundred stipendiary soldiers, and, supported by a body of Arabian horse, whose services Schilling the governor had secured by bribing some Sheiks of the desert, threw up batteries against the tower of Alcaide, and, after some skirmishing with Devil-driver, who hastened to its relief, completely razed it. This triumph was enhanced by the capture of a Turkish galleon, on the voyage back to Malta—the merchandise on board of which was valued at one hundred and sixty thousand crowns.

The exultation of the Order, however, was subdued by the death of the Grandmaster, who died at Montpellier in France, whither he had repaired for the benefit of his health, and by two crimes of magnitude perpetrated by individuals amenable to the statutes. One of these was the robbery of a highly venerated shrine, by an aspirant for the clerical habit of the Order. The other was the murder of a Maltese woman by an English knight, who, in a transport of rage and jealousy, stabbed her to the heart. The thief and the murderer shared the same doom. They were formally sentenced to death by the secular judges of the island, and, being tied into sacks, and carried a mile from the port, were thrown into the sea.

John d'Omedes, a knight of the language of Arragon, succeeded the Grandmaster Didier de St Jaille. Though the majority of the knights were disposed to give their suffrages in favour of the commanders, Botigella or De Grolée, both of whom were distinguished for talents and valour, brother Garcia Cortez, who chanced to be the electing knight, supported by the Spanish faction, craftily de-

ed the vote in the Arragonian's favour. This elec-
ı placed at the head of the Order one of the most
row-minded, partial, and rigorous chiefs, who ever
d the supreme authority. Among other unpo-
ar and unjust acts, by which he commemorated
commencement of his reign, he removed the ve-
ıa Botigella from the command of the gallies, and
ferred it on Leo Strozzi, a young Florentine
ght of illustrious birth, who had served his ap-
nticeship in war, under the famous Andrew Do-
in the Emperor's fleet. Strozzi, though an un-
ı act of favouritism advanced him to this digni-
and though he had been, from his boyhood, a
iled child of fortune, proved afterwards, that na-
e intended him for a great captain. But the in-
ine troubles that distracted his native city, sub-
uent to the assassination of the Duke Alexander
Medici, ultimately deprived the Order of his ser-
es. Philip Strozzi, his father, the fomenter of
se troubles, fell into the hands of his enemies,
l. perished in a dungeon by his own hand, at the
y time his son was hurrying from Malta, to en-
vour to effect his liberation. One of the last
ı of the elder Strozzi's life was, to invoke an a-
ger to rise from among his descendants; and,
n that hour, his sons Peter and Leo, regarding
arles the Fifth as the subverter of the liberties of
ir country, and the indirect murderer of their fa-
r, dedicated themselves to the service of France,
ely that they might pass their lives in arms
inst him.

Paul Simeoni, the knight who had signalized him-
by the liberation of the Christian captives at
ais, succeeded Strozzi in the command of the
ies. *Shortly after his* appointment, an envoy ar-

rived from Muley Hascen, the Moorish prince of Tunis, complaining that the Turkish pirates, who had over-run the African coast, had obtained possession of the port of Susa, and several other places in the vicinage of his capital; and that, without the assistance of the same allies who had restored him to the sovereignty, he could not, for any length of time, maintain himself against them. An ambassador from the Order reported the Tunisian's jeopardy to the Emperor; and that monarch, conceiving his dignity outraged in the person of his Moorish vassal, instantly equipped an armament in the ports of Sicily, and despatched it, in company with fourteen Maltese gallies, to Muley's relief. The whole fleet sailed under the command of the Maltese admiral; but the land forces were headed by the Marquis of Terra Nova, the Emperor's lieutenant. Having joined forces with the Tunisian prince, the Marquis invested Susa; but, owing to his credulous reliance on the representations of a renegade, who entered the camp as a deserter purposely to betray him, he expended all his ammunition against a part of the fortifications which was impregnable. The knights, seeing the store of powder exhausted, and ashamed of the incapacity of the Sicilian general, made an effort to enter the town by a narrow breach which their cannon had effected. One hundred and thirty of them, followed by four hundred soldiers, endeavoured to make a lodgement on the top of the wall, to which they had to scramble in single files; but no sooner did they gain that perilous elevation, than the Turkish musketeers and cross-bowmen assailed them both in front and flank, from the inner side of a deep intrenchment, and they were forced to abandon the assault. The Marquis, finding him-

self compelled to raise the siege, prepared to wreak his vengeance on the renegade who had deceived him; but the traitor eluded his pursuit, and regained the city in safety. The expedition returned to Malta without honour; the knights bewailing the many brave men whom they had buried at the foot of the unpropitious walls, and banning the incapacity of the stranger who had commanded them.

The commander Botigella, who had just returned from the government of Tripoli, his period of service at that exposed station having expired, joined loudly in these complaints. He represented it as sheer folly to attempt forming permanent establishments among the faithless and turbulent tribes on the African coast; and strenuously urged, that Tripoli itself should be abandoned, unless the Emperor agreed to refortify it, and assist in its defence. The council, though wary of offending Charles, held the arguments of Botigella as too cogent to be altogether scouted; and a formal application was accordingly made to the Imperial dictator, that he should either render Tripoli tenable, or permit the Order to evacuate it. Charles readily promised to place it in a state capable of resistance, but, in the meanwhile, recommended the knights to hold themselves in readiness to join him in an expedition, which, he anticipated, would sweep the whole race of corsairs from both shore and sea.

The enterprise he contemplated was a descent on Algiers, the stronghold of the redoubted Barbarossa, who had confided it to the government of a viceroy, while absent in command of the Turkish Emperor's fleet. Spain, Sicily and Naples, resounded with the clangour of warlike preparation. Large levies of troops were made in Italy, and even Germany sent

a formidable body of cavalry to the war. So greatly did these preparations stimulate the soldier-monks of Saint John, that the whole brotherhood burned with a desire to be included in the expedition; but prudence forbade the Grandmaster to encourage a general crusade; and the contingent of the Order was limited to four hundred knights, each of whom was accompanied by two armed attendants. George Schilling, great Bailiff of Germany, was appointed to command the Maltese squadron.

The expedition rendezvoused at Majorca. The veteran Doria, and the Marquis del Guasto, who headed the land-forces, ventured to remonstrate with the Emperor on the imprudence of risking his fleet on a shelterless coast, at the autumnal season of the year, when hurricanes prevail; but Charles ridiculed their apprehensions. When Doria bluntly remarked, that, if the enterprise were persisted in, it would end in their destruction, the Emperor answered, that since he himself had enjoyed two-and-twenty years of empire, and Doria threescore and twelve of life, both ought to die satisfied—die when they might.

The voyage from Majorca to the African coast was speedy, but tempestuous. The fleet arrived off Algiers in the end of October; but, though the winds that had buffeted it by the way had subsided, the surge broke furiously on the shore; and two days elapsed before the troops were able to disembark. Many of the soldiers had to wade breast-high through the waves; but happily no opposition was made to their landing. The army, including six thousand horse, amounted to about twenty-six thousand men; and, to oppose this mighty force, Hassan-Aga, a Sardinian renegade, whom Barba-

rossa had left as viceroy in Algiers, had only eight hundred Turks and five thousand Moors. Part of the latter, however, were refugees from Granada, eager to avenge their wrongs on the heads of the Christian oppressors who had deprived them of their country. The Emperor, to prevent national jealousies among his troops, judiciously divided them into three bodies. In the van, he placed the veteran soldiers of Spain; in the centre, the Italians and the knights of Saint John; and in the rear, the troops from Germany and Flanders, and the volunteers. The knights came to the war, not mounted as of old, when they sojourned in Palestine, but on foot, wearing cuirasses and helmets, and carrying each a short spear, in lieu of the chivalrous lance which their predecessors had so often reddened with Paynim blood. Their surcoats were of crimson velvet, on which shone a white cross, the symbol of their Order; and never had the banner of Saint John been intrusted to a band of nobler-looking or braver men.

Algiers, the city against which this formidable expedition was directed, occupied the slope of a hill, facing a spacious bay of the Mediterranean. The houses rose terrace above terrace, in such a manner that the windows of the one tier looked down on the roof of the next below it, "most beautiful to behold." * Having pitched his head-quarters, and erected a battery in the immediate neighbourhood of the city, the Emperor called upon the Viceroy to surrender; but the latter treated the summons with contempt. The landing of the army was the signal for the Arab auxiliaries, whom he had allured into his service by the prospect of plunder, to

* Knolles.

commence operations. Mounted on fleet horses, and armed with long javelins, which they hurled with fatal dexterity into the Christian ranks, they maintained an incessant skirmish, notwithstanding the battalion of Malta was thrown forward to the left of the army, and repeatedly repulsed them. These harassing attacks continued throughout the night; and it was not till the morning broke, that the storm of arrows and darts, which fell thick as hail into the camp, was stayed by a fierce charge of the Sicilian pikemen, who chased their half-naked adversaries beyond the adjacent hills.* But, on the evening of the second day, while every Christian heart beat high with the hope of victory, the sky was overcast, torrents of rain flooded the bivouac, and the sea, chafed into fury by the autumnal blast, roared like thunder along the coast. The troops having landed unprovided with tents, passed the night ankle-deep in the mire of their comfortless camp, grasping their spears, which they had stuck into the saturated earth, to prevent the hurricane from sweeping them away —their bodies benumbed, and their watch-fires extinguished. Their plight was too lamentable to escape the knowledge of their vigilant adversaries. At break of day, a band of Moorish horsemen sallied from the gate nearest the Christian position, cut a picquet stationed in advance to pieces, and, sword in hand, attempted to fight their way to the Imperial quarter. The Italian regiments of Colonna and Spinola, sustained by the Maltese battalion, stood to their arms, however, in time to arrest this sortie; and a sanguinary combat ensued between the Moorish cavalry and the Christian knights. The knights,

* Knolles.

though fighting at a disadvantage, dismounted and slew many of their opponents; and several acts of individual heroism crowned with glory their united valour. Nicholas de Villegagnon, a French chevalier, rushing into the thickest of the battle, had his left arm pierced by a Moorish lance, on which he attempted to spear the horseman who had wounded him, but without success. The Moor was about to repeat his blow, when Villegagnon, who was a man of great stature and proportionate strength, vaulted up behind him, and stabbed him to the heart. Another French knight, named Ponce de Savignac, the standard-bearer of the Order, pursued the flying Moors to the very walls of the city, and, in chivalrous bravado, stuck his dagger into the gate, as evidence that nothing but bars and bolts had stayed his progress.

The cannon planted on the walls, speedily drove the knights back to their former position, and the Moors, armed with iron cross-bows, which were infinitely more serviceable in a humid atmosphere than the Christian match-locks, made a second sortie, in greater force, and with greater fury than before. The Italian regiments, most of whom were raw troops, gave way before this new onset; but the knights still kept their ground, and, with the assistance of a body of Germans whom the Emperor sent to their succour, drove the Infidels once more within their own walls. The Bailiff Schilling, who commanded the knights on this occasion, brought them back from the pursuit covered with wounds and glory. As the Moors made use of poisoned quarrels for their cross-bows, every wound inflicted by them proved mortal. Among those who fell, was the brave De Savignac, who, after one of these fatal bolts

was buried in his breast, refused to resign the standard which it was his duty to uphold, till death loosened his grasp. Seventy-five knights, three chaplains, and about four hundred soldiers in the service of the Order, perished in this bootless fight.

The army had scarce time to ascertain the extent of its loss, when a new and far greater calamity obliterated the remembrance. The storm of war had for the moment rolled away, but that of the elements still raged with unmitigated violence; and, as the day advanced, the sea, lashed into fury, drove the ships from their anchors, and strewed the whole coast with wreck. In the short space of half an hour, the Christians, bleeding from their recent wounds, and destitute not only of shelter but of provisions, beheld fifteen war-gallies, one hundred and forty store-ships and transports, and eight thousand men, engulphed in the waves. Some of the vessels went down at anchor, in the deep trough of the sea; others were either dashed against each other, or beaten to pieces on the rocks. Several commanders of gallies, finding it impossible to ride out the hurricane, ran their vessels ashore on distant parts of the coast, which they reached only to fall under the scimitars of the marauding Arabs. It was a scene of indescribable desolation; and the Imperial leader, crowned though he was with half a dozen diadems, could only gaze in futile anguish on the spoil of the winds of heaven.

The Maltese gallies, being more seaworthy and better manned than the majority of the fleet, rode out the storm in safety. The crew of one galley, conceiving her in momentary danger of foundering, proposed to run her ashore; but the knight who commanded her, less careful of his life than his ho-

nour, threatened the first man who should take the helm for such a purpose with instant death; and, by his firmness, subordination was restored. The rudder of another being torn away by the violence of the waves, and the vessel consequently left at their mercy, two mariners voluntarily suffered themselves to be lowered by ropes into the sea, and shipped a new one; by which intrepid act they saved their ship from destruction.

This frightful disaster decided the fate of the expedition. The Emperor no longer contemplated the reduction of Algiers—all his anxiety was directed to the re-embarkation of his army. He immediately commenced his retreat towards Cape Matafus, near which the remnant of his fleet had found shelter; and the knights of Malta had the perilous honour of covering the line of march, and repelling the incessant attacks of the Moorish cavalry, who hovered incessantly on their right flank. The army bivouacked the first night on the margin of the brook Alcarez, which the rains had rendered impassable. It was crossed next day, however, by means of a bridge which the pioneers constructed of the fragments of vessels which the waves had strewed along the coast. Three days marching brought the army to Cape Matafus, where it re-embarked—the soldiers quitting the unhospitable shore with joy. Scarcely, however, had the fleet put to sea, when another tempest assailed it. Several ships foundered in the gale; and the Emperor beheld one, on board of which were seven hundred Spaniards, go down before his eyes. The armament rendezvoused at Bugia, where Muley Hascen, Prince of Tunis, furnished it with supplies; and on the 25th of November, the shattered remains of the army were relanded at Carthagena in Spain. While at Bugia, the Em-

peror dismissed the Maltese squadron, after confe
on all the knights who outlived the campaign se
honorary testimonials of his admiration and reg

The untoward result of the expedition against
giers filled the knights with new apprehension
garding Tripoli. They foresaw that, sooner or l
the vengeance of Barbarossa would burst in that q
ter; and once more they petitioned the Empero
ther to render it defensible, or agree to its bein
bandoned. This fresh appeal produced from Ch
only a pledge, that, in case Tripoli were besieged
would relieve it. As to immediate succour, he
ed, he had neither troops nor money to spare;
still he could not exonerate the knights from a
specially imposed upon them by the treaty of
ment, by which the cession of Malta had been
pleted. To increase the gloomy anticipations o
defenders of Tripoli, their neighbour and ally M
Hascen, Prince of Tunis, was deposed by M
Hamida his eldest son, who took him prison
battle, and put out his eyes with a red-hot la
Ferdinand de Braccimont, Governor of Tripol
learning this event, applied to be recalled; an
successor, Christopher de Solertarfan, Grand C
cellor of the Order, after a short trial of the offic
so abandoned it, as one of peril without honour.
these circumstances, the Grandmaster and council
ferred the government on the Commander de la
lette, a wise and intrepid Provençal knight, who,
the day of his admission into the Order, had
quitted Malta, save to encounter the enemy o
circumjacent sea. He possessed that indomi
courage, which is proof against all reverse, and
temns all danger; and, no sooner did he assum
command at Tripoli, than he applied himself i

fatigably to reorganize the garrison, and place the town and castle in a proper state of defence.

While the new governor of Tripoli was thus employed, the noted Barbarossa terminated his career. He died at Constantinople, at the advanced age of eighty years, and was succeeded in his maritime command by Dragut his lieutenant—a famous corsair, who had sprung, like himself, by a course of lawless enterprise, from obscurity, to an elevated station. This bold pirate, who had long been the scourge of the Mediterranean, entertained the most implacable hatred of the Christian name. In one of his expeditions, he was forced to strike his flag to an Imperial squadron commanded by Jannetin Doria, a beardless boy; and the shame of such a defeat, combined with the indignities inseparable from a rigorous captivity which extended to four years, greatly increased the natural ferocity of his disposition. The authority vested in him by the Emperor Solyman, after the death of his old commander, stimulated Dragut to new enterprises; and, in imitation of the Barbarossas, he possessed himself of the town of Africa or Mehedia, the ancient Adrumetum, a place between Tunis and Tripoli, for the purpose of securing to himself an independent sovereignty, and a good port where he might deposit the spoil which he swept in such abundance from the European shores. Mehedia was, at that time, one of the strongest fortresses in Barbary. It was encircled by thick and lofty walls, strengthened by towers and bulwarks, and commanded by a citadel, well provided with cannon. The narrow promontory on which it stood was almost insulated by the sea, while the large and commodious harbour was sheltered from every wind; and that part of it appropriated to the gallies could be secured at

pleasure with iron rails. It had originally been subject to the Princes of Tunis; but at the time of Dragut's attack, had thrown off its allegiance to that state, and was governed by the inhabitants as a sort of commonwealth. So jealous were these Moorish republicans of their independence, that they refused alike to admit either Turk or Christian within their walls; and it was more by treachery than by force of arms, that the corsair overcame their stubborn attachment to freedom. He suborned the captain of one of the towers, by whom he was admitted at midnight, along with a considerable body of troops, when the citizens, taken by surprise, acknowledged him as their master.

The conquest of Mehedia alarmed not only the Maltese knights, but the Emperor Charles, who, anticipating constant descents on the coasts of Naples and Sicily, while Dragut retained so convenient a stronghold, resolved to root him out of it. Accordingly, Doria his admiral sailed with a considerable armament for the African coast; and the gallies of Malta under the Bailiff de la Sangle, having on board a hundred and forty knights and four hundred stipendiary soldiers, joined the expedition. The Christians disembarked at Cape Bon, and, after one or two trivial conquests, won chiefly by the valour of the Maltese knights, blockaded Mehedia; but as the siege could not be undertaken until the arrival of reinforcements from Naples and Sicily, a considerable time elapsed before the place was regularly invested. The interval was employed by Dragut in ravaging the coast of Spain; he, nevertheless, did not neglect to put Mehedia in the best possible state of defence. In the end of June 1550, trenches were opened before the town, and batteries raised against it. At first, the inhabitants, who justly regarded their Turkish tyrants

the authors of the war, manifested a wish to capi-
ate; but the Governor, Rais Essé, a young and
olute adventurer, nephew to Dragut, threatened
whole of the magistrates with death, and the city
th desolation, if they did not make the most des-
rate resistance. Hostilities commenced with a sortie
the garrison; and a fierce and obstinate combat
ued between it and the Neapolitan troops, in
ich the latter suffered considerable loss. The
ights of Malta, seeing their allies thus roughly
dled, advanced to their assistance; and the Moor-
squadrons, broken by their onset, quickly dis-
ded, and sought safety in flight. A breach hav-
been effected in the wall which ran across the
mus that connected the town with the mainland,
Viceroy of Sicily, who, in conjunction with Don
rcia, son of the Viceroy of Naples, commanded
land-forces, ordered an assault. The knights
med the honour of leading the attack as their spe-
l privilege; but the Viceroy, anxious to mono-
ize the whole glory, ordered his own battalions to
nce. The Sicilians, though galled by a terrible
, rushed gallantly into the breach, and leapt sword
hand into the works behind it. Here, however,
ir progress was fatally checked by a succession of
p trenches, skilfully flanked and filled with iron
kes. The Viceroy, warned of the jeopardy of
troops, sounded a retreat; but of the brave men
o led the attack, only one escaped the deadly dis-
ges of the Moorish musketeers; and he was spared,
rely from a desire, on the part of the Governor, to
ertain the besiegers' designs. This repulse spread
pondency through the Christian ranks; and the
eral dejection was aggravated by a scarcity of pro-
isions, and by the contagious distempers which fa-

tigue and privations engendered. It was now that the generous self-devotion of the knights of Malta shone forth with its ancient splendour. They constructed an hospital-tent, into which the sick were received, without distinction of rank or nation; and the whole army had reason to admire and bless their charitable labours. But, though thus occupied with offices of mercy, they laid not aside their battle-harness; and an attempt which Dragut made to throw succours into the city, was foiled chiefly through their valour, in which skirmish several brave knights lost their lives.

The landward wall being found impregnable, a floating battery was raised against a weak part of the fortifications which was washed by the sea, and in a little time a practicable breach was made. The Viceroy of Sicily no longer disputed with the knights the honour of leading the attack; and, pursuant to ancient privilege, the banner of Saint John once more fluttered in the van. At the discharge of a signal-gun, the knights flung themselves into a number of light shallops, and pushed towards the battered wall; but finding their progress obstructed by sand-banks, on which their boats momentarily grounded, they leapt into the water, and, sword in hand, waded to the foot of the fortifications. The Moors defended the breach with great obstinacy, and the knights entered it amid a murderous discharge of shot and fire. The commander de Giou, who carried the standard of the Order, was foremost in the assault; but scarcely had he planted his banner on the wall, when a bullet struck him backwards into the sea. The ensign was immediately grasped by the Chevalier de *Cossier*, who, despite the deadly shower of musket-balls and cross-bow bolts that fell around him, held

it proudly aloft during the whole of the battle. Still, though the breach was gained, there were defences behind it which the enemy contested with great bravery; and many knights and distinguished volunteers, who fought under the banner of the Order, perished. The commander de Guimeran, who headed the attack, disheartened at seeing so many of his companions weltering in their blood, hesitated whether to retire or persevere in his efforts to effect an entrance; but, happily, at this perilous juncture, he discovered a practicable passage, of which he promptly availed himself, and the innermost streets soon resounded with the Christian war-cry. Intrenchments had to be surmounted in every quarter; but nothing could check the ardour of the assailants. The citizens, filled with dismay, abandoned the contest, and sought safety in flight; but the Turkish soldiers of Dragut refused to accept of quarter, and perished to a man. A prodigious booty fell into the hands of the conquerors. The knights and other officers of distinction who fell in the assault, were honoured with interment in the principal mosque, which was first purified, and consecrated as a Christian temple. Afterwards, when the place was abandoned by the Imperial troops, the ashes of these warriors were transported to Sicily, and deposited in the cathedral at Montreal, where a stately monument was erected, bearing an inscription commemorative of their renown.

The share which the knights of Saint John had in the conquest of Mehedia rendered them so obnoxious to Dragut, that he exerted all his influence with the Emperor Solyman, to engage him in an enterprise for their extirpation. Rumours that a mighty armament destined against Malta was fitting out in

the Turkish ports, forewarned the knights of the storm about to burst upon them; but the Grandmaster, D'Omedes, who was far more careful about the enrichment of his own kindred, than the security and dignity of the Order, treated these reports with contempt. The commander de Villegagnon—the same knight who had signalized himself before Algiers—a man of a noble presence and illustrious reputation, abandoned the service of Henry the Second of France, in which he had acquired great honour, and repaired to Malta specially to rouse the Grandmaster from the fatal lethargy into which he was plunged; but D'Omedes was proof against all his arguments. Tripoli was reinforced with twenty-five refractory knights—young men who had been under arrest for insubordination—and a small body of Calabrian peasants, pressed into military service by the Viceroy of Sicily; but Goza was left totally undefended; and the wives and families of the inhabitants, when they sought an asylum in Malta, were rudely refused it, on the argument, that their husbands and fathers would fight the better, when all that was dear to them was dependent on the triumph of their arms.

About midsummer, 1551, a Turkish fleet appeared off the coast of Sicily, and, after a futile attempt to besiege Catania, invested the town and castle of Augusta, which capitulated in a few days. The Grandmaster, with that fatal blindness which had all along marked his conduct, persisted in his belief that this armament was not destined against Malta, but was about to act against Naples in concert with the French fleet. But, on the 16th of July, his incredulity was removed, by the arrival of the Ottoman squadron off Port Musceit—one of the great bays which peninsulate the rocky slip of land called Mount See-

berras, on which stands the modern city of Valetta. The Grandmaster, to his dismay, beheld, from the windows of his palace, ship after ship, bearing the ensign of the hereditary enemies of the Order, furl their sails in the offing; and the people, filled with consternation at the formidable aspect of the armament, crowded into the fortresses for refuge. Malta, notwithstanding the efforts that had been made to render it defensible, could at this time boast of only two places of retreat capable of holding out for any length of time against an invader; namely, the Bourg or town, situated on one of the small spits of land that project from the southern side of the grand port; and the *Cité Notable*, or capital, a place in the interior of the island. The Bourg was defended by the guns of the castle of Saint Angelo, and was the ordinary residence of the convent. As the refugees found it impossible to obtain roofs to shelter them, they bivouacked in the streets and market-places, exposed to a burning sun, and tormented by the want of water.

Notwithstanding the panic that prevailed, and the comparatively defenceless condition in which the knights found themselves placed by the fatal conceit of their chief, they put a bold front on the war, and prepared for a stout resistance. Perceiving the Turks making demonstrations as if about to land, the commander Upton, an English knight distinguished for his bravery, headed a band of thirty of his brethren, and four hundred native volunteers, who had formed themselves into a mounted battalion, and galloped down to the point of the coast where a descent was most likely to be made; while the commander De Guimeran, the same Spaniard who so honourably distinguished himself at the siege of Mehedia,

took with him a hundred knights on foot, and three hundred harquebusiers; and, passing over the port in skiffs, planted an ambuscade among the rocks at the extremity of Mount Sceberras. Soon afterwards, Sinam Pasha, the General of the Ottoman army, and Dragut, Admiral of the fleet, descended from the lofty deck of their war-ship into a stately galley, and stood in towards the great port, to ascertain the practicability of a debarkation. To avoid the artillery of Fort Saint Angelo, the galley steered close under the steril rocks of Mount Scebarras; and, no sooner was it within musket-shot, than De Guimeran's harquebusiers saluted it with a furious volley. The discharge staggered the Turks for a moment; but Sinam, enraged at this surprisal, ordered them, on their peril, to hold on for the shore; and De Guimeran, seeing a powerful body of Moslems advancing against him, re-embarked his small battalion, and returned to the convent. Sinam contented himself with climbing Mount Sceberras, from whence he reconnoitred the Castle of Saint Angelo. Its aspect damped his ardour; and he openly reproached Dragut with having miscalculated the difficulty of the enterprise, remarking, at the same time, that the eagle itself could scarcely have chosen a more inaccessible eyrie. Dragut defended himself sharply, as was his wont; and Sinam prudently referred the matter to a council of war. The council, in complaisance to their commander, voted the siege of the Bourg and Fort Saint Angelo inadvisable; and all that the impetuous Dragut could prevail on the General to attempt, was the conquest of the Cité Notable. The troops accordingly disembarked, and advanced into the interior of the *island* in considerable force, accompanied by field-

artillery. Fire marked their march;—not a hamlet, not a corn field, escaped destruction—the whole country was enveloped in the smoke of these wanton conflagrations.

The Cité Notable was under the government of George Adorno, an illustrious Genoese knight, and but poorly garrisoned. Many peasants capable of strengthening the garrison had taken refuge within the walls; but there was a want of knights to discipline and command them. Adorno, while he exerted himself to increase the means of defence, despatched a special messenger to the Grandmaster, imploring succour, and particularly the aid of the French knight Villegagnon, whose valour and experience were in themselves a host. D'Omedes, with his usual selfishness, refused a reinforcement of knights; but, as Villegagnon's frankness had become disagreeable, he readily consented that he should repair to the post of danger. He endeavoured to impress that knight with an idea, that he had selected him on this occasion as a mark of confidence; but Villegagnon saw at once through the shallow finesse. He answered boldly, that to save the place, at least an hundred knights ought to be thrown into it; but that, nevertheless, as a true soldier of Saint John, bound but to obey and to die, he was ready to enter it singly, and cast his life away for the honour of his Order. The Grandmaster, ashamed of his conduct, and still unwilling to alter his plans, offered him six chosen knights for his companions; and with these Villegagnon quitted the convent under the cloud of night. Having reached the Cité Notable before daybreak, they crept close to the wall; and on a given signal, were drawn up by ropes, unperceived by the besiegers.

The generous self-devotion of these knights reanimated the garrison; and many persons who had trembled at the Ottoman name before their arrival, now burned with an ardent desire to emulate their bravery. Villegagnon cheered the townsmen with fallacious hopes; but with the governor Adorno he had no concealment. On the contrary, he frankly told him, that there was no further succour on the way, and that he and his companions had only come there to die as became Christian knights, and the renowned banner under which they were banded.

The knowledge that succours had found access into the place, and revived the drooping valour of the garrison, disheartened the besiegers; and the Turkish general was further intimidated by false advices, that a mighty Christian armament, under the famous Andrew Doria, and destined for the relief of Malta, was actually at sea. Conceiving himself beset with perils, he again called a council of war, and, in accordance with its advice, abruptly raised the siege, and re-embarked. To quiet the turbulence of his troops, who murmured loudly at the unsuccessful issue of the expedition, he permitted them to make a descent on the island of Goza, which they cruelly ravaged. The governor, Galatian de Sessa, made a feeble attempt to defend the untenable war-tower in which he took refuge. It commanded a small town which lay at the foot of the hill on which it was situated; and the natives, stimulated by a dread of Turkish barbarity, volunteered to fence the breach, which the enemy's artillery quickly effected; but De Sessa's valour was not proof against the thunder of the cannon, and, like a craven, he abandoned his post, and hid himself in his chamber. The inhabitants, panic-struck at seeing a knight deport himself

like a dastard, would have deserted the breach to a man, had not a brave English cavalier taken the command, and, with his own hand, fired off the cannon which defended it. A ball from the Turkish batteries speedily terminated the career of this good soldier; and no one being found to take his place, the Governor despatched a messenger to the Turkish general with an offer of capitulation; but, as he demanded the most honourable conditions, Sinam contemptuously rejected it, and returned for answer, that, if the fortress were not instantly surrendered at discretion, he would enter it sword in hand, and hang the coward who commanded it at the gate. De Sessa, after another and scarcely less futile attempt to negotiate, gave orders that the Turks should be permitted to occupy the place; and his own quarters were the first that fell a prey to their rapacity. To show the contempt in which they held him, they compelled him to act the part of a beast of burden in carrying his own furniture to their ships; after which, though he had Sinam's pledge that his own liberty, as well as that of forty other persons, should be respected, he was stripped almost naked, and chained down like a slave. Sinam, to save the appearance of having basely violated his pledge, gave forty infirm old men their freedom —arguing, with the characteristic sophistry of a Turk, that the oldest were of course the principal inhabitants. Upwards of six thousand Christians were hurried into slavery on this occasion. As a proof that some traits of magnanimity dignified the inroad, it is stated, that a Sicilian, who had become naturalized in Goza, preferring death to bondage, first poniarded his wife and two fair daughters, and then, sallying forth with his musket and crossbow,

expended every bullet and quarrel against the enemy, and, having slain and wounded several, at length flung himself despairingly on their swords.* The cowardly De Sesa, who was the countryman and personal friend of the Grandmaster, was saved from universal disgrace through his influence. A report was promulgated, that he had fallen in defence of his post; and it was not till many years afterwards, when he returned from slavery, that its falsity was generally detected. By that time, the abhorrence entertained against him had in a great measure died away; and the hardships of a protracted bondage being regarded by the council as a sufficient punishment for his pusillanimity, he was permitted to pass the remainder of his days in peace.

Dragut and Sinan Pasha, having thus devastated Goza, stood away for Tripoli with an intention of razing that place. The Grandmaster, apprehensive that Europe would resound with reproaches against him should it be taken, prevailed on Gabriel D'Aramont, the French ambassador at the Porte, who had touched at Malta on his way to Constantinople, to act as a mediator; and he immediately repaired to Tripoli in that capacity. Meanwhile, Sinan having debarked his troops at Tachora, four leagues from Tripoli, where he was joyfully received by the Morat Aga, the prince of the district, despatched a Moorish horseman with a white flag to the Christian post. This messenger, advancing to the edge of the fosse, stuck a cane into the earth, with a paper fastened to the end of it, which, on examination, was found to contain a cartel or defiance, to the effect, that unless the place were instantly surrendered, in which

* Relation de N. Nicolai.

case the garrison would be at liberty to depart, the Turkish army would enter it by assault, and treat it as a conquered city. Tripoli was governed by Gaspard La Vallier, Marshal of the Order, a veteran knight highly respected for his experience and valour —though the Grandmaster, jealous of his popularity, held him in no favour. His answer to Sinam was as laconic as the cartel which required it. He had been intrusted, he said, with the defence of Tripoli, and he would defend it to the last drop of his blood. On receiving this resolute reply, Sinam landed his battering-train, and invested the place. Before the trenches were opened, however, the French envoy entered the port, and repaired to the Turkish camp, where he was received with the distinction becoming the representative of a puissant and friendly monarch. D'Aramont exerted himself to divert the Pasha from attacking the city; but Sinam cut his arguments short, by exhibiting his sovereign's orders, and saying, that his head would be struck off if he did not fulfil them. The Frenchman would instantly have put to sea again, with the intention of carrying his petition to Constantinople; but Sinam, apprehensive that a change of orders would mar his conquest, caused the brigantine which had brought him to be unrigged, and interdicted his departure.

