

THE HISTORY
OF THE ORDER OF
ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM.

BOOK IV.—MALTA.—(CONTINUED.)

CHAPTER II.

Now do we enter the memorable 1565, for ever glorious to the order of Malta. The captain 1565 general of the Spanish navies, the famous warrior Garcias de Toledo, by Valetta's advice, made Viceroy of Sicily as well—first instance of those two high dignities being united in one person—it was no small matter for the grand master to have acquired the gratitude of so potent a personage, suiting much of what follows.¹

Solyman had many political reasons for his expedition. It was now ready, after five years of hard labour, and was about to sail—such the best

¹ Bosio : par. iii., lib. xxiv. 489.

intelligence. Stupendous armament! Was it not the same Solyman who had taken Rhodes? Such artillery, heavy, light, of all sorts, so numerous, such immense stores of every kind, so vast an army, a cavalry so equipped and mounted, so magnificent a fleet, such various machines to besiege fortresses, beyond what the Ottoman house had ever before brought together! Nor did he neglect any resource, but to make the sure still surer, had likewise his spies everywhere. But principally at Malta, two renegade engineers, one a Slavonian, the other a Greek, who had noted every gun, and measured every battery there; and got back safe to the Golden Horn, where they assured the sultan Malta could be taken in a few days, without need to dig a trench, for that Borgo was without what merited to be called fortifications, and unable to resist a brisk *coup-de-main*. New buildings cannot possibly be strong, and whatever be pretended in show, yet in reality would not be tenable for a week, even less; and as for the fort of St. Elmo, it was too small to be of much avail, and would be quickly knocked to pieces by the Turkish heavy cannon. The rest of the island contained nothing to withstand the crescent a moment. Yet would Malta be a most serviceable conquest, and to defray the expenditure, were there not the bequest of the

late sultana, the wealth of who would not be backward for so holy a purpose; the large mosques, and other ecclesiastical endowments; the offerings of devout and rich Mussulmen; and even all the universities and pious associations of Islam in the Levant?

While the Grand Seignior, or his deputies, master of the whole Mediterranean and a large majority of Europe, might dictate laws, as universal lord, from that not unpleasant rock, and look down upon his shipping at anchor in its excellent harbour.¹

Nor was the grand master idle, but on Monday, the 9th of April, had a visit from Don Garcias de Toledo, who had asked his majesty for twenty-five thousand infantry, between Spaniards, Germans, and Italians, and now had come to Malta with twenty-seven galleys, to see it himself; so after having dined with the grand master, it was interesting to see those two celebrated warriors walk out together to examine the positions; which being done, Toledo, before the whole council, gave his word of honour to the grand master to be back with succours before the end of June; and smiling added, "I leave you hostage my son, whom I dearly love, and one thousand Spanish foot, a re-

¹ Bosio : par. iii., lib. xxiv. 490.

markably fine corps." His son was a promising youth, and took the habit.

Finally, Valetta, begging of Toledo some professional counsel for his conduct during the important siege, the experienced Spaniard, after some modest reluctance, uttered these three maxims; first, that the council-of-war be restricted to very few, and excellent veterans, it appearing to him best for prompt decisions and secrecy; second, not to allow sorties and skirmishing, but husband his people for resisting assaults; third, above all, to take care of his own person, on whom the whole depends; for that the sovereign's death has often caused overthrows, and loss of victories.¹

That nevertheless Valetta was not even then quite certain the Turk could come against Malta, or not rather against some other spot of Christendom, is proved by his letter to the Pope a moment after Toledo's departure, on the 10th of April, and wonderful it is how he could have written so quietly and wisely at so critical a juncture.²

Many of the preparations intended (like suspending the building of the new city months before, when the rock was only cut down half of what was prescribed by the model), with regard

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxiv. 500.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., cxcvi. 1.—Appendix, ccxix.

to sending the rest of the invalids out of the island to be supported elsewhere, at their country's expense, and similar, were broken off abruptly, by pressing and infallible tidings that the Turk was at hand. So ensued a parade of the different Languages as of old, drawn up each before its own inn, to be examined by a knight of another Language, with all the ancient details; and of the fourteen chosen knights-examiners, was Nuzza, Bailiff of the Eagle. Only what appears to me an adjunct is here precisely specified, that each individual had to fire three musket shots at a target, with a premium for the best. A roll showed them in all (knights and servants-at-arms), a little more than five hundred. But these were in the most perfect condition, ready for any grade, whether the lowest, or to act as superior officers to excellent troops; valiant and faithful volunteers, of all ranks and nations, and a not effeminate population.

What countries sent forth who participated in so famous a siege, so glorious a war, it is not just to deprive them of their due fame. Therefore, says Bosio, "here they are for an eternal memorial, as far as my brother and I were able to discover;" and they lived within some thirty years of the event.

	Knights.	Servants-at-Arms.
Provence	61	15
Auvergne	25	14
France	57	24
Italy	164	5
England	1	
Germany	13	1
Castille	68	6
Arragon	85	2

They together make five hundred and forty-one; besides whom there were several chaplains in the inns, and other clergy, as their bishop, who though members of the order, were never permitted to be fighting men.

Continentalists will find many of their most illustrious names. If Italians are singularly numerous, Malta was near; and the Bosios, as of Italian extraction, and writing in Italian, may naturally have taken more pains to have their countrymen's list complete. As to the hapless English Language, though mightily fallen, it was not utterly annihilated as yet. And those unwilling to circumscribe to one solitary one, the Englishman present at that magnificent danger, may prefer thinking that they disguised their names by some foreign termination; valiant hearts, unwilling to bring down persecution on their families at home.

Where emigration is necessary, perhaps masquerade may be so too. Their brothers in arms would have thought it a noble charity to accept them under translated titles, incorporated them into their own body, and giving them a new nationality, keep their secret. Nor is it easy to blame either such refugees or such donors. If they concealed their names, it is to be supposed they had sufficient reason for it; so leave them to the Lethe they chose. Or if that sound harsh, is it not remediless? Who is able to deter them, even were it not over late?

On the 8th of May, two hundred of the Spaniards, promised by Toledo, appeared, very jewels of prime soldiery. The Turkish fleet, proceeding towards Malta, were however traced every step, and the grand master exactly informed of each of their movements; how they suffered from storms, and in a calm were carried by the current on sandbanks, where, on one occasion, off Cerigo, they had one thousand men drowned, chiefly Spahis, and on another lost two of the heaviest cannons, and above eight thousand barrels of gunpowder, with one thousand three hundred cannon-balls of cast iron, which agreed with an ill-omen on their leaving Constantinople; so that the Turks were not the least surprised when they heard of these disasters;

nor even later, when they saw a pitiful remnant of that splendid expedition return without having effected any part of the projects for which it was sent.

At last Pasha Mustapha resolved to investigate the state of his armament, and it now consisted of thirty-eight thousand three hundred, all tolerably good, but not all select troops, without counting any of the great number of strangers, and hangers on of every description.

On Friday, 18th of May, their ships were clearly visible at sunrise, about fifteen miles to the south-east of Marsa Sirocco, at which St. Elmo and St. Archangelo fired each three cannons, preconcerted signal for the enemy in sight. Then was there a popular disturbance, which increased at the terrible advance of the infidels. In the memory of no living man any such thing had been seen. How grand, how numerous, how well ordered were those multitudes of sails! What sublime energy in those armed ships!

The dread signals being returned by other three cannonades from Città Vecchia (Notabile), and by three from Gozo, roused the inhabitants of both islands to a loud clamour of drums and trumpets, sounding and beating to arms everywhere. A violent commotion ensued, some labour-

ing with utmost diligence in polishing and preparing their arms and horses; others loading their beasts of burden and themselves with their household stuff and children, to convey them to a place of security; some gathering together and heaping the corn, already cut in many parts of the country, to transport it into the fortresses; and no few replete with horror, not knowing what they were doing, began running to and fro. In such universal disorder and peril, so ardent and near, the lower classes, that afterwards became so dauntless, were at that first encounter stricken with the wildest consternation. Even some who used to be held valiant and boastful, could not prevent their cheeks from turning pale, or such like symptoms of inward terror. But knights and soldiers, and the most experienced of the Maltese, as accustomed to arms, and intensely occupied, testified by their animated gesticulations their great joy at this splendid opportunity of fighting in defence of their creed, liberties, and country.

Bravest of the brave was Valetta himself; not the smallest sign of hurry or internal conflict was to be seen in him, but much tranquil intrepidity, as it were perfect security, breathed from his serene truly royal aspect, which set every heart at ease, and made it quietly resume its proper place

within the breast. And to act with unison and maturity of purpose and established rule, from the outset in this confusion, perhaps necessarily incident on the foe's sudden approach, and to consult on what would be the wisest on their proximate landing, he convoked a council of many of his grandees and chief knights, among whom was Sir Oliver Starkey, Lieutenant of the Turcopolier, the only real and avowed Englishman on that awful and most brilliant spot. There were many famous captains, generals, aid-de-camps, chamberlains, statesmen, secretaries, and distinguished men of all nations formed, as it were, into Valetta's personal guard, or military household, who never left him day or night, but accompanied him everywhere during the siege. This council advised him to send instantly to inform Don Garcias Toledo of the Paynim's arrival; and that he should despatch further details to his imperial highness as speedily and regularly as he could; and the officer was back from Sicily the third day. As yet on board, it seemed the intention of the Turks was, by their continually sailing alongshore, to distract the Christian, and then land without the smallest opposition, when and where he least expected.

Appearances lead us to infer that poisoning the

wells was one of the ordinary defences of the times; for Bosio relates quite simply, as nothing unfrequent or astonishing, or at all criminal, that the chief physician was ordered over the whole island on that inhuman service, "attended with considerable success until the barbarians discovered the stratagem, and had the waters diligently *purged*."¹

The crescent sailing leisurely round its victim, so close to land that the ships were generally within a stone's throw of it; and where the rock was high, and projected out a little over the sea, they passed immediately under the feet of the Maltese explorers; so that these could look down perpendicularly on the decks, and numbered the shipping, and their number agreed precisely with the review off Greece. While that was going on, the poor from the *casali*, with their infants in their arms, and their other little ones on their shoulders, continued retiring into the forts. The Marshal Couppier, Knight of Auvergne, with his horse and foot, according to orders, kept marching along the sea-side, observing the hostile fleet, which, on arrival off Mugiazzo (Haintofecha), a few miles south of Citta Vecchia, opposite a large

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxiv. 514.

fountain head, with abundance of spring water, dropped anchor at once, but in such a manner as indicated a design to proceed on, since without a signal for the landing of any body, nor showed the smallest movement during the remainder of the day, but kept quietly reposing; the marshal too always standing with his troops openly drawn up until dusk; and at night shutting in, left videttes and sentinels, and a good guard in observation, to inform him every now and then of what was occurring, and drew off his little army to refresh at Citta Vecchia, whose citizens, seeing the Turkish fleet had anchored there, apprehending the first attack would be on themselves, sent to the grand master for either permission to abandon their city, and with their families and chattels retire into Borgo; or that he would send to Citta Vecchia a good guard of knights and hired soldiery, with requisite powder and artillerymen for the cannons which their walls had already, in which case the citizens to a man promised to do their duty. At that very moment the grand master was reading the rolls, and found his whole force, all comprised, came to eight thousand five hundred in round numbers:

Crews of the Galleys	600
Crew of the Galeon	100
Men of Borgo	500
Those of Bermola, and that part of the Island	300
Those of Citta Vecchia, and principal part of the Island	4560
Artillerymen	120
Household of the Grand Master	150
Garrison of St. Elmo and St. Archangelo	150
Hired Spanish Troops, those of Colonel Mas included	800
Volunteers of Medici	200
Volunteers of Sicily, Genoa, Piedmont, and Italian outlaws	675
	8,155

Which, with the knights make up the number a trifle more. The numbers were small, and the Maltese irregulars, but long marshalled under the knights, who indeed formed the leading officers of the whole array. When the grand master had done with the rolls, it was near midnight, and then he gave audience to those from Città Vecchia, bidding them tell the inhabitants to be of good courage, and resist, and that he would send them all they asked. And so he did at daybreak,

and moreover ordered the good knight and celebrated Melchior d'Eguaras to make Citta Vecchia his head-quarters for all the cavalry, retiring thither, and harassing the foe's rear, in case he should march to besiege Borgo, or St. Elmo. Therefore those of Citta Vecchia were quite pleased, and ever performed their devoirs with fidelity and valour.¹ That same morning, as soon as it was broad day, the grand master, accompanied by his council and his *azonini reali*, and engineers, went reviewing the walls of Borgo, prescribing various urgent repairs, strengthening everything with great assiduity, and assigning their posts to the different Languages, in the same order pretty much as in 1551. Every one might know where to go to prevent confusion, and all might be ready to move at the slightest signal, with the accuracy of clockwork.

In what was naturally the most perilous place on the only land-side of the triangle (for such is Borgo), and comprehends its whole front, were to stand the three French Languages, Provence, Auvergne, France. But art had rendered it the strongest now and most secure. The Italian Language, commanded by its head-admiral of the order, a knight of seventy, yet eminently daring

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxiv. 516.

and courageous to heroism the most romantic, a splendid and liberal man, a cousin of the late Pope Julius, and Governor of Castle St. Angelo at Rome, and one day to be Grand Master, Sir Peter del Monte, was to defend the whole island of Senglea and St. Michael's Fort. The entire curtain which forms the triangle's second side, from the extreme west of France unto St. Angelo, was entrusted to Arragon, including Catalogna and Navarre; and the third, from St. Angelo to Provence, would formerly have belonged to those of Castille and Portugal, of England and of Germany; but the first of these being by far the most numerous, it was thought best to station them in the most dangerous part, to wit, from the angle of Provence to where the riding house once stood, but was thrown down for that effect; and to Castille and Portugal succeeded the German Language; and next what should have been the English; but as it was reduced to a single individual, Sir Oliver Starquey, a body of hired soldiers were put under his command, to defend the rest of the curtain up to St. Angelo. And since the Auvergnese were not in sufficient number, the grand master planted some Genoese between the corner, where Provence ended and Castille began, whence that spot is called to this day, Post of Genoa. In the infirmary,

since it had gates towards the marine, they were closed, and parapets raised, where some hired troops were posted, under command of the officers of that house itself. The same regarding the prison. And the shipping in that much-frequented port received orders to raise their guns, so as in case of need to aid to defend it, if the enemy should try to force its entrance. The platform flat with the sea at the foot of St. Angelo's, opposite St Michael's Spur, where is fastened the chain that shuts the Creek of Senglea, was given in guard to a Spanish knight, who fortified it with the crew of his galley so well, and nine pieces of heavy artillery grazing the waves with their fire, and protecting the chain, that to touch it would have been a labour of vast fatigue and infinite danger. That chain had been made at Venice, and was three hundred paces long, and so thick, that nothing like it had ever before been seen in Christendom, and was linked to a most enormous anchor, that had belonged to the great karack, stoutly imbedded in the living rock, cut on purpose with much trouble and ingenuity; chain supported about three hands above the water, upon beams perforated by other as wide beams of the most durable oak, like a huge ladder in one continuous line, reposing on a quantity of empty casks, well smeared with

pitch and tar, and at the nearer end connected with a colossal cable tightened or loosened by several windlasses on the platform; nor could they be wrought, or the smallest boat pass without orders from the said knight.¹ Several other curious works, it is too tedious to describe.

Hired soldiers, as far as they went, were divided out to all the Languages. The Governor of St. Elmo being too old, he was not insulted by superseding, but under colour of captain of succour, a Bailiff, in the prime of manhood, with forty knights, and a corps of the choicest troops, were stationed there.

On the grand master's return to his palace, he found two men waiting for him, both of them villains unknown to each other, both of them spies, both renegades, sent to him by his Constantinopolitan emissaries, to advise him carefully of the true state of the Turkish fleet, in which they both had come in different ships, and landing with the earliest disembarkation, ran away, and bore him letters and countersigns. One was from Salerno, the other from Cataro. The former regularly in pay of the grand master himself; the other he had never seen. However, he brought proofs not to be doubted. Both agreed in the most minute parti-

¹ Bosio : par. iii., lib. xxv. 519.

culars; that most certainly the Turks, before going to Barbary, would try to take Malta; that though Mustapha might delay fighting till he had news from Dragut, in conformity with the sultan's injunctions, yet it would be solely not to lose time while his galley was going to Tripoli and returning, if he had the appearance of only reconnoitring the fortresses. And indeed the impatient pasha had already unveiled his intentions in a great degree; for though the fleet kept at Mugiazzo to deceive the marshal, thirty-five galleys from off the rearguard had received a portion of troops at night in deep silence, and sailing off with them, disembarked them quietly at Marsa Sirocco and the Cala before daybreak. About three thousand Turks, who kept continually increasing by other boatfuls in multitudes, they were intended to prevent the Maltese from carrying in the harvest, and to cut off the marshal from re-entering either Borgo or St. Elmo. Everything prognosticated that the first attack would be on St. Elmo. Then clearly did the grand master perceive the marshal's dangerous position, and instantly sent him orders to leave the cavalry at Citta Vecchia, and march with all the foot into Borgo without a moment's delay.

No longer lamentation; too late for that; he had

lamented before. Promises to him had been broken, and he taken by surprise after all, without half the hired troops he had bargained for, and stores he had purchased, but which had failed to be delivered at the appointed time, by no fault of his.

He took care that a right-valiant knight marched a body of troops in a quite different direction; so as to be visible to the Turks, and divert them from the marshal, who, however, had left Citta Vecchia at daybreak, to succour some skirmishers, who had lost their way in those embarrassing little enclosures, and then fallen into an ambuscade, which deprived the order of two promising young knights; one (a Portuguese), killed; and the other's horse the same, and under it fell its rider (from the heart of sweet France), and was carried off prisoner, severely wounded, to Mustapha, who rejoiced at such an opportunity of information, but could squeeze little out of him, though put to the torture, except that Malta was exceedingly strong, with a large army, which the Turks believed.