The trenches being opened, a fierce cannonade was directed against the castle, which was the only well-fortified point. The batteries thundered without intermission, though to little purpose, for several days; but at length a deserter pointed out a weak part of the wall, and a breach was effected. The commandant endeavoured to fence it by intrenchments; but the slaves refused to work in the teeth of the Turkish fire; and the terror with which they were

seized extended to the garrison, which consisted only of two hundred raw recruits from Calabria, and the same number of Moorish allies. The Calabrians were stationed chiefly in a small fort called the Chatelet, at the entrance of the harbour, under the command of a military serving-brother, named Des Roches. This officer, observing symptoms of discontent among his troops, took measures to ascertain their designs; and his vigilance was rewarded, by the discovery of a plot which they had hatched, to escape to Sicily in a brigantine then in the port, and leave a burning match so situated as to fire the powder-magazine and blow up the tower, as soon as they were out of danger. Des Roches lost no time in reporting this conspiracy to the Governor, who, unwilling to proceed to extremities, confined himself to removing the malecontents into the city. This clemency proved fatal to his authority, for these turbulent rogues speedily infected the whole garrison with their seditious fears. Supported in their insubordination by several Spanish knights, they abandoned their posts, and, simultaneously surrounding their leader, threatened to take his life if he did not compel the Governor to a timely capitulation. The Marshal endeavoured to reason with the mutineers; but they were deaf to his arguments, insolently calling on him to surrender. A council was summoned, and the knights and officers who composed it were requested to give their advice. The Chevalier de Poissi, a French knight, declared that he had examined the breach, and found it perfectly defensible; but Herrera, a Spaniard, delivered himself differently, and ascribed the Frenchman's valour to the knowledge, that the knights of that nation had a friend in the person of D'Aramont in the enemy's

tamp. It was at length determined to re-examine the breach; but the mutineers would listen to no reports, save such as were made by their abettors; and these being of course unfavourable, they protested, that, if a white flag were not instantly displayed, they would themselves propose a capitulation. The knights, thus cruelly abandoned, had no alternative but to yield. Deputies were despatched to the Turkish camp, and a treaty was agreed on, which, even at the moment of subscription, Sinam was determined not to observe. To adjust certain preliminaries, he requested that the Governor would visit him in his camp; and La Vallier, fearful of showing too great an anxiety about his personal safety, accordingly repaired thither, accompanied only by a single companion. Sinam received him with great arrogance; and, fretted by his insolence, the Marshal told him, that if he were not pleased with the capitulation, he might destroy it, and allow the sword still to decide between them. Enraged at this boldness, Sinam ordered him to be manacled, and sent a prisoner on board his war-ship; but his companion, the knight de Montfort, was permitted to return to Tripoli, with a message to the commander Copier, recommending that, as he was in the hands of the enemy, he might, in every thing that concerned the safety of the city, be considered a dead man. The knights, when informed of his detention, abandoned all idea of capitulation, and endeavoured to inspire the troops with the same spirit of resistance which burned in their own breasts; but neither remonstrances nor menaces could prevail on the dastards to resume their arms. The negotiations with Sinam were renewed, and at length he ratified the original treaty. The mutineers being told, that it stipulated for

their liberation and immediate departure, would not consent to remain longer within the walls, but rushed tumultuously out into the open country; whereupon, Morat Aga suddenly surrounded them with a body of Turkish cavalry, and made the whole of them prisoners. The knights, thus abandoned, also quitted the city, and fell into the same snare. Des Roches, the brave serving-brother who commanded the Chatelet, alone spurned to submit to so base a destiny. Though the Turkish general employed both bribes and menaces to induce him to surrender, he persisted in resistance, till his little fortress was reduced to a pile of ruins, when, finding it no longer tenable, he embarked in a small bark during the night, with the thirty men who composed his detachment, and made his escape to sea—some writers say, to the French ambassador's gallies.

Through the exertions of D'Aramont, the whole of the knights, and a considerable number of the citizens, were either gratuitously liberated or ransomed. To accomplish their redemption, the generous Frenchman not only used his utmost influence with Sinan, but sacrificed a large sum out of his private fortune. Accompanied by the warriors whom he had thus rescued from bondage worse than death, he sailed for Malta, naturally anticipating a most hospitable reception from the head of the Order. But the Grandmaster, startled at the loss of Tripoli, and conscious that he had misapplied the funds set apart for its defence, artfully impressed the knights with a suspicion, that the French envoy had acted faithlessly in the negotiation, and, to serve his own sovereign, who was on amicable terms with Solyman, had delivered up Tripoli to the Turks. This report having been industriously circulated, D'Aramont, on

arriving off the harbour about sunset, found it barred with a chain, and the garrison of the castle under arms. Next morning, however, he was permitted to land, when, finding himself an object of general execration, instead of respect, he instantly demanded to be heard in full council, touching the mission with which he had been intrusted. With this demand, the Grandmaster, however averse to a public explanation, found it necessary to comply; but D'Aramont, contemning the base imputations promulgated against him, contented himself with reminding the assembly, that the Grandmaster's entreaties alone, coupled with his own anxiety for the interests of Christianity, had induced him to engage in so thankless a service—adding, that he had performed it honourably, and that he relied on the Grandmaster's honour, for the fulfilment of certain stipulations under which the knights had been ransomed. The Grandmaster vouchsafed only a cold and cautious answer; and D'Aramont, seeing the tide of popular opinion setting strongly against him, quitted the island in disgust for Constantinople.

D'Omedes, encouraged by the credulity with which his aspersions against the ambassador had been received, now looked round him for a special victim, as a shield to his own reputation. He had long regarded the Marshal la Vallier with dislike; and, at his suggestion, that veteran, together with his companions in misfortune, the knights Fuster, De Sousa, and Herrera, who had been implicated in the seditious proceedings that accelerated the surrender, and were therefore justly arraigned, were cited to stand their trial for the loss of Tripoli. The tribunal appointed to take cognizance of the matter, consisted of three knights and a secular judge, named Antho-

ny de Combe—all of them men completely subservient to the Grandmaster's pleasure. The whole brotherhood were officially warned that no solicitations in favour of the accused would be entertained; while, on the other hand, the vilest criminals were received as credible witnesses against them. The Marshal, against whom this prosecution was chiefly directed, would have inevitably fallen a victim to it, had not the commander Villegagnon, with that generous intrepidity which distinguished him, stood forward in open court as his advocate. He boldly ascribed the loss of Tripoli to the true reasons—the Grandmaster's negligence and avarice; and, captivated by his arguments, a strong party, consisting chiefly of French knights, espoused the cause of the prisoner. This revolution only stirred D'Omedes to greater exertion. Fresh witnesses were suborned; but Villegagnon exposed their corruption, and brought forward no less than sixty respectable persons to testify in behalf of his friend. At length, the commissioners gave in their report, and the secular judge, pronounced sentence in full council. It was to the effect, that though the loss of Tripoli was to be ascribed solely to the cowardice of the Calabrese soldiery, yet any knight who surrendered a post intrusted to him, without instructions from the Grandmaster, was liable to degradation; and the court, therefore, adjudged the whole four criminals to be deprived of the habit and cross of the Order.

Iniquitous as this sentence was, as far as respected La Vallier, it fell short of the wishes of the Grandmaster. Though it would have given him no concern had it touched the Marshal's life, he was disappointed to find, that it subjected the three Spanish knights to punishment. They had been includ-

in the accusation, merely to obviate a suspicion the prosecution being instituted from national tred; and he formally represented to the council, st, as far as respected them, the sentence was unst, and that only that part of it which referred to e Marshal should be carried into immediate exetion. In consequence of this appeal, the judge, th a villanous pliancy, revised the sentence, and empted the Spaniards from its operation. The iliff Schilling, enraged at this flagitious proceedg, publicly reproached the parasite with his propate submission to the opinion of the Grandmas:; while Noguez, a Castilian knight, contemptuly reviled him as a wretch, and vowed never to mit the sentence to be executed against the Marl, unless the Spaniards suffered along with him a declaration which the whole assembly supported, d to which even D'Omedes himself was ultimately liged to bend. But his vengeance was only smored—not extinguished; and, with his usual craft, again suggested the remodelling of the sentence. e council, however, could not be swayed to leave n the hands of a judge whose corruption had been dered so notorious; and, foiled at every point, Omedes dissolved the assembly.

Meanwhile, through the machinations of the andmaster and his confidants, the calumnies fated against the ambassador D'Aramont had n industriously circulated throughout Europe, l at length reached the ears of his sovereign, nry the Second of France. That monarch intly made a formal complaint to the Grandmaster; l followed it up by demanding the fullest explanon touching the innocence or guilt of his envoy. Omedes, *perplexed* by this epistle, submitted it

to the council, who decided that the French King should be assured that the Order had every reason to be satisfied with D'Aramont's conduct. The secretary was instructed to draw up an answer to that effect, for signature by the Grandmaster; and the Chevalier De Villegagnon, who was about to quit Malta for his native country, was appointed to carry it to the court of France. But D'Omedes, unwilling to abate his persecution of La Vallier, and yet afraid to deal uncandidly with so potent a monarch as Henry, delayed the letter from day to day, till Villegagnon, rendered suspicious by his procrastination, instituted a strict scrutiny into the motives which occasioned it. By this means he was enabled to detect a plot for the revisal of the sentence passed on the Marshal—D'Omedes having determined to reappoint his minion De Combe to the head of the commission, after taking him bound, under a heavy penalty, to give such a judgment in the matter as he himself should prescribe. The Marshal, according to this iniquitous arrangement, was first to be interrogated on certain points calculated to criminate him, and, if he either denied or refused to answer them, then to be put to the torture, and the confession which his persecutor doubted not would be extorted from him, forwarded to the French King, instead of the letter dictated by the council. * As soon as Villegagnon was fully assured of the reality of this conspiracy, he presented himself before the council, and peremptorily demanded, in the name of the French envoy, the explanatory letter ordered to be written to his sovereign, or, in lieu of it, a copy of the sentence passed on La Vallier and his companions.

* Memoires de Villegagnon.

Pleased at the interference of this generous-hearted knight, who had long been a thorn in his side, the Grandmaster sternly requested him to explain on what grounds he demanded, in behalf of a secular prince, an explanation of any criminal process which had occurred within the jurisdiction of the Order. With the candour which had always distinguished him, Villegagnon assigned, as his reason, his knowledge of the conspiracy between the Grandmaster and De Combe against the Marshal's life. D'Omedes, roused to fury, fiercely denied the truth of the allegation, and poured forth a torrent of abuse on his accuser. Notwithstanding his vehement protestations, however, the council detected ample proofs of his guilt, both in his speech and bearing; and Villegagnon withdrew from the assembly, with the assurance that the credentials he waited for would be consigned to his custody without delay. A subsequent attempt was made by the Grandmaster to qualify the letter to the French King, in a manner suited to his own views; but here again the vigilance of Villegagnon foiled him. The letter which the latter ultimately carried to the court of France, fully exonerated D'Aramont from the charges which the insidious reports propagated by the Grandmaster embraced, and which the partisans of the Emperor Charles had spared no exertions to disseminate. *

As D'Omedes had impeached the Spanish knights, Fuster, De Sousa, and Herrera, more from motives of policy than from a wish to bring them to justice, they were soon after liberated; but his animosity towards La Vallier continued unabated, and he was left to pine in dishonourable confinement. The

* M. de Thou.

persecution of this venerable knight, whose conduct, though in some respects imprudent, never approached criminality, furnishes remarkable evidence of the influence possessed by the head of the Order, and also of the freedom with which even the meanest knight, when he saw occasion, could call in question the proceedings of his chief. The government of D'Omedes, like all unprincipled despotisms, was, in reality, weak and wavering. That such was the case, the following incident is good testimony. Leon Strozzi, Prior of Capua—the same Florentine knight, who, in consequence of the undue partiality of D'Omedes, superseded the veteran Botigella in the command of the galleys, but subsequently devoted himself to the service of France—after having rendered all the maritime countries of Europe too hot to hold him, presented himself before the port of Malta, and requested, as a member of the Order, to be received under its protection. With this request D'Omedes, who regarded him as the implacable enemy of his patron Charles the Fifth, refused to comply; and Strozzi, taking to himself the extraordinary title of "The Friend of God alone," became the enemy of all mankind, and for a whole summer scourged the Mediterranean with his piratical exploits. * Tired, at length, of the proscription in which he lived, he entered into a negotiation with the Emperor Charles, to whom, despite his hereditary antipathy, he tendered his services; and while it was pending, privately landed at Malta, and, without intimation, presented himself before the Grandmaster. A more dignified chief would have sternly resented this intrusion into his territories; but intimidated by the bold bearing

* Brantome.

of the Prior, and the evident devotion of the many friends whom he had in the Order, and influenced also by the knowledge that the Emperor was anxious to secure his services, the Grandmaster not only overlooked the audacity with which he had forced an audience, but received him into his confidence. This pliancy of temper, however, the Order had no reason to regret. Strozzi was a warrior of great natural talents and vast experience, and his advice was of the utmost utility in the erection of the military works which were subsequently executed for the defence of the island.

These works, though not so extensive as the commissioners appointed to superintend them recommended, were nevertheless numerous and important. The Bourg, though protected by Fort Saint Angelo, was commanded by Mount Saint Julian, another salient point; while the spacious haven called Marsa Musceit, on the opposite side of Mount Sceberras, was totally undefended. It was the opinion of the commissioners, that a new town should be instantly built on Mount Sceberras, as it presented the greatest facilities for fortification; but, as the treasury of the Order was not in a state to authorize such an undertaking, the knights confined themselves to building a castle at the extremity of that promontory, and another on Mount Saint Julian. The one was named Fort Saint Elmo, and the other Fort Saint Michael, in commemoration of the towers bearing the same names, which defended the port of Rhodes.

The knights laboured with the greatest ardour at these works; and the Prior of Capua acquired so much popularity by his exertions to expedite them, that D'Omedes, with his usual narrow-mindedness,

became jealous of his renown; and, to get rid
him, sent him with an armament to threaten
coast of Africa (1552.) Strozzi landed his tr
near Zoara, in the province of Tripoli, and, eag
earn distinction under the banner of the Order,
tempted to carry that place by a coup-de-main.
town was totally defenceless towards the land;
as the Christians entered it at night, the inhabit
were unaware of their jeopardy, until the clangor
drums and trumpets filled their streets. No so
did the soldiers find themselves in possession of
place, than, contrary to the instructions of their l
er, they dispersed, and proceeded to inflict all
miseries of war on the population. In the mid
these atrocities, they were startled by the fierce c
of a Turkish army, which happened to be encam
in the neighbourhood, and whose watch-fires
had, during their midnight march, mistaken for th
of a tribe of predatory Arabs. At the head of
force, which was thrice as numerous as that wh
Strozzi commanded, fought the redoubted M
Aga: and a desperate conflict commenced in
streets of the half-sacked city. The knights, tho
they numbered three hundred, and fought with t
ancient bravery, found it impossible to turn the
of battle. Strozzi's nephew fell gallantly in
foremost ranks; and, eager to avenge his death,
uncle, at the head of a fresh body of troops, fl
himself into the conflict. Disabled by a mus
shot which lodged in his thigh, the Prior was
the point of being cut down by a Turk, whe
small band of knights formed themselves in a ci
round him. The commander Copier, and
knights Soto-Major and Sainte Jaille, were str
lifeless at his side; and he must have fallen a

into the hands of the enemy, but for Torcillas, a Majorcan knight, remarkable for his strength and stature, who, lifting him in his arms, hurried him to the beach, from whence a boat carried him to his galley. This event was the signal of retreat to the whole army; and, though hard pressed, it retired in good order, stubbornly contesting every inch of ground. The knights themselves were the last to embark. To cover the embarkation of the soldiers, and preserve the standard of the Order, they drew up in a solid phalanx at a narrow pass, and, with their swords and short pikes, repelled several charges of Turkish cavalry. Seeing a body of Turkish musketeers advancing, they at length threw themselves into the sea, which was shallow, and waded breast-high, amid a shower of balls, to their shallops. La Cassiere, the standard-bearer, held the ensign of the Order constantly displayed during the whole of this perilous retreat; and several knights were killed in the act of assisting him through the waves. Few of the knights or military serving-brothers engaged in this expedition survived it. The language of Italy lost, among others, the brothers Valperga, Sforza, and Justiniani—all scions of families renowned in story; and sixteen knights, descended from the most illustrious houses of France, were also among the slain. As the attack, however, was totally unprovoked on the part of the inhabitants of Zoara, the unprosperous issue may be regarded as a sort of retributive justice; for the knights, notwithstanding their chivalrous character, and vaunted devotion to the cause of humanity, were too often regardless of the dictates of that generous virtue.

The miserable *plight* in which the Prior and his

battered armament returned to Malta, did not deprive him of the reputation of a wise and valiant commander. He had behaved intrepidly in the fight; and no sooner were his wounds closed, than he was reappointed to the command of the gallies, and subsequently made so many captures under the flag of the Order, that he not only brought immense riches into its ports, but rendered his name a terror to all the Moslem pirates who showed themselves betwixt the Straits of Gibraltar and the mouths of the Nile.

CHAPTER V.

Death of D'Omedes and Election of La Sangle—Death of Leo Strozzi—Malta devastated by a Hurricane—Election of La Valette—Expedition against Gabes—An immense Turkish Armament arrives before Malta—The City Besieged—Attack on Fort Saint Elmo—The Ravelin taken—Desperate situation of the Fort—Fire-hoops used by the Garrison—Dragut mortally Wounded—Fort Saint Elmo carried by Storm—Barbarity of the Victors.

THE Grandmaster D'Omedes died on the 6th of September 1553. In the last days of his sovereignty, intelligence reached Malta that Mary of England, the daughter of Henry the Eighth, conscience-stricken, say the Catholic historians, at her father's unjust spoliation and persecution of the Order of Saint John, and eager to manifest to the uttermost her implicit devotion to the Church of Rome, had determined to make restitution of all the commanderies and manors which he had confiscated. The envoy intrusted with this mission, brought an invitation to the knights to send a deputation to England without delay; and the Commander de Montferrat was accordingly despatched to that country, and, in virtue of the authority reposed in him, was reinvested in the estates which

had formerly belonged to the Order. In the reign of her successor Elizabeth, however, the reinvestment was abrogated, and the Order completely and finally suppressed.

D'Omedes left behind him the reputation of an avaricious, imperious, and revengeful man; the valour which he had displayed at the siege of Rhodes was forgotten, and he descended unhonoured to the tomb. Strozzi, Prior of Capua, had long aspired to the Grandmastership, and an effort was made to place him in the stead of the departed chief; but a dread that he would divert the resources and forces of the Order, to avenge himself of the house of Medici, occasioned his rejection; and Claude de la Sangle, a French knight, was elected. The knights Gagnon, Pascatore, and Bernardin, who were chiefly instrumental in bringing about this event, soon after died, under circumstances which excited a suspicion that they had been poisoned by Parpaille, one of Strozzi's domestics, at his master's instigation—a suspicion which seriously blighted the Prior's fame, and was probably not far wide of the truth. The election of a Frenchman fortunately put an end to the factious differences which had agitated the Order during the whole of D'Omedes' grandmastership. The French knights had been so long accustomed to monopolize the supreme dignity, that it was extremely difficult to reconcile them to the rule of a man, who, besides being a native of another country, was known to be devoted to the Imperial interest, and who had been exalted by partisanship, rather than by the unanimous suffrage of the Chapter. To this national rivalry may be ascribed some of the shades which darken D'Omedes' renown. It is to Frenchmen that posterity is principally indebted for

the chronicles of the Order; and as these annalists were all more or less infected with the prejudices which prevailed, it becomes the impartial historian to receive with some caution their report of a chief, who would have been obnoxious to them, though he had had no other objectionable quality save that of being born in Spain.

La Sangle was at Rome when he was chosen Grandmaster. He was treated with great honour, not only in that city, but in Sicily, where he chanced to touch on his way to Malta. The Sicilian Viceroy did not leave him long in ignorance of the Emperor's object in lavishing these attentions. Tired of the trouble and expense of maintaining the city of Mehedia, which the knights had assisted him to take from Dragut, Charles, with his usual selfishness, proposed that the Order should transport itself to that place, and make it the permanent residence of the convent. The Grandmaster referred the matter to the council; and that assembly, out of consideration to the Emperor, condescended to await the report of several commissioners whom they sent to survey Mehedia, before they returned a definite answer. This report was of such a nature as at once induced them to reject the proposal. The knights had become completely maritime in their habits; and not only were they unwilling to resign the islands, which they had exercised so much skill to render defensible, but they justly argued, that, on the coast of Barbary, they would no longer be able to give that succour to Christians traversing the Mediterranean, which was one of the grand objects of their institution. Charles professed himself satisfied with these reasons; but the Viceroy of Sicily thought proper to resent them, by interdicting the supplies of

corn which the convent was in the custom of drawing from that island; and, to mollify him, the Grand-master had to despatch the Prior of Capua with several gallies, to chase away the corsairs who infested his coasts. While employed on this service, Strozzi received a pressing invitation from his eldest brother, who had succeeded to the command of the French army in Italy, to re-enter the service of France. Suppressing his antipathies against that government, in order to gratify the hereditary spirit of revenge, which still whispered, that, in concert with his brother, he might yet overturn the dynasty which had driven his father to seek an asylum in a suicide's grave, he at once acceded to the proposition. But a hint of his design having been forwarded from the court of Spain to the Sicilian Viceroy, that functionary prepared to prevent the Maltese gallies from leaving the port of Palermo. By one of those stratagems, however, which intrepid and gifted men alone are able to plan and execute, Strozzi eluded the Viceroy's vigilance, and returned to Malta, from whence, after having formally resigned his command, he again sailed on what he was pleased to style a private adventure, accompanied by a number of young knights, who were delighted to make their first essay in arms under so redoubted a chief. As soon as he was fairly at sea, he disclosed to his followers the true nature of his intentions, whereupon a few Spanish and Italian knights abandoned him; but the rest declared themselves ready to share his fortune, wherever he might lead. He accordingly ran down to the coast of Tuscany, and landed at Port-Ercole, where he was instructed, by the French general who occupied it, to wait the junction of a fleet of Provençal gallies. Eager to achieve some exploit

in the interval, with the small force he commanded, he formed the rash project of seizing the insignificant fort of Scarlino, in the principality of Piombino, and, with his usual intrepidity, set out in person to reconnoitre it. Unfortunately, a peasant, who lay in ambush near the walls, recognised him, from his majestic stature, and mortally wounded him in the side with a musket-ball. Thus, by the hand of a peasant churl, fell one of the bravest captains of the Order—a man who would have died its chief, had his moral worth been commensurate with his valour. He was buried in the great church of Porte-Ercole; but a year afterwards, Cosmo de Medicis, the hereditary enemy of his house, with the rancour of an ignoble adversary, had his remains torn from the grave, and cast into the sea.

The commander Parisot de la Valette succeeded Strozzi, as admiral of the Maltese gallies. His name soon became as terrible to the Turkish and Moorish corsairs, as that of his predecessor; and, stimulated by his repeated triumphs, the whole Mediterranean came to swarm with privateers manned by knights, who were scarcely more scrupulous as to the nature of the war they waged than the pirates whom they sought to extirpate. This maritime crusade at length excited the attention of the Sultan Solyman; and the Grandmaster, warned by the indications of his impending wrath, applied himself to replenish the arsenals and strengthen the defences of the island. At his own expense he made a considerable addition to Fort Saint Elmo; and so completely fortified the peninsula of Saint Michael, which, like that of the Bourg juts into the Grand Port, that, in honour of him, it was designated the Isle de la Sangle, and has ever since borne that name.

While these works were in progress, the island was devastated by one of those terrible hurricanes, which the Greeks of the Levant call *Syphon*. It was in the evening of the 23d of September that this frightful tempest burst over the port. The waves, heaped into mountains by conflicting blasts, rolled irresistibly within the harbour, which was soon strewed with dead bodies and the fragments of shattered barks. Such was the fury of the whirlwind, that four gallies were sucked into its vortex and capsized, and their crews were either drowned, or crushed to death within them. The houses near the port were thrown down, and their inmates buried in the ruins. Even the Castle of Saint Angelo itself tottered to its foundations; and the huge flag-staff which upheld the standard of the Order, was torn up and hurled to the distance of half a mile. Fortunately this fierce gust was of short continuance. At the expiration of half an hour, the wind subsided as suddenly as it had risen; but not till upwards of six hundred persons had perished. It was not till next morning that an attempt could be made to right the capsized vessels—a service which the Grand-master personally superintended. Hearing a noise proceed from one of these barks, he caused a hole to be made in the side of it, when a monkey instantly leaped out, delighted at its liberation; and the Chevalier de l'Escure, and several other knights who were on board the galley at the time of the disaster, were afterwards rescued through the same aperture. They had passed the night chin deep in water, clinging to the ribs of their unfortunate vessel, with barely sufficient air to preserve them from suffocation.

While the Order was occupied in repairing these *misfortunes* which the generosity of several poten-

tates and distinguished knights enabled it to do with unexpected rapidity, the corsair Dragut, expecting to attack Malta at a vantage, appeared off the island with a considerable fleet, and, disembarking a large land force, ravaged the open country. A body of three hundred knights, however, under the commander Louis de Lastic, repelled these pirates with great slaughter; and by way of reprisal, Francis de Lorraine, Grand Prior of France, scoured the whole coast of Barbary with a powerful squadron, and returned to port laden with spoil. In one of the maritime exploits performed by the knights at this period, a Gascon knight, hurried away by his valour, rashly leapt into a Turkish galley, and finding escape impossible, fired a quantity of gunpowder which chanced to be within his reach, and blew up the vessel.

The Grandmaster La Sangle died on the 17th of August 1557. His last days were embittered by a dispute respecting one of Strozzi, Prior of Capua's galleys, which had been unjustifiably carried out of a Roman port after that knight's death, and was afterwards recaptured by an emissary of the Pope, under circumstances which compromised the independence and honour of the Maltese flag. The vexation which La Sangle experienced on this occasion, brought on the malady which terminated his life.

John de la Valette, one of the most illustrious commanders the Order ever possessed, succeeded, by an unanimous vote, to the Grandmastership. He had made Malta his constant residence from the day of his reception as a knight, and had advanced progressively from dignity to dignity, till his chivalrous virtues procured him the supreme appointment. One of his first acts was to repair the injustice of his immediate predecessors, by a rever-

sion of the sentence which had been passed on the Marshal la Vallier, through the machinations of D'Omedes. La Sangle had merely liberated La Vallier from chains and close confinement; but La Valette relieved him, from what was infinitely more debasing to a proud spirit—unmerited disgrace. The death of the Emperor Charles the Fifth (1558), and the consequent annihilation of Spanish influence in the convent, the better enabled the Grandmaster to gratify the generous impulse of his heart by this tardy reparation. By his energy and address, he had previously reduced the commanders in the Bohemian and Venetian states, who had long pretended to exercise an independent authority, to proper subjection. The remonstrances he employed in this negotiation, enforced as they were by Charles, who had just abdicated the Imperial dignity, and his brother Ferdinand, induced the German knights to despatch a deputation to Malta, accredited by all the Priors of Germany, to announce their implicit submission, and the future payment of all their responsions—engagements which they never afterwards violated.

The thorough conviction which La Valette entertained of the innocence of La Vallier, not only induced him to remove the stigma which had been cast on the character of that knight, but incited him to enter into a project for the recovery of the fortress, the surrender of which had involved him in disgrace. Dragut, though still nominally the subject of the Sultan, ruled in Tripoli with absolute sway; and, by sparing neither labour nor expense, had rendered it one of the most defensible places in Barbary. The Duke of Medina-Celi, Viceroy of Sicily, who suggested the expedition, secured for it the approbation of his sovereign, Philip the

Second of Spain. The season being unpropitious, the Grandmaster would have postponed the departure of the armament till the following spring; but the Viceroy, aware of the unstable tenure of his commission, and eager to earn glory while the opportunity was left him, would not be dissuaded from an immediate departure. The fleet rendezvoused at Malta (1559), where four hundred veteran knights, and upwards of fifteen hundred soldiers, besides volunteers, embarked, under the command of the Chevalier D'Urré de Tessieres, admiral of the gallies. Unfortunately, the Viceroy, with that obstinacy which often characterizes weak and pusillanimous men, and contrary to a solemn understanding between him and the Grandmaster, turned aside from Tripoli, and attacked the insignificant island of Galves. The Moors who inhabited it defended themselves with great bravery; but the Christian arms ultimately proved victorious. Inflated by this conquest, the Viceroy set about constructing a fortress for its maintenance; but insubordination and disease combined to impede the work. Several distinguished knights fell victims to the prevalent distempers; and intelligence of these proceedings being forwarded to Malta, the Grandmaster, after duly notifying his disapprobation of the Viceroy's conduct, ordered the Maltese troops to separate from the expedition, and return home. The Commander de Tessieres, before he obeyed this mandate, employed every effort to induce the Viceroy to re-embark; but, though warned that a powerful Turkish squadron, combined with all the piratical gallies that could be mustered, had put to sea with the intention of destroying him, the Duke was proof against argument. Seeing him confirmed in

his obstinacy, the remnant of the Maltese fo
embarked. Nine knights died on the ho
voyage; and the commander himself, togetl
the greater part of the soldiers, marines an
who composed the armament, expired shor
their return.

Notwithstanding this mortality, the Gran
could not bring himself to leave the Vicero
fate; and three well-manned gallies, un
knight De Maldonat, were soon after despat
his succour. This reinforcement reached
only to witness the dispersion of the Chris
mament. Stubborn in his belief that the
squadron would not assail him, the Viceroy
to credit the startling reports which prevailed
effect, until he beheld the Ottoman fleet
horizon. Disease had completely subdued th
of the Christian forces; and, instead of mar
to meet the enemy on the waves or on the
they crowded in disorder into their vessels,
only to escape a rencontre. The admiral, Jo
drew Doria, (not the great Doria), enervated
ness, made his escape in a light brigantine,
along with him the Viceroy, who preferred a
rious flight to death amid the ruins of the
which he had built. Twenty-eight gallies an
teen large ships were captured by the Turks
handful of troops, under Alvarez de Sande, a
officer, held out the fort for three months, a
only subdued, when, preferring death to int
privation, they flung themselves, sword in ha
the enemy's ranks. Fourteen thousand men p
in this expedition. The knight de Maldonat p
ed the three gallies which he commanded, by
piloting them through the shallows and san

that hem the coast, after the battle was irretrievably decided against him.

It was about this time that Cosmo de Medicis, Grand-duke of Tuscany, anxious to create a powerful maritime force in his dominions, instituted a naval corps, on the officers of which he conferred the honour of knighthood, under the patronage of Saint Stephen. He at the same time assigned them the newly founded city of Cosmopolis, in the island of Elba, as a residence.* The commanders of this new Order were instructed to avail themselves of every opportunity of co-operation with the Maltese squadron, whenever they met it at sea; for the knights of Saint John had become as famous throughout Europe for their maritime skill, as they had long been for their warlike renown. Never before had their gallies been so numerous, or so efficiently manned. The pirate flag quailed before them in every corner of the Mediterranean; and their annals abound with details of naval combats in which the more intrepid commanders almost invariably bore away the palm of victory from the Moslems. Foremost among these ocean-warriors, fought the commander de Romegas, otherwise L'Escure—the same knight whose life was so miraculously preserved in the memorable storm which did so much damage in the island; but his laurels were stained by the bloodthirstiness of his zeal. It would, indeed, be a breach of historical candour not to state, that the warfare was characterised on both sides by sanguinary ferocity. If the Turk and the Moor were cruel and merciless, so was the Christian knight. It was a war of reckless bloodshed and brutal spoliation—a series of legal outrages which humanity chronicles with regret.

* Knolles.

A general council of the Catholic Church was held at Trent about this time, chiefly with a view to concert measures for checking the progress of the reformed doctrines, which assembly the Chevalier Royas de Portabrange attended, as the representative of the Order. He exerted himself to procure the restoration of such possessions and privileges as had been usurped by various potentates; but the assembly, immersed in business of greater moment, treated his appeal with coldness and neglect. Considering that the Pope himself was one of the princes against whom his complaints were levelled, it is not surprising that he totally failed in his mission. Yet, at this very period, when not one among the fathers of the church had a word to advance in favour of that illustrious brotherhood which had for centuries been its chief bulwark, the knights took Pignon de Velez, a strong fortress on the coast of Barbary, which, two years before, had successfully defied the forces of Spain. Five of the Maltese gallies employed in this service soon after performed a notable exploit, by capturing a large and richly laden Turkish galleon in the mouth of the Adriatic. The battle lasted five hours, and one hundred and twenty Christians, including five knights, fell ere the Turks pulled down their flag. The knights, Giou and Romegas, commanded the Maltese squadron in this fight, which redounded the more to their honour, inasmuch as the loss of the galleon, which belonged to the Kislar-aga, chief of the black eunuchs of the seraglio, occasioned more dismay at Constantinople, than if the cross had been planted in triumph on the walls of some important fortress. Solyman, regarding it as an insult offered to his own house-

hold—for some of his female favourites had shares in the argosy—was grievously incensed. Not only did the Kislar-aga and the Odalichi urge him to vengeance, but even the Imaun of the grand mosque publicly invoked him to redeem, with his sword, the many followers of the Prophet who pined in Christian chains. The populace also lifted up its potent voice; and Solyman, fanned into wrath, swore solemnly by his beard to extirpate the Order.

The Sultan, notwithstanding his indignation, did not rush into the contest without first consulting his counsellors, as became a wise and prudent prince. Several of them recommended, as a preliminary step, an expedition against the Christian settlements in Barbary; others, against Sicily and Italy; but, in the Sultan's own eyes, the subjugation of Malta alone found favour; and he steadily adhered to that project, as the most likely to spread the terror of his name far and wide. He accordingly set about equipping a mighty armament, the command of which he intrusted to the Pashas Mustapha and Piali, with the understanding that the corsair Dragut, whose naval renown was still untarnished, should be admitted to all their councils.

The knights, warned of the storm about to burst on them, by the loud and general note of warlike preparation that sounded in the East, spared no exertion to place their island in a proper state of defence. With the exception of Spain, which furnished a small body of troops, and the Pope, who contributed ten thousand crowns, none of the great European potentates showed a disposition, or indeed had the power, to render them any essential aid. France was rendered powerless by intestine strife; *Germany* trembled for her own frontier; and

England no longer took an interest in the co
between the Crescent and the Cross. But the l
ledge that they were left to engage single-hand
the battle, acted only as a stimulus to the vale
the knights. At the Grandmaster's summon
veral hundreds of them, who were dispersed a
the distant commanderies, hastened to Malta, f
noble ardour, where, in conjunction with their
experienced confreres, they employed themselv
disciplining the native population, and the sta
aries whom the agents of the Order levied i
Italian States. Such commanders as were incu
tated, by age or infirmities, from repairing t
post of danger, remitted to the treasury greate
of their personal funds. But the bulwark o
Order was the Grandmaster himself. Equal i
tural sagacity, in courage, in military skill, a
honourable zeal, to the most illustrious chiefs i
ever possessed, fortune could not, at this critical p
have devolved the supreme power on a more ef
and magnanimous commander than John de la V
Temporal dignities had been showered thickly
him; but, far from alienating his heart from the
duties of his profession, they had only rendered hi
more eager to deport himself on all occasions a
came a true Christian knight. To such a man, i
far easier to prepare to meet death bravely on hi
bastions, than to contemplate the possibility o
banner he fought under being torn down in
honour by the hands of an enemy. He fulfill
one and the same time, the duties of the hospi
the private soldier, the engineer, the artillerist
the captain of the host. The one hour h
busied in the hospital, the next superintendin
pioneers who were employed in constructing

defences; and, with the same hand that had traced the plan of the rising bulwarks, he frequently grasped, by way of example, the mattock and the spade. "A formidable enemy," said he, speaking in full assembly to his knights, "are coming like a thunder-cloud upon us; and if the banner of the Cross must quail to the unbeliever, let us remember, that it is a signal that heaven demands from us the lives which we have solemnly devoted to its service. He who dies in this cause dies a happy death; and, to render us worthy to meet it, let us renew at the altar those vows which ought to make us not only fearless, but invincible in the fight."