Of course, as soon as the marshal received the orders, he had his squadrons recalled, and making them follow him to within sight of Borgo, entered it with the infantry, and sent back the cavalry.

Indeed cavalry are generally of no use in Malta, but quite necessary at all times, on the coast of Barbary, where the Turks were to go next; so they had a considerable proportion of that arm with them, also because of inveterate custom; for what is a Turk without his horse?

Grievously did the mis-adventure vex Valetta; particularly to hear of capture, fearing that torments would force that unfortunate young knight to a disclosure of their unprovided state. Yet quite the reverse. He spoke but of the strength of the fortifications, and that even if there were not these, still would Toledo hurry from Sicily on the instant with a great army, which disturbed the pasha much.

But in the meantime, the grand master in Borgo, the admiral in Senglea, the bailiff in St. Elmo, kept readying everything day and night. Equally the Commander, Mesquitez, in Citta Vecchia. And now the whole Turkish fleet, no longer concealing their movements, sailed back to Marsa Sirocco, and disembarked most of the soldiery; who fortified their camp, from dread of the Christians, lest they might attack them of a sudden.

On this Valetta, who was very religious, summoned the bishop, and ordered him, with two other

priests, to exhort the people by sermons and processions, and to implore the divine succour; for it was the Lord's day, 20th May. And immediately on return from prayers, he bade the marshal to be drawn up at daybreak at the Casal of Alterscen (half way to Marsa Sirocco), with one thousand two hundred men of foot, and the whole of the cavalry, which he must immediately order from Citta Vecchia. So done; the horse under Sir Melchior d'Eguaras, and the infantry re-inforced with many knights volunteering—who to avoid observation, left their steeds behind in Borgo; but the marshal, perceiving the enemy were at Casal St. Catherine, a little further on, ordered Sir Melchior to advance. The Turks, as soon as they saw the cavalry, quitted their entrenchments instantly, and skirmishing, got nearer by little and little, with a great number of banderoles of different colours, and firing from wall to wall, killed several of ours, having a great superiority from the length of their guns, and wounding more and forcing them to recede—the rather, that our horses, impeded by the walls, could not effect much. At which moment, a renegade Frenchman, who had been taken in Barbary, fled to Sir Melchior; who sent him to Borgo to the grand master, with four of his dragoons, but previously questioned him a

little, and learned that the squadron before him consisted of ten thousand Turks, which made him bid his Ensign, Sir Stephen Clairmont, retire slowly with the standard; so very slowly, as to be unperceived, ever skirmishing ardently, until he decoyed the enemy into St. Leonard's plain, where the marshal had prepared with harquebussiers (sharp-shooters) all those enclosures called *chiuse* in Maltese; but which are simply diminutive fields, with dry stone walls, instead of hedges, and which cavalry, to get out or into them, must know the passes. Our horse and foot, thus aiding each other, fought to advantage.

The plan acted excellently well, to the enemy's great detriment; but at length the marshal, fearing to get surrounded by the Infidel myriads, and calling to mind his instructions, began retreating till under the walls of Borgo, whose artillery drove the enemy back; and from the counterscarp issued several bodies of foot and horse, the grand master having been unable to restrain the rush, and eight hundred fresh harquebusses hurried to succour the marshal. And his soldiers, encouraged by this reinforcement, flung themselves all together on the foe with such daring animation and order, kept up by the marshal and his intrepid and experienced officers, who added to their repute this day, that

at length the Turks commenced by turning in confusion, and ended by fairly running away. Conquered and broken, many of them were slain, and a few given quarter; but much greater would have been the result had the cavalry been sooner on the spot. But conformably to the grand master's first instructions, the marshal had sent them back towards Citta Vecchia, when from a rise seeing what was going on, they wheeled about, and came to join us at full gallop; and indeed lanced thirty or forty of the Paynims, but not in time to catch them on the open space, where they could have acted freely. Not that the victory cost us nothing, for besides a few slain, badly wounded was Sir Melchior himself, who had to pass the command to Sir Peter Coupplier, of the magisterial household, who led back the cavalry to Citta Vecchia; while Sir Melchior had to enter Borgo to be healed, not only from his wound but also because of the dreadful bodily weakness consequent on remaining three days without food or repose.¹

In this action a Navarrese knight, Sir John de Morgut, killed a sumptuously-dressed Turk, who wore on his right arm an armlet of gold, on which were engraved some words in Arabic, to be

¹ Bosio : par. iii., lib. xxv. 522.

translated thus: "I do not come to Malta for wealth or honour, but to save my soul." Curious and later proof than is easily imaginable, how the religious enthusiasm, or fanaticism as some please to call it, which produced the holy war, was not limited to the Christians; who were not in truth even the inventors of the name, but the Mahometans themselves.

Slowly did the Turks begin and proceed, while day and night, not only men, but women, with their *animals* of burden, laboured at bearing in earth from the country, and making mounds of it in Borgo, wherever was judged best. The Salerno renegade, having gone twice or thrice backwards and forwards from our army to the Moslem, by the grand master's orders, came to him early on the morning of the 21st of May, to inform him that the two pashas had determined on making an armed recognisance up to the very ditches of Borgo, not only to display the bravery of their soldiers, but also to strike terror into the Christians, at that most potent Turkish array. That they would not disembark their military stores, till they had examined the harbour better; and also it would not be until after dinner, when men are usually more daring. So all the artillery were loaded, and the Languages

ordered by the grand master to their posts ; and he exhorted their leaders to be extremely attentive that day, for that much depended on repressing the first impetus of the Turks ; and to be very careful as to the gunpowder, so that no disorderly explosion should take place on that day. And recollecting Don Garcias de Toledo's maxim, he at first resolved to admit of no sortie or skirmishing ; but on further thought, deemed it expedient to except the enemy's first approach to the ditches, lest it might be taken for timidity, whereas it was necessary to show him a bold face. Nevertheless, to avoid any of the disorderly enthusiasm of the preceding day, which had not pleased him, he determined on sending out only six hundred of the very choicest of their musketry, under the Marshal and Colonel Mas, and the renowned standard-bearer, Medrano, to entrench themselves in St. Margaret's, within a musket-shot, in a straight line in front, from between the bastions of Auvergne and Provence. The cannon of those posts, without any injury to our own, could do great harm to the enemy, if he ever approached that small country church. He likewise sent two other expert knights, with four hundred foot, armed with pikes and corslets, and some musketry, to descend into the covered way of the counterscarp ; and other com-

panies of soldiers, and as many of the people as chose, with ensigns, banners, and a loud noise of drums, should show themselves on the top of the posts to be assailed. And because of his desire to keep his knights for cases of need, he forbade any of them to go out; which more inflamed their ardour to get face to face with the Turks, whence he was so tormented, that he yielded permission to some of them, which caused a violent disorder, that there was danger of his being left alone in Borgo; for the other knights, thinking it a mark of shame to remain shut up there, while those of St. Margaret's had leave to begin with the enemy, who was now appearing in sight, all ran from their posts to the gates, to go out. It was necessary for the grand master in person to present himself to shut them. Scarcely was he able to curb his own knights; it required all his authority to prevent them from forcing them open; and before he had been able to have their shutting compassed, a great crowd of knights had got out. Yet after remedying that nuisance, he was himself to blame for exposing his person to a great danger, contrary to the advice of his assistants, by ascending into the bastion of Provence; where he remained almost the whole day with extreme peril, taking high delight in observing the fine

shots of the artillery breaking, injuring, sweeping away whole ranks of the infidels, whose army, covering the whole country, and estimated at forty thousand, or little less, drawn up closely in form of a crescent, marched direct on St. Margaret's; extraordinary and superb view! For not only all were in rich, gaudy, resplendent dresses, but carried a quantity of triangular banderoles, of different lively colours; and the magnificent armour and arms, and standards and flags, made the whole, at a distance, seem infinite multitudes of flowers in a meadow or luxuriant pasture; nor delightful only to the eyes, but also to the ears, from the various instruments, melted down by the air into exquisite harmony. But to this harmonious sweetness soon succeeded a rude and horrible dissonance from our cannonades and theirs, and the harquebusses of both. The marshal had commenced properly what lasted several hours, during which myriads of turbans went flying—little pebbles thrown among them with remarkable generosity—play which the artillery joined in finely. Those long-robed gentlemen were observed to run about, far more nimbly than could have been imagined. Our musketeer, too, managed his weapon much better, as the Moslems learned to their cost, for their muskets, seven or nine palms long,

could not be charged as rapidly as ours, or discharged, which gave us a great advantage; only resting on a wall, they had a rather longer range.

Bravely skirmishing for a considerable length of time wearied our troops, while the enemy, from their numbers, were always renewing theirs with fresh ones; neither bridled by the slaughter from the Giaours in the church, nor from the Borgo artillery. Each new corps of infidels kept driving forward what survived of their force; which the marshal perceiving, not to lose any more good soldiers, and valiant knights in vain, some of his being already killed, was obliged by his instructions to abandon what had been only meant for a temporary obstacle.

The Paynim, with their accustomed shouts of triumph, erected on its gable the standard of a sanjac-bey (major-general), and round it various other banners. At that same moment a monstrous mischief had threatened the grand master while urging the artillery to augment their efforts; for besides the Turkish fusillades that poured down on all sides, so that a soldier next him was shot dead, and one of his pages wounded in the neck, one of our own cannon being discharged, the wind carried a spark to another cannon, and fired it off unex-

pectedly, killing four of our people in that same bastion, and more or less maltreating a multitude of others of them; among whom Don Frederick de Toledo, son of the viceroy, in his cheeks and hands—and much worse another knight of a renowned family in Syracuse, who died of his wounds a few days afterwards.

Yet that gun regained our esteem by its next shot, which most opportunely cleared the marshal from his greatest difficulty, carrying away many a turban into the air, and extending their wearers' corpses, who an instant before had been so full of pride and temerity in pressing on our outpost; which so completely humbled the misbelievers, that their vanguard refused to advance a step, and on sight of a small corps emerging from the counterscarp to aid the marshal, they turned and fled; and being followed by a cannon-ball that killed a few, it struck the rest with such a panic of terror, that the whole Turkish army halted, and could not be induced to come nearer. Only half-a-dozen straggled from the wings, to plant and lose a few banners near the ditches, while ours were employed in retaking St. Margaret's. And retake it they did; not but that some of our knights were slain, and one severely wounded in an eye, which had just dropped from its socket; he

was not hindered by that from killing the sanjacobey with whom he was engaged; nor desisted from the tremendous duel, until he wrenched from his dying grasp one of the principal standards of the Grand Seignior's armies, which was hung up subsequently in St. Leonard's Cathedral.

It is not astonishing that in an action of six hours in an open country, against such odds, where the Turks lost from nine hundred to a thousand of their best troops, we should have had a loss of twenty-one, comprehending those in the Provence bastion, and those blown up in a house near Bormola. During the skirmish at St. Margaret's, Mustapha, mounting and accompanied by his advisers, favourites, engineers, and that French knight taken near Citta Vecchia, rode to the top of a hillock called Asieli by the Maltese, whence could be seen the post of Castille, and ditch, and flank and casemate of Auvergne; and after gazing intently for some time, called Sir Hadrian de la Riviere, and promised him liberty if he indicated Borgo's weakest point, to which his reply was, "Highness, the weakest point is that fronting you." Scarcely had ours discovered Mustapha, from his beautiful Arabian horse (and in truth the Turks had brought several beautiful ones) than they directed a piece at him with such accuracy, that not to be hit, he was forced to

descend; and then, in striking contrast with his habitual clemency, was the arrant cruelty with which he had the gallant and high-minded Hadrian put in irons, and driven aboard to be bastinadoed to death, and bid farewell to sweet France.

Then the Turkish army divided into three, and set about robbing and devastating the island; but one of their divisions approaching St. Michael's and Senglea to reconnoitre, out sprang the old admiral, and gave them too severe a lesson for them ever to return.

On Tuesday, May 22nd, before daybreak, two other renegades came into Borgo, having been won over by the Salernitan, who was afraid of returning any more to the Moslem camp; so on his last visit corrupted two of those about the person of Mustapha—the one spy having promised a generous recompence to the other—which they now came to merit, by recounting that both the pashas, Mustapha for the land service, and Piali for the sea, had had a long conference in a garden; the nautical showing the risk they were running by keeping asunder, for that in certain weather it would be very hard to re-embark at Marsa Sirocco. So they determined to reconnoitre St. Elmo that very day; and if it was so easy as the engineers told Solyman, it could not resist above four or five days; and

their fleet might be in perfect security at Marsa Muscietto—and it would be a kind of conquest of the whole island—and they might come and go as they liked; that the principal Turks were glad, for they had begun to fear it was destined they should never embark again, but all die at Malta; that on the fleet everything depended, not for them only, but for all Islamites; and that the fleet's destruction would be destruction to the entire Ottoman Empire.

Much did these tidings please the grand master too, and he showed it; for thus he would be left time to finish the ramparts of St. Michael's, and what remained to be done at Borgo. He informed the bailiff, and sent him succours of a hundred knights, and a body of hired soldiers under the renowned Colonel Mas and the knight, his brother and lieutenant, in hopes the bailiff would hold out until the arrival of those from Spain, bidding him be exceedingly careful not to allow of skirmishing and sorties; that he considered St. Elmo the key of Malta; that in defending it, he would insure his own merit, for to him precisely, and to him alone, the whole intelligent world would attribute the final victory. "Yes! Bailiff d'Eguaras might rest assured that he individually would be considered the

real protector of Malta, and that the grand master would be only second in universal fame."

But the recognisance of St. Elmo could not but cause a fierce contest, in which some were slain on each side, but incomparably more on the Moslem's. By land, the whole way from Marsa Sirocco, did the Turks draw their heavy artillery up Scheb-Erras (Maltese for the mountain on whose top St. Elmo stands), each enormous cannon (as could be distinguished clearly from St. Angelo's fort) besides a multitude of men, had twelve pair of oxen. At such ardour in the infidels, the grand master began to be afraid St. Elmo would be irrevocably reduced previous to Toledo's rescue. Was he unfortunately to be too true an augur?

The council advised him to despatch his own nephew, a most trusty knight, and the spies themselves to Toledo instantly, with the whole recital of all events at Malta hitherto; and entreat his viceroyal goodness to transmit the succour without further delay, and the same as to whatever hired troops the order's own authorities had succeeded in levying. If possible, that they should all come with the galley's return. An ambassador extraordinary, Sir Camillo de Medici, was by the same ship sent to the Pope, imploring him to urge all the Christian potentates to prevent Malta being lost, their own

irreparable loss. And by the same opportunity the grand master wrote a circular to all his priors, that not only they should instigate the several sovereigns, but likewise appeal to all the Christian people in Europe; and in reply, many gentlemen adventurers of every nation marched. His Catholic Majesty issued orders to his whole army to assist Malta. But to give and to effectuate are very different things. Yet would Malta have been a dangerous place to let fall into bad hands. Its ports are too secure a refuge to belong to any not trustworthy. But Don Garcias de Toledo had also sent to Malta. The ships crossed each other without knowing it. Laudatory or not, the viceroy's letter, whatever opinions it exhales, shows a firm and fervent predilection for the order in general, and the grand master in particular. Not a doubt of it. Such the first impression; though in several of his suppositions he be headstrong, or quite wrong, his last words evidently came from the bottom of his soul: "Believe me, not one of its own members bears a sincerer affection for the order than myself, nor for your individual happiness. Well, by the account I have to render to the Almighty I swear, that what I told you is what most becomes you and your illustrious brotherhood. I conjure you to have great care where you trust your person, in respect of

fusillades and everything of the kind; for on the day (which God forbid!) of such a calamity, Malta and all belonging to it, may consider themselves completely ruined."

The whole of that night, and the next day, the Moslem artillery were being dragged up Scheb-Erras, while ours had some houses thrown down for the aim; and high over the old platform, containing the guns, on a level with the water, to defend the chain, was erected a new one, nearly as lofty as Scheb-Erras itself; and on that novel eminence were placed the weightiest of our cannon, and the stoutest, and were pointed against the spot made ready by the Turks for their batteries; only we were forced to economise our powder a little, and keep it for the assaults, for, although a good provision of it had been laid in, yet it was not sufficient, as was visible towards the end of the siege; so vast the consummation necessary for muskets, cannonades, mines, and all sorts of military fireworks, rockets, and mortars, the endless items of a protracted leaguer.

With wondrous rapidity and ingenuity, the mis-believers continued, and deserved encomium of indefatigable and transcendant ability in trenches, and underground works, of what denomination soever. Although nearly the whole island of Malta

is rock, the ditches round its fortresses are exceedingly deep, but chiefly those of St. Elmo, extending for little less than a mile; nevertheless, the Turks overcame each difficulty, and impeded as they were in every way, contrived to use pickaxes, spades, and shovels, with cleverness and daring, equal to their amazing toil, transporting to such a height fascines and timber, from shrubs and trees cut down throughout the island, except, alone, the *Boschetto*, kept in reserve until towards close of the war; so that already had they burrowed and formed subterranean passages to within a firelock's reach of St. Elmo, not a Moslem being disheartened by its never-ceasing cannonades. The batteries of the Turks were ornamented with a quantity of banners, and when they got closer we learned, to our own cost, what capital musketeers they were. Often were they seen to hit what foreheads soever peeped for an instant above the Christian parapets.