The solemn ceremonial which followed this address, was well calculated to inspire the knights with the most fervent zeal. Shriven of their sins, they partook of the eucharist, and renounced all temporal pursuits and gratifications, until such time as their redemption should be accomplished. Private animosities were abandoned—they strengthened each other by the utterance of noble sentiments—and, bending in devoted brotherhood before the symbol of their faith, they vowed to stand between it and profanation, till the last drop of their blood was drained.

A general muster of his forces showed La Valette that he might rely on the services of seven hundred knights, besides serving-brothers, and about eight thousand five hundred soldiers, composed of the crews of the gallies, foreign stipendiaries, and the militia of the island. As had been done by L'Isle Adam at the siege of Rhodes, each language was intrusted with a particular post on the fortifications. The defence of the Bourg, a most important position, was confided to the three languages of France,

and part of the language of Castile. The knights of Italy, headed by the Admiral De Monte, occupied the Isle de la Sangle, and those of Arragon the quarter and platform of the Bormola gate. The languages of England and Germany, with the remnant of the knights of Castile, were posted on the Mole, and from thence as far as the ditch of fort Saint Angelo, which was garrisoned by fifty knights and five hundred soldiers, under Garzeranos, a Catalonian knight. Romegas, with that intrepidity for which he was distinguished, undertook, with his marines, to defend the entrance of the great port; and a battery of nine guns, commanded by Guiral, a Castilian, was raised to protect the harbour of the gallies, which lay between the Bourg and the Isle de la Sangle. This port was further defended by a great iron chain, supported on casks and beams of timber, placed at regulated distances, and extending from the platform of Saint Angelo to the cape called the Spur of Saint Michael. The garrison of fort Saint Elmo was increased to sixty knights, commanded by Desguerras, Bailiff of Negropont; and to these were added the Cavalier John de la Cerda, and a body of Spanish infantry under his command. The Cité Notabile was intrusted to Mesquita, a Portuguese knight, and the island of Goza to the Chevalier Torreglias, a Majorcan of tried valour, who only prized the appointment the more for the peril it embraced. In addition to these arrangements, Copier, Grand Marshal of the Order, was placed at the head of an ambulatory corps, with instructions to hover perpetually in the vicinity of those places most calculated to admit of a hostile descent.

It was on the 18th of May 1565, that the Mal-

tese sentinels stationed on the cavalier of fort Saint Elmo, first descried the Turkish fleet. It consisted of one hundred and fifty-nine oared vessels, and carried thirty thousand soldiers, chiefly janizaries and spahis—troops who, on all occasions, formed the *elite* of the Ottoman battle. A squadron of store-ships accompanied this mighty armament, having on board the heavy artillery, the horses, and the necessary munitions of the army. In the course of the night, notwithstanding the vigilance of the Grand-master, three thousand Turks landed at Saint Thomas's creek, a roadstead a few miles to the eastward of the Grand Port. On the following night, the fleet, with lanterns lighted, stood away for the more remote bay of Marsa Sirocco, where next morning the whole army disembarked. Hostilities commenced ominously for the Order. A Portuguese knight, who had been sent out to reconnoitre, was struck dead by a Turkish ball fired from ambush; and the Chevalier de la Riviere, who gallantly rushed forward to bear off his body, had his horse shot under him, and was taken. The Turkish general put the captive knight to the torture, to extort from him a description of the weakest points of the fortifications. La Riviere, affecting sincerity, named the post of Castile; but no sooner did the Pasha behold its bulwark and casemated ravelin in a bird's-eye view which he subsequently obtained of the whole defences from Mount Calcara, than he knew that his prisoner had dealt falsely with him; and, setting the example to his soldiers, they beat out the knight's brains. This cruel act, and the outrages perpetrated by the invaders in every corner of the island, were avenged however in some measure by the column under the Grand Marshal, which cut off fifteen hundred ma-

rauders who had straggled from their ranks, in which service it lost fourscore soldiers and one knight, an illustrious Florentine named D'Elbene. The Grandmaster, though he held it prudent to encourage these skirmishes at the outset, as likely to habituate the soldiers to the aspect and shouts of the enemy, soon saw that the numerical disparity was so prodigiously against him, as to render them inadvisable; and the Marshal and his corps were ultimately recalled within the walls.

Fort Saint Elmo, which, as has already been stated, occupied the extremity of the rocky peninsula called Mount Sceberras, was the first defensible point which the Turks assailed. They argued, that were that post carried, they would obtain complete possession of Port Musceit, which would afterwards serve as a secure and commodious haven for their fleet. Pioneers immediately attempted to open trenches to the landward of the fort, which was but indifferently defended on that side; but the hardness of the rock, and their complete exposure to the cannon on the walls, rendered the work impracticable. As a substitute, they raised parapets of planks and beams, banked with earth, which was brought from a distance with prodigious labour, and worked into clay mixed with rushes and straw. Under this cover the works rapidly advanced. Platforms were raised, bristling with cannon; and, on the 24th of May, six days after the arrival of the fleet in the offing, a battery of ten guns, each of which carried a ball weighing eighty pounds, two sixty-pound culverins, and a basilisk of enormous dimensions, which threw stone-bullets that weighed one hundred and sixty pounds, opened upon the fort. Every shot told; and, seeing

the works momentarily crumbling under this terrible shower, the Bailiff of Negropont despatched the Spaniard La Cerda to solicit a reinforcement from the Grandmaster, on the assumption that a stout and courageous garrison alone could maintain so exposed a post. La Cerda imprudently announced the jeopardy of the fort in presence of the assembled knights, and, with a faint-heartedness that disgusted the Grandmaster, predicted its reduction within a week. In order to set a brave example, and to protract the defence by every possible mode, in the hope that the Viceroy of Sicily, at the head of powerful succours, would ultimately arrive to his relief, La Valette instantly declared, that he himself would undertake the command of the little garrison. But the knights rose in a body, and implored him not to abandon the important duties attached to his station, to become the defender of a single post, while, at the same time, a number of the bravest voluntarily offered to repair thither, and do their endeavour to preserve it. Accordingly, a reinforcement, headed by the Chevaliers Gonzales de Medran and La Motte, was boated across the haven under cover of the guns of Saint Angelo; and afterwards, from time to time, individual knights, stimulated by more than ordinary ardour, transported themselves in skiffs to the same perilous destination. Among these brave men was La Mirande, a veteran knight, who, having arrived from Sicily at this critical juncture, voluntarily joined the garrison of Saint Elmo, and, by his noble example, greatly supported its defenders in the resistance which they subsequently made. A cannon-ball from the Castle of Saint Angelo having shattered a stone in the Turkish trenches, a fragment of which severely wounded Piali Pasha, La Valette took ad-

vantage of the consternation into which the enemy were thrown by the accident, to despatch a messenger to the Viceroy of Sicily, entreating him to hasten to his aid with what succours he could muster. The Viceroy returned for answer, that he would be with him by the middle of June,—news which so cheered the garrison of Saint Elmo, that it made a gallant sortie into the Turkish trenches, and for a time kept the enemy completely at bay. But the Osmanlis, rallying bravely, as is their wont, recovered the ground which they had lost, and not only repulsed the Christians, but, concealed by the smoke of the artillery, pursued them back to the counter-scarp, where they effected a lodgement by means of beams and gabions, and erected a battery upon it. The garrison soon had reason to deplore this circumstance; for the Turkish harquebusiers, protected by their works, coolly shot down every man who showed his head above the parapet.

Matters were in this position when the corsair Dragut arrived in the Ottoman camp. Though he by no means approved of the operations which had preceded his arrival, he laboured not the less assiduously, now that the siege of this isolated fortress was commenced, to achieve its reduction. He might be said to live in the trenches; and several batteries, raised under his immediate direction, opened with fatal precision on the ravelin and cavalier. At his suggestion, four culverins were also planted on a headland on the other side of Port Musceit, the fire of which flanked these defences. The promontory on which this battery was erected, retains the name of Cape Dragut to this day.

Overpowered by long watching and incessant fatigue, the Christians relaxed their vigilance for a

short space; and the Turks, seeing the ravelin ruined and undefended, suddenly stormed it at daybreak, and put all who opposed their entrance to the sword. From thence they would have flung themselves directly into the fort; but the garrison, roused to a knowledge of the danger, fiercely obstructed their advance. Twice in the course of six hours did the Turkish general urge his janizaries to renew the assault; and such was their stubborn bravery, that, but for the shortness of their scaling-ladders, their efforts would have been successful. This bootless strife cost the Turks three thousand chosen soldiers. The Order lost nearly a third of that number, and twenty knights. It is recorded, as an instance of knightly magnanimity, that the Chevalier de la Gardamp, being mortally wounded by a musket-ball in the heat of the battle, would not permit any of his brother knights to bear him from the walls, but, with his yet remaining strength, crawled into the chapel of the fort, and, laying himself down before the altar, there breathed his last.

The loss of the ravelin, and the number of the wounded whom the Grandmaster saw return to the Bourg, and whose place he instantly supplied with fresh troops, gave him great uneasiness; but his sorrow was mixed with indignation at beholding the Spaniard La Cerda again appear before him, with no better apology for his recreancy than a slight scar. Far different was the conduct of the commanders Desguerras and Broglio, the joint-governors of the fort which he had abandoned. Though both of them were wounded, they pertinaciously refused to retire from their post, preferring, as they nobly expressed themselves, a death of honour on its battered walls.

The incessant attacks of the enemy, who kept constant possession of the ravelin, soon rendered Saint Elmo barely tenable. Seeing their cannon dismounted, their ramparts in ruins, and the fort completely commanded by the hostile batteries, the gallant men, who still attempted to defend it, deputed the Chevalier Medran, a knight of tried valour, to represent their deplorable situation to La Valette. Medran, whose courage was above suspicion, declared, in full council, that longer resistance was impracticable—and that the continued occupation of a post so dismantled would only consume forces which would speedily be required for the maintenance of more important positions; but still, he added, the brave soldiers who garrisoned it were prepared, if the Grandmaster so willed, to make it their tomb. La Valette frankly admitted that the fort could only be maintained at the most imminent peril to its defenders; but that, as its abandonment would inevitably deter the Viceroy of Sicily from sending the succours he had promised, and thereby facilitate the entire subjugation of the island, he could not, consistently with his duty, consent to their recal. It was by protracting the siege alone, that he anticipated ultimate triumph; and he therefore called upon Medran to represent, in his name, to the knights in the fort, that it depended chiefly on their conduct whether this great battle for their freedom and existence were lost or won,—that by their vows they were bound, at all times, to hold death as preferable to defeat—and that, rather than suffer the fort to be evacuated, he himself would take his place among its defenders, and share their fate.

Several knights, who had grown gray in the service of the Order, no sooner heard Medran deliver

this stern message, on his return to Saint Elmo, than they began to prepare for death; but their more youthful confreres, not yet disposed to resign life with similar submission to what seemed a merciless decree, instantly drew up, and transmitted to the Grandmaster a written document, protesting against the policy which devoted them to certain death, and threatening that, if boats were not sent to take them away immediately, they would sally sword in hand into the trenches, and be cut to pieces there in fair fight, rather than remain to be butchered behind their own ramparts. To this desperate threat La Valette only answered, that if they really valued the renown which they affected to prize so highly, they would enhance it more by yielding due obedience to him as their commander, than by giving way to the dictates of despair; as, without yielding such obedience, no member of the Order could possibly die an honourable death.

That he might not appear utterly to abandon them, however, the Grandmaster deputed three commissioners to visit the fort, and ascertain, from personal inspection, the exact state of the defences. Two of the commissioners admitted that the place was barely tenable; but at the same time endeavoured, by judiciously eulogizing the valour with which it had been defended, to stimulate the garrison to further resistance. But the third, who was named Constantine Castriot, and who boasted of being descended from Scanderbeg, the famous Epirote chief, declared, with less temper than became the occasion, that the danger was by no means so great, and that, with due exertion, new defences might be thrown up, which would completely shield the garrison from the Turkish guns on the ravelin. The scarred and

war-worn men, to whom this discourse was directed, heard it with great indignation; and when he was about to return to the Bourg along with his colleagues, a tumultuous attempt was made to detain him, in order that he might share the danger he contemned, and practise the lessons of defence which he was so forward to inculcate. Castriot framed his report to the Grandmaster in the same spirit; and to show that it was founded on conviction, offered, provided he were allowed to take with him a reinforcement of troops, to throw himself into the fort, and either maintain it, or bury himself in its ruins. La Valette affected to accept of his services; and at the same time, a fresh levy of Maltese militia gallantly volunteered to relieve the disheartened men who occupied the post. Thus supported, the Grandmaster despatched a notification to the knights in the fort, couched in cold and stately language, intimating, that ten times the number of soldiers requisite for its defence had voluntarily offered to undertake it; and that he no longer insisted on men who were confessedly plunged in despair, continuing on so perilous and important a service. "Return," his epistle concluded, "to the convent, in the same boats that convey this new force to your relief. The preservation of the island, and of the Order, depends on the nature of the defence which the garrison of Fort Saint Elmo makes; and my mind will be easier regarding it, when I know that it is in the hands of warriors on whose courage I can confidently rely."

The malecontents were cut to the heart by these contemptuous lines. They felt at once that it would require infinitely more resolution to evacuate the fort, under such circumstances, and to support the cold looks of the Grandmaster, and the wants of

their brethren, than to lay down their lives to a man on their shattered walls. They therefore unanimously entreated their commander, to despatch, without delay, a letter to La Valette, imploring pardon for their irresolution, and pledging themselves to expiate it by an invincible and glorious resistance. As they had no boat to carry this message across the haven, an expert swimmer was intrusted with it, and accomplished the passage in safety.

La Valette, who had foreseen this reaction, consented, after a little delay, to accept their submission; and the valour of Castriot, who was probably from the beginning duly tutored by his politic chief, was not put to the test. No efforts were spared to strengthen and increase the means of defence which yet remained. Under the Grandmaster's directions, a species of fire-work was prepared, which was afterwards found of infinite service in repelling the assaults. It consisted of large hoops made of light wood, which, after being dipped in brandy, were rubbed over with boiling oil, and then covered with cotton soaked in a combustible preparation, two ingredients of which were gunpowder and saltpetre. This operation was repeated three times at different intervals, in order to allow each layer of cotton to cool before it was covered by another. When the hour of battle came, these hoops were set on fire, and thrown, with the aid of tongs, into the midst of the enemy. Hooped into clusters by girdles of unquenchable flame, the Turkish soldiers often lost all discipline; and, to prevent the flesh from being burned off their bones, flung themselves into the sea.

Vexed and ashamed at being so long kept at bay by a handful of desperate men, the Turkish leader

at length made a general assault on the fortress. At daybreak on the 16th of June, the Turkish gallies commenced a furious cannonade against the seaward rampart; and at the same time the land batteries shattered into ruin the still remaining fortifications. This done, the Ottomanlis entered the ditch to the sound of their proud but barbarous music; and, at the discharge of a signal-gun, rushed impetuously to the assault, covered by four thousand hurquebusiers and cross-bow men, who, from their post in the trenches, shot down every Christian soldier who showed himself in the breach. Behind that deadly gap stood the knights and their scant battalion, armed with pikes and spontoons, and forming, as it were, a living wall. Between every three soldiers stood a knight, the better to sustain the courage of those who had nothing of chivalrous renown to uphold them. In vain did the Turks dash themselves on this impenetrable phalanx. When swords and pikes were broken, the Christian soldiers grappled with their antagonists, and terminated the death-struggle with their daggers. The burning hoops were of eminent service in this combat; and the cries of the wretches whom they begirt, added greatly to the horror of the fight. It was a cheering circumstance to the defenders of the fort, that the conflict was maintained under the eyes of their friends in the Bourg, whom they feared had begun to doubt their bravery. Amid the thunder of the artillery, and the groans of the dying, their ears were gladdened at intervals by encouraging shouts wafted across the haven from the distant ramparts; and the guns of forts Saint Angelo and Saint Michael played incessantly, and with considerable effect, on the Turkish lines. An attempt

which several of the commanders of the Turkish gallies made to storm one of the seaward bulwarks of the fort, was foiled by a single discharge from one of the batteries of Saint Angelo, which swept down twenty men. In the heat of this fierce onset, the Turks tried to possess themselves of the great cavalier which covered Fort Saint Elmo—a lofty mound of earth, so steep as to be almost unscaleable; but the Chevalier Guigno, an Italian knight who commanded the post on its summit, repelled the attempt, chiefly by means of the flaming hoops;—for even the bravest of the Ottoman host recoiled in consternation before these wheels of fire. At the end of six hours, the knights, covered with wounds, and blistered by the scorching rays of the sun, had the consolation to hear a retreat sounded from the enemy's trenches; and the Turks reluctantly retired, leaving behind them two thousand dead. The Christians raised a shout of triumph when they beheld the pride of the Turkish battle roll away in disorder from their ruined walls; and their brethren in the Bourg loudly echoed back the cheering cry. Seventeen knights fell gloriously in the breach on this occasion, and the killed and wounded soldiers exceeded three hundred. Among the slain were the Chevaliers de Medran, De Vagnon, and La Motte. De Medran had just killed a Turkish officer, and possessed himself of the standard which he carried, when he was struck down lifeless by a musket-ball. The Commander de Morgut may also be said to have fallen in the battle; for, while passing from the fort to the Bourg to have his wounds dressed, a cannon-shot from the Turkish batteries carried off his head.

The loss which the garrison had sustained was

promptly repaired by fresh troops from the Bourg. All of them were volunteers; for the Grandmaster, regarding the service as one of infinite peril, would exercise no authority in the matter. The Turkish general, satisfied, from the bloody repulse he had met with, that Saint Elmo could never be carried, while reinforcements of chivalrous and devoted soldiers could be thrown into it, held a council in the trenches, when it was determined to cut off all communication with the Bourg, and subject the fort to a close blockade, both by land and water. The corsair Dragut, and a sangiack who acted as chief engineer, were present at this consultation; and, in order to settle some point relative to the projected operations, they boldly quitted the shelter of the works, and repaired to the open ground to continue their deliberations. While thus employed, a cannon-ball from the castle of Saint Angelo killed the sangiack on the spot, and shivered a rock close beside him; a fragment of which struck Dragut behind the right ear, who instantly fell down speechless, and bathed in his own blood. Mustapha Pasha, afraid lest the army should be discouraged by this disaster, ordered a mantle to be flung over the wounded chief while his attendants were removing him to his tent; and then, with the intrepidity of a gray-headed and redoubted commander, made a reconnoisance from the same spot on which his friend had just been wounded. In the end, he ordered a strong body of troops to occupy a promontory at the mouth of the grand port called the Gibbet Cape, on which he erected a battery which completely commanded the entrance to that haven. The Grandmaster, aware that if the enemy once effected a permanent lodgement on the Cape,

the fate of fort Saint Elmo was decided, instructed the Grand Marshal Copier to make a sortie to prevent it; and a vigorous charge made by that knight drove the Ottomans back to their camp. But this advantage proved of small moment. The contested headland was again occupied, and that, too, by a force which was not to be dislodged by any detachment the Grandmaster could send against it. Moreover, the Pasha, to render his leaguer of Fort Saint Elmo the more effectual, constructed a covered way in rear of the trench under the counterscarp, which he carried down to the sea-beach opposite the Gibbet Cape, and filled with a body of skilful harquebusiers, whose fire, crossing that of the battery on the farther shore, rendered it impossible for any vessel to pass between the Bourg and the Fort, which was now completely invested.

The defenders of Fort Saint Elmo being thus cut off from all succour, the Turkish General, on the 21st of June, marched all the chosen battalions of his army into the trenches, and once more ordered them to the assault. Thrice did the janizaries rush into the breach, and as often were they repulsed with immense slaughter. Night seperated the combatants, and the knights who survived these terrible conflicts, passed it in binding up each other's wounds, and listening to the groans of the dying. Even the Bailiff of Negropont, and the knight La Mirande, whose confidence in the valour of the garrison had hitherto been proof against every reverse, could no longer deny the imminency of the danger; and an expert swimmer was despatched to the Bourg with a final intimation to the Grandmaster, that, unless he succoured them immediately, their destruction was inevitable. A stern sense of the duties incumbent on

a professed knight, had rendered La Valette deaf to their former representations; but, when he saw them completely shut up in their battered citadel, and severed from all Christian aid, his heart smote him, and he instantly despatched five large boats, crowded with the bravest of his knights, to force a passage to their rescue. But so completely was the haven commanded by the Turkish batteries, that this flotilla, after much perilous but futile manœuvring, was obliged to return to port; and the besieged beheld their last hope of salvation defeated.

While there remained a hope of escape, many of the devoted men thus offered up at the shrine of necessity, had felt it difficult to practise the resignation of martyrs; but now, when the day of their destiny had arrived, they anticipated, with a stern and tranquil fortitude, their inevitable doom. In the course of the following night, they all took the sacrament in the chapel of the fortress; and, with fraternal tenderness, bade each other farewell. At daybreak, they repaired to their several posts, satisfied that, in a few hours, the Turks would enter the fort over their lifeless remains. Such as were incapable of supporting themselves, in consequence of their wounds, were carried in chairs to the breach, where they preferred dying with weapons in their hands, to being butchered by the victors when the battle was over.

At sunrise, on the 23d of June, the Turks quitted their trenches for a final assault. Ladders and bridges had been planted at every practicable point during the night; and thirty-two pieces of cannon opened the battle with their terrible voice. The storming bands felt confident of victory, and flung themselves into the breach with savage shouts. The

bravery with which they were received fell nothing short of their own ardour. The humblest Christian soldier within the fort emulated the knights themselves in this last struggle; and, for a time, the destructive missiles which they hurled into the Turkish battalions procrastinated their advance. But, at the end of four hours, there remained only sixty persons to defend the breach, exclusive of a few soldiers who had hitherto maintained the cavalier, but who were now required to join this heroic remnant. No sooner did the Turks perceive the cavalier abandoned, than they suspended their attack to take possession of that post, from whence they instantly commenced a galling fire of musketry, singling out, with fatal precision, every knight who appeared to animate the fight. The Bailiff of Negropont and the veteran La Mirande, were among the first who fell under their deadly aim; and, one after another, the rest dropped dead beside them. At length, the breach was cleared—but only when the last of the Christian combatants was cut down by the Turkish sabres—"every man," says Knolles, "being slain in valiant fight." The victors entered the fort with shouts of triumph; and their fleet, at the same time, sailed into port Musceit with all the pomp of a naval pageant. The famous Dragut lived long enough to hear, that victory had at last crowned the Ottoman arms. He was speechless when the clangour of the martial music, and the thunder of the artillery, annunciatory of the conquest, reached his ears; but he had still strength sufficient left to indicate his satisfaction to the messenger who informed him that the fort was won.

The defence of this fortress cost the Order three *hundred knights* and thirteen hundred soldiers; and,

if the Maltese chroniclers may be credited, the Turks purchased it by the sacrifice of eight thousand men. Mustapha Pasha was so astonished at the insignificance of its fortifications, that he exclaimed, in reference to the conquest of the Bourg, "What resistance may we not look for from the parent, when it has cost us the bravest of our army to humble the child!" With the barbarous policy of his nation, he ordered the breasts of the slain knights to be gashed in the form of a cross, and their hearts torn out; after which, the lacerated and headless bodies, clothed in their battle-vests, were tied to planks and flung into the sea, to be drifted into the harbour. La Valette, when he beheld these dismal mementos of the gallant band which he had sacrificed, cast up by the surge at the base of his ramparts, could not restrain his tears: but his grief soon gave place to vengeance; and, with a barbarity still less excusable than that of the Pasha, inasmuch as it emanated from a Christian knight, he ordered, by way of reprisal, that all the Turkish prisoners in the city should be massacred. This sanguinary edict was promptly executed; and the Maltese artillerymen, loading their guns with the bleeding heads of the victims, fired them, instead of balls, into the Turkish camp.

CHAPTER VI.

The Bourg and Isle de la Sangle regularly Invested—Lascaris the Deserter—Defensive Preparations—Erection of a Marine Stockade—Combat of Swimmers—General Cannonade—Arrival of Hassan, Viceroy of Algiers—Exploits of Candelissa at the Stockade and Spur of Saint Michael—Attack of the Algerines on the Bormola Gate—Heroism of individual Knights—Death of the Knights Henry de la Valette and De Polastron—Desperate Attacks on Fort Saint Michael and the Bastion of Castile—Fall of the Sangiack of Bosnia—Jeopardy of the City—Repulse of the Enemy from the Cité Notable—Arrival of Succours from Sicily—The Turks driven out of the Island—Conclusion of the Siege.

For a short space, the tragical issue of the siege of Fort Saint Elmo spread a sort of panic throughout the convent; but the efforts of the Grandmaster, whose cheering voice was like the sound of a trumpet to his knights, quickly restored their confidence and valour. The whole of them renewed their vow to shed the last drop of their blood on the walls, rather than allow the enemy to effect a lodgement on them; and the common soldiers, animated by a conviction familiarly expressed by La Valette, that, though every knight were slain, they would still find among themselves a chief capable of leading them to victory, displayed a scarcely less chivalrous zeal. To gratify that spirit of vengeance which the barbarous

conduct of the Turks had roused, and also to destroy all hope of a capitulation, he decreed that no prisoners should be taken. A Christian slave, who was sent from the Turkish camp to propose a negotiation, was instantly ordered to be hanged; but, being an abject creature, seventy years of age, was reprieved, and allowed, at his own entreaty, to return to bondage. The knight who conducted him beyond the barriers, when they arrived at the counterscarp, pointed significantly to the ditch, which was very deep, and said, "Tell the Pasha that this is the only place we can surrender. It is specially reserved for him; and here he and all his janizaries will find a grave."

This bold conduct satisfied the Turkish leader, that it was idle to waste time in courting negotiation; and he accordingly invested, without farther delay, the entire peninsulas of the Bourg and La Sangle. As the hardness of the rock defeated his attempts to open regular trenches, he constructed breastworks of stone; and his batteries being completed at every point, seventy large cannon began to batter in breach. Before the leaguer was thoroughly accomplished, however, the chevaliers Robles and De Quincy, at the head of forty knights, and a number of secular volunteers of various nations, who had landed on a retired part of the coast, managed, under cover of a thick fog, to throw themselves into the town, where they were received with joyful acclamations by all classes. La Sangle, and its principal defence, Fort Saint Michael, were the points against which the besiegers first directed their fire. Several batteries, planted on Mount Sceberras and the hill of Corradin, completely commanded these posts; and as they were esteemed the weakest, and there-

fore the most honourable, the *elite* of the Order undertook their defence. The inner harbour alone remained open; and to shut up this only channel by which succours had a chance of being introduced, the Turkish general resolved to make an attack by water on a position called the Spur of Saint Michael, which occupied the extremity of the peninsula of La Sangle. As it was impossible for a flotilla to pass under the batteries of Saint Angelo, on this perilous service, without risking certain destruction—the guns of that fortress commanding the whole of the outer port—he determined to adopt the notable expedient of transporting a number of boats from Port Musceit into the inner basin, across the isthmus that joined Mount Sceberras to the mainland. This he purposed to accomplish by the labour of Christian slaves, and afterwards to assail the Spur and Fort of Saint Michael simultaneously by land and water. The desertion of a Greek officer from his service, however, put the knights in timely possession of his project, and occasioned it to be materially altered. This Greek, who was named Lascaris, was descended from a family which had given several Emperors to the East. He had been made a slave in his infancy, and reared in the Moslem faith, but had never forgotten the renown of his ancestors, or become a confirmed recreant to the Cross. The Ottomans, honouring him for his illustrious descent, though they had beggared his whole race, educated him as a warrior; and, at the time of his desertion, he held a distinguished appointment among the Spahi. Ambition had hitherto rendered him insensible to the disgrace of supporting the crescent in opposition to the Christian banner; but the magnanimous de-

fence made by the garrison of Saint Elmo—the s of their bleeding bodies choking the breach—the fortitude with which their brethren in the o fortresses also stood prepared to meet their doom, red up the latent nobility of his nature; and, scor the renegade character which circumstances had posed on him, he resolved to convey the Christ timely intimation of the pending attack, or lose life in the attempt. Availing himself of an op tunity of withdrawing unobserved from his post hurried down to the beach opposite the Spur of S Michael, and made a signal, by waving his tur that he wished to be taken into the island. S guerre, the knight who commanded at the Spur, ceiving, by his habiliments, that he was an offic distinction, instantly notified the circumstance to Grandmaster; but in the meanwhile, the sig made by Lascaris, having been observed by se Turks at a distance, a party of them ran dow the beach, with an intent to obstruct his flight; knowing his death to be inevitable, if he were ar ed, he instantly leapt into the sea. Though ar different swimmer, he was yet able to keep hir buoyant until three Maltese divers whom Savogr promptly despatched to his assistance came up to and brought him half lifeless to the shore. Or recovery, he disclosed the Pasha's project to Grandmaster, adding, that he had come to peris necessary, along with the Christian knights. La lette was so filled with gratitude for this impo service, and saw so much to admire in the fugit character, that he generously pensioned him the public treasury; and throughout the rest of siege, Lascaris made it manifest, both by his can in the council, and his valour in the fight, that

ciple alone had swayed him to desert the Ottoman banner, and that he had nowise degenerated from the dauntless character of his race.

Thus forewarned, the Grandmaster prepared, with his characteristic sagacity, to defeat the contemplated assault. The seaward walls of La Sangle were heightened by his orders, and the cannon on them brought to command the inner port at every point; while, at the suggestion of two Maltese pilots who enjoyed his confidence, a vast stockade, extending from Mount Corradin to the Spur, was formed by driving huge piles into the shallow water, and then fixing a chain on the top of them by means of iron rings. Where the depth of the water, or hardness of the submarine rock, was such as to preclude this kind of defence from being adopted, strong booms, formed of spars and masts nailed together, were chained from pile to pile. So highly was La Valette pleased at the impracticable aspect which this stockade gradually assumed, that he subsequently ordered others to be constructed for the better protection of the seaward posts which the languages of England, Germany, and Castile were appointed to defend. These works could only be carried on after sunset, in order that the workmen might be screened from the fire of the Turkish batteries; yet so indefatigably did the pioneers labour at them, that they were completed in the course of nine nights; and the Pasha beheld a barrier, perfectly impassable to his boats, rise as if by magic from the bottom of the sea. Invincible perseverance, however, was one of the leading features of Mustapha's character. At the suggestion of a Christian renegade, a band of expert swimmers was despatch-

* Knolles.

ed, under the cloud of night, with axes in their girdles, to open a passage for the flotilla through the booms and palisades. The noise which these adventurers necessarily made in the execution of this perilous duty, soon alarmed the garrison, and the guns on the walls immediately commenced a fierce cannonade. Being too elevated, however, they threw their shot over the heads of the Turks employed in demolishing the barrier; upon which the Admiral de Monte, who held the chief command in La Sangle, resorted to the daring expedient of combating these new enemies with their own weapons. A party of swimmers was promptly mustered from among the Maltese, who, stripping themselves naked, and armed only with swords, pushed boldly out to the stockade, and, after a brief but sanguinary combat, completely routed the Turkish hatchet-men. A subsequent attempt was made by the Turks to break the booms and stakes, by means of cables worked by ship-capstans planted on the opposite shore; but it was also baffled by the intrepidity of the marines, who no sooner saw what was intended, than they swam out again and cut the ropes.

Enraged at being thus circumvented in a favourite project, the Pasha, on the 5th of July, ordered all his guns to open simultaneously on the two towns. Accordingly, the vast batteries on Mount Saint Margaret and the Corradin rock, commenced a furious cannonade against Fort Saint Michael, and the bulwarks of La Sangle; while those on Mount Sceberras and Mount Salvator played with equal industry on the Castle of Saint Angelo and the Bourg. The whole island trembled with the incessant roar of the artillery, and both towns were completely belted as it were with smoke and flame. Covered by this iron

shower, the besiegers ran their trenches to the verge of the fosse of Fort Saint Michael, and battered a small redoubt which obstructed their advance with so much fury, that the knights who defended it blew it up, and retired into the fort. The cannonade did not cease until considerable breaches were made in the advanced works both of Saint Michael and the Bourg; and the Pasha was only induced to delay making an attempt to storm the former, from a desire that the Viceroy of Algiers, who was daily expected to arrive at the head of a powerful reinforcement, should share in the assault.

So closely were the two towns blockaded, that the communication between them was for a time entirely interrupted, save by means of boats, which, in their transits, were exposed to great jeopardy from the Turkish shot. At the suggestion of John Anthony Bosio, a young knight, and brother to the annalist of the Order, whose work has been frequently quoted, a bridge of planks, supported on casks made water-tight, was thrown across the lagoon, and afterwards proved of great service in facilitating the passage of succours to the posts which were most in danger.

The Algerine viceroy entered the Turkish camp soon afterwards, accompanied by two thousand five hundred chosen soldiers—men long trained to arms, and so formidable on the African coast, as to be known there by the portentous cognomen of the Brave Men of Algiers. Hassan, their leader, was little other than a youth; but he boasted of being the son of the famous Barbarossa, and the son-in-law of the scarcely less famous Dragut; and the same passionate love of sanguinary renown which had distinguished these chiefs, stimulated him to the

combat. When he beheld the ruins of fort Saint Elmo—the post before which his father-in-law had received his death-wound—he could not refrain from expressing his astonishment at its insignificance; and contemptuously remarked, that, in less than half the time which had been consumed before it, his *Bravos* would have planted the Ottoman banner on the walls. To show that this was no idle boast, he entreated the Pasha to allow him to head the contemplated attack on Fort Saint Michael, which he pledged himself to carry, sword in hand; and Mustapha, nowise averse that this impetuous ardour should evaporate in the van of the battle, not only consented that he should command on that occasion, but proffered him the support of six thousand men.