At length Bailiff Eguaras sent one of his bravest officers, a Spanish nobleman, captain in the service of the King of Spain, to ask the grand master for succours and stores, his little citadel being closely pressed. And on the chief of chiefs asking him in public, for on the square of Borgo their meeting chanced,—“How is St. Elmo?” replied what he ought only to have hazarded in secret, in the ma-

gisterial palace, and private closet, not to frighten the people: "Sire, St. Elmo is too small to be ever able to resist such considerable forces!" At which Valetta, highly displeased, directed to him a disdainful look, and conceiving an unfavourable opinion of him at once, thanked him ironically for the information, exhorting him to do his duty, in a very high tone of voice; otherwise that "he would go himself with the other troops, and protect the fort from every harm." Not but he that same moment sent a corps of two hundred chosen Spaniards, led by Gonzalez de Medrano, famed for his intrepidity, and delighted at being named to that service.

Then came a Spanish renegade from the Moslems telling they had planted fifteen of their heavy guns, and would infallibly begin firing them within three or four days; and never, from that hour, was the firing to stop, or be suspended a single minute, day or night, until St. Elmo was taken, and the crescent in full possession of Marsa Muscietto; and that the Turks spoke no more of going to Goletta, or any part of Barbary, but only not to quit Malta till they had entirely reduced it.

Fortunately no great effect is produced by firing cannon, however weighty, from above to beneath, otherwise those from the summit of Scheb-Erras

could have destroyed all the shipping in the harbour at Malta, and all the works of Borgo.

Sir Melchior, being now better of his wounds, contrived to return to the cavalry at Citta Vecchia, and on the very same day, Pasha Piali approaching to see the wondrous mounds of earth that in a stony island like Malta, the Turks were able, in so short a time, to gather and erect about St. Elmo, one of its cannon sent a ball against a rock, some of whose splinters wounded him in the face.

But, on Tuesday, the 29th of May, when ours losing patience at the near blockade, attempted a sortie, under Mas and Medrano, what was our surprise, when the smoke of the artillery blew off, at beholding the counterscarp occupied by the Turks, and ornamented with their banners, all along its edge! Certainly it was a grievous though beautiful sight! And little by little they built up a wall, at first obstructing the view, and eventually enclosing the fortress.

At length arrived Dragut, and the sultan's firman was read out, that, considering the King of Tripoli's great military experience, neither of the pashas should undertake anything of importance without his consent, which naturally tickled the corsair's vanity; and a council of war was held, in which he

proposed attacking "Gozo first, and Citta Vecchia, which should not be left in the enemy's hands, to disturb our rear, but either quite our own or utterly destroyed." Yet he finally assented to what the Aga of the Janissaries argued for, and nearly all the other officers. "St. Elmo, not for any other reason," exclaimed Dragut, "than that it becomes the reputation of the Turkish army not to retire ever from what it has once begun!" And reconnoitring St Elmo, he assured Mustapha that, to save time, he ought to take the ravelin, at what cost soever of his bravest troops.

Various gallant actions daily fought by our cavalry proved the wicked policy of the corsair's proposal. Not an hour of idleness did those who held the country about Citta Vecchia indulge in certainty; and among them some Maltese of conspicuous valour.

Nor did the Turks not exert themselves to finish their general battery, and proceed to assail St. Elmo. Thus (as they had brought from Constantinople the pieces of timber all prepared to be joined together and formed on the spot) that immense machinery was erected early before sunrise on the last of May; after labouring on it for fourteen days, from their landing at Marsa Sirocco. Placid was the weather and quiet the waves that morning,

when forth burst from that awful battery an echo that reverberated everywhere; and those infernal engines, with too fair order, began opening furiously against the doomed fortress. In one straight line from northeast those dreadful batteries extended on the pinnacle of Scheb-Erras, so as to be on a level with the great cavalier of St. Elmo, at one hundred and eighty yards' distance, as noted in the journal of the order's engineer at that time. Fourteen standards of different colours were planted thereon; with as many cannon, ten sending iron balls of eighty pounds each, three colubrines of sixty each; and a basilisk of one hundred and sixty. Thirteen had wheels; but the basilisk, another sort of machinery moving with more ease to aim better and recoil less; as those most excellent of artillerymen showed to perfection. Wonderful! Those monstrous guns struck point blank what smallest mark soever; and continually passed through our port holes and overturned our cannon. The grand master that morning stood a good hour without once moving, admiring the various effects of the Turkish battery; some of whose balls after hitting their first mark, rose and went hissing in a direct course up towards heaven, crowned as they flew with a fiery circle; and then descending gave a second blow, and often several blows—killing

many of our people at each. Nor did those blazing orbs not drop by times upon the sea, and rebounding seek the distant sky—charming, but for us terrible to witness.

Yet less with what happened before his corporeal eye was the grand master then occupied, than with revolving deeply vexatious tidings received that very night. And when asked what, he called a council to hear a letter from Toledo, who had detained his nephew's galley at Messina, and now wrote by this Maltese felucca that his promise had been on the clear understanding he should be lent the order's galleys, and galley slaves during the siege; when they could be of no use at Malta, or worse, for the former might fall into the enemy's clutches, and the latter were useless mouths at least, and required being looked after; that the Hospitallers could not expect him to keep his promises, if they broke their own; that the proper way was for each party to perform what they had promised, and then he would punctually execute his. The grand master's reply (and his council applauded it) was that it was no fault of his, but the Turks had taken him by surprise and made it quite impossible for him to send slaves and galleys, as the viceroy would know himself if he were here; so that it required at least fifty knights and

troops of confidence to keep the galley slaves down, and he had not the force; that he was now in Borgo without more than two hundred soldiers; all the rest being in Citta Vecchia, St. Elmo and the other forts; that if he sent away the two hundred from Borgo, its citizens would undoubtedly leave the town, with infinite disorder for consequence; that therefore, to receive the galleys and galley slaves, Toledo must send another corps without losing a moment, besides the one thousand men, with whose aid even it would be very hard for him to hold out until he came with the army to liberate him entirely; that already the Turkish guns had destroyed the cavalier of St. Elmo and taken its counterscarp; that he entreated him to be quick and come himself soon, and not to fail sending the one thousand men instantly.

On the 1st of June, a cannon ball having cut the staff of the standard of the cross and it falling down, there rose a loud shout from the Moslems; for it being Friday, they reputed it an omen of victory.

The fierce contests are beyond recounting. Dragut objected to the fewness of the pieces, and that not fourteen but one hundred he would have had; and fifty at a time playing, while the other fifty reposed, thus keeping up a continuous discharge

night and day without even for an instant ceasing; and to follow his advice at least in part, another battery was added by these Turks (who have no equals for moving earth expeditiously) and another basilisk and fifteen as heavy guns as the others: so that poor St. Elmo was now thundered at by thirty of the hugest of artillery, brought nearer to thirty-five short yards.¹ Nor can we assuredly be unamazed at so small and defective a place resisting such a tremendous fire, and not at once in cinders. Yet despite all, it continued—that superhuman resistance.

On the 3rd of June, when by a singular coincidence falls St. Elmo's day, the Turkish engineers, from the counterscarp which they had taken, perceived (by striking with their harquebusses) that the ravelin had no flanks—discovery they could not have made but for want of care, which ours were almost obliged to have, from the vigilance of those most excellent harquebussiers and surest aimers in the whole wide world, the Janissaries; so as to render it utterly impossible for a man to let himself be seen an instant over the parapet without being infallibly shot dead, which constrained the guard to lie down, and it fell asleep; including the sentinel, who ought to have occupied the angle. It

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxv. 539.

might not have been wholly without excuse that the sentinel (if there were one) without sleep for so long a time should have been thrown by nature into a slumber, contrary to his best efforts; particularly in such a posture. Others report he received a bullet through his skull, which slew him too instantaneously to be able to cry out. This would be a more serious affair and argue some inexactitude in making the rounds, for why not have replaced the dead sentinel with a living one without a moment's delay? Blame was given to the chiefs. Yet was it not to be over severe? Did they not act in the main, regarding so many other things, incomparably well? There are narrow bounds to man's noblest energies. Still must we own, it was not exactly proper, to have left none of the knights to oversee so important a post, but entrust it entirely to forty soldiers however choice, partly Spanish and partly Italians, under a corporal—though even of De la Cerda's.

The Moslem engineers, entering by an embrasure not much higher than a tall grenadier, astonished to observe no one, and unobserved themselves, since the angle was a dead wall, ran instantly and told Pasha Mustapha, who happened to be near, and without a moment's loss called some of his fiercest and most ferocious Janissaries, who at once leaped into the ravelin

with such sudden swiftness, that the guard had not time to form, and the corporal being killed immediately, his soldiers shamefully fled in a panic out of the work. Then but for the valiant sergeant-major stationed in the covered way, who, with a tremendous shout rushed forward, followed by his superb corps, and shut up the passage with their wedged bodies, and defended it with such rare heroism with pikes and muskets, that they stopped the invaders, who were making for the inner drawbridge—but for him and his, St. Elmo's loss had dated from that day.¹

Attempts the most desperate to retake the ravelin were all fruitless. A Pisan knight, Sir Francis Lanfreducci, did wonders; but nothing could retrieve the lost.