The young Viceroy, being thus installed in an honourable but perilous post, prepared to attack the peninsula, both by land and water at the same moment. The maritime part of the enterprise was confided to Candelissa, his lieutenant, while he himself undertook to storm the landward defences. Candelissa was a Greek renegade, celebrated for his skill in naval tactics, which he had studied under Barbarossa, and long habituated to war and blood. Under his superintendance, and in accordance with the Pasha's original project, a number of boats were dragged overland from Port Musceit, and launched into the Great Port, where he manned them with Algerines and Turkish soldiers to the number of four thousand men. Far from advancing to the assault with the silence that prudence dictated, this flotilla set sail for the stockade to the wild music of the gong, the horn, and the atabal, and preceded by a *boat* filled with Mohammedan priests and holy men,

who, with the same breath, implored heaven to grant them the victory, and to hurl its thunderbolts on the Christian host. The prayers and imprecations of these fanatics, however, were speedily interrupted by the fire of the Maltese cannon; and the rowers, stretching vigorously to their oars, ran the whole fleet close to the stockade. Apprehensive that he might fail to break through this barrier, Candelissa had provided himself with a vast number of planks, by means of which he anticipated being able to form a sort of bridge between it and the shore, and so facilitate a prompt and general disembarkation. His soldiers, though galled by a murderous fire, both of round shot and musketry, sprang bravely on the stockade, and, with hammers and hatchets, tried to demolish it; but finding that impracticable, they had recourse to the planks which their leader had in reservation. These proved too short, however, to reach from the palisades to the shore; and a partial panic threatened for a moment to defeat the enterprise. But the voice of Candelissa was to his followers a sound infinitely more terrible than the thunder of the Christian battle; and, rallying in obedience to its mandate, they forced a passage to an uncovered part of the beach, at the extremity of La Sangle. This headland was defended by a battery of six guns, playing level with the water, and a strong intrenchment, within which were posted the Commander de Guimeran, an aged knight, whose name has more than once been mentioned with honour in the African wars, and a number of expert harquebusiers. Guimeran allowed the Turkish flotilla to advance close to the shore before he opened his guns;—and, if credit may be given to the annalists of the Order, several boats were sunk,

and four hundred Turks slain, by his first volley. Notwithstanding this terrible reception, Candelissa and his Algerines made good their landing. Two cannon, loaded to the muzzle with small shot, poured another deadly discharge into the midst of them; but still the stern voice of Candelissa shouted, "Onward!" while, at the same moment, he peremptorily ordered the boats to push back into the deep water. This was a decisive indication to his soldiers that he had disembarked, firmly resolved to carry the post or perish; and, rendered desperate by the perils that beset them, they laid their ladders against the intrenchment, in the teeth of a destructive fire, and, after a combat of five hours, forced its defenders to retire, and planted seven Turkish ensigns on its summit.

The sight of the Moslem standard floating triumphantly on this outwork, filled the knights with shame and indignation; and a fresh body of them, headed by the Admiral, De Monte, renewed the battle. Covered by a volley of musketry, they closed with the enemy, using their half-pikes, swords and daggers, indiscriminately in the *mêlée*. At the moment when victory seemed about to desert the Maltese banner, the shout of coming succour rose from behind them, and a reinforcement from the Bourg, headed by the Commander de Giou and the Chevaliers De Quincy and Ruiz de Medina, advanced to the rescue. The arrival of this detachment decided the conflict. The Turkish pennons were torn down, and their defenders driven headlong from the rampart. Even Candelissa himself, panic-struck at last, turned his back on the battle, and was among the first to leap into a boat for safety—an act that greatly dishonoured him in the eyes of his soldiers,

and blasted for ever his previous renown. All the Turks who failed to reach their boats were sacrificed. Not even to those who begged quarter in the dust was mercy granted. The only answer vouchsafed to such petitioners was, that they should have Saint Elmo's pay; and, in the same moment that it was uttered, the deadly blade cut them down. Many were shot by the harquebusiers, while trying to swim after their boats; and of the boats themselves, many were sunk by the fire of the batteries. Dead bodies and shattered limbs covered the whole harbour; and of the four thousand men who had departed so proudly in the morning from the opposite shore, scarcely five hundred survived the fight. About one hundred knights and secular gentlemen, whom a generous zeal had brought to Malta, lost their lives in repelling this attack. Among them was Frederic de Toledo, son of the Viceroy of Sicily, a young knight whom the Grandmaster, out of consideration for his father, who was extremely fond of him, had attached to his own suite. This youth no sooner heard that the Spur of Saint Michael was on the point of being taken, than, with the valour of a true Castilian, he hastened voluntarily to its rescue, and was cut asunder on the rampart by a cannon-ball. At the same moment, a splinter of his cuirass, which the ball had shattered, killed the Chevalier de Savoguerre; while another shot killed the Chevalier de Sousa, and carried away the arm of Gaspar de Pontevez. The knights, De Gordes, Mello, Cardinez and De Quincy, though all wounded, gallantly refused to quit their posts, and only accepted of such appliances as could be administered on the spot.

The landward attack, headed by the Algerine viceroy in *person*, was not more successful than that.

of his lieutenant. At the sound of a signal-gun, his troops rushed gallantly towards the breaches on the side of the Bormola gate and castle of Saint Michael, and, in a short space, a small corps of Algerines, which led the assault, displayed their ensigns on the parapet at several points. A murderous discharge, however, from the cannon of fort Saint Michael, which the commandant Robles, a brave and experienced soldier, had loaded with musket-cartridges, and an incessant shower of small shot, poured into the head of the Algerine battalion, by the Castilian and Portuguese knights, posted along the flank of the Bormola, drove it backward again with frightful slaughter. Another breach, defended by the knights Carlo-Rufa and La Ricca, was next stormed; and in a short time, these two brave men, who exposed themselves with signal intrepidity, were borne mortally wounded from the platform on which they fought. The Admiral, De Monte, himself took their place, and, aided by a phalanx of the same warriors who had just driven Candelissa and his followers into the sea, quickly changed the aspect of the battle. Unable to withstand their steady and destructive fire, the Viceroy at length sounded a retreat, leaving the flower of his Algerines lifeless at the foot of the rampart.

The Turkish general was neither surprised nor sorry to see the pride of his young colleague humbled by the stubborn valour of the knights; but still he was too able a commander to fail to follow up this bloody effort with a fresh attack. No sooner did the Viceroy, after a combat of five hours duration, retire from the breach, than he ordered his janizaries, the pride of his army, to push into the deadly gap. Though almost worn out by

their previous struggle, and the intolerable heat of the noon-day sun, the Christians again stood to their arms, and, after pouring in one fatal volley of musketry, closed sword in hand with their adversaries. From that moment, the battle became as it were a series of single combats. Warrior grappled warrior in desperate strife, and separated only when one or both fell mortally wounded to the earth. In the heat of the conflict, a brave Osmanli, perceiving the havoc made by the sword of the Chevalier De Quincy, flung himself headlong into the heart of the Maltese battalion, and, firing his harquebuss close to the face of the knight, shot him through the head. The next moment, he was himself hewn down by a Christian sabre. The knight De Gordes did not long survive his gallant comrade. Having, at the head of a strong detachment of the citizens, dislodged the assailants from the foot of the rampart, by means of stones, fire-works, and boiling oil, he ordered a body of pioneers instantly to fence the breach with wool-packs and gabions, and strengthen it on the inner side by a trench and barricade; but while occupied in this important service, his head was carried off by a ball from the Turkish batteries. Forty other knights, and two hundred Christian soldiers, perished in the same conflict.

Undismayed by these successive repulses, the Turkish commander ordered a kind of bridge to be constructed, by means of which he anticipated his troops would be able to enter the works at a signal advantage. The Grandmaster, who regarded this contrivance with apprehension, made two attempts to burn it at night; but the sleepless vigilance of the enemy rendered them futile. He at length determined to make a final attempt to destroy it by

day; and his nephew, Henry de La Valette, a young and valiant soldier, was intrusted with the perilous duty, principally to show the knights, that their chief was as ready to expose the life of his brother's son, as of any other man who fought under the standard of the Order. The youth accepted the appointment with pride; and the Chevalier de Polastron, his most valued friend, with the gallantry of a noble and devoted heart, voluntarily engaged to support him in the enterprise. At the head of a body of picked men, and in the teeth of a heavy fire from the Turks, who occupied the counterscarp, the two gallant youths sallied out in open day, with the intention of fastening a number of strong ropes to the principal posts and beams of the bridge, so as to enable them to drag it by main strength from its position. The aim of the Turkish harquebusiers, however, proved so deadly, that even the bravest of the Maltese soldiers, after a few ineffectual efforts to attach the ropes, fell back under screen of the fortifications. La Valette and De Polastron, intent only on setting a brave example to their followers, remained almost unsupported at the foot of the bridge; and, while engaged in attaching the ropes to it with their own hands, were both killed on the spot by the Turkish marksmen. Seeing these two heroic friends struck down side by side in their blood, the Turks, anxious to obtain the reward which their commander had offered for every knight's head that should be brought him, rushed forward in order to decapitate them; but the Christian soldiers, filled with shame at having left them to perish, burst from their covert to prevent their mutilation. A fierce struggle ensued on the spot where the youths had fallen; and, in the end, their followers had the melancholy

satisfaction of bearing back their lifeless remains into the fortress.

However keenly the Grandmaster might feel the death of his nephew, he took care that nothing in his conduct should indicate that he bewailed him more than any other knight who had fallen at his post. To such commanders as ventured to condole with him on his loss, he said, mildly but firmly, "All the brotherhood are my children; and I therefore grieve equally as much for Polastron, as I do for La Valette. And, after all, where is the great reason we have to lament them? They have only sunk a few days before us into the grave!" Equally noble was his remark, when told that the Turkish general had determined, in case the city fell into his power, to save the Grandmaster from the general slaughter, and carry him to Constantinople in chains. "I shall take care," said the veteran chief, "to save myself from such humiliation; for if the siege, contrary to my hopes, terminate fatally for the Order, rather than be flung alive at the Sultan's feet, I will assume the garb of a private man-at-arms, and in that guise, and in the thickest of the battle, meet a warrior's death!"

He followed up this speech by repairing in person to reconnoitre the spot where his nephew had been slain. By his orders, an embrasure was opened in the wall, immediately facing the bridge, through which a piece of artillery was brought to play on the whole structure. A few discharges shattered it in such a manner as to render it unserviceable; and on the following night it was set on fire, and consumed to ashes.

So greatly was the Pasha disconcerted by this event, that he debated in full council the propriety

of persisting in his attacks on Fort Saint Michael, under an impression that he might have better success were he to assault the Bourg. The council recommended, that both points should be assailed at the same time; and it was accordingly decided, that, in conjunction with the Viceroy of Algiers, he should resume his operations against the peninsula of La Sangle, while Piali, the admiral of the fleet, at the head of his marines, stormed the Bourg. Candelissa was instructed, at the same time, to station himself at the mouth of the great port with eighty gallies, to intercept succour from abroad. Pursuant to this arrangement, the Turkish batteries again opened on the two towns with redoubled activity, and the contest waxed daily more bloody and desperate. The Christians, though almost invariably victorious, saw their numbers wasting away with a rapidity that prognosticated their speedy extermination. For four successive days they were engaged in incessant skirmishes on the walls of La Sangle; and at length, on the 2d of August, the Turkish horns sounded a scalade. Stimulated by an assurance that the towns should be given up to plunder, the Turks fought with extraordinary obstinacy; but at the end of six hours their ardour abated, and they retired from the breaches, leaving them choked with their dead. Five days afterwards, simultaneous attacks were made on Fort Saint Michael and the bastion of Castile. The assault on the latter post, however, was merely a feint to distract the attention of the garrison, and divide the knights. The janizaries, who led the van of the Turkish battle, advanced to Fort Saint Michael with warlike shouts. Though the ground over which they marched was strewed with their mutilated bodies, they gallantly fought their way to the top of the

ach, and for four hours defied all the efforts of knights to effect their dislodgement. But the ninency of the danger only strengthened that in-nitable bravery which burned so steadily in every ristian breast. Not only did the knights, and the zen-soldiers, whom they had banded, deport them-'es as became men struggling for every thing that akind prize, but even the women and children, ated by conjugal and filial love, hovered on the ts of the combat, and supplied their protectors h refreshments, or flung missiles and fireworks the Ottoman ranks. The breach and castle e completely enveloped in a mantle of smoke and e; and at those times when there was a slight rmission in the cannonade, the clash of armour, the shouts of men grappling in mortal strife, was ted over the city from the scene of death. The iha himself advanced to the very foot of the wall; as his janizaries filed past him, cheered them to the gap. With his scimitar he cut down tremblers, who showed a disposition to retreat; from that moment every Osmanli fought for ory or death. At the end of four hours, the ristians, reduced in number, and faint with fa-e, began to lose confidence in their arms, and to pare for the worst; when suddenly, to their asto-ment and joy, they heard a recall sounded a-g the Turkish line. This seasonable relief was sioned by a gallant diversion on the part of the mander Mesquita, governor of the Cité Notable, , observing from his post the sulphurous cloud t enveloped Fort Saint Michael, hastily ordered w squadrons of cavalry to mount, and, with a t-soldier behind each trooper, make a dash at the rest point of the Turkish position. The Cheva-

liers De Lugni and Vertura, who commanded this detachment, led it down to the fountain of La Marza, where the Turks had established an hospital, and with more consideration for the precarious situation of their brethren than the pleadings of humanity, massacred all the sick and wounded it contained. The fugitives who escaped their weapons, carried to the Turkish camp a report that succours from Europe had arrived, and that they had been set upon by the van of the Sicilian army; whereupon Mustapha hastily abandoned the assault at the very moment it promised to prove triumphant, and moved the flower of his army towards the fountain of La Marza, to check the advance of this new foe. When he ascertained that he had been betrayed into this injudicious movement by a handful of men detached from a place which he had hitherto considered below his notice, his indignation knew no bounds. He would have returned instantly to the breach, had not the harassed state of his troops, and the approach of night, conjoined with the entreaties of his principal officers, satisfied him of the absolute necessity of suspending operations at least till next morning.

Before the next sun rose, the Pasha's wrath had evaporated; and a fortnight elapsed ere he adventured a fresh assault. In the interim, his pioneers ran a number of mines into various parts of the fortifications. These, however, were in most cases skilfully countermined by the besieged, who, like the defenders of Rhodes, frequently encountered the enemy under ground, and either compelled him to evacuate the galleries, or, by premature explosions, made them their common grave. In the course of these operations, the Camp-master Robles, who com-

anded at Fort Saint Michael, was killed by a musket-shot, while inspecting the ruins of the wall during the night. * On the 18th of August, the patience of the Turkish leaders became totally exhausted; and, at the head of the flower of their troops, they once more made a simultaneous attack on the castle of Saint Michael and bastion of Castile, with the resolution of continuing it day and night, by means of fresh troops, until the towns were taken. This attack was made at the hour of noon, when they expected to find the knights reposing indolently behind their intrenchments. A terrible cannonade had previously almost razed a part of the walls of Fort Saint Michael; but Mustapha Pasha, on whom the perilous duty of attacking it again devolved, though he found scarcely any thing in the shape of a regular barrier to obstruct his entrance, expended the vigour of his forces in vain against the impenetrable rampart which the besieged formed with their bodies. Piali's attack on the bastion of Castile was equally bloody and desperate. Having, as a preliminary step, sprung a mine, and thrown down a pannel of the wall, his troops, shouting their battle-cry, sprang boldly into the breach, and, for a short time, drove all before them. Brother William, a chaplain of the Order, perceiving several Turkish standards planted at the base of the parapet, and considering the town as lost, hurried to where La Valette was enjoying a transient repose, and, with uplifted hands, adjured him to retire without delay into Fort Saint Angelo, as the only place of safety. But the Grandmaster, instead of adopting this well-meant but unknightly

* Knolles.

advice, hastily caught up a light morion and pike, and, without waiting to brace on his cuirass, rushed to the shattered bastion. He was followed by a reinforcement of knights and citizens, who, hearing him protest to the commander Mendoza, the captain of the post, that he would never quit it alive while the Turkish banners waved in triumph over it, charged desperately into the thickest of the enemy, and tore down the obnoxious flags. Thrown into disorder by this onset, the Turks recoiled, and Mendoza entreated the Grandmaster to retire to a place of safety; but the brave old man, rightly anticipating a speedy renewal of the assault, refused to comply; adding, as he did so, "Is it possible for me, at the age of seventy-one, to lay down my life more gloriously than in defence of our holy religion, and in the midst of my brethren and friends?" As he had foreseen, the assault was renewed after sunset; but the assailants, disheartened by their frequent repulses, and unwilling to encounter the grenades and flaming hoops which the besieged were ready to hurl down on them, did nothing more than keep up an irregular tirallade from a distance, and strike their swords against their bucklers, in order to deceive their chief, by imitating the clangour of battle. These sounds, however, did not long impose on the Pasha; but he had the policy, as soon as he became aware of their nature, to suspend the attack till the following morning.

August the 19th, the assault was renewed with undiminished resolution. To facilitate the conquest of the ravelin of Fort Saint Michael, the Turks constructed a huge machine of a cylindrical shape, strongly hooped with iron, and charged with gunpowder, bullets, nails, and pieces of rusty iron. A

match being introduced into it, it was fired, and flung among the Christians who crowded the ravelin. Happily several knights, aware of the destruction with which they were threatened, had the self-possession to lay hold of this infernal engine before it exploded, and to cast it back into the midst of the assailants, who were just entering the breach. It burst in the same moment that it fell, scattering death around it; and the Christians, taking advantage of the panic it occasioned, followed it up by a sally sword in hand, and once more drove the Turks back to their intrenchments.

The attack on the bastion of Castile was more successful. Having forced their way through a deadly fire, the Turks gained the parapet, and again their standards were planted in triumph within the fortifications. Warned by their shouts that they had achieved a partial advantage, the Grandmaster hastened to the post of danger; and, at the head of a body of pikemen, charged into the thickest of the battle. Death reigned on every side; and, as in former encounters, the pike and sword were often thrown aside, and the single combats which ensued decided with the knife and the dagger. A considerable number of knights fell, gallantly emulating each other in the strife. The commander of Bonneseigne had one of his eyes burned out, and his face frightfully scorched with fire, while fighting side by side with La Valette; and at length that veteran chief himself was dangerously wounded in the leg by the fragment of a grenade. Still he refused to quit the bastion; nor did he retire from it until the timely arrival of Cencio Gasconi, an experienced knight who had succeeded to the command at the Spur of Saint Michael, together with the Chevaliers Bergia Mendosa,

Don John, and La Roche Pereira, with a numerous body of Maltese militia, decided the contest; and at nightfall, forced the enemy to retire to their camp.

Another assault was made on the 20th; not that Mustapha expected instantly to carry the place, but that he calculated on exterminating the knights by piecemeal, as it were, and so reducing it, as he had done Fort Saint Elmo, by the gradual annihilation of its defenders. To shield his soldiers from the musketry of the besieged, he invented morions or head-pieces, made of light wood and bullet-proof, which reached as low as their shoulders. Eight thousand infantry were furnished with these grotesque casques; and, with their heads encased in them, advanced to the breach of Saint Michael. But no sooner did they come into action, than they found their wooden helmets an incumbrance not to be borne; whereupon, casting them away, they moved on bare-headed to the assault. Cheder, sangiack or governor of Bosnia, led the storm. He was a gray-haired warrior of established renown, and had pledged himself to carry the post or perish. With the pride of one who had returned victor from many a red field, he came to the battle clothed in a superb vest, and decorated with all the gorgeous trappings incidental to his rank and station. As he advanced to the parapet, he ordered his standard-bearer to keep his ensign constantly displayed; but in a few minutes that officer, who instantly became a marked man, was killed by a musket-shot and the banner dashed from his grasp. It was immediately relifted; and several Turks in succession were struck down in the same honourable capacity. Seeing his last subaltern slain, the sangiack himself raised the fallen pennon, *holding it* with one hand, while, with his scimitar in

the other, he pierced into the thickest of the fight. His valiant bearing, his magnificent vestments, and, above all, the fatal standard that waved over him, rendered him so conspicuous, that twenty muskets were at once levelled at him from the breach, and a bullet, fired by the Chevalier Pessoa, one of the Grandmaster's pages, terminated his life. Still his standard found a supporter; and the officer who, for the last time, relifted it, so far encouraged his followers by a brave example, that a succession of single combats took place over the sangiack's body. The Turks at length succeeded in bearing his remains back to their lines, together with the pennon, about which he had been so careful, tattered and drenched with blood. In this struggle fell the commander La Cerda—the knight whose conduct was considered so reprehensible during the early part of the siege of Fort Saint Elmo. Unable to bear the stain that had fallen on his reputation, he had latterly sought every opportunity of effacing it by an honourable death; and, like a true knight, fell shouting his war-cry on the breach.

Three days elapsed before the Pasha found it advisable to renew the attacks. But on the 23d, Fort Saint Michael and the bastion of Castile, were again assaulted with the same fury that had characterized the former storms. A letter, containing merely the word "Thursday," had previously been shot into the city from the Turkish lines, and, benefiting by the hint it conveyed, La Valette stood prepared for a desperate struggle on the day named. So persuaded were the whole garrison that the crisis of their fate had arrived, that the wounded knights in hospital, like their brethren who had perished so bravely in the breach of Fort Saint Elmo, were, in accordance with their own entreaties, allowed to repair to the threatened

posts. But, though the Pasha conducted this fresh attack with the skill of a great commander, and though his troops fought with their usual obstinacy, the deadly fire from the fortifications rendered both alike unavailing. At the bastion of Castile, however, the Admiral Pisli, after sweeping the breach for some time with a furious cannonade, promptly raised a platform close to the wall, and of such an elevation as completely to command the parapet, which was speedily cleared of its defenders by the fire of a body of Turkish musketeers. This new work no sooner attracted the attention of the Grand-master than he saw at once how fatally it might obstruct his operations; and when the council assembled on the following night, to take into consideration the distressed state of the city, the apprehension it occasioned materially influenced the debate. The majority of the grand crosses, after pointing out that the fortifications were mined in every quarter, the walls ruined, and the outworks taken, declared the town untenable; and recommended, that those defences which yet remained should be blown up, the city abandoned to its fate, and the whole garrison drawn into Fort Saint Angelo. But La Valette sternly rejected this counsel. He argued, that neither could the Castle of Saint Angelo contain the vast number of people who would in that case be entitled to claim shelter within it, nor could the cistern with which it was provided furnish the necessary supply of water for such a multitude, even for a few days; and, satisfied by his representations that both La Sangle and the Bourg must be defended to the last extremity, the council entreated him at least to retire in person into the citadel, and carry with him the relics and archives of the Order; but the

brave old man spurned this proposal with greater indignation, than he had done the other. "Never," said he, "will I follow such advice. On the battered walls, which you propose me to abandon, we must triumph together, or perish!"

To show that this indifference to his personal safety was unaffected, and that his resolution was really immutable, he reduced the garrison of Saint Angelo to a few soldiers, and used every exertion to accelerate the formation of retirades and intrenchments, in rear of the ruined works. By the advice of the Commander de Claramont, an Arragonian knight of great capacity, an aperture was made in the wall, in the quietest manner possible, from whence, in the course of the following night, a body of Spanish knights silently sallied, and crept along the base of the fortification, till they reached the platform which occasioned so much annoyance. The Turkish guards, to whom Piali had confided it, were ignorant of their danger until the Christians made their onset, and, consequently, were so completely taken by surprise as to be incapable of resistance. At the first shout of the assailants, they fled towards their lines; and Claramont, who headed the sortie, instead of destroying the platform, proceeded to refortify it in such a manner as to turn it into an important defensive position.

No fresh assault was made till the 1st of September, when the janizaries, stimulated by the hope of plunder, fought their way through an unintermitting shower of deadly missiles to the summit of the breach of Saint Michael, and established themselves for a moment in several important posts. A wooden barricade alone separated them from the besieged, and their muskets were levelled across each other

through the interstices. Still the fortitude of the knights opposed an insuperable barrier to the courage of their adversaries; and again, after a dreadful carnage, did the Turks retire despairingly from the conflict.

Meanwhile the Pasha, persuaded that the place could be reduced by famine alone, and startled at the prospect of a scarcity of provisions in his own camp, made a diversion in the direction of the *Cité Notable*, under an impression that he would shortly be compelled to raise the siege, and that the conquest of that position would palliate the failure of the grand enterprise, in the estimation of his sovereign. This expedition, which consisted of four thousand chosen men, was led by himself in person. It left the camp on the last day of August, and on arriving before the Cité, which was but indifferently fortified, prepared to carry it by scalade. But Mesquita the governor, who had timely notice of the enemy's approach, pressed even women and children into his ranks, and made such a gallant display of muskets, pikes and standards, along the curtain, that the Turkish engineers, who were sent forward to ascertain the most pregnable points, returned to their leader with a report, that the town was defended by a garrison so numerous as to defy any attempt to enter it by a coup-de-main. Intimidated by this statement, the Pasha, after cannonading the place for a short time, retreated in great despondency to his former quarters. Trembling lest his head should be struck off on his return to Constantinople, as an atonement for his want of success, he convened his council, and entreated any man who had a new project or stratagem to suggest, to make it known to him. A proposition was made to employ a wooden

tower, such as had been often successfully used in sieges in former times; and one being constructed, it was pushed on rollers close to the breach of Fort Saint Michael. This structure was divided into several stories. The highest story was filled with musketeers, and was so ingeniously contrived, that no sooner had its occupants discharged a volley, than, by means of machinery, it sank down below the level of the parapet, and allowed them to reload in safety. By means of this invention, the Turks spread slaughter along the whole wall; but at length, at the suggestion of a Maltese carpenter named Andrew Cassar, an aperture, of sufficient size to serve as an embrasure for a piece of artillery, was made in the fortifications, directly opposite to where the tower was planted. A culverin charged with chain-shot was then brought to bear on the machinery, which raised and lowered the summit of the tower; and a single discharge shattered it to pieces, and dashed the marksmen that were stationed upon it to the earth. This success infused a new spirit into the Christians. Though their walls were breached in various places, and every bulwark honey-combed with mines, they no longer stood on the defensive, but began to make sallies with the confidence of men certain that their resistance was to have a glorious termination.

At this period, when the battle was almost won —when the Order, by its own indomitable valour, had all but beaten the Osmanli back in disgrace to his ships—the long listened for cry of rescue came cheerily over the waters from the Sicilian shore. A powerful armament had for some time been assembled at Syracuse, ready to embark for the relief of Malta; but the vacillating policy of Philip of Spain,

conjoined with the natural indecision of his Viceroy, had deferred its departure from day to day, till the Grandmaster, whose remonstrances, through the medium of his envoy, had been urgent and incessant, began to despair of it ever putting to sea. Among the forces assembled were two hundred Maltese knights, whom the jeopardy of their convent had called from the remotest parts of Christendom to its relief. These men, indignant at the Viceroy's irresolution, wearied him with entreaties to embark; and there was scarcely a soldier in his army who did not ardently desire to hasten to the aid of the handful of brave men, whose efforts to defend themselves had become the theme of universal sympathy and admiration. Overcome at length by popular clamour, the Viceroy repaired to Syracuse; and, after a general muster of his forces, which amounted to nearly eight thousand men, mostly veteran troops, unfurled sail amid salvos of artillery, and the shouts of his whole army.

The fleet, after being driven far wide of its course by a tempestuous easterly gale, rendezvoused at the small island of Linosa, where the Viceroy found letters from La Valette, instructing him to disembark in the commodious and retired creek of Melecha; but now that he was so near the scene of strife, his resolution again failed him; and, instead of effecting a landing at the point recommended, he sailed leisurely along the Maltese coast, and allowed his fleet to be descried by two Turkish cruisers stationed off Port Siroc. In the course of the following night, the weather again became so tempestuous as to occasion a second dispersion of the fleet; on which he put his helm about and stood back for Sicily, where he relanded his troops at Pascal. This pusillani-

mous proceeding filled the whole army with indignation. Instigated by the knights attached to the expedition, who loudly expressed their contempt and dissatisfaction, the soldiers became mutinous; and, while the general officers were closeted with the Viceroy in council, crowded round the house in which it was held, and tumultuously demanded to be re-embarked. The Viceroy, reading in the countenances of his counsellors that they sympathized with the ardour of the malecontents, yielded to the clamour he had not the nerve to contemn. On the 6th of September, the fleet again unmoored for its original destination, and the same night anchored in the channel of Goza, under the islets of Cumin and Cuminot. Next morning it ran into port Melecha, where the whole army and military stores were promptly landed. The Viceroy, in accordance with his instructions from Spain, remained no longer with the expedition than to see the disembarkation effected. Immediately afterwards, on pretence that his personal presence was necessary at Messina to hasten the departure of a strong reinforcement, he sailed for that port, leaving a leader of distinction named Ascanio della Corna in the chief command.

Though the discovery of the Sicilian fleet by the cruisers stationed off Port Siroc, had given the Turks timely warning of the descent that was impending, they lulled themselves into the belief, that nothing more would be tried than to force the entrance of the Grand Port, and there decide the war by a great naval engagement. Under this impression, they blocked the entrance with stakes and booms, and held themselves in readiness to weigh their last anchor to defend it. Their consternation, consequently, was extreme, when their scouts announced that a

Christian army had actually landed, and was in full march, with the evident intent of attacking the Ottoman camp. Rumour magnified the Sicilian troops into an overwhelming force; and, without waiting to ascertain their real strength, the Turkish general instantly drew his garrison out of Fort Saint Elmo, abandoned all his heavy ordnance, and hurried on board his fleet with disorderly precipitation. Scarcely, however, had he accomplished this sudden movement, when he obtained authentic information as to the number of new enemies whom he had to contend with; and filled with shame, that six thousand Christians should have put him to rout without firing a musket, he summoned a council of war, and, with the concurrence of a small majority of its members, issued orders for the whole army to be relanded. But in the few hours that he had been afloat, the labour of months had been rendered futile. The Maltese had already levelled all his lines and intrenchments, and the standard of Saint John once more waved victorious on the cavalier of Fort Saint Elmo. The Turkish soldiers, sick of the war, were dragged almost by violence from their ships to the shore. About seven thousand were relanded in the creek of Saint Paul, fifteen hundred of whom, commanded by the Viceroy of Algiers, were left on the beach to secure a safe re-embarkation, while the main body under Mustapha himself advanced into the interior of the island in search of the Sicilian succours. He found them intrenched on a hill, flanked by narrow defiles, and consequently difficult of access. Della Corna, their generalissimo, was disposed to remain in this exceedingly defensible position; but Alvarez de Sande, commandant of the Neapolitan contingent, the same officer whose name in

honourably mentioned in the expedition to the island of Galves, eager to remove an impression unfavourable to his renown which his complaisant concurrence in the tardy proceedings of the Viceroy had engendered, gave his advice, that the whole army should advance down the hill to meet the enemy. This counsel was supported by a declaration on the part of the two hundred Maltese knights who had arrived from Sicily with the fleet, each of whom had brought with him two or three armed friends and attendants, forming altogether one of the most efficient battalions of the army, that unless some such movement were made, they would try to cut their way singly through the Turkish legions, and either join their friends in the city or perish. De Sande's proposition was consequently adopted; and in the teeth of a protestation from Della Corna, the whole army moved down the hill in order of battle, still headed, however, by their general, who, though prudent in council, was not a man to remain in the rear when the vanguard was entering the battle. The conflict that ensued was short and decisive. At the first onset of the Maltese battalion, the Turkish line began to waver; and a furious charge in flank by Vincent Vitelli, a valiant Italian captain, at the head of a band of volunteers, completed their discomfiture. Deserted by his soldiers, the Pasha reluctantly turned his bridle away from the field. Such was his perplexity and despair, that, in his flight, he twice dropped off his horse, and would have fallen into the hands of the Christians, had not several of his officers, at great personal risk, promptly reseated him in his saddle. In the heat of pursuit, many of the knights, finding their mail an intolerable incumbrance under a burning sun, unbraced their cuirasses, and, thus unbar-

nessed, chased the fugitives pell-mell to the beach; transfixing with their short spears, as they rushed onward, every panting wretch who dropped down exhausted in their path. But no sooner did the fleetest of them touch the strand, than Hassan of Algiers, who, with his troops, lay in ambush among the rocks, dashed headlong into the battle, and for a time nicely balanced the chances of victory. Several knights were slain, and others taken prisoners; and had not De Sande, at the head of a considerable force, arrived in good time at the scene of action, and made a decisive charge, the flower of the Maltese battalion would have been sacrificed. By this timely succour, the captive knights were rescued, and the Turks compelled to re-embark. Such was the ardour of the Christians, that they pursued them far into the sea—contemning, in their chivalrous excitement, alike the dashing of the waves and the terrible fire of musketry and round shot which the Pasha Piali opened on them from his shallops and gallies. This was the last effort of the Turkish leader to retrieve a long series of reverses. In the same hour that the remnant of his once formidable army re-embarked, he ordered the anchor to be weighed for Constantinople; and a day or two afterwards, the Viceroy of Sicily beheld, from the castle of Syracuse, the whole of the Ottoman fleet standing away for the Eastern sea.

Thus ended this memorable siege, in which twenty-five thousand Turkish soldiers perished. On the other side, the loss was also great, amounting, including two hundred and sixty knights, to between seven and eight thousand soldiers and citizens;—in fact, so prodigiously was the garrison reduced, that, at the time the Turks abandoned their lines, it num-

bered barely six hundred effective men. A nobler resistance was never made by a besieged fortress; and it had this advantage over the scarcely less glorious defence of Rhodes, that it was triumphant. "If a man do well consider," says Knolles, "the difficulties and dangers the besieged passed through in this five months' siege, the manifold labours and perils they endured in so many and so terrible assaults, the small relief to them sent in so great distress, with the desperate obstinacy of so puissant an enemy, he shall hardly find any place these many years more mightily impugned, or with greater valour and resolution defended." It were futile to deny, that the energies of the besiegers were cramped by the paltry jealousies and conflicting counsels of the Ottoman leaders; but still, even with this admission, the indomitable fortitude of the besieged, under circumstances the most appalling and disastrous, confers on their struggle a renown unsurpassed either in ancient or in modern times. Had the puissant Solyman commanded his army in person, as he did at the siege of Rhodes, Malta would, in all probability, have been taken; but no man who forms a correct estimate of the chivalrous zeal that animated the champions of the Cross, will question that he would have found it only a mighty grave.

The 8th of September, the anniversary of the raising of the siege, continued to be celebrated as a high festival, as long as the knights retained the jurisdiction of the island. On that day, the church of Saint John, in which a chapel was assigned to each language, and the pavement of which was entirely composed of sepulchral flags of the finest marble, porphyry, lapis lazuli, and other valuable stones, representing, in a most expensive kind of Mosaic,

the arms and insignia of departed grandmasters and commanders, * was superbly decorated; and a knight, habited in a suit of armour such as was worn during the crusades, and attended on one side by a page bearing a superb sword and poniard, presented to La Valette by Philip of Spain, in token of his esteem, and on the other by the Grand Marshal, carried the standard of the Order to the holy fane, where, amid bursts of martial music, and salvos of artillery, its victorious folds were spread in grateful humiliation over the high altar.

* Brydone—Tour through Sicily and Malta.

CHAPTER VII.