How dreadful to us from Borgo to see that famous ravelin crowded with turbans and their banners stuck all along its line of parapets! What use our efforts? In less than an hour the ravelin was levelled so open, that the Turks could walk into it carrying logs of wood and fascines to cover themselves from our musketeers above. The bulwark of defence has ceased to exist. But can still be of offence! And take what it failed to protect! "Lions of Islam" (roared a dervish, just as they

¹ Bosio : par. iii., lib. xv. 541.

were about rushing again to the assault), "Let the sword of the Lord separate their souls from their bodies, their trunks from their heads, liberate spirit from matter. Oh ye who believe in one sole God, now is your time! Your perspiring enemies are delivered into your hands. Bind them not! Soil not your hands with touching them, but cleave them to the earth! Too nauseous to touch! Their very touch would blister you. The canine idolators must be thrust down into Gehenna! Soldiers of Paradise, penetrate into their accursed den and spare nothing; not yourselves, much less the Giaours! Hesitate, and they require more venom! This is your day of judgment, O infidels! Allah Keram!"

Which truly caused a momentary verbal altercation soon to be followed by deeds too horrible for words, and on the Christians raising a shout, thus the Moslem: "No shouting, Giaours, till out of the wood!"—"But you heartless Paynim, you mangy dogs, there are no woods here; but as much of arid rock as you like! On which, by the blessing of God, your bones shall bleach and your flat skulls be found by future generations and exhibited by surgeons as a curiosity."¹

The Spanish knight who had the dispensing of

¹ Seb. Paoli : Serie ii.

gunpowder, and the care of bathing the cannons with vinegar when they were too heated, was slain, which caused no little delay and confusion. The bailiff, severely wounded in a leg, seeing the brave serjeant-major had lost an arm, so many knights killed, and soldiers; while the enemy was augmenting with fresh numbers, and that it would be nugatory to lose more of his men, resolved on an orderly retreat to within the main body of the fortress itself. At which sight the enemy chased us with violent fury; but when they presumed penetrating into that sacred square between the cavalier and body of the hold, were met with such a storm of fire, and wildfire of every description, the hideous rush down of weighty stones, torrents of boiling oil, volleys of musketry, and several cannons vomiting destruction, that multitudes were reduced to atoms—not a man of the survivors but was glad to draw back. Yet had they reason to exult that they had taken the ravelin; so hoped to be master of St. Elmo as well this same day. Transported with the joy of victory, and a most rash and uncivilised daring, against the merest rudiments of the art of war, they determined on the assault, and like brute beasts, void of the least glimmer of reason, in disdain of evident and most manifest death yawning and staring them in the face, they ran

open-mouthed to set their persons as a mark for our musketeers, and close to the jaws of our cannon, which enfiladed them on both flanks, and were intended to defend the approaches of the ravelin—by that very lane they rushed into the ditches, holding a multitude of scaling-ladders, and placed them against the rock and the walls of the castle. Though the ladders were almost all too short, yet a few of those infuriated savages contrived to get as high as the parapets, so as to display their banners to our defenders, who easily threw them down backward; and since muskets are of little use in such a situation, and that heavy stones are far more efficient, and artificial wildfire, and above all liquid pitch at a boil—for this sticks as well as scalds, and inflicts a certain death of torture—these, and similar, were poured most profusely on their naked heads, and obliged them to desist, in a rage not to be able to take St. Elmo yet awhile, but retire in shame.

The action had lasted from sunrise to an hour after noon, during which whole period, the roaring of artillery, volleys of harquebusses, and horrid screams and shouts, in every language, smoke, and flames appeared, as if the globe was splitting asunder. Throughout this conflict not one instant of intermittance in the brazen bellowing, where

effects could be produced, of theirs, or ours. Of the flower of the Turkish troops, fell two thousand; of ours, of course much less in number, but far more significant in reality. The knights alone were twenty, among whom was the brother of Colonel Mas, and a Portuguese knight of the celebrated family of De Britto, and a Frenchman of Choiseul.¹ None of the whole score of deaths but showed something of striking heroism, or a placid devotion, or both. One, a French knight, having received a bullet that lodged in his chest, was assisted off by another knight, for a little while, until the mortally wounded said, "Now, my sweet Achilles, return and combat valiantly for our faith." And then scrambling alone to the chapel of St. Elmo, reached the steps of the altar, and after recollecting himself for some moments there, dropped dead. Of their hired soldiery, about sixty privates were killed; for, of the wounded, no account was kept by any party, on either side. Only Bailiff Eguaras' lieutenant, Don Juan de la Roche Pereira, a Castilian knight, was most dangerously wounded; to whom, though young, this high place had been given as a recompense for his practical valour; and, during that murderous contest, when the bailiff went out to try to win back the ravelin, the entire command of

¹ Bosio : par. iii., lib. xxv. 542.

the interior was left to De la Roche; so he and the sergeant major had both now to be sent to the infirmary at Borgo. Couppier, for some time captain-general of the cavalry, and another knight, sent by the grand master to inspect St. Elmo, declared that to take back the ravelin was quite impossible, and all that could be done was to keep St. Elmo itself to the last extremity; but that, in its present state, it was indeed a most dangerous post, and barely tenable by the bravest for a very short while. All which the grand master wrote to Toledo; and that, in spite of the most heroic efforts, it could hold out but a very few days, or less.

“However, had I the one thousand soldiers your excellency promised, I think I could defend Borgo still. As for St. Elmo, you who have inspected it, will repute it lost, as well as I.” Yet so great was Toledo’s desire to increase his Catholic Majesty’s fleet with the Maltese galleys, that he sent for them, affirming that it was the only means to enable him to vanquish the Turks, and save Malta. And at the same time he forwarded Captain Miranda, real leader of those troops, at St. Elmo—Medrano being only his standard bearer—under hope of that chieftain’s great experience, ability and valour finding a way to set things to rights.

It afflicted the grand master sadly that Toledo

fixed the 20th of July for the date he could come with the succours; but he counterfeited other feelings, and only opened his mind to his nephew in a retired chamber. For, alas! his doubt was—could he hold out so long? So he despatched express orders to his two galleys in Sicily, to receive on board whatever succours his own prior had ready, and to return with them at every risk—even that of going down.¹ In a letter to Toledo he supplicates for even five hundred men, within an hour, and that he is delighted with Captain Miranda, whose valour and military talents will certainly delay St. Elmo's surrender a little.

Miranda after reviewing it, assured its assembled garrison that far from wishing to display any authority given him, he came very willing to die in such honourable company; determined to be their servant to the knights; and to the soldiers a companion and loving brother; not to exhort them to conduct themselves valiantly, for he knew it unnecessary; but to serve and aid them and run the same fortune with them. And "though the place was small and weak, yet so much the more honour." And to acquire popularity he hurried off a message to the grand master that nothing in war was better than to try to keep the soldier pleased and content;

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxv. 543.

and that nothing conduced more to this than allowing of his handling money, to pass the noisome hours at gambling, and buy wine and some additional dishes to please the palate and restore bodily strength; for which he begged his highness to make them have good living and good cash. And the grand master at once complying, the soldiers got back into the best possible good humour and forgot their disasters.

As long as that furious cannonading of the Turks continued, he had the soldiers kept out of all danger—only a rigid look out on the sentries. And thither were sent up the one hundred harquebussiers of various nations from Citta Vecchia making it be their own request; and also some knights volunteers, who desired to follow Miranda's fine example. And the grand master and council hearing the wound of Bailiff Eguaras in the leg was getting worse, sent him word to come be healed at Borgo; for that it was not at all well the supreme head of a fortress in such straits should lie under any impediment. To which he replied that, though he certainly felt a little uncomfortable, he nevertheless was resolved not to quit the fortress! "But," added the noble veteran, "if the grand master have in his eye any one of greater experience and ability than mine for this weighty

charge, let him be sent freely by all means; for it will give me great satisfaction to resign, in respect of the order's service; only allow me to remain here likewise; for my desire is to sacrifice my person for Christendom. Feeling myself aged, I do not think I could spend my few remaining days of life anywhere so well as where I am." So the only magisterial resolution come to, was that in case of his death, Colonel Mas should succeed him; but that so long as the valiant Bailiff lived, he should not be superseded. The consequence was that he became more oporose than ever, and took a hand in everything, even the meanest offices. Often were he and Broglia, somewhat his elder, seen to go side by side to work at the repairs and carrying baskets of earth to encourage the others; for necessary had it become, they should all concur if they wished for the least shelter from the enemy's artillery, which eat away by degrees every one of their defences. The Turkish basilisks pierced through more than eighteen palms of solid masonry. The insupportable fatigues increasing, chiefly the whole night, and the burying in the parapets of bowels and limbs of men all torn to pieces and pounded by the hostile cannon, to such a pass had the hapless besieged been now reduced; what with never stirring from their posts, but sleeping there and eating; with all other

human functions, in arms always, and prepared for combat; by day exposed to the burning sun, and by night to the cold damp; privations of all kind, from the blasts of gunpowder, smoke, dust, wildfire, iron, and stones, volleys of musketry, to explosions of enormous batteries, insufficient nutriment or unwholesome, they had got so disfigured, that they hardly knew each other any more. Ashamed of retiring for wounds not manifestly quite dangerous and almost mortal, those with the smaller bones dislocated or shattered, and livid faces bruised with frightful sores, or extremely lame and limping wofully; these miserably bandaged round the head, arms in slings, strange contortions—such figures were frequent and nearly general, and to be taken for spectres rather than living forms.