Increased Renown of the Order—Death of Solyman—Foundation of Valetta—Death of La Valette—Battle of Lepanto—Grandmastership of La Cassiere—Revolt in the Convent—Degeneracy of the Order—Predatory Enterprises—Arrogance of the Ecclesiastical Functionaries—More Domestic Troubles—Maritime Exploits—Expedition to Candia—The Island of Saint Christopher purchased by the Order—Exploits of Hocquincourt—Termination of the War in Candia.

THE Sicilian auxiliaries, and the knights who accompanied them, were welcomed as deliverers by the Grandmaster and his brave associates. They found the veteran encompassed by shattered walls and ruined bulwarks, and with a mere remnant of scar-covered men around him; but the pride of victory animated every ghastly countenance, and lit up every wearied and long-sleepless eye. In the midst of their exultation, they forgot not the gallant spirits whose blood had dewed their impregnable ramparts; and, now that the thunder of the battle had rolled away, and given them time for lamentation, fraternal tears watered their graves. To perpetuate the memory of a deliverance so signal and triumphant, the Bourg received the name of the Victorious City, (*Citta Vittoriosa*), which it bears to this day.

The Princes of Christendom had looked on al-

most with arms folded, while the knights, cooped up in a single stronghold, were struggling for existence with an overwhelming host; but no sooner did the rumour of their redemption spread far and wide, than Europe celebrated it by solemn thanksgivings and festal fires. The name of La Valette was hailed as illustrious wherever the church of Rome had a settlement, or the Order of Saint John a manor. The Pope, boundless in his acknowledgments of the services the Grandmaster had rendered to Christianity, formally proffered him a cardinal's hat; but, gifted with more self-denial than D'Aubusson, the defender of Rhodes, who accepted a like dignity, La Valette rejected it as incompatible with his official duties. Philip the Second of Spain sent him, in token of admiration, a magnificent sword and poniard, the hilts of which were of gold, enriched with diamonds, and at the same time recognised him as one of the greatest captains of the age; while the Viceroy of Sicily, on the contrary, was visited with the Royal displeasure, for no other reason, it would appear, than that he had adhered too strictly to his instructions. He was removed from his government, and ended his days in obscurity, universally execrated and contemned.

The flattering assurances conveyed to the Grandmaster by these complimentary embassies, were qualified, however, by rumours from the East, of a new descent on the island being in contemplation at Constantinople. Solyman, though exceedingly wroth with his generals at the manner in which they had been repulsed, had still sufficient policy to spare their heads, in order to conceal from his people the reverse his arms had sustained; nay, he even stooped to propagate a statement, that the

sland had been reduced, and the forts destroyed; ut he pledged himself privately to his council, that ext spring he would repair to Malta in person, and t once raze its fortifications, and depopulate it. La Valette knew too well, that if this threatened xpedition took place, the extinction of the Order ould be the result; for, with a half empty convent, beggared treasury, a ruined and defenceless town, nd a ravaged island, where could he look for means o repel a fresh inroad? In this critical situation, hose old commanders whom he admitted to his conidence, recommended the entire abandonment of he island, as a place totally incapable of further reistance; and called upon him to retire, at the head f his knights, to Sicily, or some other Christian ountry. But La Valette, remembering the cruel perseutions which had overtaken the Templars when they bandoned the shores of Palestine for their European receptories, and elated, it may have been, by the roud association of the *Citta Vittoriosa* with his wn fame, steadfastly refused to entertain such counel. In preference, he had recourse to an expedient hich some historians scruple to justify, but on rounds not perfectly evident, when the extreme eril in which he was placed is taken into consileration. At his instigation, the arsenal at Contantinople was set on fire, by emissaries bribed for he purpose; and a vast number of the gallies destind against Malta were destroyed by the conflagration. This disaster compelled Solyman to postpone the xpedition; and, before he could equip another fleet, ar called him to his Hungarian frontier, in which ampaign he died (1566). He was in his seventyecond year at the time of his death, and had een seated forty-six years on the Ottoman throne

not one of which, say his biographers, passed over his head without being rendered memorable by some glorious action—the proudest panegyric ever passed on any sovereign of his line.

The death of Solyman left the Grandmaster leisure and tranquillity to raise his capital from its ruins, and also to carry into effect a project which he had long cherished, well worthy of his enlarged and princely mind. This was the extension of Fort Saint Elmo, the foundation of a new city on the peninsula of Mount Sceberras, and the removal of the convent to that commanding position. To accomplish such magnificent works, however, large funds were requisite, and the treasury was drained almost to the last ducat. But the reputation of the Order had never stood higher in the estimation of the Christian world; and to that he made a prompt and well-timed appeal. The Pope pledged himself to contribute fifteen thousand crowns; the King of France one hundred and forty thousand livres; the King of Spain ninety thousand livres; and the King of Portugal thirty thousand crusadoes. In addition, the commanders of the Order rivalled each other in the extent of their voluntary contributions, and, in many cases, greatly circumscribed their private fortunes. Thus encouraged, La Valette invited engineers and artificers from Italy, and the foundations of the New City were traced with magnificent ceremonials, after a plan drawn by himself, but long ascribed to the captain Francisco Laparelli. The first stone was laid on the point of Saint John's bulwark, and the Grandmaster spread the mortar on it with his own hand. Under it were deposited a great number of gold and silver medals, on which was represented the new city, with the

end, "MELITA RENASCENS;" and on the ex-
ue, the day and year of the foundation. The
ne bore a Latin inscription, to the effect that the
andmaster La Valette, taking into consideration
perilous siege which had recently terminated, had
ermined to build a town on Mount Sceberras, the
ter to check any future descents of the barbarians;
l had founded it with profound solemnity on the
th of March 1566. His arms (a Lion, Or, in a
ld gules) were carved on the first stone, and the
w city was named by acclamation the City of La
lette; to which, in accordance with a custom pre-
ent in Sicily, the epithet "*Umilissima*" was
pended, as indicative of the humility of the Or-
r.

This pageant over, the work proceeded with great
idity, knight and burgher labouring with equal
thusiasm to facilitate its advancement. The com-
nder de la Fontaine, a knight famed for his skill
fortification, had the chief superintendence of the
gineer department; and, for nearly two years, he
l the Grandmaster spent almost the whole of
ir time amid the masons and artificers on Mount
eberras. A scarcity of money occurring, in con-
quence of some commanders being dilatory in
warding their responsions, La Valette had re-
urse to the critical expedient of coining brass
nies of various sizes, and issuing them at a no-
nal value. These coins bore on one side two
nds joined, and on the other the arms of La
lette, quartered with those of the Order, and en-
cled by the legend, "*Non æs, sed Fides.*" The
actuality with which this depreciated coin was
thdrawn from circulation, whenever remittances ar-
ed from Europe, prevented the public confidence

from being diminished, and enabled the Grandmaster to reissue it again from time to time as he saw occasion, without at all weakening his government.

The last days of La Valette, like those of L'Isle Adam, the hero of Rhodes, were disturbed by intestine divisions among his knights, and unpleasant disputes with the Pope and other potentates, who evinced a startling eagerness to encroach on the possessions and privileges of the Order. Inflated by the brilliant defence which the brotherhood had made, several young Spanish knights gave themselves up to a freer course of life than was compatible with their vows, and, becoming roisterers, wits, and song-makers, made even the bravest and most venerable of their brethren, and the noblest ladies in Malta, the objects of their irony and slander. A prosecution being instituted against these libellers, they entered the council-hall in a tumultuous manner, dashed the pen from the vice-chancellor's hand as he was recording their sentence, and then, hurrying to the sea-side, seized a scampavia, and escaped to Sicily. For this rebellious proceeding, they were formally deprived of the habit of the Order, and emissaries were despatched to apprehend them; but, aware of the stern character of the Grandmaster, they continued their flight to their own country, and effectually eluded pursuit. About the same time, a Florentine named Bonaccursi, who had been long settled in Malta, and had married a lady of great beauty, a descendant of one of those noble Rhodian families who had followed the fortunes of the Order, in a transport of jealousy poniarded his wife, and escaped to Italy, greatly to the Grandmaster's vexation, who spared no effort to bring him to justice.

The differences with the Pope, Pius the Fifth,

originated from that prelate usurping the Grandmaster's patronage so far, notwithstanding the pompous professions of admiration and respect which he had so recently bestowed on the Grandmaster, as to confer the dignity of Grand Prior of Rome on Cardinal Alexandrino, his own nephew, whom he relieved at the same time from the responsions which had been paid by his predecessors. The ambassador of the Order at the Court of Rome, represented the injustice of this proceeding in such forcible language, that the Pontiff, though confessing himself to blame, chose to take offence at what he considered the disrespectful conduct of the envoy, and dismissed him in disgrace.

All these circumstances conjoined, preyed deeply on the mind of the Grandmaster; and, to relieve the melancholy thoughts that oppressed him, he made an excursion with his falcons, for the purpose of enjoying his favourite amusement of hawking, to a part of the island bordering on the creek of Saint Paul. It being the middle of July, the weather proved excessively hot; and, while engaged in the noble sport in which he delighted, he was struck by a *coup-de-soleil*, and, after an illness of three weeks, which he bore with the resignation of a martyr, terminated his glorious life (21st August 1568.)

The funeral obsequies of this illustrious knight were celebrated with great magnificence. His remains were first deposited in the chapel of Saint Mary de Philerme in the Bourg, but were afterwards, in accordance with his dying wish, removed to the church of Saint Mary of Victory, which he had built in the new city. The Admiral's galley, stripped of its masts and cannon, carried the hero's ashes across the port to their final resting-place.

The two gallies which towed the funeral barge were hung with black cloth, and several Turkish standards trailed behind them in the waves. After these came two other gallies, which had been the special property of the departed chief, covered with sepulchral ornaments, and crowded with the principal dignitaries of the Order. In this solemn array the funeral procession quitted the harbour, and, slowly coasting Mount Scoberras, entered Port Musceit, where the coffin was relanded. The household of the deceased, clothed in deep mourning, and carrying each a torch, then headed the train; and the corpse was borne by a band of priests, chanting the service of the church, to the sepulchre appointed to receive it, while the bloody and tattered banners that had been torn from the Infidels were suspended over the grave.

Peter de Monte, Grand Prior of Capua, whose name is so often mentioned with honour in the defence of La Sangle, succeeded to the Grandmastership in the stead of the magnanimous La Valette. On his deathbed, the latter had recommended Antonio de Toledo, Grand Prior of Castile, as the knight most capable of supporting the dignity of the Order; but a cabal, in which De Monte, however, had small personal concern, secured the vote in his favour, thereby elevating a scarcely less worthy candidate. It was not till three years after the death of La Valette (1571), that the new city was finished, and made the seat of government. In the preceding year, several Maltese cruisers having captured a number of Turkish vessels off the mouths of the Nile, Ucchiali, a famous corsair, by way of reprisal, attacked the squadron of the Order at an advantage, with a superior force. Three Maltese gallies were

taken, and the Admiral's galley was driven ashore off the town of Monchiaro in Sicily—an event which was followed by the death of the Chevalier Saint Clement, its commander.

Before this disaster could be repaired, the banner of Saint John was again unfurled in war against the Ottoman, as a party to a powerful Christian league. The Emperor Selim the Second having invaded Cyprus, which, in common with many of the Greek islands, and a great part of the Morea and Dalmatia, still acknowledged the dominion of the Venetian republic, took the cities of Nicosia and Famagusta (1569), and prosecuted the war with so much vigour, that the proud princes of the Adriatic, trembling for their supremacy in the Levant, were compelled to implore assistance from the Pope, the King of Spain, and several of the minor Italian potentates. After a great deal of diplomatic trifling, a common circumstance in these times, when statesmen held hypocrisy to be a cardinal virtue, a confederation was agreed to; and in the summer of 1571, a mighty Christian armament rendezvoused at Messina, and sailed for the Moreote coast. This expedition consisted of two hundred and ten gallies, twenty-eight large transport ships, and six "galeasses" armed with heavy guns, and was commanded in chief by Don John of Austria, natural brother to Philip the Second of Spain; "a man," says Knolles, "then about four-and-twenty years old, in whom wanted no honourable parts, his mother's blemish only excepted." The Pope's gallies were commanded by Mark Anthony Colonna, the Venetian by John Venieri, and the Maltese, which were only three in number, by the knight Pietro Justiniani. The flower of the young chivalry of Spain and

Italy served under the flags of their respective countries as volunteers; and the land troops alone amounted to twenty thousand men, many of whom had grown gray in camps and battles. The Ottoman fleet, against which this vast armament was despatched, was commanded by Ali Pasha, and consisted of two hundred gallies, and seventy frigates and brigantines. The Christians encountered it in the Gulf of Corinth or Lepanto, where it had anchored, laden with the spoils of the whole Dalmatian coast, having recently ravaged the shores of the Adriatic to within cannon-shot of the very batteries of Venice. Prudence dictated to the Turkish commander to keep within the Gulf; but, inflated by his late achievements, and encouraged by rash counsel, he no sooner learnt that the Christian fleet was in the offing, than he ordered his squadron to unmoor, and stand into the open sea. Flushed with the hope of victory, the Turkish gallies were dashing gallantly onward before a favourable breeze, through the channel of Lepanto, when they descried, off Cape Skropha, and outside the islets called the Kursolares (the ancient Echinades), the Christian armament, formed in line-of-battle. It was divided into four squadrons; commanded, on the right, by John Andrew Doria; on the left, by the Venetian captain Augustine Barbarigo; and in the centre, by Don John, with Colonna and Venieri for his lieutenants. The Maltese gallies were stationed on the extreme left of the line. Sixty ships, under the Marquis of Santa Cruz, were formed into a reserve; and a squadron of eight gallies, under John de Cordova, with the six Venetian galeasses, which, armed with ponderous ordnance, and crowded with chosen soldiers, looked like floating castles, led the van of the battle. The Turks

formed in nearly similar order, save that they had no reserve, and that their line was wider and crescent-shaped. Ali the Capitan, with Pertan a celebrated corsair as his lieutenant, commanded the centre, which was opposed to Don John, while Ucchiali and Siroc, two distinguished officers, were opposed to Doria and Barbarigo.

It was about sunrise (7th October 1571) when a signal-gun from the Grand Admiral's galley told the Christians to prepare for battle. Instantly the banner of the confederation, which had the image of Christ crucified embroidered upon it, and had been presented by the Pope, was unfurled, and, after a brief prostration and prayer on beholding it, each man grasped his arms ready for the fight. Don John, clothed in glittering armour, visited the several squadrons in person, spreading confidence every where by his cheerful and martial voice; and shouts of "Victory! Victory!" followed him over the waves. Favoured by the wind, and burning with an ardour nothing inferior to that which animated their adversaries, the Turks held bravely on their course; but just as they were on the point of joining battle, the breeze flagged, and chopped round in such a manner that the first broadside from the galeasses, which were anchored like floating bulwarks a mile ahead of the Christian fleet, enveloped them in the smoke of the guns. Though staggered by the discharge, which sunk several of their gallies, the Turks continued to rush into the battle, and, amid the clangour of cymbals, drums, and other martial instruments, blended with wild shouts, opened their fire on the Christian line. A furious conflict instantly commenced. The Capitan Pasha, singling out the Christian Admiral's galley, bore down on it with such vio-

lence, that the beaks of both vessels were demolished by the shock. Both were manned with the choicest soldiers and mariners in their respective fleets, and thrice they boarded and repulsed each other with prodigious slaughter. Venieri, seeing the High Admiral hard pressed, was preparing to give him support by pooping the Turkish galley, when he was intercepted by Pertan Pasha, and compelled to look to his own safety. Though seventy years of age, the noble Venetian deported himself with all the courage of a youthful warrior; and, inspired with a generous emulation at the sight of his white hairs streaming in the van of the battle, his men displayed a resolution worthy of their commander. Still, the numerical superiority of the Turks enabled them to fight their way over the prow of the galley; and, almost swept of her defenders, she was on the point of being captured, when the Venetian captains, Malipetra and Loredano, hastened with their vessels to her relief. This timely succour again turned the tide of battle; and, though both Malipetra and Loredano were speedily slain, their fall only rendered the valour of their followers more irresistible. Two Turkish gallies at length struck their flags; and Pertan, seeing himself in danger of being captured, leapt into a boat, and, passing through the Christian fleet unmolested, abandoned the combat, and escaped.

Meanwhile, Siroc Bey had led the right wing of the Turkish battle against the left of the Christian line—hemmed in on the one side by a dangerous bank, formed by the discharge of the Aspropotamos (the ancient Achelous), and on the other by the Venetian galeasses, which shattered many of his vessels with their terrible fire. To create a diversion he

despatched a small squadron under a Genoese renegade, with orders to stand close in shore, and endeavour to outflank and fall upon the rear of the Christian fleet. This manœuvre, however, came to the knowledge of the Venetian captain, Barbarigo, in time to enable him to receive the onset, both fore and aft, with equal resolution and sagacity. Amid a murderous shower of round and small shot, darts and arrows, the contending gallies grappled each other, and every man was brought foot to foot with his adversary. Two Christian gallies, the one commanded by Barbarigo in person, the other by Mark Ciconia, were beset, the one by six, the other by five, Turkish vessels; and while gallantly contending against this overwhelming force, an arrow entered the left eye of Barbarigo, and, piercing his brain, laid him mortally wounded on the deck. Ciconia was also severely wounded, and frightfully scorched with Greek fire about the face and breast; but he managed to defend himself, till the arrival of two powerful Venetian gallies changed the aspect of the fight, and enabled him not only to repulse the enemy with great slaughter, but to capture several of their vessels, together with a superb ensign, which had been the pride of the Ottoman fleet. The fall of Siroc Bey himself, who had grappled with the galley commanded by John Contarini, and was struck down lifeless in the thickest of the battle, completed the discomfiture of his squadron. From that moment, despair pervaded it, and every man tried only how he could best reach the neighbouring coast; but so closely did the Christians pursue them, that scarcely one escaped.

In the centre, however, the battle still raged with unabated fury. The gallies commanded by Don John and the Capitan Pasha had been engaged

nearly three hours, and, as yet, neither could boast of victory. But no sooner did the Christian Admiral hear the shout of triumph raised by the Venetians on the left, than, afraid that the conqueror's meed was to be torn from him by one of his own lieutenants, he liberated four hundred chosen soldiers, whom he had hitherto kept as a reserve under hatches, who, with loud cries, and full of ardour, sprang cheerfully on the enemy's deck. This fresh onset decided the conflict, and the galley surrendered; but not till its commander, his head shattered by a musket-shot, was stretched mortally wounded among the slain. He was carried, bathed in his own blood, but still breathing, to the presence of Don John, who commanded his armour to be unbraced, and his head to be struck off and displayed on the point of a spear, to intimidate the combatants in such of the Turkish gallies as yet maintained the battle. His two sons, nephews of the Emperor, were both captured alive in another galley.

But though the left and centre of the Christian line had achieved a complete triumph, the right had as yet barely joined battle. Doria, who was opposed to the corsair Ucchiali in that quarter, with a shyness unworthy of his name, and which has given rise to a diversity of opinions regarding his motives, instead of rushing at once to close combat, spent the time in futile manœuvres, as if he aspired more to ensnare his enemy than to conquer him in fair fight. Some of his traducers have even gone so far as to charge him with an intention of abandoning the Christian fleet, in case he saw the day likely to end disastrously; but the most rational inference is, considering his reputed sagacity and bravery, that his purpose was to countervail, by stratagem, what he wanted

in strength. In these circumstances, Ucchiali, after following him out to sea, extended his line with a view to encompass the Spanish squadron; by which manœuvre, he captured twelve Venetian gallies, which had imprudently withdrawn from their appointed station. Many knights of Saint Stephen (the Florentine Order of knighthood, instituted, in 1561, by Cosmo de Medicis, in imitation of that of Malta) lost their lives on board of these gallies; and one was blown up by its commander, rather than surrender. Doria, seeing a part of his squadron thus annihilated before his eyes, could no longer remain at a distance, but at length stood fairly into the fight. At the same time, the left wing and centre having mastered all the vessels opposed to them, despatched a number of gallies to share in this new combat; and, among others, Justiniani, with the Maltese squadron, was detached from the left, where he had assisted to defeat Siroc. The Maltese gallies were the first that reached the scene of combat; and Justiniani saw himself suddenly beset by six Turkish gallies, who pressed him so desperately, that fifty of his best knights were slain, and one of his ensigns was torn from the mast. With three arrows sticking in his body, he, however, maintained his vessel till such time as the other two gallies were able to shake off the enemies by whom they were surrounded, and hasten to his rescue. At one period, during this sanguinary conflict, his vessel was all but captured—the Bailiff de Spar, commander of the land forces of the Order, lay slain on her deck, and the Infidels were actually towing her away in triumph, when the other gallies arrived to her relief. It was not till Ucchiali was informed of the death of Caragiali, his lieutenant, and

beheld the bravest of his men lifeless around him, that he abandoned the combat. Fifteen Turkish captains gallantly covered his retreat; and, though forced to fly at last, he made his escape with forty gallies, and carried away with him the Maltese standard, which he afterwards laid as a testimony of his valour at the Emperor's feet.*

In this great naval engagement, which completely decided the supremacy of the Christian flag in the Grecian waters, the Turks lost their general-in-chief, and, according to some historians, five thousand officers, and thirty thousand men. One hundred and forty gallies were captured, independent of those destroyed, and twenty thousand Christians were liberated from slavery. The Capitan Pasha's galley, which was among those taken, was a vessel of surpassing beauty. The deck, says Knolles, was of walnut-wood, dark as ebony, "chequered and wrought marveilous fair, with divers lively colours, and variety of histories;" and her cabin glittered with ornaments of gold, rich hangings, and precious gems. In the Pasha's casket were found six thousand ducats, which were conferred, together with a yearly pension, and the honour of knighthood, on the Macedonian Greek who had slain him. The loss of the Christians was computed at fourteen captains of gallies, and seven thousand six hundred men. No less than thirteen noble Venetians, of the class of Senators, perished. One of these, the valiant Barbarigo, who was mortally wounded in command of the left wing, survived the battle, and, like another Epaminondas, thanked heaven with his dy-

* Graziani, Hist. de Cypre.

ing breath, that he had lived long enough to know that victory had smiled on the Christian arms. *

To return to Malta. The Grandmaster de Monte, who was upwards of seventy years of age, died in the following year (1572), and was succeeded by John L'Evesque de la Cassiere, of the language of Auvergne—the same knight who deported himself so gallantly as standard-bearer in the attack on Zoara in 1552. Though a brave and sagacious commander, a natural violence and obstinacy of temper, which frequently betrayed him into discourteous language, in some measure disqualified him for so responsible an office; and he soon found himself involved in painful and troublesome disputes, not only within, but without the convent. He had enjoyed the dignity only two years, when a dispute having arisen between him and the Bishop of Malta as to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction, Pope Gregory the Thirteenth, to whom he appealed, despatched an accredited member of the Holy Inquisition, that most sanguinary and atrocious of all judicial institutions, to decide between them. This official fixed his head-quarters permanently at Valetta, where, under pretence of protecting the interests of the Holy See, and in direct violation of the arrangements on which such mediation was originally accepted, he

* Cervantes, the author of Don Quixote, served on board one of the Papal gallies in this expedition. As he himself says, (in the preface to the second part of Don Quixote), he considered the loss of his left hand (which was struck off in the course of the action by a blow of a scimitar), as a "trifling price to pay for the honour of partaking in the first great action, in which the naval supremacy of the Ottoman was successfully disputed by Christian arms."

and his successors secured a degree of ascendancy which frequently occasioned serious divisions, and even sometimes threatened to subvert the government of the Order. This ascendancy was achieved by the disposal of what were called brevets, or patents of independence, to the native Maltese, by which the holder and his family were taken under the immediate protection of the Holy See, as "patentees of the Inquisition," and virtually absolved from their allegiance to the Grandmaster. The Bishop, moreover, assumed a similar independency of jurisdiction, by right of which the bestowal of a simple tonsure freed the wearer from subjection to the tribunals of the Order; and Gargalla, who then held the See, having, along with Cressin, the prior of the church, another restless and turbulent man, been denied the privilege of paying inquisitorial visits to the Hospital in the Cité Notable, excommunicated its directors. This occasioned tumults among the people, who, as usual in such disputes, sided with the priests; and forcible measures were necessarily adopted, to preserve tranquillity. The schism even extended to the convent itself; and three of the inquisitorial functionaries having been apprehended on a charge of traitorous designs, they not only confessed that they had conspired to poison the Grandmaster, but inculpated many Spanish and Italian knights as their accomplices. This charge, which seems to have been altogether false, greatly excited the indignation of the accused; and, forgetting the respect due to La Cassiere as their head, they entered the council-chamber tumultuously in a body, and called upon him, in insolent terms, not only to divulge the proofs he had against them, but to submit the case

to the Pope's decision. Time, however, mollified their wrath, and the appeal was forgotten.

In the midst of these intestine broils, La Cassiere had also several foreign disputes and cares to harass him. Every year brought with it threats of a new attack from the Turks; and though these ultimately evaporated in the conquest of Goletta and Tunis, which the Emperor Selim wrested from Spain, they yet sufficed to keep the council in a constant state of excitement. For a time, too, a point of maritime right with the republic of Venice was debated with great acrimony, and with difficulty brought to a satisfactory termination. Moreover, the Grand Priory of Castile having, in consonance with the wish of the King of Spain, been bestowed by the Grandmaster and council on an Austrian archduke, on condition of his entering the Order, the Castilian knights took the arrangement so much amiss, that their discontent assumed a rebellious aspect; and, to subdue them, it was necessary to resort to Papal intimidation. As a penance for their insubordinate conduct, they appeared before the council in full assembly, carrying each a wax taper, to entreat pardon; which was granted, accompanied by a severe reprimand. About the same time (1578), six Portuguese knights, who entertained a blood-thirsty spirit of revenge against one of their countrymen, the Chevalier Carreras, entered his apartment masked, and wearing false beards, and barbarously assassinated him; for which crime they were tried, condemned, and, in terms of their sentence, sown up in sacks, and thrown alive into the sea. The only gleam of glory shed over this dark era, was the honourable death of several commanders of the Order;

who fell gallantly supporting the Christian banner against the Moors in the fatal battle of Alcazar, in which Sebastian, King of Portugal—the hero of many a wild Lusitanian legend—lost his army and his life.

These disturbances were only a prelude to greater troubles. The Spanish knights, who formed a closely united and influential body, and whose main objection to La Cassiere was his being a Frenchman, determined, as the green old age he enjoyed left them no hopes of his speedy demise, to compass his deposition by a regular conspiracy against him. As a preliminary step, they gained over the languages of Italy and Germany, and even some of the French knights; and, among them, the commander Romegas, Prior of Toulouse and Ireland, was seduced into the sedition. Romegas, whose name has already been noticed with honour, but who combined a sanguinary and ill-regulated ambition, with great valour and personal prowess, was won upon to join the conspiracy, by the prospect of succeeding to the Grandmastership,—self-conceit blinding him to the improbability, that the malecontents, who were so eager to depose one Frenchman, would elevate another to the vacant dignity. To the dishonour of the Order, which had begun to exhibit a lamentable and profligate laxity of discipline, one cause of complaint against La Cassiere was, his having expelled all courtesans from the city and suburbs of Valetta to the remote casals. The Maltese annalists record this gross dereliction from one of the cardinal rules by which the institution was originally regulated, with shame and sorrow; and, from that date (1581), the efficiency and renown of the Order may be said to have rapidly declined.

Encouraged by the knowledge that they were countenanced in their lawless proceedings by the court of Spain, and by the arrival of three Sicilian gallies, ostensibly fitted out against the Turks, but in reality sent to support them, the malecontents availed themselves of an opportunity of impugning the decision of the Grandmaster in a question respecting the watch-word which had arisen between the language of Auvergne, and the knights of Italy and Spain. He was openly charged by the rebels in tumultuous assembly, with having shown an undue partiality to his own nation—with having dissipated the revenues of the Order—with neglect of its affairs—with gross inattention to the defence of the island—with incapacity and immorality—and, as a climax, with a treasonable correspondence with the sworn enemies of the Christian faith. To remedy the defects of his government, they called upon him to appoint a lieutenant; and when La Cassiere indignantly rejected the insolent proposition, nominated Romegas to that office on their own authority. This was followed by a still more audacious edict, by virtue of which, and on pretence that the Grandmaster's person was in danger, they forcibly arrested him, and imprisoned him in the tower of Saint Angelo. He was carried thither in an open chair, hooted by the younger portion of the rebellious knights, and reviled by crowds of Cyprians, who had returned to the city the moment his authority was subverted; but he bore these indignities with the fortitude of a man who regarded them not as insults, but as honours.

He had been two days in this humiliating situation, when Chabrillan, general of the gallies, entered the port with his squadron. That knight, after com-

muning with him in his captivity—a privilege the rebels dared not refuse—offered to reinstate him at once in his former dignity, and carry him back to his palace in triumph at the head of his marines; but La Cassiere nobly answered, that he would rather end his days in prison, than deluge the convent with blood; and that he left it for the Pope to punish or recognise his deposition. Appeals were accordingly made to Rome by both parties; and so important was the revolt esteemed there, that the whole city was agitated by it. This popular sensation was increased by a duel between two Italian knights, Bosio and Guimarva. The latter having reproached the former with being a time-serving abettor of the Grandmaster, Bosio attacked and slew his antagonist in presence of the Papal guards in Saint Peter's Square; after which he contrived to escape, and was never apprehended.

Enraged at the conduct of the rebels, the Pope instantly despatched an accredited agent to Malta to inquire into the matter, and to act as lieutenant of the Order until a final adjustment. On the arrival of this officer, La Cassiere, who had previously been entreated by the rebels, who had begun to tremble for the consequences of their usurpation, to accept of liberty, was reconducted to his palace, and informed that it was the Pope's pleasure that he should repair to Rome, where a gracious reception awaited him. He accordingly embarked for Italy, and entered the Eternal City with the suite of a conqueror, three hundred knights being in attendance. Romegas, and several other ringleaders of the malecontents, also repaired, by citation, to the papal tribunal; and, in terms of a peremptory edict, the Spanish gallies, after some demur on the part of their

commander, who argued that the King of Spain was the legitimate protector of the Order, withdrew from the island. Harassed and dispirited by the discreditable circumstances in which he stood, and humiliated to perceive, that while La Cassiere was hailed with every mark of distinction at the court of Rome, he was left to pine in neglect as a turbulent rebel, the proud heart of Romegas gave way—a fever seized him, and at the end of seven days he died. His partisans were directed to make a formal and public submission to the Grandmaster; and it is told of one of them, the commander de Sacquenville, that when he would have confined himself to kissing La Cassiere's hand, the Cardinal de Montalto exclaimed, "Down on your knees, rebellious knight; had it not been for the clemency of your chief, your head would have fallen many days ago by the executioner's axe!"

La Cassiere did not live to return to Malta, and behold the full re-establishment of his authority. He died at Rome in the beginning of 1582; and the Pope, availing himself of the circumstance, to influence the election of his successor, forwarded a brief to Malta, restricting the chapter to the choice of three candidates, though a formal deputation from the convent had previously entreated him not to infringe the freedom of the election. This led to the elevation of Hugh de Loubeux de Verdale, who had long been in high favour at the court of Rome. Verdale was a man of a gentle and pacific character, and exercised his patronage with strict impartiality; yet he failed to secure the confidence of the Order. Finding his authority continually contemned, he paid a visit to Rome (1587), where he was received by the Pope, Sixtus the Fifth, with great honour, and

sent back to Malta with a cardinal's hat, in the hope that this new dignity would overawe the malecontents. This however, it failed to do. Sedition continued to reign throughout the convent; and, assailed by incessant complaints on all sides, he once more repaired to Rome, where he soon after died of a broken heart (1595). The troubles of his reign were aggravated, moreover, by a visitation of the plague, which in 1592, almost depopulated the island. In the same year, through the influence of the Bishop Gargalla, the Jesuits were introduced into Malta, where they speedily gained a great ascendancy. It was during his Grandmastership that materials collected by the commander, John Anthony Fossan, for a history of the Order, were confided to James Bosio, with instructions to complete the work.

Don Martin Garzez, of the language of Arragon, succeeded De Verdale. Having neither favourites nor prejudices, he came into power as it were by popular acclaim, and the six years he held the reins of government were marked by tranquillity and subordination. He died in 1601; and Alof de Vignacourt, Grand Hospitaller of France, was elected to the vacant dignity. * He was a man of great talents, and enjoyed both a long and brilliant reign, though the records left of it are comparatively scant and unsatisfactory. The year succeeding his election, the gallies of the Order attacked and carried in a very gallant manner the town of Mahometa in Barbary; and descents were also made against Patras and Lepanto on the coast of Greece. Two years afterwards (1604), a predatory expedition was

* Vide Vignette.—Taken from an original portrait, by Michael Angelo Caravaggio.

e to the island of Lango, which was hallowed in estimation of the Order by ancient associations, n the ravagers, with more intrepidity than huma-, dragged away an hundred and sixty-five of the ves as slaves. In 1610, the knights, Fresnet, nres, and Gaucourt, made an attack on the Turk-fortress of Laiazzo, on the Cilician coast. Hav-burst open the gate by means of a petard, they red it in triumph, and, after razing the works, re-t to their vessels, carrying with them abundance booty, and upwards of three hundred captives. t year, a similar attack was made on Corinth, ch was also taken and sacked—a circumstance ch so greatly enraged the Turks, that four years wards (1615), they made a fresh descent on ta by way of reprisal. Sixty gallies appeared re the island on this occasion, and landed five sand men, with the intention of sweeping the bitants into slavery; but the Maltese, having ly notice of their approach, retired with their erty into the different strongholds, and the Otto-s, unable to attempt a siege, had to re-embark out capturing a single man. These advantages, wver, were counterbalanced by the loss which Order sustained before Suza, on the coast of ary, in 1619, while co-operating with the forces he Catholic league, in an attack on that place. nty knights fell in this expedition, which ended he Christians being repulsed. An enterprise, ertaken by the gallies of the Order singly, in the wing year, against the Castle of Torneza, the d depôt of the Morea, was more successful. assailants, headed by the commander Saint re, burst open the gates of the fortress as they done that of Laiazzo, by means of petards; but

the knowledge that four thousand Turks were advancing to relieve it, induced them to make a hasty retreat to their ships, carrying with them, however, all the booty and prisoners they had taken.

Though these exploits are narrated in terms of high commendation by the annalists of the Order, they were, in reality, nothing else than piratical descents, made more for the purpose of plunder, than from that generous spirit of religious and martial zeal which distinguished the knights of Saint John at an earlier era. The political importance of the Order was sensibly on the decline; and though the knights continued to be respected throughout Christendom, as valiant and experienced soldiers, while their services were eagerly coveted in every fleet and army of Europe, the fraternity, as an independent body, was no longer regarded as a puissant and indispensable ally in the terrible struggles between the Cross and the Crescent, which almost annually deluged the countries bordering on the Danube, with blood. In point of discipline, too, a marked and humiliating change had taken place. The statutes still existed in all their rigour; but many of them were become in a great measure obsolete, and crimes began to disgrace the Order, which had never before stained its archives. Those statutes, however, which were framed to support the temporal dignity of the institution, had nowise lost their immutability in the estimation of many of the knights;—in proof of which, it may be mentioned, that Charles de Brie, a natural son of Henry Duke of Lorraine, having been admitted into the language of Germany through the influence of the Princes of the Empire, the German knights rose in a body to express their dissent, and, in their indignation, tore the armorial ensigns of the Grand-

master and Order from the gates of their inn, leaving only those of the Emperor standing.

Though the Mastership of De Vignacourt was, on the whole, prosperous and brilliant, he did not entirely escape those domestic cares which had harassed and even brought to the grave several of his predecessors. Both the Grand Inquisitor and the Bishop of Malta, supported by the Pope, Clement the Eighth, exerted themselves to subvert his authority; and, on one occasion, the brotherhood were so exasperated at the meddling and arrogant habits of the bishop, that a number of the younger knights surrounded his palace, and openly threatened to throw him into the sea. The Grandmaster succeeded in suppressing the tumult, however, before the prelate had sustained any injury, and afterwards sent him off to Rome, in the hope that the Pope would punish him for his insolence. But his Holiness, on the contrary, was so incensed at the treatment which the Bishop had received, that he threatened the Grandmaster with the anathemas of the church; and De Vignacourt had to make ample concession before the wrath of the Papal tyrant could be stayed. Notwithstanding these vexations, the Grandmaster was able to complete one of the noblest monuments, in the shape of a public work, which remains to attest the grandeur of the Order—namely, an aqueduct for the conveyance of a large spring of water into the city of Valetta from the southern part of the island. This canal, which is still in repair, is upwards of nine and a half English miles in length. The water is carried into every street by subterranean ducts, which connect the public and private cisterns, and furnish a supply of that indispensable element to the inhabitants, when the rains, on which they chiefly depend, are not suffi-

ciently abundant. De Vignacourt, also, added to the defences of the island, by erecting strong works at the havens of Saint Paul, Marsa Sirocco, and Marsa Scala, and on the island of Cumin. In the midst of these honourable cares, while enjoying the pastime of hare-hunting in the heats of August, he was seized with apoplexy, exactly as had happened fifty-four years before to the illustrious La Valette, and died a few weeks afterwards (14th September 1622), at the age of seventy-five.

Mendez de Vasconcellos, of the language of Portugal, succeeded De Vignacourt; but being four score years of age at the time of his election, he enjoyed the dignity scarcely six months. Anthony de Paule, his successor, was also far advanced in life when called to the supreme command; for, as always happened in tranquil times, the ambition of the younger knights instigated them to favour the candidate whose term of days was, as far as age went, nearest a close. De Paule's reign began by two severe but imperative acts of justice. Juan de Fonseca, a Portuguese novice, was convicted of robbery and murder, and had his head struck off by the common executioner in the great piazza of the palace; and Faulcon, Prior of Capua, having been found guilty of embezzling public monies to a large amount, was condemned to perpetual imprisonment, in which he died. Scarcely had the Grandmaster confirmed the sentence of this false knight, when he was called upon to vindicate his own character—his enemies having denounced him to the Pope as a man of loose morals, and guilty of simony, inasmuch as he had attained the supreme dignity by bribery and corruption. The Pope, Urban the Eighth, sustained his defence; but shortly afterwards, in imitation of his predeces-

, Paul the Fifth and Gregory the Fourteenth, u-
ed the patronage of the Italian commanderies,
ral of which he conferred on his nephews and
urites, in direct subversion of the statutes of the
er. Indignant at this proceeding, the Italian
hts refused to take their turn of service on board
gallies; and many of them quitted Malta and re-
ed to their paternal homes. The Grandmaster
only remonstrated with the Pontiff on the occa-
, but carried his complaints to the feet of the prin-
l sovereigns of Christendom; but, as has already
said, the influence of the Order was on the wane.
Pope continued to bestow the Italian benefices
his creatures as they fell vacant, and the kings of
ope left him to act entirely as he thought pro-
in the matter. He also took upon himself to re-
the mode of electing the Grandmaster, and al-
l the ancient usage of the general chapters so far,
empower the Grand Inquisitor to preside over
n. De Paule, with the imbecility of a dotard,
ly submitted to this humiliating arrangement;
to obviate opposition from the higher spirited
more impetuous knights, they were sent to sea
the gallies when the next Chapter was conven-
-at which the Inquisitor, but with somewhat re-
ted powers, took his seat accordingly.

he Grandmastership of De Paule, like that of
Vignacourt, was characterized by a piratical and
uinary, but less successful warfare, against the
man flag. In 1625, twelve knights lost their
, and several were wounded, in an unfortunate
ent on the island of Santa Maura; and the same
two Maltese gallies were captured by the Infi-
after a long and obstinate engagement. These
ses, however, were counterbalanced by several

rich prizes taken on the Moreote and Barbary coasts. At this period (1632), the population of Malta, which, seventy-five years before, at the raising of the famous siege, did not greatly exceed ten thousand, amounted, exclusive of the members of the Order, and familiars of the Inquisition, to upwards of fifty-one thousand souls—the best proof that can be given of the paternal care of the administration. *

Paul Lascaris Castelard, a descendant of the Counts of Vintimiglia, and of the Greek Emperors of Constantinople, succeeded the Grandmaster De Paule, who died in 1636 at an advanced age. The war which raged between France and Spain at the time of the election, and in which many of the knights, particularly those of France, contrary to the strict letter of their statutes, which prohibited them from taking up arms against any Christian power whatever, were personally engaged, involved him, at the outset of his reign, in much intricate and troublesome negotiation; and while the matters in dispute were pending, the Viceroy of Sicily, warmly espousing the Spanish side of the question, almost starved Malta, by refusing the customary supplies of grain. The Grandmaster however, having, in terms of an official edict, opened his batteries on a French vessel commanded by the knight De la Carte, which had beaten a Spanish ship in the channel of Goza, and then attempted to anchor in Port Siroc, so far propitiated the Spaniards, and satisfied them of his neutrality, as to induce them to re-establish a free intercourse between the island and the Sicilian coast. It was now the turn of France to be offended; and to punish the Grandmaster for the insult offered to his flag, the French king

* Vertot et Boisgelin.

seized all the possessions of the Order in his dominions, with a view to annex them to the crown lands. Through the agency, however, of M. de Lomenie, secretary of state, one of whose sons had just entered the Order, this quarrel was amicably adjusted, and the commandery of La Rochelle was given to the young Chevalier, in acknowledgement of his father's services.

39 In 1588, a bloody action was fought between the gallies of the Order, commanded by the knight de Charolt, and three large ships of war, employed in convoying a considerable fleet of Turkish merchant vessels from Tripoli to the East. The Maltese admiral, without expending a single broadside, ran his six gallies directly aboard the corsairs, two gallies grappling each ship. The Infidels made a gallant resistance—especially their admiral's vessel, which was commanded by Ibrahim Rais or La Becasse, a renegade of Marseilles, who had at one time acted as pilot to the Maltese squadron, but having been captured by the pirates of Tripoli, had turned Mohammedan, and, by his valour, raised himself to the highest post. The galley called the Saint Peter, commanded by the Chevalier de Gallean Chateauneuf, and supported by the Admiral's galley, engaged Ibrahim's vessel, which had on board four hundred and fifty Turkish soldiers, all chosen men. Mariel de Chateauneuf, the Chevalier's brother, was the first of the Christians that leapt on the corsair's deck, whither he was instantly followed, sabre in hand, by a number of knights, who cut all who offered resistance to pieces; and their leader had the honour of dragging Ibrahim to his brother's feet. The whole Turkish flotilla was taken; and, rich in slaves and booty, the victors returned in triumph to the harbour of La Valette. The victory, however, was purchased by the death

of several distinguished knights—among whom were the Chevaliers de Viontessancourt, De Malmaison, D'Isnard, De Piccolomini, and De Sousa—all knights bearing names illustrious in their respective countries.

In 1640, the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt, then general of the gallies, cut out six Barbary rovers from the harbour of Goletta; and four years afterwards, three gallies, commanded by the knight de Piancourt, performed a still more memorable achievement, by capturing, after a sanguinary conflict of seven hours, a large and formidably equipped Turkish galleon. Nine knights fell in this engagement, among whom were the Chevaliers de Piancourt and Boisbaudran. Two brave young novices, Robert and Nicholas de Boufflers, were also among the slain. The Turks, on their part, lost six hundred men; and among the captives was a Sultana, from the Sultan's own harem, who was bound on a pilgrimage to Mecca, accompanied by her infant son, reputed to be a prince of the imperial line. This boy was brought up a Christian, and afterwards became a monk of the Order of Saint Dominick, in which he was known by the name of Father Ottoman.

The capture of this galleon threatened for a time to bring a serious reprisal on the Maltese territory. The Sultan Ibrahim, furious at his loss, formally declared war against the Order; and the Grandmaster found it necessary to implore succours from all quarters, so as to enable him to make ample preparation to repel the threatened invasion. Chivalry no longer monopolized the admiration of the Lords of the West; yet, as a proof that it had still a few enthusiastic votaries, it may be mentioned, that on this occasion Louis, Count D'Arpajon, a French nobleman,

raised two thousand of his vassals, and, accompanied by a knightly retinue of kinsmen and friends, repair to Malta to offer his services, together with an abundant supply of provisions and munitions of war, to the Grandmaster. Happily, however, the Sultan was induced to abandon his contemplated descent, and turn his arms against Candia; and D'Arpajon, together with the brothers Giles and John Francis de Fay, Counts de Maulevrier, high-born Norman gentlemen, and a Neapolitan lord, who had all been equally forward to take up arms in defence of the banner of Saint John, were dismissed with various honorary privileges, one of which was permission to wear the golden cross of the Order.

Notwithstanding the rigour with which the republic of Venice had several times treated the Order, by sequestrating its possessions on what the knights considered frivolous pretences, the fact of Candia being attacked no sooner became known to the Grandmaster, than he despatched the Maltese squadron to its relief; and during the time the fate of that island remained undetermined, the gallies constantly contributed more or less to its defence. This service, however, the Candiotes were fully entitled to, as the Sultan had been provoked to invade the island chiefly on account of the Venetian authorities having given shelter to the Maltese squadron after the capture of the galleon. To a maritime state like Venice, jealous of its commercial privileges, and proud of its supremacy at sea, the knights, better skilled in warlike enterprises than in nice international distinctions, doubtless often gave legitimate cause of offence; and when it is considered that they were bound, by their vows, to pass their lives struggling for the exaltation of the Cross, and

that, where the battle-shafts flew thickest, there they were likeliest to meet with spoil, it does not become even their most partial annalists to ascribe their alacrity in this instance to an extraordinarily magnanimous impulse. One of the most memorable actions they performed in the war, was at the siege of Candia in 1650. * That city being closely pressed by Hussein Pasha, at the head of a formidable army Balbiano, Admiral of the Maltese gallies, threw himself into the place, along with sixty knights and six hundred men, and undertook to defend Fort Martiningo, a post of great danger. The Turks having established themselves in a demi-lune at the bastion of Bethlem, Balbiano volunteered to the Venetian general to recover the work; and his offer being gratefully accepted, he entered it, sword in hand, at the head of thirty knights, and one hundred of his braves marines. It was at night that this small but resolute band made the assault. Shrouded in darkness they silently mounted the ravelin; and the Turks who occupied it, taken by surprise, were either cut down before they could grasp their weapons, or else driven headlong over the parapet, and forced to abandon the post to its fate. Next day, however, a mine was sprung under it with such fatal effect, that several knights were destroyed. The Chevalier de Sales, nephew of the famous Saint, Francis de Sales Bishop of Genéva, was one of those who were blown up. Falling back into the mine, he was buried to the waist in its ruins. Notwithstanding this disaster, the survivers retained possession of the post; and by one means or other, the besiegers were kept at bay for a considerable time, and finally repulsed. Several

* Rycaut's continuation of Knolles' Turkish History. Vertot and Boisgelin say 1649.

years afterwards (1657), the Maltese squadron, combined with that of Venice, gained a signal victory over the Turkish fleet at the Dardanelles, which the Venetian admiral chiefly attributed to the excellent seamanship and valour of his allies.

While the flag of Saint John was thus upholding its ancient glory in the Eastern sea, Lascaris the Grandmaster was harassed by various domestic cares, inseparable from the supreme office. The chief of these arose from the overweening insolence of the Pope, Urban the Eighth, and his minions, the Inquisitor and Bishop; and from the refusal of the Viceroy of Sicily to allow the exportation of the necessary supplies of corn to Malta. The Grandmaster succeeded in a great measure in checking the arrogance of the inferior ecclesiastical functionaries; but he was so far won upon by the Pontiff individually, that he consented to violate one of the most sacred statutes of the Order, by sending the Maltese gallies to co-operate with the forces of the Church, against certain Italian princes who had entered into a league for the purpose of humbling his Holiness. This indiscreet and highly culpable act brought the Order under the ban of the allied sovereigns, who sequestrated its domains in their respective states; and it cost Lascaris much difficult negotiation to obtain a reversal of these attainders. On a point of minor importance, the Grandmaster showed much more scrupulosity—a proof that trifles sometimes exercise a greater influence over the minds of men than matters involving a great principle. This was in refusing the grand cross of the Order to the son of the King of Tunis, a Moorish prince, who had been converted to the Christian faith—though the application

in his behalf was backed by the Pontiff, a
influence of the court of Spain.

In 1650, the foundation of a library for
fit of the Order was laid at Malta; and a
passed, that the books of the knights shoul
sold after their death like their other effects
warded as public property to the conve
years afterwards, the Grandmaster made a
novel addition to the possessions of the Ord
attention of the civilized world was at that
tensely directed towards the Western hemisp
through the agency of the Chevalier de Poi
mandant of Saint Christopher's in the West In
acted as representative of a company of Fre
chants who held large grants there under th
crown, Lascaris was induced to make a purc
only of that island, but of the neighbourin
of Saint Bartholomew, Saint Martin, and Sai
to which he would have added Guadaloupe
tinico, had it been practicable. The fee-
these possessions, with all the plantations, s
stores upon them, was purchased for about
sand pounds sterling; * but the Grandmast
ed besides to liquidate the debts due by t
proprietors to the inhabitants. The transact
ever, completely disappointed his expectati
on the death of De Poincy, it was discov
he had, from selfish motives, betrayed the
to a most unprofitable speculation. Twe
afterwards, in the Grandmastership of Nich
toner, these transatlantic dependencies we
to other French merchants; and such is th
lous change which industry and commerc

* 120,000 livres.

prise can produce, that, little more than a century subsequent to the date of these transferences, English proprietors were to be found in the same islands, who, from one year's revenue of a single plantation, could have paid the whole purchase-money which the Maltese knights had given for them.

Several incidents, military and domestic, of a less important complexion, which occurred in the Grandmastership of Lascaris, are purposely passed over as inconsequent to a narrative professing only to embrace the nobler achievements of the Order. Lascaris died in 1657; and the Inquisitor, fortified by a Papal brief framed to regulate the succession, formally interdicted the election of the Bailiff Martin de Redin, one of the candidates to the vacant dignity, charging him at the same time with simony and immorality. Faction ran high in the convent; but Redin's partisans, piqued at the restriction attempted to be imposed upon them, supported him so staunchly, that he was declared duly elected. The Inquisitor carried a protest against his election to Rome; but the Pope, considering it impolitic to display direct hostility towards a knight who enjoyed the special favour of the court of Spain, not only acknowledged him as regularly chosen, but compelled the appellant to be the herald of his own discomfiture. There is ample room for suspicion, however, that the charge of simony was not wholly groundless; for the Grandmaster showed his gratitude to his Holiness, by conferring a rich commandery, and a diamond cross valued at twelve hundred crowns, on the Prior de Bichi, the prelate's favourite nephew; and various other commanderies were subsequently bestowed on other members of the Pontiff's family, in gross violation of the statutes of the Or-

der, and to the unqualified disgust of all the unprejudiced members. It is more painful to the conscientious annalist to record these mean infractions of honest principle, than to chronicle great crimes.

Redin died in 1660—leaving behind him no honourable monument of his reign, save a chain of watch-towers with which he had fenced the coast. He was succeeded by Annet de Clermont de Chattes Gessan, who survived his election only three months—the opening of a severe wound which he had received at the taking of Mahometa in Barbary, hurrying him suddenly to the grave. Raphael Cotoner, a Spanish knight, was next advanced to the supreme dignity; and, shortly after his election, the gallies of the Order, combined with powerful succours from Louis the Fourteenth of France, the Pope, and the Duke of Savoy, again sailed to aid the Venetians in the defence of Candia. A Genoese squadron would have joined the armament, had not the ancient pride and rivalry that subsisted between the two republics thrown obstacles in the way, and induced the Venetians to reject the succour, by which, had it been frankly accepted, the island would in all probability have been saved.

The Christian leaders, the chief of whom was a prince of the house of D'Este, who commanded the French troops, with the Maltese knight de Gremonville for his lieutenant, first thought of making an effort to recover the town of Canea; but their force being too small to besiege it in form, they directed their operations against some Turkish forts in the neighbourhood of Suda. Several of them were taken by storm, partly through the bravery of the Maltese battalion; but the campaign terminated without either side gaining any decisive advantage. The Se-

nate of Venice manifested its consideration for the services of the Order, by passing a decree that the knights should be permitted to appear armed in every place within the territories of the Republic—a privilege withheld even from its own subjects.

A malignant fever, which scourged the whole of Malta, cut short the life of the Grandmaster, Raphael Cotoner, in 1663. His prudence, piety, and munificence, had won him the admiration and affection of the whole convent; and, by the unanimous voice of the Chapter, his brother, Nicholas Cotoner, a knight equally distinguished for the qualities that constitute a great commander, was elected his successor—being the only instance, save that of the Villarets, of two brothers having successively enjoyed the Grandmastership. This knight had scarcely entered on the duties of his high office, when he was invited by Louis the Fourteenth to engage in a new enterprise against the piratical States on the Barbary coast. That puissant monarch, fretted by the constant depredations committed on his commerce by the African corsairs, resolved to repress their insolence, by establishing a colony in the heart of their territories; and the Knights of Malta were entreated to aid him in the undertaking. The Maltese squadron, accordingly, joined a French armament under the Duke de Beaufort at Port Mahon, from whence the whole expedition set sail for the African shore (1664). The site which the French monarch had pitched upon for his chief position in the hostile country, was the village of Gigeri, a place between Algiers and Bugia, exactly fifteen leagues from each. It lay close to the sea; and, in its immediate vicinity stood an old castle, situated on the top of an almost inaccessible mountain. The Christians dis-

embarked without opposition; but no sooner did the Moors discover that they were bent on constructing defensive works, than they made several bold attempts to dislodge them; and, after some sharp fighting, compelled the troops to return on shipboard, with the loss, in killed and prisoners, of four hundred men. The unsuccessful result of this expedition was rendered the more galling to Louis, by the loss of one of the ships of war which made part of it, with several troops of horse on board. As to his knightly allies, they soon lost the recollection of the share they had in his disappointment, in the achievement of fresh triumphs. In the following year (1665), the knights, Crainville and Tremicourt, two devoted friends, the one commanding a forty gun ship, the other a frigate of twenty-two guns, encountered in the Channel of Samos, a Turkish caravan, or convoy, consisting of ten ships and twelve saicks, on the voyage from Alexandria to Constantinople. Notwithstanding the great disparity of force, the two knights intrepidly bore down into the midst of the enemy, captured four of the richest vessels, and either sunk or dispersed the rest. About the same time, the knight D'Hocquincourt, while moored off Dolphin Island, was suddenly beset by a fleet of Turkish gallies, carrying troops to Candia, part of whom were promptly disembarked, and assailed him with musketry from the shore, while the flotilla opened a cannonade from the sea. Having crippled the Maltese vessel by their fire, the Infidels attempted to carry her by boarding, but were repeatedly repulsed. Hocquincourt fought like a lion, at the head of his crew; and the Turkish leader, enraged at his obstinacy, ordered a clear passage to be made for his own galley, and his rowers vigorously

plying their oars, ran her fiercely against the Maltese ship. This manœuvre enabled Hocquincourt to take advantage of a breeze which had just sprung up, and clear the land, leaving behind him sanguinary evidence of his bravery in almost every Turkish galley. He himself carried away with him an honourable wound, and forty of his men were slain. * This illustrious knight did not long survive this gallant action. Shortly afterwards, his ship was cast away in a gale, on a rock near the island of Scarpanto; and he perished in the wreck, along with the knight De Grilles, his friend, and one hundred and seventy mariners. Equally disastrous was the fate of the elder Tremicourt, brother of the knight of the same name recently mentioned, who, having attacked two rich Turkish merchantmen off the coast of Egypt, was mortally wounded in the head by a musket-shot on his own deck, and lived only long enough to hear that his comrades were victorious. His brother, filled with grief at his fate, seemed afterwards to have no object in life but to avenge it. But while on a successful cruise, his vessel was hurled by a tempest on the African coast, when he unhappily fell into the hands of the Moors, who, proud of having captured so redoubted a commander, forwarded him to the Sultan at Adrianople. Mohammed the Fourth, who then occupied the Ottoman throne, was so captivated by his noble presence and bearing, his youth, for he was only twenty-two years of age, and the fame of his exploits, that he spared no persuasions to induce him to become an apostate, and enter his service. He even tempted him with the offer of the hand of a princess of the imperial line, and the rank

* Rycaut.

of Capitan Pasha; and when he found persuasion of no avail, had recourse to menaces and tortures. But the fortitude of the Christian knight was equally proof against temptation and cruelty; and he purchased the crown of martyrdom, as nobly as ever had done any of his confreres, when their zeal burned the brightest in the olden time. Mutilated in every limb, his head was at length struck off, and the bleeding trunk cast into the Maritza, as unworthy of a grave.

In 1667, the Turks made another desperate effort to bring the war in Candia to a conclusion. The Grand Vizier Achmet repaired in person to the island, at the head of a large body of fresh troops, and laid siege to the capital, which had long defied every attempt to take it. The Venetians, on their part, again appealed to several Christian princes for aid; and a Maltese armament, which was soon after followed by powerful succours from France, Germany, and the Papal States, was accordingly despatched to their assistance. A dispute as to precedence arising between the knights and the Venetians, the Maltese squadron stood homeward again without firing a gun. * Two years afterwards, however, the knights again unfurled their banner on the Candian coast; and, about the same time, there came from Germany a company of one hundred and fifty chosen and well-armed soldiers, furnished by the Teutonic knights, who once more appeared in the front of battle, side by side, with their ancient rivals in renown, the chevaliers of Saint John. The Maltese battalion employed in Candia at this time, numbered four hundred men, and it suffered so

* Rycaut.

severely in the memorable defence of the capital, where it had a very perilous post to defend, that its commander, the knight Hector de Fay la Tour Maubourg, seeing the desperate situation of affairs, conceived himself justified in directing his attention solely to the safety of the remnant. He did not re-embark, however, till the French, and many of the German auxiliaries, had also abandoned the devoted city, and till every hope of longer maintaining it was extinguished, and it had become one vast and pestilent grave. The departure of this small but valiant band of knights led to an immediate capitulation (1669); and thus, after a war of unexampled ferocity, which lasted twenty-five years, and in which many illustrious commanders from various countries of Christendom perished, did one of the most impregnable fortresses in the world, and the whole island in which it was situated, pass into the hands of the conquering Ottoman. Had not other quarrels conspired to distract the Sultan's attention, and divide his army for the greater part of that time, not even the generous valour which animated the many gallant adventurers who fought in behalf of the Republic could have saved Candia from an earlier fate. The details of the siege of the capital are in a great measure foreign to this narrative, otherwise they would form a striking parallel to the sieges of Rhodes and Malta. A more resolute resistance, or a series of more heroic deeds, the historian has rarely chronicled. *

* Sir Paul Rycaut states, in his continuation of Knolles' Turkish History, that a Captain Scot, a native of Scotland, was taken prisoner by the Turks in this war, and ransomed by the English factory at Smyrna. The same historian also mentions with honour an English captain, called Anand. A part of the fortifications of Candia was styled the Scottish Fort.

The capitulation of Candia led to a permanent treaty of peace between Turkey and the Venetian republic. This event gave the Grandmaster considerable uneasiness; for, conscious how indefatigably he had laboured to circumvent the Turk in all his projects for the subjugation of the island, and how incessantly he had harassed his coasts with hostile inroads, he felt the greatest apprehension that the next exploit of the Ottoman arms would be an attack on Malta. To baffle such an attempt, he invited an eminent Italian engineer, named Valperga, to visit the island; and, under his superintendance, an enclosure called the Cotoner was added to the fortifications (1670). This immense work was little short of three miles in length, and consisted of nine bastions and two demi-bastions, connecting the Isle de la Sangle with the Bourg, and embracing all the heights which commanded the ancient defences of both places; while the area within was sufficiently extensive to contain the whole population of the island, with their cattle and effects. The Grandmaster was generally blamed for the magnitude of the undertaking, as incompatible with the means of the Order; but he boldly commenced the work, and continued to carry it on unintermittingly for ten years. At the end of that period, the total exhaustion of the treasury occasioned it to be discontinued; and thirty years elapsed before any further measures were adopted for its completion. Additions were also made to La Floriana, an advanced work commenced in the grandmastership of Lascaris, for the defence of Valetta; and a new fort, called Ricasoli, was erected on the headland which commanded the entrance of the grand port. At the same time, a lazaretto, which has ever since retained a high repu-

tation, was built on the island in Port Musceit. This institution, however, did not preserve the island from a visitation from the plague, a few years afterwards, which swept off thousands, and almost unmanned the gallies.

The suppression of the Order in England, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, has been mentioned in its proper place. From that time forward, the intercourse between the convent and that country suffered a permanent interruption, and the knights could scarcely be expected to entertain any friendship towards a nation which had treated them with severity and injustice; yet, in 1675, when Charles the Second declared war against Tripoli, and sent an expedition to chastise that piratical state for a succession of depredations on his commerce, the ports of Malta were thrown open for the reception of his fleet, and supplies of all kinds were promptly tendered. The English monarch afterwards gratefully acknowledged this hospitality.

CHAPTER VIII.

Expedition to the Morea—Embassy from Russia—The fo tifications of Malta greatly strengthened—Revolt of th slaves—Ignoble subserviency of the Order—The Malte Gallies—Grandmastership of De Rohan—Earthquake i Sicily—Effects of the French Revolution—Rapacity o the Republican Government—Munificence of the Russia Czar.

THE Grandmaster Nicholas Cotoner, died in 1680 and was succeeded by Gregory Caraffa, a Neapo litan—the only Italian knight who had been electe to the supreme dignity for one hundred and twenty eight years. In the course of the nine years durin which he held the reins of government, the flag o Saint John was repeatedly triumphant on the Turk ish coast. Austria and Turkey were at that tim engaged in a sanguinary and desperate conflict, whicl had led to the invasion of the Imperial territories and the investment of Vienna itself, by a formidabl Turkish army. With the aid, however, of the illus trious John Sobieski, the hero of Poland, the Infi dels were repulsed from its gates with prodigiou slaughter, which encouraged several Christian state to confederate, for the purpose of carrying the wa direct into the Ottoman territories (1684). Th Maltese knights, the Pope, and the Venetians, wer

parties to this league; and their respective squadrons soon spread consternation along the shores of Barbary and the Morea. Prevesa and the island of Santa Maura were taken by the knights; and the combined fleets afterwards attacked Coron, and carried it after a stout resistance. Old and New Navarino, Modon, and Napoli de Romania, were successively besieged and taken; but the last named place did not open its gates till after it had been besieged a whole month. The Seraskier made repeated attempts to relieve it, but was thrice routed under its walls. Nineteen knights, and a great number of Maltese soldiers, perished in these combats. In 1687, the confederates made a descent on the Dalmatian coast, and took Castel Nuovo, a position which gave to Venice the command of the commerce of the Adriatic. In this service the Maltese knights deported themselves so gallantly, that the Pope, Innocent the Eleventh, publicly congratulated the Grandmaster on their conduct. These triumphs, however, were counterbalanced by a bloody check which they sustained, in common with their allies, before the fortress of Negropont, in 1689. Twenty-nine of the bravest knights fell there in an unsuccesful assault; and the Grandmaster was so deeply afflicted by their loss, that distress of mind, combined with severe bodily ailments, hurried him to the tomb (1690).

Caraffa was succeeded by Adrian de Vignacourt, a kinsman of that Alof de Vignacourt, who, nearly a century before, had enjoyed the same dignity, with so much honour to himself and glory to the Order. The sanguinary conflicts in which the Order had been engaged under his predecessor, had swept off a large portion of the male population of the islands,

which were, in consequence, filled with widows and orphans, who had to suffer the miseries of destitution in addition to their irreparable loss. Through the instrumentality of the Grandmaster, a fund was subscribed for their support—an incident more honourable to his memory than if he had died the victor of an hundred fights.

In 1692, the Maltese squadron, in combination with the Papal gallies and a Venetian armament, made a descent on Candia, and laid siege to the important fortress of Canea; but at the end of twenty-four days, the besiegers were forced to abandon the enterprise and the island. In the following year (11th January 1693), Malta was shaken by an earthquake, the oscillations of which continued with more or less violence for three days, and laid several buildings in ruins. The same shocks were felt in Sicily with still greater violence, and the town of Augusta was almost wholly destroyed. No sooner was intimation of this disaster received at Malta, than a squadron was despatched with supplies to the houseless inhabitants—a proof that the spirit of benevolence and mercy still had its residence in the convent, and that the title of Hospitaller was not yet become an unmerited designation.

Adrian de Vignacourt died in 1697, and Raymond Perellos de Roccaful, an Arragonian knight, was elected Grandmaster in his stead. In the second year of his administration, the Order was gratified by friendly overtures from Peter the First, Emperor of Russia, tendered through the medium of an ambassador, who visited the island in a style of princely magnificence, and was received with marked distinction by the convent. This Boyard was named

Kzeremetz; * and in a Latin harangue addressed to the Grandmaster and the knights, described himself as arrived from the hyperborean pole, to pay homage to the heroes of the church-militant—the Maltese knights. The acute mind of Peter had discovered the policy of forming a friendly alliance with a fraternity, which, for five centuries, had been in a state of constant warfare with the Turks—his hereditary adversaries; and he hoped, by this mission, to lay the foundation of an intercourse which should render the knights his staunch auxiliaries, whenever he and the Sultan were at variance. There is even room for suspicion that he contemplated a league with the knights, as likely to secure him a stronghold in the Mediterranean; and that, blended with the admiration of their renown, which he could not fail to entertain, was a deep and mighty scheme of self-aggrandizement. Be this as it may, the knights felt exceedingly flattered by his condescension. His envoy was loaded with honours while he remained on the island; and when he quitted it, his departure was celebrated with all the pomp and circumstance becoming the farewell of the accredited messenger of a puissant prince.

The Grandmastership of Perellos, like that of several of his immediate predecessors, was disturbed by the factious intrigues of the ambitious churchmen, who, as inquisitors, found means to establish themselves within his territories. They bore with impatience the supremacy of the knights, and spared neither the arts of perfidy, nor of superstition, to

* Voltaire calls him Sheremeto. In his credentials, as printed in the *Codex Diplom.* of Sebastian Paolo, he is named as above.

achieve their ends. The arrogance of the Grand Inquisitor Delci at length became so intolerable, that, finding his authority openly contemned and usurped, the Grandmaster appealed to the Pope, and the decision of his Holiness restored something like tranquillity; but the presumptuous priest was permitted to escape unpunished. During the twenty-two years Perellos remained in power, no event of great historic importance was recorded in the archives of the Order. No year passed, it is true, without being marked by some naval triumph; but these were principally conflicts between single ships; and, though highly honourable to the Maltese flag, and disastrous to its enemies, were not of the same significance as those grand combats and expeditions in which whole fleets had been engaged. But though the flag of Saint John was almost invariably victorious, it could not in every instance command fortune. On one occasion, the Bailiff de Spinola, general of the gallies, a veteran knight, after seeing his brother mortally wounded at his side, was run foul of by a Turkish vessel with which he had engaged, when his galley sustained such injury, that she was cast away in a fierce gale which unluckily sprung up at the moment. Spinola himself was saved through the intrepidity of the commander de Javon, captain of another galley; but his brave deliverer, along with three knights and seventy of his crew, unfortunately perished. *

* Vertot and Boisgelin differ in regard to this disaster The former says that it was Javon's galley that was cast away and that he was drowned; the latter, that it was the Admiral who was wrecked, and that 22 knights and 500 men perished in the battle and in the storm together. I have followed Vertot, as far as respects the death of Javon, and the extent of the disaster.

For nearly a century, the Maltese navy had been declining in magnitude; and anxious to restore it to its former strength, the Grandmaster Perellos successfully exerted himself to provide a squadron of decked war-ships, of a size greatly superior to the gallies, the command of which was given to the Chevalier de Saint Pierre, a gallant Norman knight. * This squadron afterwards emulated that of the gallies in the wake of glory; and in 1710, its commander, the Chevalier de Langon, fell in the arms of victory, after having gallantly defeated the admiral of Algiers.

The Grandmaster Perellos died in 1720, leaving behind him various useful public works as monuments of his tranquil and honourable reign. He was succeeded by Mark Anthony Zondodari, a Siennese knight of illustrious birth, and in every respect worthy of the supreme dignity, which he assumed amid the acclamations of the whole convent. Two large corsairs were brought into the port as prizes in the midst of the rejoicings that followed his election; and the happy omen was soon after strengthened by the capture of an Algerine ship of war, carrying eighty guns and five hundred men. But Zondodari did not long enjoy a station which he was so well qualified to adorn. He was cut off by gangrene in the third year of his Grandmastership; and Anthony Manuel de Villena, a Portugese knight of the language of Castile, was elected in his stead (1722).