Justly can it be averred that this was one of the most perilous, direst, cruelest sieges in the memory of man; only as to food, some other besieged people have been still worse off. If here was no drought or famine, it is to be put down to the grand master's praise, and his kind foresight; for if the commissaries had calculated well as to eating, they had miscalculated as to what is perhaps more important, the liquids; and the cisterns were much sooner drunk dry than thought; so Valetta at one time feared we should have been

left without water, with a renewal of our sufferings in Barbary. But thanks be to God, this did not happen.¹ Also the order had to feed about seven thousand of the poor Maltese, excellent creatures, who well deserved our care; for while some others deserted to the Turks, not one native Maltese did.

The indefatigable Turks next turned their ideas towards cutting off all communication between St. Elmo and Borgo, and realized their project in a great degree. It was now the sixth of June, and their horrid, most merciless artillery bellowed and raved night and day just the same, it seeming their design to pound the fortress into ashes. Now few cannons remained to the Christians. In spite of all his efforts to prevent them, the Moslem built up a wall on the ravelin, as high as St. Elmo's parapets, and enclosing it.² The only momentary repose of ours was to scrape together a little clay from the underground vaults within the fortress, and well wetting it, wrap themselves up in it as in a blanket, to lie down on or near the new parapets, which they made of wooden boxes, filled with earth, and covered with mattresses and bags of wool instead of fascines; of which they had no

¹ Bosio : par. iii., lib. xxv. 545.

² Id. : id., id. 547.

more, and earth too waxed scarce, of which refuge they were finally deprived, and it consumed their small residue of force. A variety of contrivances to take ours captive encountered an intrepidity that made them all fail. But our most signal heroes went dropping; Medrano's serjeant was killed; Miranda declared longer defence impossible, and engaged Bailiff Eguaras and Governor Broglia to convene a council-of-war. There was Medrano instructed to relate the whole to the grand master, and that they every minute expected to be blown up with the rest of the fortress, which leads immediately to the conquest of the whole island; and then Toledo's coming would be useless. The only way to save the order's best nerve, "so many of its most valuable troops, is instantly to call into Borgo the survivors, where they perhaps may hold out until the Spanish army's arrival." Medrano obeying, got with some difficulty to Borgo, and secretly, in the grand master's own private room, told him and his council the entire unhappy verity. Whence after profound consultation he received this answer: "We know very well that in a mere military point of view St. Elmo is untenable; but our oath and profession is freely to sacrifice our lives for Christendom. We are absolutely obliged to undergo a certain and

manifest death to save the Christian people, and our order, in this case when our liberators are so near; and therefore this council and I determine that they must not abandon St. Elmo, even if they were alone; but that we will instantly join them if necessary, and die with them."

As to blowing up, they had before been told it was out of the question, the fortress standing on a rock; which however was contrary to what the unfortunate besieged saw and heard, for several mines exploded with a smothered noise under them, and the rock and the fortress both went rocking, and casks of vinegar rolled about their hall, and quantities of earth in the ditches.¹

So on Medrano's return with fresh troops, and some timber and old sails and other stores, sorrowful was the greeting. Horrible the dread of being buried alive; not even able to fight, but see shaking about what must infallibly soon fall and crush you. Not one by any possibility could hope to be saved from that hideous end.

The Bailiff, Miranda, Mas, and most of the knights, frankly and enthusiastically expressed their resignation, as well as the new comer, Captain Vagnone; but the rest thought it a cruel sentence, and De la Cerda (with some who consulted their

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxv. 550.

personal safety), under pretext of wounds, departed for Borgo, not without disapprobation; but gained shortly afterwards the valiant and honourable death that became him in defending that town. Others, that is, of the privates (for not one of the officers would sign it, much less any knight of the order, though some few of them were thought internally to assent to it) wrote to the grand master with the intention of obliging him to recall them. "We came to defend a fortress, this is such no longer, but without counterscarp or ramparts. The ravelin has been built up to the roof; we can neither offend the Turks, nor defend ourselves. So send no more succours, for they would be only so many more lost; for unless boats come take us away this very night, at the toll of nightfall, we are resolved to force a sortie, and die as becomes soldiers. June 8th, 1565."

The grand master's only reply was that on his word of honour Toledo's re-inforcements were on the point of arriving, and that a renegade just arrived from the Moslem camp had assured him the Turkish engineers had discovered St. Elmo could not be mined, as planted on a living rock; that they had tried to mine it, but totally in vain; but however, if resolute to abandon St. Elmo, to let him know first, that he might send gunners to

nailed the guns, and boats to receive them and all, for St. Elmo lost, every hope of having succour from Toledo was lost also. And grand master and council decided likewise to name three commissioners to take an ocular view of St. Elmo, a Spaniard, a Frenchman, and an Italian—all three grand crosses of the order—to give in a regular report. These found the soldiers ready to depart, having already sacked the ammunition and public store of every kind of arms, and in the very act of throwing all the spades, shovels, and pickaxes into the cistern, when stopped by Colonel Mas, who had still some authority with them; which rebellious misconduct caused more surprise and terror in the commissioners than if they had seen the Turks in possession. As to speaking in private to Miranda, Mas, Eguaras, or Broglia, it would not at all be allowed by the mutineers. These notwithstanding, returned in a short time to their duty. Whoever liked to leave the place, might; since for every one who returned, four offered to succeed him; on which all resolved to stay, nor would an individual of them undergo the shame of being the first to retire. All determined to remain and ask the grand master's pardon; that they would lay down their lives willingly, and

defend St. Elmo as long as any others could, though desperate its condition indeed.

Fifteen knights were sent as aid; and what is astonishing, two Jews volunteered to go and die with them.¹

Then Miranda had the colours hung out on various spots, to make the Turk think we had received great re-inforcements, and cried to ours with a soldierly speech,—“So let me see you sell your lives dear; and let there be a loud noise of drums and trumpets, and several volleys of musketry, and some discharge of cannon too, as wild rejoicings.”

But this irritating the Infidels, their battery's dreadful bellowings were worse than ever. The grand master's consolation at the garrison's sublime coming about, was darkly overcast by tidings that the two galleys he recalled had come—perhaps, too, with some supplies—and in strict conformity with his letter, had put into Hayntofecha; but on finding it in possession of the Turks, returned forthwith to Sicily. As to Toledo's succours, they were coming, though delayed; and that viceroy may have been too careful. Will they not come too late for poor St. Elmo?

An invention of the war in Hungary, under

¹ Bosio : par. iii., lib. xxv. 553.

Charles V., to be used instead of gunpowder in besieging or maintaining a siege—circles of fire—were much in request with the order, who almost alone had the secret. And a most infernal one it was; but now published by Bosio as quite easy to make, and much practised against the Turks at the siege of Malta. Of these two, three, even five were enveloped in the same fiery circle, the wider, and the more victims, the better. No escape, but for all to agree instantly, and rush together into the sea. For the rest, the Turkish harquebussiers were far superior to ours, so that twenty-five of our sentries were shot dead in one morning. Strange; but Toledo seemed to care more for what is not unfitly called the little succour, than for all in Malta. But it was seeming only, for in reality he was a stanch friend to it. His precise commands to the commander of succours were, not to land them if St. Elmo was taken, or Citta Vecchia; for in case of either, neither Borgo nor St. Michael could make any resistance. But on the 16th of June four galleys sailed from Messina to Malta, with eight hundred soldiers and stores.¹ Exactly that day had the Turks selected for their first general assault on St. Elmo. Their galleys and Draguts having come round from Marsa Sirocco, followed by the whole

¹ Bosio : par. iii., lib. xxv. 560.

Moslem fleet—the idea being, that when these light vessels had essayed and forced the passage, then the heavy should enter and choose their stations—firing at St. Elmo as they passed, and landing the maritime to join them to the land forces, and advance all together to storm the Giaours in their castle. Thus like a thick forest was the sea at the harbour's mouth. Towards sunset, and during part of the night, the galleys proceeded to batter the mark, for the purpose of keeping the besieged without repose, and have them weary when the real assault should begin. About two hours before day-break, was heard a single loud voice, and clear singing out of certain words in a foreign tongue, to which the whole army replied in a low murmur; and we learn from persons practised in their rites, that it was a delegate from the Grand Mufti, their High Priest, making a kind of confession in the name of all, and after it an absolution, explaining the happiness of a future existence, according to the Koran's promises, to all who intrepidly advance to death in support of the law of Mahomet. Next a long profound silence, during which they reinforced with four thousand harquebussiers all the trenches of the counterscarp quite round, and ravelin, both in front and towards Marsa Muschietto, as well as the part near the spur of the Cavalier.