Villena came into office under circumstances scarcely less auspicious than his immediate predeces-

* He was brother of the celebrated Abbé de Saint Pierre, and author of *Le project pour extirper les Corsaires de Barbarie*, published along with that author's works.

sor. He had filled various subordinate posts with honour, and had repeatedly proved his valour, and shed his blood in upholding the flag of the Order. During the Grandmastership of Perellos, the convent had, more than once, been alarmed by a report that an immense armament was equipping at Constantinople, for the purpose of making an attack on Malta; and both that Grandmaster, and his successor Zondodari, had strengthened the weaker parts of the fortifications, to guard against the threatened descent. Villena, forewarned by a repetition of the rumour, adopted similar precautions. At his suggestion, a considerable fort was erected on the little islet of Marza Musceit, which the Turks had found a most advantageous position at the time of the great siege, while a magnificent series of works was added to the landward defences of the new city. The fort in Port Musceit is still called Fort Manuel, in honour of its founder; for, like most of his predecessors, Villena could not resist the desire of securing historical immortality by means of stone and mortar; but, though one of his names was also bestowed on the other superb bulwarks which rose up under his superintendence, that of the engineer who planned them speedily superseded it, and the whole enclosure is now known only as the Floriana. The good effects of these precautions were soon obvious; for a Turkish fleet of ten ships, which appeared off the port, was so intimidated by the impregnable aspect of the whole island, that, after firing a few guns, and indulging in some empty gasconade, its commander held it prudent to abandon the enterprise. This bravado led to a correspondence between the Grandmaster and the Marquis de Bonnac, the French ambassador at the Porte, which brought on a nego-

tiation that ultimately ended in a formal truce between the Sultan and the Order (1723). The principal stipulations of the treaty were, that the slaves on both sides should be exchanged—that the truce should last twenty years—that the piratical States of Barbary should not be included in it—that the Maltese should enjoy the same privileges as the French in the Sultan's dominions—and that the treaty should be null the moment any Christian potentate went to war with him. The knights defended this arrangement, on the argument, that it would enable them the better to suppress the corsairs who swarmed on the African coast; but, though the treaty was popular at Constantinople, the machinations of several of the principal officers of the Turkish navy, rendered it void, and it never was ratified.

The Grandmaster died in 1736, and was succeeded by Raymond Despuig, a Majorcan knight, whose short reign of little more than four years, embraced no event worthy of being chronicled. Emanuel Pinto de Fonseca, his successor, was descended from one of the most illustrious families in Portugal; and, though his Grandmastership was distinguished by no memorable military exploits, the annals of the Order, nevertheless, describe it as long, prosperous, and glorious. By the Maltese, he was regarded as a wise and beneficent prince; and such was the estimation in which he was held by foreign states, that the Genoese, finding the island of Corsica a troublesome appanage, in consequence of the inhabitants pertinaciously refusing to submit to their laws, contemplated at one time ceding it to the Order. France, however, had long cherished the project of uniting Corsica to her dominions; and the machinations of her statesmen, conjoined with prudential

considerations on the part of the knights, who foresaw that such an acquisition would rather weaken than strengthen their influence, and inevitably embroil them in European politics, prevented the completion of any such arrangement.

But, though venerated both at home and abroad, Pinto, like all his predecessors, had his own share of public cares to harass him; and, strange to say, they originated in that very amenity of disposition which made his subjects bless his yoke. The mildness of his government extended even to the Mohammedan slaves, whom the Order held in bondage, and who amounted to about four thousand. Of these, only a very small number were subjected to confinement. By far the greater portion enjoyed almost perfect liberty, and were received as confidential domestics into the households of the knights, the Grandmaster not excepted, who treated them with the greatest indulgence, and generally found them serviceable and faithful. But slavery is abhorrent to the nature of man; and the bondsman, though the chain that fetters him may be almost invisible, longs not the less ardently to burst it asunder. It happened that a Turkish galley was brought into Malta by the Christian slaves who manned her, who had risen upon their Moslem officers while at sea, and subverted their authority. Among the Turks thus captured was the Pasha of Rhodes, a man of great influence in his own country; and the Grandmaster, anxious to propitiate the French, who were on friendly terms with the Sultan, immediately consigned this distinguished prisoner to the French minister at his court. This ensured the Pasha the treatment befitting a man of his high station. He was lodged in a palace situated in a beautiful garden in the Floriana—his domestics

were restored to him—a princely allowance was made to liquidate his expenses—and, as a proof of generous confidence, he was permitted to receive the homage of the Turkish slaves. Among these was a negro—the very man whose treachery had reduced the Pasha to a state of bondage. This wretch, conceiving himself indifferently rewarded for his former treason, and stimulated by that love of desperate emprise, which either leads to the highest dignities, or to a dishonoured grave, formed the daring project of subverting the government of the knights, and of rendering the Sultan forever his debtor, by putting him in possession of Malta. The Pasha eagerly agreed to promote the scheme, and, assisted by one or two active auxiliaries, gradually concocted a most formidable conspiracy; and that, too, in so secret a manner, that no Christian on the island had even a suspicion of its existence. The conspirators fixed on the festival of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, as the fittest time to carry their designs into execution. On that day, it was customary for the population of Valetta to repair in crowds to the *Cité Notable;* and it was arranged, that, at the hour of the *siesta*, when all who remained within the walls were likely to be overcome with heat and sleep, the principal posts should be stormed, and a massacre commenced. A slave, who held a confidential situation near the Grandmaster's person, was instructed to enter Pinto's chamber, decapitate him in his slumber, and then instantly exhibit the bleeding head in the grand balcony of the palace, as a signal for the slaves of the other knights to follow his example. The leaders of the insurrection felt secure, that, in the midst of the panic which these murders would inevitably create, they would carry the gates, the arsenal, the cavaliers,

and Fort St Elmo; and, once in possession of these, they did not despair of holding out till a fleet from Barbary, which they knew to be at sea, and aware of their project, should appear off the harbour. This deep-laid plot was discovered just in time to prevent its explosion. In a moment of ungovernable passion, aggravated by the fumes of wine and opium, the negro quarrelled with a young Persian, a soldier in the Grandmaster's guard, who was in his confidence, and attempted to poniard him; but the youth fortunately escaped the deadly steel, and, trembling at the danger he had encountered, lost not a moment in disclosing the whole conspiracy. A Jew, in whose house the quarrel had originated, and who was also a party to the plot, instigated by his wife, who had overheard part of the altercation, likewise came forward to secure his own safety, by denouncing the negro; and the latter, being promptly apprehended, a tribunal was summoned to take cognizance of his treason. The sable ruffian not only boldly confessed his crime, but impeached several accomplices, who, in their turn, implicated others. At first, the Pasha's name was held sacred by the whole body of conspirators; but, in the end, he was accused as the lever of the plot; and, had it not been that he was under the protection of France, he would have been torn to pieces by the infuriated populace. He was kept in strict confinement during the remainder of his stay on the island, and between fifty and sixty, some accounts say one hundred and twenty-five, of his accomplices expiated their crime by death. The modes of their death were truly terrible. Some were burned alive, some were broken on the wheel, and some were torn to pieces by four gallies rowing different ways, and each bringing

off a limb. * The annals of Malta state, that several of them, and, among others, the negro and the Pasha's secretary, became converts to the Christian faith immediately before they were delivered over to the executioner, and that they died with manifest signs of penitence; while those who clung to the faith of their ancestors, met the mortal blow as the wolf does, without a quiver or a groan.

The Grandmastership of Pinto, whom an English traveller of the day described as a clear-headed, sensible, little old man of ninety, was lengthened to thirty-two years. Tranquil and prosperous as his reign was, it was fatal to the independence of the Order, which lapsed gradually under the supremacy of France, and was contented to owe to the diplomatic artifices of that power, the immunity from Turkish aggression, which, in former days, its own good swords had won.

The indolence of the Moslems their natural enemies, had been more fatal to them than the bolts and scimitars of Turkish war. "The struggle," says Sonnini, speaking of a somewhat latter date, "had dwindled into a phantom, of which some pitiful expeditions of corsairs kept up the shadow. The caravans or cruises of the gallies were now nothing but parties of pleasure to and from the delicious havens of Sicily; the defence of those superb ramparts, the monuments of the glory of the Order, and of their enemy's shame, was confided to foreign and mercenary soldiers; and that social energy, which had made one of the greatest empires of the universe to tremble, was no longer exemplified except in the sparks of courage struck from a few individuals." †

* Brydone—Tour through Sicily and Malta.

† Trav. in Egypt.

In gratitude for the services of France, in averting invasion from their island, the Maltese gallies made an expedition to the coast of Africa along with the French fleet, and assisted to bombard several piratical ports, but to small purpose. This was the only military exploit that distinguished Pinto's reign; and it may be said to have also been the last enterprise the Maltese squadron was ever engaged in. From that date, its feats were confined to the cruises of a few privateers; but still, such is the force of old impressions, the Maltese name continued so formidable in the Turkish seas, that the appearance of the smallest felucca carrying the flag of the Order, diffused terror along the African and Asiatic coasts. Of the gallies, as they existed at this date, Sonnini, who beheld them in port, has furnished the following superb description. "They were armed, or rather embarassed, with an incredible number of hands; the general alone had eight hundred men on board. They were superbly ornamented; gold blazed on the numerous basso-relievos and sculptures on the stern; enormous sails, striped with blue and white, carried on their middle a great cross of Malta, painted red. Their elegant flags floated majestically. In a word, every thing concurred, when they were under sail, to render it a magnificent spectacle. But their construction was little adapted either for fighting, or for standing foul weather. The Order kept them up rather as an image of its ancient splendour, than for their utility. It was one of those ancient institutions which had once served to render the brotherhood illustrious, but now only attested its selfishness and decay." *

* Trav. in Egypt.

Pinto died in 1773, and was succeeded by Francis Ximenes de Taxada, an aged and superannuated knight. During the two years that he survived his election, his peace was broken by seditious cabals, fomented by the priests, who were incessantly plotting to subvert his authority, and who, at last, supported by a body of Maltese, most of them men of a turbulent and infamous character, and, as some writers assert, by the secret agents of Catherine the Second of Russia, * who, like her predecessor Peter the Great, had an anxious desire to establish herself in the Mediterranean, broke out into open revolt. Four hundred rebels suddenly possessed themselves of Fort Saint Elmo; but the knights, led by the Bailiff de Rohan, promptly retook it, and the ringleaders were delivered over to justice. The Grandmaster, however, never recovered the shock which he sustained on this occasion, and soon after died.

The Bailiff Emanuel de Rohan, of the language of France, succeeded Ximenes as Grandmaster (1775). He was descended from one of the most ancient and most illustrious families of that country, † and had passed his youth in honourable service at the courts of Spain and Parma, which career he ultimately abandoned, from a love of independence, to become a simple Maltese knight. One of his first acts after his elevation, was to strengthen the executive go-

* Mirabeau.

† M. Chateaubriand (the author of Atala) is descended from this great house of Bretagne, if the *Dictionnaire Veridique* may be relied on. The Rohans claimed descent from the ancient sovereigns of that province; and *Henri Quatre* had, through his grandmother, the wife of the Duke d'Albert, a dash of their blood in his veins.

vernment, by the formation of a regular battalion of infantry, composed promiscuously of Maltese and foreigners, but officered exclusively by knights. This step had been strenuously recommended by several friendly powers, as the only mode by which the Grandmaster could preserve his authority; and as it was accompanied by a hint, that, if the Order did not look to its own security, the royal counsellors would take the island under their own protection, the suggestion was promptly adopted. This corps was intrusted with the keeping of La Valette, and the other important forts; while a considerable local force was enrolled to guard the open coast. An effort was also made to improve the financial statutes, and revive the ancient discipline of the Order; and judicious alterations were carried into effect in the courts of judicature, and additional facilities given to public education. Nor, while thus busied in improving the internal administration, did the Grandmaster neglect the foreign policy of the Order. In Poland, he obtained the restitution of some ancient possessions—in Russia, he acquired new ones. In Germany, the circle of Bavaria created for him a new language (1782), which received the name of the Anglo-Bavarian, and was endowed with the confiscated property of the Jesuits to the extent of 170,000 florins—a sum equal to 15,000*l.*; and in France he succeeded to the possessions of the Order of Saint Anthony—a pious association scarcely less ancient than that of Saint John itself. *

The year 1783—the eighth of Rohan's grand-

* Instituted in 1095, for the relief of persons afflicted with leprosy, and virtually abolished by an edict of the French government, forbidding it to receive any more novices, issued in 1768.

mastership—was rendered memorable by an event which filled Europe with consternation, and furnished the knights with an opportunity of exercising, in their fullest significance, those charitable duties which their vows imposed on them. A frightful earthquake ravaged Sicily and Calabria; and, in particular, the towns of Messina and Reggio were laid in ruins; while such of the inhabitants as escaped, being buried in their shattered dwellings, were forced to bivouac in the open country, destitute alike of shelter and subsistence. The Maltese gallies were laid up in ordinary at the time intelligence of this disaster reached the island; but such was the activity displayed in equipping them, that they were made ready for sea in a single night, and instantly set sail for the scene of desolation, under the command of the Bailiff Frelon de la Frelonniere, a noble Breton knight, carrying with them medicines, beds and tents, for the relief of the sufferers. On their arrival off Reggio, they found the earth still oscillating at intervals, and the whole face of the country changed. Mountains had disappeared in one place, and risen up in another; the channels of ancient rivers had become dry, while impassable streams watered plains which had never before boasted of a brook. The inhabitants of one unhappy village, Sylla, had been one and all engulphed by a sudden and marvellous reflux of the ocean; and the whole coast was covered with houseless multitudes, wan, worn, and half naked. The knights landed half their stores for their relief, and then stood away with the remainder for the Sicilian shore. They found Messina a vast pile of ruins—its superb edifices rent or overthrown—its noble quay silent and deserted—and the surviving population wandering, in hopless des-

pondency, over the adjacent fields. Yet, in the midst of this misery, surrounded by the dead and the dying, the knights found the Neapolitan commandant well lodged in a temporary barrack stored with delicate refreshments, and regaling himself with the music of a military band. Conceiving it a point of etiquette that he should accept of no succours from the knights on behalf of the suffering people, until he had consulted the authorities at Naples, he politely declined their benevolent offers to erect an hospital; and their labours, during the three weeks they remained in the port, were confined to surgical aid, and a generous distribution of the provisions which they had on board. Having retouched at Reggio, and landed there the supplies which the commandant of Messina would not condescend to accept, the gallies returned home, followed by the blessings of the thousands whose distresses they had been so prompt to relieve. This is one of the noblest incidents in the later annals of the Hospitaller Knights. It proves that the Christian virtues which shed such a lustre on the Order in the olden time, were not totally extirpated; and that a munificent spirit of hospitality continued to adorn it even in the last years of its decline.

The narrative of the warlike achievements of the Chevaliers of Saint John is now ended—there is not another valorous exploit to record—but it still remains for the historian to detail the cruel circumstances under which the sanctity of the Maltese territory was violated, and which led to the illustrious fraternity of soldier-monks which had, for upwards of two hundred years, exercised over it a clement domination, being subverted, plundered and dispersed, homeless and penniless, over the world. France, the country

which had been, from the days of Raymond Du Puis, the grand nursery and munificent benefactress of the Order, after a series of vicissitudes, unnecessary to be enumerated in this narrative, lapsed into a state of anarchy unparalleled in the history of the world. Ancient institutions were overthrown, the landmarks of hereditary right were annihilated;—blood, innocent blood, deluged the land, and crime alone triumphed. In a revolution specially directed against the overweening ascendancy of aristocratical distinctions, and alike subversive of religious impressions and feudal rights, an establishment, biassed, like that of Malta, on heraldic fame, was not likely long to escape denunciation. The judicious economy with which the possessions of the Order in France were superintended, aggravated the danger, by pointing them out to democratic rapacity as a productive source of plunder. "Scarcely any land in France," says Boisgelin, "was better cultivated than the estates of the Order; they were, indeed, in many parts complete models of rural economy; neither the idle nor the poor appeared in the neighbourhood, the greatest attention being given to employ the former, and relieve the latter." The farms not only embellished the districts in which they were situated, but were a sort of local seminaries, in which the neighbouring peasantry acquired the best practical rules of agriculture. It was not in the nature of events that spoil so tempting should escape confiscation, in a convulsion which shook the land like an earthquake, and dashed down, after fourteen centuries of supremacy, an ancient throne; nor was it possible that the knights themselves, however aware of their jeopardy, and inclined to temporise with the faction ready to lap their blood, should

altogether steer a strictly neutral course in so general a commotion. When a voluntary contribution of the third part of the revenue of every proprietor in France was demanded by Necker, the great financier of the day, to relieve the exigencies of the government, the knights were the first to give in their recognizances, and make the requisite payments; and, subsequently, when the unfortunate Louis the Sixteenth was reduced to a state of beggary, and solicited the Order to mortgage its credit in his behalf, it cheerfully advanced him five hundred thousand livres—thus showing itself as eager to ransom the most unfortunate of the Bourbons from the brutality of his own subjects, as it had been to redeem Saint Louis from the thrall of the Infidels, and Francis the First from the bonds of Spain. The fate of Louis, however, was not to be averted by foreign aid; and the Grandmaster, aware that he stood committed with the dominant factions by his sympathy for the unfortunate king, endeavoured, by manifesting a bustling eagerness to protect the French commerce in the Mediterranean, to deprecate the wrath of those who had compassed his death. But this wavering policy availed him nothing. First, a decree was passed subjecting the possessions of the Order to all the taxes imposed on other property—next it was enacted, that every Frenchman who was a member of any Order of knighthood which required proofs of nobility, should cease to be regarded as a citizen of France—and lastly, by an edict dated the 19th of September 1792, the Order of Malta was declared to be extinct within the French territories, while its possessions were annexed to the national domains. This last decree was passed into a law without one dissentient voice. Terror either rendered the for-

mer advocates of the Order dumb, or stimulated them to stand forward among its persecutors. A pledge was given that the knights should be indemnified by being made pensioners of the nation; but this was burdened with a reservation, that every one enjoying such a stipend should reside in France, a clause tantamount to complete proscription, considering that, to have any title to patrician descent, was, in those days of blood, a sure and speedy passport to the scaffold.

The moment the edict of spoliation was promulgated, the estates of the Order were sequestrated and ravaged. The knights resident at the various commanderies were forced to fly for safety. Those who fell into the hands of the revolutionary authorities were thrown into the state prisons, to wait the pleasure of their persecutors; and it was subsequently proposed, that those who had retired to Malta and other countries, should be outlawed as traitors to their country, on the argument, that they ought rather to have starved in France, than have gone abroad to look for subsistence. The Bailiff de la Brilhane, the Maltese ambassador, repeatedly interposed in defence of his Order; and at last rendered himself so conspicuous, that he was warned that his life was in danger. "I fear nothing," said he, with the magnanimity of an ancient chevalier; "the time is arrived when it is as honourable to die on the scaffold as on the field of battle." A natural cause soon after terminated the life of this intrepid knight, and, in all likelihood, deprived the guillotine of a victim. He was the last Maltese ambassador ever sent to France. To aggravate the indignities heaped on the Order, the Temple, the principal residence of the knights in Paris, was degrad-

ed into a prison, and the discrowned Louis and his unhappy family were incarcerated within its walls.

Sensible of their inability to oppose such a puissant enemy as revolutionary France, the knights abstained from aggravating the antipathy of their persecutors by a formal declaration of war, and tried, rather by acts of courtesy towards the national marine, to deprecate what they could not resist. On one occasion, sixty French vessels, richly laden, wintered in the port of Malta, and the Grandmaster was urged to seize them, by way of reprisal; but he only answered, "that the Order was instituted to suffer injustice, not to revenge it." * Had this humility been genuine, it would have been worthy of the successor of the meek Hospitallers of the Founder's time; but the luxurious habits and love of ease which pervaded the convent in the last years of its existence, leave no doubt that an ignoble policy dictated the Grandmaster's reply. He was aware, that the lazy and debauched lives of many of his knights had degraded the establishment in the eyes of Europe; and trembled therefore to provoke, by open complaints, the ruin that threatened to overwhelm him.

But, though the knights affected to maintain the strictest neutrality in the war in which France and the principal states of Europe were ultimately involved, the French Directory soon saw reason to argue, that they were indirectly parties to the mighty league formed against it. The English and Spanish fleets were permitted to recruit sailors in Malta, the mariners of which were reduced to beggary by the inability of the Order to support

* Reinaglim.

them; and the Directory instantly denounced the proceeding as tantamount to an act of direct hostility, and in due time prepared to revenge it. Meanwhile, the Bourbon dynasty was completely subverted; and the ancient *Oriflamme* of France, after fluttering for a short space in the van of the foreign armies which tried in vain to stem the torrents of republican steel that poured incessantly over the Alps and the Rhine, disappeared from the field. Many Maltese knights shared in this war under the allied banners; and when they found their services no longer of avail against the common enemy in the plains of Italy and Germany, they hurried homeward to their own insular territory, under the impression that all the chivalry of the Order would soon be requisite to man its bulwarks. The Grandmaster received them with open arms, though the impoverished state of the treasury rendered it difficult to make a provision for their maintenance; and it is said, that, with the simplicity of a true hospitaller, he voluntarily reduced the daily expenses of his own table to a single Maltese crown. *

In 1797, the cloud that hung over the prospects of the Order was partially dispelled, by a new patron, who suddenly started up in the person of the Russian Czar. Negotiations had been pending for several years between the Maltese and Russian governments, relative to the possessions of the Order in Volhynia, which province had fallen to the share of Russia on the partition of Poland; but, before they could be brought to a termination, the Empress, Catherine the Second, who commenced them, closed her reign, and Paul the First succeeded to the diadem.

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* Two shillings. Boisgelin.

A passionate admiration of chivalrous renown was one of the characteristics of this eccentric, and, in many respects, unamiable monarch; and, on his accession, the negotiations were resumed under the most flattering auspices. Not only were the claims of the Order to the Volhynian estates fully recognised and confirmed, but various munificent grants were added, to increase their value; while a new priory, called the Grand Priory of Russia, was created, and incorporated with the ancient English or Anglo-Bavarian language. The courier intrusted with the despatches announcing these gratifying events was arrested by the French in his passage through Italy, and his papers taken from him. Their contents were subsequently published by Order of the Directory, by which means they were first made known in Malta. The Grandmaster Rohan was on his deathbed when they arrived, and he died without the consolation of knowing the success of his exertions. He was a simple, generous-hearted, and learned man; and, had the government of the Order fallen to his share in better times, his talents and virtues would have strengthened and adorned it.

CHAPTER IX.

Grandmastership of Hompesch—Paul, Emperor of Russia, declared Protector of the Order—Penury of the State—Invasion of Malta by the French under Bonaparte—Disgraceful Supineness of the Knights—Tumults in the City—Treachery of Ransijat—The Capitulation—Severity of the Conquerors—The Grandmaster Hompesch quits the Island—His Death—A remnant of the Knights retire to Russia—The Emperor Paul elected Grandmaster—Blockade of Malta by the English—Frightful Situation of the Inhabitants—Surrender of the Island to the British—Conclusion.

THE Bailiff Ferdinand de Hompesch, a German knight, succeeded Rohan in the Grandmastership (1797). He was the first Grandmaster ever chosen from the German language, and was destined to be the last genuine Maltese knight who enjoyed that distinction. It is stated by Boisgelin, that he was by no means ambitious of the supreme dignity; but it is certain that he came forward as a candidate for it, and contracted large debts to defray the expenses of his election, the success of which was attributable more to the circumstance of his holding the influential office of minister from the court of Vienna, than to any superior personal qualifications. In fact, matters had arrived at such a crisis, that the French knights, always the dominant party, were one and all anxious

to avoid being advanced to a dignity which had become specially obnoxious in the eyes of their republican countrymen. Bonaparte, who anticipated the vacancy, had, with his characteristic eagerness to regulate the internal affairs of neighbouring states, formed the project, if report be true, of filling it up with the Spanish Prince of Peace; but, ere the intelligence of the death of Rohan reached Madrid, that adventurer had contracted an alliance with a Princess of the blood-royal, and the Grandmastership of Saint John of Jerusalem was no longer regarded as an object worthy of his ambition.

The first act of Hompesch after his installation, was to ratify the convention which the ambassador of the Order at Saint Petersburgh had entered into with the Russian Emperor. An envoy extraordinary was despatched to the Imperial court, where he was honoured by Paul with a public audience. On this occasion, the cross of the redoubted La Valette, which had been preserved in the treasury as a sacred memorial, and several other ancient and sanctified relics, were laid at the Emperor's feet; and the ambassador, in a studied harangue, full of gratitude and laudation, implored his Imperial auditor, in the name of the whole fraternity, to become chief of their establishment, under the title of "Protector of the Order." The Emperor was pleased to accept of the investiture, and allowed the ambassador to brace on him a superb coat of mail which had been brought from Malta for the purpose, and to suspend from his neck the cross of La Valette. The Empress and the heir-apparent were honoured at the same time with the grand cross of the Order, as were the other branches of the Imperial family—a piece of complimentary policy suggested by the criti-

cal situation in which the knights found themselves placed. At the same audience, the Emperor, in virtue of his office of Protector, invested the Prince of Condé, an exiled scion of the Royal Family of France, with the grand cross, and named him Grand Prior of Russia.

There exists not a doubt that Paul, though in many respects an unamiable prince, was sincere in his friendly professions towards the knights; for he not only proclaimed himself their advocate at every European court, but declared, that every favour conferred on them should be regarded as a mark of personal deference and respect towards himself. Meanwhile, it had been proposed in the famous Congress of Rastadt, where the rights of the Maltese Knights were stiffly debated, that the Order of Saint John should be consolidated with the Teutonic Order. The Knights of Malta were rather favourable than averse to this proposition—indeed, they solicited it as the only means of preservation; for, in their misfortunes, they saw not how they could better defend the few rights they yet possessed, than by a union with a puissant and independent establishment, nearly as ancient, and constituted on the same principles, as their own. It is more than probable, however, that, had the negotiations proceeded, the conjunction would have been defeated by the aversion of both Orders to sink their own specific name; and certainly it could scarcely have been expected by the Teutonic Knights, that a fraternity so illustrious as that of Saint John should willingly agree, whatever might be the difficulties that oppressed it, to merge in the title of a strange Order, that proud historic designation under which it had gained all its glory.

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there was a public debt to the amount of
of French livres; and so low was the
Order, that no person would advance a
to relieve it.

The first division of the French fleet, the destination of which had, for several months, kept the whole of Europe in suspense, arrived before the Port of Malta on the 6th of June 1798. It consisted of seventy transports and several frigates, and made a formidable display—greatly to the disquietude of the knights and islanders, among whom incendiaries disseminated startling and treasonable rumours with marvellous activity. Commodore Sidoux, the commander, seeing the batteries ready to salute him with a shower of balls the moment he ventured within their range, sent a message on shore, expressive of his wish to preserve the strictest neutrality, and merely entreating, that several small vessels might be admitted into the port, to undergo some trifling repairs, prior to prosecuting their voyage to Egypt—the ultimate destination of the fleet. This request was of course complied with, and no efforts were spared, on the part of the French leaders, to inspire the knights and people with false confidence in their amicable intentions. On the evening of the 9th of June, the grand division of the squadron also furled sail in the offing, having on board General Bonaparte the commander-in-chief of the expedition. The arrival of this redoubted soldier, whose victories and vicissitudes have since filled the world with wonder, was the signal for terminating the hollow and indecisive intercourse that had arisen between his vanguard and the Maltese authorities. He instantly instructed the French consul to demand free and immediate access to all the ports for the whole fleet, with liberty to debark; and though the Grandmaster summoned resolution to reply, that such a request could not be complied with, the city was thrown into a state of indescribable agitation. The

French consul Caruson, who carried this to the General, did not return, which left signs of his countrymen no longer doubtful therto a fatal lethargy had pervaded the counte now, when the hostile intents of the French were explicitly indicated, a feeble effort was m prepare for resistance. The militia were ins to arm—palisades were formed at several p and the contents of the powder-magazine in closure of the Cotoner, were ordered to be r into the city. The seditious reports indus propagated among the troops and citizens, pr this transference from being satisfactorily acco ed. Neither mules nor waggons were to be and latterly a few knights had to perform th Next day, the French troops were observed ing into long boats in order to land; and at rilous juncture, the knight Bosredon de B secretary to the treasury, sent a letter to the master, requesting that the keys of his offic be intrusted to another keeper, and that h have a place appointed for him to remain in the action, as neither his duty nor his inc would allow him to fight against the French pily this open defection was not imitated other knight. Ransijat was immediately s and confined in the castle of Saint Angelo, rest of the knights hurried with seeming als their different posts.

The French debarked at Magdalen Creek, evening on the 9th of June. The small but in tower of Saint George, in the vicinity of the place was carried without the loss of a singl one cannon-shot only being fired by the fals who commanded it. Throughout the whole

following night, the firmament was brightened with the signal-rockets sent up incessantly from the fleet, which extended along the whole north-eastern coast of the island, from Goza to Marza Sirocco. At daybreak on the 10th, fresh bodies of troops were thrown ashore at seven different points; and at none of them did the invaders encounter any thing like resistance, save at Goza, where the knight De Megrigny commanded. Considering that the French men-of-war kept so far out at sea, as to be unable to cover the landing by their fire, under an impression that the Maltese were prepared to receive them with red-hot shot, and showers of stones fired from the *fougaces*, or rock-mortars by which the weak parts of the coast were defended, there is no other way of accounting for the non-resistance of the islanders than by ascribing it to the foulest treason. The force on the island was by no means despicable. There were 200 French knights, 90 Italian, 25 Spanish, 8 Portuguese, 4 German, and 5 Anglo-Bavarian—in all 332, fifty of whom, however, were incapacitated, by age and infirmities, from active service. The regular troops amounted only to about 3300; but the Maltese militia might easily have been brought to muster ten thousand men. The *fougaces*, of themselves, were sufficient to have done murderous execution on the invaders. They were a kind of mortars hollowed in the solid rock, and calculated to range so as to throw their charge on the spot likeliest to be selected for debarkation. It required a barrel of gunpowder to load one of them, and stones were crammed over the charge till they quite filled the piece. The mortars, fired by a match, threw this marble hail many hundred fathoms; and men, boats, and even ships within their range, were exposed

to certain destruction. Their immoveability of course rendered them less effective; but still their very magnitude and novelty were calculated to excite dread in the breasts of the invaders, had the islanders had resolution to employ them. *

From the moment the French vanguard touched the beach, no man, knight, servitor, or slave, thought of resistance. The renown of the republican arms—those arms which had been reddened with the bravest blood of Italy and Germany—was known in every corner of the island; and the warrior monks, whose mailed predecessors had, for seven centuries, kept at bay the savage chivalry of Syria and Turkistan, were panic-stricken, or suborned, and simultaneously abandoned their forts and batteries. Some of Bonaparte's biographers go so far as to assert, that the few shotted cannon that were fired, were fired only for formsake, to save, forsooth, the honour of the knights. † Alas! that the last relics of chivalry in Christendom should stoop to so mean a subterfuge for salvation!

The French soldiers, with their usual license, instantly began to lay waste the island; and it was only then that the native militia, seeing their hearths violated, took courage from despair, and slew several of the marauders. The brigades of Generals Lannes and Marmont first arrived within cannon-range of the city of La Valette, into which the country people were flocking by thousands, filled with suspicion and despair. Rumours of treason among the knights were inculcated and credited by the populace, who manifested their indignation by menacing cries, and general

* Brydone et Boisgelin.
† Bourienne. Memoirs of Napoleon.

insubordination—a spirit which rapidly extended to the troops, and became more and more developed as unfavourable reports poured in from the distant posts. News first arrived that the Nasciar intrenchment, a work of considerable importance in the interior, had been abandoned by the battalion appointed to defend it; and next, that the Cité Notable, into which the fugitives had retired, had surrendered to the French General Vaubois—the *Hakem Testaferrata* or governor having voluntarily delivered up the keys, before he was even summoned to open his gates. The abandonment of the Nasciar intrenchment cut off all communication between the country and Valetta; and the inhabitants beheld the French leaguer established under their very walls. A trifling diversion was made at the mouth of the Grand Port by a small squadron commanded by the Chevalier de Soubiras, and a sally was also attempted to the landward with nine hundred chosen men; but neither mariner nor soldier deported himself with his wonted bravery, and both enterprises failed.

At mid-day on the 10th, every fortified post in the country, except the tower of Marza Sirocco, had the French flag floating over it. Eighteen French knights, who had fallen into the hands of the enemy, were carried before General Bonaparte, who, with that abrupt arrogance which formed so remarkable a feature in his character, exclaimed, "What! am I constantly to meet knights in arms against their country? I will not accept of you as prisoners, but have given orders to have you all shot." This menace, however, was not carried into effect; on the contrary, the prisoners had no reason to complain of the treatment they afterwards met with.

Meanwhile, the tumults which prevailed within

the city became hourly more appalling. Stir
revolt by the reports of treason, which the en
of the French indefatigably propagated, th
proceeded to open acts of violence, and many
fell victims to their reckless indignation. Th
of the Grandmaster itself was stained with l
blood; and those whom the assassin's dag
not deprive of life, were exposed to the gro
sults. The troops ultimately interfered, and
some degree of tranquillity; but, from that 1
the influence of the Order became totally
tive, and resistance ceased to be contemplate

The besieged passed the night of the 10th
by insurrectionary alarms, and by the sound
own cannon, which continued to fire on the a
posts of the enemy after the sun had set.
morning of the 11th, the disorders of the pr
day were renewed—groups of desperate men
ed the city, vociferously demanding the lives
knights whom the French incendiaries had
them to regard as traitors; and these, un
were the very men in whom the only ren
public virtue was now to be found. To
the general consternation, two Greek vessels
had been permitted to enter the port as
traders, at the time the French fleet first a
in the offing, were discovered to be filled with
lican soldiers and arms, which were intende
put into the hands of the disaffected. The d
of this treachery drove the populace to fury;
ber of the false sailors were massacred, while
mainder were made prisoners, and the militar
on board the vessels were seized as fair spoil.

It was at this alarming epoch, when all
confidence was at an end, when confusion an

der triumphed in every quarter, and when the militia, suborned from their duty, lawlessly shot each other in the streets, that a few of the better order of citizens, heading a body of their more pacifically disposed brethren, repaired to the palace of the Grandmaster, and, again acknowledging him as their sovereign, implored him to put an end to the anarchy that prevailed, and instruct them how the city might best be defended. Had a L'Isle Adam, or a La Valette, held the supreme dignity—had the feeble-minded Hompesch himself but had the resolution to brace on the armour in which the latter had battled so victoriously against the Ottoman host, and show himself thus harnessed to the multitude, Malta would not have been lost without one honourable effort for its redemption. But he answered the deputies evasively and distrustfully, that he would take the advice of his council as to suppressing the outrages of the soldiery; and the hour of generous reaction passed away, never more to return.

The sun went down, leaving the city a prey to tumult and despair. Fire-arms were discharged momentarily in different parts, and bands of desperadoes congregated, ready for deeds of violence, in every street. The Grandmaster ordered the armed patroles to be strengthened, but this only filled the populace with greater indignation; and from listening to the complaints shouted around them, the soldiers gradually came to sympathize with the disaffected. Next day, a vast multitude, including men of all grades, from the noble to the humblest artisan, bent on annihilating the Grandmaster's sovereignty, forcibly invaded his palace; and, after reproaching him with the treason of his knights, the inefficiency of his orders, and all the evils that the general insurrec-

tion had brought upon them, boldly announced, th they had subscribed a paper in presence of the Dut consul, delivering the city into the hands of t French; and that they held the authority of t knights as terminated. The Grandmaster had r the power of resenting this audacious usurpati of his rights; for the rebels walked fearlessly a triumphantly through the apartments of his pala He could only agree to summon a council; and t malecontents, disposed the one moment to surrend and the next to repose on their ancient governme and die on the ramparts, departed, to be betray by the seditious into new crimes.

While the council was assembling, the tumults r commenced. The knights, on their way to the p lace, were grossly insulted, and their lives endange ed; and, among others, the Chevalier O'Hara, t Russian envoy, whom a generous impulse had hu ried into the midst of the insurgents, with the ho of persuading them to return to their duty, narrow escaped falling a martyr to his honourable zeal. T Grandmaster intimated, that he had at length r solved to try the effect of haranguing the people person, and of taking his station at the advanc post of the Floriana; but the parasites, who clu round him, basely opposed this proposition, on th argument, that his life was too valuable to be rash hazarded—an argument which, in such circumsta ces, none but a craven could have entertained. I the midst of these deliberations, a tumult was hea rolling onward to the palace. The air resound with shouts of "Liberty!"—"Equality!"—ar "Long life to Ransijat!" and that false knigh forcibly liberated by the populace, was borne on the shoulders to the doors of the council-chamber, whe

a formal demand for admittance was made; as also, for a sight of a letter, which, it was known, the council was employed in framing to the French commander, soliciting an armistice of twenty-four hours. Both these demands were granted, as was a third, that several Maltese deputies should accompany those of the Order commissioned by the council to repair to the French head-quarters.

The application for an armistice was so framed as to be virtually a surrender at discretion. General Bonaparte answered it briefly, that he would enter the city on the following day, and would then condescend upon the manner in which he was to treat the Grandmaster and his brethren. The Maltese deputies brought back with them several French officers, who began, without ceremony, to prepare for their General's entrance. Better than his word, Bonaparte entered the same evening. As he passed through the formidable works which defended the landward side, General Caffarelli, one of his suite, significantly remarked to him, "It is well, General, that there was some one within to open these gates to us. We should have had some trouble in entering if the place had been altogether empty." The Grandmaster expected that the victor would at least pay him the compliment of a visit; but the French General held that the compliment should be reversed, and at the end of several days, Hompesch so far subdued his pride, as to show him that deference, by which he subjected himself to an interview, characterized only by cold formality and stately neglect.

By the articles of capitulation, the knights renounced, in favour of France, the sovereignty of Malta, and its dependencies. In lieu, the French republic pledged itself to exercise its influence to se-

cure the Order another principality; and in the mean while, it bound itself to pay the Grandmaster an annual pension of 300,000 livres, and each French knight resident in Malta, a similar yearly allowance of 700 livres, with three hundred livres additional to every knight who exceeded sixty years of age. It also engaged to use its influence with the Cisalpine, Ligurian, Roman, and Helvetian republics, to grant like pensions to the knights in their respective territories; and further to employ its credit with the other European powers to secure to the knights of each nation their right over the property of the Order, situated beyond the French jurisdiction. The knights were, moreover, permitted to retain their private estates; and the Maltese were assured that their religion, their privileges, and their property, should be held inviolable, and that no extraordinary taxes should be imposed. The commander, Bosredon de Ransijat, stood at the head of the subscribers of this humiliating capitulation. Four influential citizens, all Maltese, with the Bailiff de Turin Frisani, a Sicilian, and the Chevalier Philip Amat, the Spanish charge-d'affaires, also appended their names. Thus was the dissolution of the Order consummated.

The French no sooner found themselves uncontrolled masters of the island, than they proceeded to regenerate it in the true spirit of republican fraternization. A provisional government and municipality were formed, and the laws of the Directory introduced. The Commander de Ransijat received, as the reward of his perfidy to the Order, the appointment of president of the new administration; but he exercised his functions under the surveillance of a commissary of the Directory, who exacted the most servile submission to his will. At the conquest of Rhodes, the Turks, filled with respect for the valour of the

warriors who had so bravely resisted them, spared the armorial sculptures, commemorative of Christian chivalry, with which that city was adorned, and many of them remain undefaced to this day. The chivalry of republican France, more barbarous than the legions of the Ottoman, tore down or obliterated every record of patrician ancestry and heroic exploit —an act of vandalism almost incredible on the part of an army which carried with it to the land of the Ptolomies and Cleopatras, a chosen band of literati and artists, professedly pledged to fling a shield over the remains of antiquity, and to atone to the world, by their scientific labours, for the blood and tears which their expedition was likely to cause be shed.

One of the first acts of the new government, was to enjoin all the knights to quit the island within three days. The Chevalier O'Hara was only allowed three hours to prepare for his departure, while the Portuguese knights were restricted to forty-eight. The impossibility of this harsh edict being complied with, rendered it necessary to modify it, particularly in regard to the aged and infirm. About ten pounds Sterling (240 livres) was advanced to each knight for the expenses of his journey, but he was not permitted to depart until he had torn the cross, the emblem of his Order, from his breast, and mounted the tricoloured cockade. The citizens also were speedily made to feel the oppressive yoke under which they had fallen. The French fleet being in want of sailors, a general press was ordered, and the whole able-bodied mariners on the island, together with the Grandmaster's guard, and all the enrolled soldiers, were swept away. Promises were made that their wives and families, who were naturally filled with despair at their seizure,

should be supported during their absence; but these were speedily violated and forgotten.

Humbled to the earth by these proceedings, the Grandmaster made haste to quit a residence which republican insolence had rendered intolerable; but, no sooner were his intentions promulgated, than he was beset by a host of creditors, all clamorous for the settlement of their demands. In these circumstances, he claimed the plate of his palace, and of the different inns, together with the jewels preserved in the treasury of the Order; but Ransijat and his coadjutors answered, that the whole had become public property, and that all that could be granted to him was a pecuniary equivalent. To facilitate the degraded chief's departure, six hundred thousand French livres were accordingly advanced, as an indemnification—three hundred of which were handed over to his creditors. He was not even allowed to carry with him the archives of the Order. All that republican rapacity consented to spare, were a part of the true cross, which the knights had brought with them from the Holy Land, the hand of Saint John, presented by the Sultan Bajazet to the Grandmaster D'Aubusson, and a miraculous image of the Holy Virgin of Philerme. Even these relics, regarding the genuineness of which, it were idle to institute an inquiry, were not given up until they had been completely stripped of the valuable ornaments with which chivalrous superstition had surrounded them.

Hompesch embarked on the night of the 17th of June. He took his passage on board a merchantship bound for Trieste, and a French frigate convoyed him, more from policy than from respect, as far as Meleda, on the Dalmatian coast. Twelve knights, the majority of them commanders, and two servants-

at-arms, accompanied him into exile. The voyage lasted thirty-nine days; and so heartly sickened were the party of each other's society, that the Grandmaster resigned his office the moment he landed, and separated himself for ever from the companions of his flight. Of this weak man, who died in obscurity at Montpellier in 1804, aged sixty-two, nothing further need be said. He had forced himself into an office for which nature had not qualified him; and he expiated his vainglorious error, by being obliged to acknowledge it in times of difficulty and disgrace.

The French expedition, with General Bonaparte at its head, weighed anchor from Malta on the 19th June, two days after the Grandmaster's departure. Four thousand men under General Vaubois were left on the island. The rarities found in the public treasury and in the churches, together with the standards and trophies of the Order, were all carried away by the spoilers; but these relics never reached the country for which they were destined. Part of them perished in the *Orient*, the French flag-ship, which was blown up in the memorable naval battle of Aboukir; and the rest were captured by the English in the *Sensible* frigate, which shortly after fell into their hands. Considering the hopeless debasement of the Order—so lamentably indicated by the treason and total absence of public magnanimity that pervaded all ranks—it is not surprising that many of the knights readily enlisted under the French banner—some to perish, as many of their predecessors had done, on the sands of Egypt; others to close their eyes before the walls of Saint John D'Acre—that city which the valour of the ancient Hospitallers had immortalized—and which, on that occasion, the valour of a single British knight, Sir Sidney Smith, may be said to have saved. The

fate of those who, on the faith of the capitulation, sought an asylum in France, was still more deplorable. They were refused entrance into the ports where they wished to land; and many of them, reduced to the condition of beggarly wanderers, died from actual privation. Nor did Rassijat himself escape the contumely and destitution that perfidy and apostacy almost invariably bring in their train. Treated with neglect by the republic, though he had bartered his honour to serve it, and scouted even by his own kindred for his notorious want of faith, his last solace was taking up the chronicler's pen, and venting in futile recriminations, the bitterness of spirit which disappointed ambition had engendered. *

The knights who followed the most prosperous course at the general dispersion, were those who took refuge in the Russian dominions, under the wing of their Imperial protector. Filled with boundless gratitude for the benefactions he heaped upon them, and eager at once to gratify him, and to place a broader shield between themselves and their oppressors, they constituted themselves a regular chapter, and declared Paul to be their "most Eminent Master," "their sovereign Prince." Paul, who had long entertained a keen anxiety to obtain this now almost nominal dignity, graciously acknowledged the tender; and he was solemnly inaugurated as the seventieth Grand-master of the Order (1798). At the same time, the standard of Saint John was hoisted permanently on the bastions of the Admiralty at Saint Petersburg, where it continues unfurled to this day.

An election, which placed a prince bound by matrimonial ties, and beyond the pale of the Catholic

* Journal du Siege et Blocus de Malthe.

church, at the head of the Order, shattered at once the very basis on which it was founded—indeed, as the act of a few refugee knights, who, in their despair, grasped at a reed, in the hope that it would support them, some writers argue, that it ought to form no part or parcel of the legal proceedings of the Order.* Be this as it may, the election was bitterly reprobated by the Pope; and the Elector of Bavaria, to get rid of the dis-

* This was not the first instance, however, in which the statutes were set aside in favour of schismatics. So far back as the grandmastership of Fulk de Villaret (1309), the knights of the bailiwick of Brandenburg, instigated by ambitious views, separated themselves from the Order, and, taking advantage of the disputes which had broken out in the convent, in consequence of the irregular election of Maurice de Pagnac, declared themselves independent, and chose a superior of their own, to whom they gave the title of Master. This schism was not settled till 1382, when, by a formal treaty, the Brandenburgers were allowed to retain the nomination of their chief. But, at the Reformation, they adopted the new mode of worship, which again embroiled them with the convent; and, by the peace of Augsburg, they were exempted from the payment of all future taxes to Malta, on the simple arrangement, that they should remit thither 2400 golden florins in a slump sum. The royal family of Prussia subsequently took the bailiwick under its protection, and afterwards some prince of that house constantly held the superiority. It was not till the reign of Frederic the Great that the bailiwick resumed its amicable relations with Malta. In 1763, through the instrumentality of that monarch, it was arranged, that the intercourse with Malta should be renewed, and that the Brandenburgers should pay their responsions into the treasury in the same manner as the Catholic commanders. From that date, the Protestant knights were treated as brethren. By the statutes of the bailiwick, the postulant must be a native of Germany, and a Protestant—though this rule has not been strictly adhered to. Sonneburg, a small town thirteen German miles from Berlin, is the principal place of residence. The knights wear a scarlet uniform, with white lapels, cuffs, and collar, and metal buttons, bearing a cross with eight points. The golden cross differs from that worn by the Ca-

putes in which it involved him, abolished the Order in his dominions. Paul entered on his duties with alacrity, by instantly creating a new Russian priory for his Greek nobles, which he provided abundantly with rules and statutes, and generously endowed. His election was formally notified to all the Courts of Europe; and the whole nobility of Christendom were invited to become knights of the regenerated Order, on production of the requisite gentilitial proofs. Paul also, at first, contemplated sending a military force to co-operate with the English and Neapolitans in the reconquest of Malta; but events, over which he had no controul, defeated the project; and, by one of those sudden mutations in policy, for which modern times have been so remarkable, the troops who were to have acted as the auxiliaries of England in the expedition, were ordered to hold themselves in readiness to traverse the wastes of Central Asia, and assail the British possessions in the East—an enterprise, however, which was wisely abandoned.

Meanwhile England, single-handed, prepared to wrest from republican France the storied rock on which the tricolour had been so easily planted. Three months of bondage were sufficient to convince the Maltese, that they had exchanged an enfeebled dspotism for a yoke of extreme rigour. A licentious soldiery harassed the inhabitants, whose complaints procured no redress—the wives and children of those Maltese soldiers and mariners, who had been pressed into the French service, were left without the

tholic knights, having the Prussian eagle in the four angles, of white enamel, instead of the *fleur de lis*. The bailiff takes his oath of allegiance to the King of Prussia. He is the first prelate in the electorate, and his revenue amounts to about 30,000 crowns.—Vide Boisgelin. Hist. Malta.

subsistence guaranteed them—bands of disorderly malecontents, many of them sailors out of employment, wandered up and down, to the terror of all who had property to lose, or who loved tranquillity—faith was violated with the public creditor—all pensions were provisionally suspended—and the charitable benefactions to the indigent, which the knights had continued till the hour of their surrender, and which, in loaves alone, amounted to four hundred daily, were entirely withheld. Moreover, the regulations of the *Monte de Pieté*, or public pawnbrokery, were remodelled in a manner that acted oppressively on the people—and copyholds, which had formerly been held for three generations, were declared extinct at the expiration of one hundred years, by which law many were brought to an immediate termination. So obnoxious was the latter regulation, that it had not been promulgated many days when the authorities found it prudent to modify it. Many minor acts of injustice and oppression, contributed to inspire the subjugated islanders with an invincible antipathy to the government of their conquerors; and, at length, the sacrilegious rapacity of the French agents produced a sudden burst of popular vengeance. An attempt was made to despoil a church in the Cité Notable, in order that its decorations might be sold for the public service; whereupon the inhabitants, rendered furious by a proceeding so opposed to their religious prepossessions, congregated in a body to prevent the sale. The French commandant Masson, succeeded in partially suppressing the tumult; but he regarded it as so serious, that he lost no time in despatching a messenger to Valetta for fresh troops. Before these could arrive, however, a second insurrection took place; and the

inhabitants, reinforced by the population of the canal Zebug, suddenly rose on the French detachment, which amounted only to sixty men, and massacred it, along with its commander. This was the signal for a general revolt. In twenty-four hours, every casal in the island was in arms, together with the whole population of Goza.

General Vaubois was not long in ascertaining the full extent of the insurrection. Two hundred men, whom he sent to reinforce the massacred garrison, were driven back with loss; and several French partisans of distinction were slain, while endeavouring to reach Valetta. The inhabitants of the Bormola, the fortified suburb which connected the Boing and the Isle de la Sangle, caught the infection; and a conflict, not unattended with bloodshed, took place within the walls. From that moment, all communication ceased between the city and the interior; and Valetta assumed the aspect of a place reduced to a state of blockade.

Five days after this revolt became known, the *Guillaume Tell*, French man-of-war, and two frigates, arrived from Egypt with intelligence, that a mighty naval battle had been fought with the British squadron under Lord Nelson, in the Bay of Aboukir, and that the French fleet was destroyed. Thus forewarned, the French commander proceeded to replenish his stores, and prepare for the blockade which he saw at once would follow an event which gave the English entire possession of the Mediterranean. An attempt was made to conciliate the insurgents; but the individuals employed to conciliate them never returned. The resolution of the Maltese was taken; and the promise of a general pardon *could not* win them to swerve from it.

Matters were in this state, when the English fleet furled sail in the offing; and, in combination with a Portuguese squadron, held a parley, in which it was demanded that the island should be instantly evacuated. The answer returned was one of defiance; and a rigorous blockade was forthwith commenced. Exasperated at being thus imprisoned, and deprived by the vigilance of the islanders of fresh provisions, the French made a fierce sally as far as the casal Zabbar, with the intention of laying it waste, but were repulsed, and forced to seek safety within the fortifications. It was at this time that the Maltese, looking back with regret to the government of the knights, despatched an invitation to Hompesch to return and resume the sovereignty. That feeble-minded man, however, declined placing himself in so perilous a situation; and though several knights, less careful of their personal safety, re-embarked for Malta with the intention of heading the insurgents, their ardour cooled in the course of the voyage, as did the anxiety of the Maltese for their arrival, and the enterprise was abandoned.

The Portuguese admiral, who was left to maintain the blockade singly during the transient absence of the English squadron, having threatened to bombard the city, many of the inhabitants were permitted to quit it at their own request—the garrison being glad to get rid of them, in order that the demands on the provision stores might be lessened. On the return of the English admiral, he a second time summoned the place to surrender, with a pledge that the garrison should have a safe convoy to France; but Vaubois again returned a laconic and positive defiance. From that day the city was so closely invested, that in the course of three

months only three small barks from Sardinia, and an advice boat from Toulon, succeeded in entering the harbour. Early in December a third summons of surrender, accompanied by a threat of bombardment, was intimated; and again laconically, and firmly contemned. Hitherto, the city had been only partially cannonaded by a few guns; but on the night succeeding this refusal, several new batteries were unmasked, and some balls happening to fall within the works, the inhabitants believed that the menace of bombardment was about being put in execution. Famine, moreover, began to stare them in the face; and many who were previously loth to depart, now gladly availed themselves of the commandant's permission to escape into the country from the horrors of a siege, and the insatiability of military rapacity, which, as the aspect of affairs waxed more and more desperate, became cruelly ingenious in its operations. At the end of four months, the countenances of many "bore marks," says Ransijat * "of the cruel privations to which they were subjected;" and even the most zealous partisans of the French, felt their sympathy excited by the general misery and despair. In these circumstances, the self-emancipated bands who held the interior of the island, planned an enterprise of a rather extraordinary description, by which, knowing the garrison to be too weak to defend the city at all points, they hoped to carry it at midnight by a coup-de-main. A strong body of the citizens were involved in the plot, and prepared to rise in arms against their foreign tyrants, the moment they heard the clangour of arms on the battlements. Favoured by the night, two hundred Mal-

* Siege et Blocus de Malthe.

tese from the country crept into the ditches and along the sea-shore, close under the city walls; but, while lying in ambush ready to plant the scaling ladders with which they were provided, two French officers, who had remained till a late hour in Valetta, in passing to Fort Manuel, in which they were quartered, discovered the skulkers, and instantly gave the alarm. Thirty-four conspirators were apprehended, and, among others, Gulielmo, a Corsican, renowned for his intrepidity, who had concerted the attack. This man and forty-three others were condemned and shot by the French authorities. They were all men of mean condition, not so much as one Maltese noble having sufficient hardihood to join in the plot, though the hatred they secretly nourished against their oppressors was deep and implacable.

In order to cheer the drooping spirits of the Maltese, and convince them of the sincerity of his sympathy, the English Commodore took them under his immediate protection. Encouraged by his support, the besiegers planned an attack on the Cotoner; but it proved abortive. The blockade had now lasted for six months, and the city exhibited scenes of frightful privation. The majority of the sufferers would gladly have quitted the town, and joined the besiegers; but the latter, aware that their departure would be a relief to the garrison, harshly drove them back within the gates. Disease, particularly scurvy, added its ravages to the general suffering; and soldiers and citizens were alike mown down by its fatal sweep. In the course of the first year of the blockade, only fifteen vessels with supplies were able to enter the port. Still, so greatly was the population reduced, that, in September 1799, the French calculated that they had yet a suffi-

ciency of grain to last them for other twelve months. At this date, a pound of fresh pork brought six shillings; salt meat two shillings and a penny; fish, of the coarsest kind, two shillings and twopence; a fowl fifty shillings; an egg eightpence; a pound of sugar eighteen shillings and fourpence; a rat one shilling and sevenpence. Even the flesh of mules and asses was greedily purchased. Happily, a scarcity of water was not added to their calamities. The canals that conveyed that necessary element from the interior had indeed been cut away; but the private tanks continued to furnish a steady supply.

Month after month passed heavily over. In August 1800, the citizens being totally beggared, and the treasury nearly empty, the garrison was put on half-pay. Still, trying as was their situation, the buoyant spirit of the French soldiers never deserted them. They made gardens in the fortifications, and raised fruit and vegetables to ameliorate their situation. Four months afterwards, their pay was entirely stopped, and their rations further lessened; yet still they performed their duty as became good troops, supported by hopes adroitly propagated by their commander, that supplies would soon arrive; and, by the glory which the voice of rumour from time to time assured them, the French armies were reaping on the Italian plains. The ancient chevaliers of Saint John themselves never, even in the days of their greatest renown, made a more obstinate defence.

At length this gallant stubbornness began to decline. Intelligence arrived that a squadron of store-ships from Toulon had been captured by the English; and General Vaubois, disheartened at the news, called a council of war, to deliberate on what

should be done; but its resolutions were of an unimportant description. Deplorable as the condition of the city was, the General had hitherto found it advisable to retain in pay a company of comedians; but now sheer beggary and famine compelled him to dispense with their services. Several amateurs, however, supplied their place; and still the French soldier chattered and laughed at stage-jokes, though surrounded by death and desolation. The population, which had numbered forty thousand souls at the commencement of the blockade, had now dwindled down to little more than seven thousand; and all fear of insurrection having evaporated, the people were, greatly to their joy, allowed once more to make use of the church-bells, an indulgence which, for precautionary reasons, had been previously interdicted. At length General Vaubois acceded to a request of the Marquis de Nissa, the Portuguese Admiral, to be admitted to a private interview; but as the Frenchman refused to listen to a word about surrendering, the negotiation failed, and the Marquis returned to his ship, followed by shouts of "Long live the republic!" "No capitulation!" Nothing remained but to straiten the blockade, for the Maltese land forces were too few in number to attempt a regular assault. In his despair, the French commandant, with the advice of his council, resolved to despatch the *Guillaume Tell* man-of-war, with all the sick and supernumeraries, to France. She stood out of the harbour in a moonless night; but the Maltese sentinels on the Coradin rock descried her as she was clearing the port of the gallies, and the batteries of the besiegers instantly opened a heavy fire. Thus warned, the English squadron kept a sharp look-out; and, though the Frenchman succeeded in slipping out to sea, pursu-

ed him so hotly, that he was speedily overtaken, and captured, after a gallant resistance, in which he lost two hundred and seven men. The *Guillaume Tell* was the last remnant of that proud fleet, which, two years before, had unfurled its sails so exultingly for the Egyptian coast; and its capture completed the dismay of the garrison, who could no longer remain blind to the necessity of eventual surrender.

Famine now stalked openly in every quarter. Fresh pork brought seven shillings and twopence a pound—rats, especially those found in bakehouses, which were, of course, well fed, sold at an exorbitant price—dogs and cats were so generally eaten, that the races soon became extinct—and horses, asses and mules, were similarly exterminated. In short, the stores were empty; and all that the resolute Vaubois could do in his extremity, was to equip and despatch two French frigates still in port, in the hope that they would reach France in safety. They gained the sea; and, for a brief space, he congratulated himself that the vigilance of the English had for once been lulled to sleep; but, two days afterwards, he was undeceived, by seeing one of them, with the French flag struck, riding in the midst of the English squadron. On the 8th of September 1800, a parley was held with the besiegers, when the terms of capitulation were arranged and ratified by Major-general Pigot and Commodore Martin, on behalf of the English. The main conditions were, that the garrison should depart with the honours of war, and that their property should be respected. On the afternoon of the following day, two English frigates and some small craft entered the port, while the English troops took possession of Forts Tigné and

Ricasoli, and the Floriana.* Next morning, the whole English squadron ran into the harbour; and, two days afterwards, the garrison embarked, and sailed on its way to France. Thus, after an endurance of two years, terminated this obstinate and memorable blockade.

Here the history of the Order, strictly speaking, may be said to terminate. At the peace of Amiens (1802), a special article respecting Malta was introduced into the treaty between France and England, to which the other great powers of Europe were invited to accede, by which it was stipulated, that as the Order, in its fallen state, was incapable of maintaining the independence of the island, the knights' sovereignty should be re-established, with the understanding that their neutrality was to be guaranteed by the presence of a Neapolitan, or other auxiliary force. It was further stipulated, that there should no longer be either a French or an English language, but that a Maltese language should be instituted in their stead; and several additional clauses expressly secured other privileges to the natives. But England, doubtful of the duration of the peace, and greatly averse to resign a position which gave her the entire command of the Mediterranean, and formed an insuperable barrier to Bonaparte's projected conquests in Egypt and the East, postponed ceding it from day to day, till, at length, the First Consul, chaffed into fury by that and other circumstances, rushed into a new quarrel to settle the matter. That England was in every respect justified in postponing the fulfilment of the treaty, as far as respected Malta, no

* This force consisted of the 30th, 35th, 48th, and 89th British regiments, supported by detachments of artillery and engineers, and two battalions of Neapolitan infantry.

unprejudiced person, who consults the history of the period, will doubt. Bonaparte had declared, that he would almost as soon agree to Britain possessing a suburb of his own capital; and had it been evacuated, as it certainly would have been, had the hollow bond of concord between the two nations endured only a few months longer, he would have lost no time in bringing it permanently within his grasp. Since that date, the island has continued to appertain to Britain; and as it has latterly been recognised by all the powers of Europe as a British dependency, there is no chance of it ever again reverting to the Order, or indeed passing into other hands. It is satisfactory to know, that the change has been eminently beneficial to the natives; and that they have ample reason to bless the fortune that placed them under the sway of the most enlightened and most paternal government in the world.

As to the Order—shattered into fragments by its expulsion from Malta, and the dilapidation of its resources—its subsequent history is so obscure and unsatisfactory, that, disconnected as it is with the politics of the times, it were idle to give the details, even though reference could be had to authenticated documents. On the death of the Emperor Paul, his successor, Alexander, issued a proclamation (March 1801), in which he assumed the character of Protector of the Order, and ordained, that the Imperial Palace should continue its chief residence, until such time as circumstances should permit the election of a Grandmaster according to the ancient forms and statutes, and that the Field-Marshal, Count Soltikoff, should in the interim act as lieutenant of the mastership. In the same year (*July*), the Council of the Order met to deliberate

on the matter, when it was resolved, that, as the elements of a general chapter could not be assembled at Saint Petersburg, the different Grand Priors should be invited to convene their chapters, for the purpose of forming lists of such knights as were worthy of succeeding to the sovereign dignity. These lists the Council proposed afterwards to submit to the Pope, with an invitation for him to choose a Grandmaster out of them; but under a protest, that this submission was not to be regarded as a precedent, injurious to the privileges of the Order in after times. Accordingly, (February 9, 1805), his Holiness, Pius the Seventh, nominated Tommasi, an Italian knight, Grandmaster; since which time, the mutations in the superiority have excited no general attention. In 1814, the French knights, taking heart at the humiliation of their arch-enemy Napoleon, assembled at Paris in a General Chapter, under the presidency of the Prince Camille de Rohan, Grand Prior of Acquitaine, for the election of a permanent capitulary commission. The government being declared concentrated in this commission, it was empowered to regulate all political, civil, and financial affairs, connected with the Order; and under its direction, a formal but fruitless application was made to the Congress of Vienna, for a grant of some sovereign independency, in lieu of that of which the Order had been so wrongously despoiled. In 1823, when the Greek cause began to wear a prosperous aspect, the same Chapter, encouraged by the good-will which the Bourbon family was understood to entertain for the Order, entered into a treaty with the Greeks for the cession of Sapienza and Cabressa, two islets on the western shore of the Morea, as a preliminary step to the re-conquest of Rhodes;

to facilitate which arrangement, an endeavour was made to raise a loan of 640,000*l.* in England; but the negotiations were conducted with a considerable degree of pompous ambiguity; and the financial speculation completely failed. * The formalities of the Order are still maintained with some degree of splendour in the French capital, and it continues to enumerate a number of distinguished members; but the utter dilapidation of its revenues, and the total annihilation of its political influence, has reduced it to the situation of an obscure association; and such, as far as human foresight goes, it is destined to remain.

Thus, after outliving the vicissitudes of seven centuries, was the venerable and sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem shorn of its possessions and political distinction. The degeneracy of the knights themselves, during the latter days of their residence in Malta, furnishes an ample apology for the small consideration which their claims of restitution have received since their expulsion from that island; while the altered state of society clearly indicates, that the powers of Europe will never conceive it imperative either to restore their property, or reseat them in an independent jurisdiction. They had their epoch of renown; and though now useless, as the ancient armour in which they combated so long and so successfully the enemies of the Christian faith, it were ungenerous to deny, that many of their actions are worthy of a proud place in the annals of mankind.

* Jourdain.

APPENDIX, No. I.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE GRANDMASTERS OF THE ORDER OF SAINT JOHN OF JERUSALEM.

		Elected
1.	Raymond Du Puis	1118
2.	Auger de Balben	1160
3.	Arnaud de Comps	1163
4.	Gilbert D'Assalit	1167
5.	Gastus	1169
6.	Joubert of Syria	1170
7.	Roger de Moulin	1177
8.	Garnier of Naplouse	1187
9.	Ermengard Daps	1187
10.	Godfrey de Duisson	1191
11.	Alphonso of Portugal	1202
12.	Godfrey le Rat	1202
13.	Guerin de Montaigu	1208
14.	Bertrand de Texis	1230
15.	Guarin de Montacute	1231
16.	Bertrand de Comps	1236
17.	Peter de Villebride	1241
18.	William de Chateauneuf	1244
19.	Hugh de Revel	1259
20.	Nicholas de Lorgue	1278
21.	John de Villiers	1289
22.	Odo de Pins	1297
23.	William de Villaret	1300

		Elected
24.	Fulk de Villaret	1307
25.	Helion de Villeneuve	1319
26.	Deodato de Gozon	1346
27.	Peter de Cornillan	1353
28.	Roger de Pins	1355
29.	Raymond Berenger	1365
30.	Robert de Julliac	1374
31.	Juan Hernandes de Heredia	1376
32.	Philibert de Naillac	1396
33.	Anthony Fluvian	1421
34.	John de Lastic	1437
35.	James de Milly	1454
36.	Peter Raymond Zacosta	1461
37.	John Baptista Ursini	1464
38.	Peter D'Aubusson	1476
39.	Emeri D'Amboise	1503
40.	Guy de Blanchefort	1512
41.	Fabricio Caretto	1513
42.	Villiers de L'Isle Adam	1521
43.	Peter Dupont	1534
44.	Didier de Saint Jaille	1535
45.	John D'Omedes	1536
46.	Claude de la Sangle	1553
47.	John de la Valette	1557
48.	Peter de Monte	1568
49.	John de la Cassiere	1572
50.	Hugh de Verdale	1582
51.	Martin Garzez	1595
52.	Alof de Vignacourt	1601
53.	Mendez de Vasconcellos	1622
54.	Anthony de Paule	1623
55.	Paul Lascaris	1636
56.	Martin de Redin	1657

		Elected
57.	Annet de Clermont	1660
58.	Raphael Cotoner	1660
59	Nicholas Cotoner	1663
60.	Gregory Caraffa	1680
61.	Adrian de Vignacourt	1689
62.	Raymond Perellos	1694
63.	Mark Anthony Zondodari	1720
64.	Manuel de Villena	1722
65.	Raymond Despuig	1736
66.	Emanuel Pinto de Fonseca	1741
67.	Francis Ximenes	1773
68.	Emanuel de Rohan	1775
69.	Ferdinand de Hompesch	1797
70.	The Emperor Paul of Russia	1798

APPENDIX, No. II.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE GRANDMASTERS OF THE KNIGHTS TEMPLARS. *

		Elected A. D.
1.	Hugh de Payens	1118
2.	Robert of Burgundy	1139
3.	Everard de Barri	1147
4.	Bernard de Trenellape	1151
5.	Bertrand de Blanchefort	1154
6.	Philip of Naples	1169
7.	Odo de St Amand	1171
8.	Arnold de Troye	1180
9.	John Terricus	1185
10.	Gerard Ridefort	1187
11.	Robert Sablæus	1191
12.	Gilbert Gralius	1196
13.	Philip de Plessis	1201
14.	William de Carnota	1217
15.	Peter de Montagu	1218
16.	Armaud de Petragrossa	1229
17.	Herman Petragrorius	1237
18.	William de Rupefort (Regent)	1244
19.	William de Sonnac	1247
20.	Reginald Vichierius	1250

* Several of the names are Latinized.

		Elected A. D.
21.	Thomas Beraud	1257
22.	William de Beaujeau	1274
23.	Theobald Gaudinius	1291
24.	Jacques de Molai	1298
25.	John Mark Lamienius (Order suppressed)	1314
26.	Thomas Theobald Alexandrinus	1324
27.	Arnold de Braque	1340
28.	John de Claremont	1349
29.	Bertrand Du Guesclin	1357
30.	John Arminiacus	1381
31.	Bernard Arminiacus	1392
32.	John Arminiacus	1419
33.	John de Croy	1451
34.	Bernard Imbault (Regent)	1472
35.	Robert de Senoncourt	1478
36.	Galeatius de Salazar	1497
37.	Philip Chabot	1516
38.	Gaspard de Jaltiaco Tavannensis	1544
39.	Henry de Montmorençi	1574
40.	Charles de Valois	1615
41.	James Ruxellius de Granceio	1651
42.	James Henry de Durefort, Duc de Duras	1681
43.	Philip Duke of Orleans	1705
44.	Louis de Bourbon, Duc de Maine	1724
45.	Louis Henry Bourbon—Condé	1737
46.	Louis François Bourbon—Conti	1741
47.	Louis Henry Timoleon, Duc de Cossé Brissac	1776
48.	Claude Mathew Radix de Chevillon (Regent)	1792
49.	Bernard Raymond Fabré Palaprat	1804

APPENDIX, No. III.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE MASTERS OF THE TEUTONIC ORDER. *

		Elected
1.	Henry a Walpot	1190
2.	Otto a Kerpin	1200
3.	Herman Bart	1206
4.	Herman de Saltza	1210
5.	Conrad Landgrave of Hesse	1241
6.	Poppo	1253
7.	Hanno de Sanger Hausen	1265
8.	Herman	1277
9.	Burchardus Schuadens (deposed)	1285
10.	Conrad de Fertuangen	1292

* This list is taken from Fuller's History of the Holy War. It comes down only to the expulsion of the Military Orders from Palestine.

THE END.

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