Which most patient and attentive harquebussiers holding their harquebusses pointed up towards the fort's parapets, no sooner was observed the crest of a morion, or a vizor opened, than they hit it, not permitting one of us to be seen, before the Turk and ours came to the grapple; for then those sharpest of sharpshooters, not to hurt their companions, ceased; though happen it sometimes did, that the same bullet killed both a Christian and a Turk. Indeed stupendous and admirable were the punctuality and diligence of that corps during the whole war, especially in assaults, when the harquebussiers slew more of ours than artillery, archers, those enormous engines, or any other weapons of offence whatever. The enemy also sent armed men (as many as they could hold) into the ditches immediately round the fortress, with multitudes of ladders. And little noise as they made, we discovered it; and did our best to disturb them with artificial fire and fragments of hard limestone, which last made a great figure in all this deadly siege. Very ineffective indeed, we repeat, is the musket in repelling scalers, at least as a firearm, when the aim is straight down. And if with the bayonet, it becomes a sort of pike; but the real pike is better, as lighter, longer, and more manageable. But stones are still better, if of a weight to upset the ladders; for

then a whole line of men fall, some of them killed, and all wounded.

At sunrise, up sprang a furious dissonance of cannonading from the batteries and ravelin, for about an hour, making the earth tremble, and the sea. Nor was it an exaggeration, but sad reality. It lay before their eyes. Then, and during the whole siege, many lives were saved by having people who attended to nothing else than at the smoke of the priming of the cannon, to shout out; at which cry every one threw himself on his face until the ball passed. Yet this at present was only the harbinger of a stately pomp, since advanced a body of eight thousand Turkish horse, led by Mustapha, with the great standard confided to him at Constantinople by Solyman's own hands; and it was now planted in face of the chief bridge before St. Elmo's principal front—signal for the assault general, which Eguaras, Mas, Miranda, and the new governor Montserrat prepared to withstand valiantly; and our garrison too, which those late reinforcements had restored nearly to its proper number, all eminently brave. Then, and in subsequent conflicts, a knight was put between every three men, to observe these, and make them do their duty. Three corps of aid stood under Miranda, Eguaras, and Montserrat. Heaps of heavy stones lay arranged along

the parapets. A corps of who from wounds or age could not be able fighting men, had to carry about certain large deep plates, with wedges of bread steeped in wine and water, to refresh and invigorate our combatants without their having to move from their places. Others had for office to draw out the corpses from between the feet of our living heroes, lest they should be shackled in their motions, or struck with horror at trampling on their dead companions. Not far from the parapets were placed barrels sawn across in two, full of a sort of vinegar and water for the soldiers or knights to dip into when the wildfire caught their clothes, for that lotion extinguished the flames at once.¹ Large assortments of circles, pikes, trumps, pots of wildfire, were everywhere at hand. Some of the most expert warriors were to walk about from post to post, investigating each. Others, in regular order, were appointed to measure out the gunpowder; others to hand the harquebusses to the harquebussiers; others to present the balls and cordage. But how make the wildfire? Gunpowder, saltpetre unrefined, ammoniacal salt, pounded sulphur, camphor, Greek pitch, powdered varnish from the grains, are the ingredients. The exact proportions are well known (says Bosio), and it is sold in the shops potted up. The pots of

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxv. 562.

earthenware, badly baked on purpose, to break the easier (that day St. Elmo showed many thousands of them), each large enough to be thrown by a man's hand twenty or thirty yards. The mouths of such pots were narrow, and after their being charged as above, had to be kept shut up carefully with linen or thick paper, tied very close crosswise with harquebuss cords presenting four ends covered with sulphur, first liquified, and then dried; which ends, when they are well lighted, you throw the pot, which breaks, and never fails setting fire to the mixture, most voraciously burning and consuming whatever it touches. Trumps are by the turner, round, concave tubes of wood, two palms thick in circumference, and three long, to be nailed or fitted tightly to the handle of a halbert, or partisan, and filled as the pots, only rendered more liquid by a little linseed oil, in such a manner that when you light the trump, it continues a long time snorting and belching vivid, furious flames, and large, and several yards long—not unlike an enormous furnace excited by a most powerful bellows—and with a violent impetus devours the opponent. Striking the face or head of a man, it either kills him at once or throws him down frightfully wounded. Pikes of war ought to be very acutely pointed, and become pikes of fire when you put a little of the mixture into a purse

two fingers long, placed in such a way towards the head of the pike, that its flames are nearly as effective as the trumps; and it finishes by firing two small cylinders of iron or brass, loaded with very fine gunpowder, and exploding leaden bullets like those of a harquebuss. Other execrable utensils of the sort are omitted for brevity; seek them who will in my authorities.

On rush the Turks and Delhis with their atrocious howl, unchained demons. The defence however was as intrepid! The noise was heard in Borgo, whence also men saw (or thought they saw) the assault and glorious resistance. Perhaps an attack more obstinate has never been read of. Thirty of the most noted warriors of Islam, rash barbarians, who had bound themselves by a solemn compact to penetrate into the fortress this day, or die together in the attempt; they advanced most brilliantly during the hottest of the conflict, which the grand master observing (as he could very well from the top of St. Angelo), and that they were close on storming the corner of the cavalier defended by Colonel Mas, had two pieces of heavy artillery brought to bear on them; the first of which, instead of good did us harm, for the gunner, keeping a little too much to the right, killed not only some of the enemy, but likewise

eight of our own knights. Still the second made amends by striking in the exact middle of those choicest Islamites, and swept away twenty of them, which was such a thunderstorm to the rest, that they fled, and never could be got to return. Of Spahis and maddened Delhis various parties next flew forward; and Janissaries with reiterated efforts, often refreshing with food and exciting drinks, but were as often driven back. Dervishes, emirs, sheriffs, and the whole band of Santons, with the most fanatical of sectaries, the Arapies, utterly regardless of their lives, endeavoured to scale the cavalier, but were unsuccessful the same. The circles of fire rolled down on them, and several, by half-dozens at a time, were consumed, tearing each other, and shrieking in spasms of the most frantic torture. Lofty this mountain! There sparkle the waves a thousand feet below you, into them if you can! Whirling, tossing with fiery convulsions in every direction, rolling too wild to look at, a blazing hurricane, with a most agonized human voice, now excruciating and loud, in various tones of intolerable pain—now so faint; at least the death they yelled for (though slow to their impatience) came in less than half an hour.

Nevertheless, two of the very wildest of the desperate fanatics, cheered on by Mustapha him-

self and Dragut, were given each a splendid banner. But all was useless. Above six continuous hours had lasted that terrific drama. With the rudest scorn the bannered lunatics were rebutted, their rich banners taken and spit upon, and then torn to frittters.

Of other four banners that we took, one was in a sortie by Medrano, and flung by his own hands into the fort. The magnificently-dressed Turk who bore it, had set it on one of the gabions, at which our said captain rushed out, killed the infidel, and wrenching the banner from his final grasp, had scarcely time to fling it up to us, much less to draw himself back, when a Moslem ball pierced his forehead, and the frank and valiant soldier fell dead, to our infinite regret. With us was his ensign, who resolute to die at his master's feet, leaped forth in a twinkling, and jostling, overturning, slaying, or wounding several Turks, was at length overcome by numbers, and killed, as he desired, at foot of that glorious corpse, which they endeavoured to pull off with them, but could not, for ours came and bore it in; and it afterwards was carried to Borgo, where it was buried in St. Leonard's, among the order's grand crosses.¹

Victory was ours; but at severe cost. At Borgò

¹ Bosio : par iii. 563.

the grand master and council went in public procession to church to thank the Almighty donor of all good gifts. But besides our wounded (so dangerously, that one of them died in the boat to Borgo), several of our knights were slain, and three hundred of our gallant troops.

So with shame and disappointment the Paynim folded the imperial standard, and left us acknowledged victors—"for to-day" (muttered the malicious Paynim)—"but to-morrow shall be your last."¹

It being necessary to replace our losses, and the grand master declining any but volunteers, the Neapolitan knights stood forth instantly in a body, priority of courage highly praised at the time; and the heroic example was followed by various of the most renowned knights of nearly every nation. From all which offerers, thirty knights were selected; to whom were added from the men of Borgo what made up the three hundred; and all were boated to St. Elmo, while Marshal Couppier with the cavalry from Citta Vecchia created a most opportune diversion by attacking the rear of the Turks. Since their universal opinion imputed their ill success to three things: 1. That the Giaours had still one heavy gun left. 2. The

¹ Bosio: par. iii. 564.

fresh succours. 3. The interference from fort St. Angelo; their engineers went with Mustapha and Dragut to review the situation, where it was determined how to prevent that gun from having effect; how to keep off succours by land or sea; how to screen out St. Angelo's fire; and to make a drawing of such devices. But while about it, was shot a cannon ball, which striking a rock, one of the splinters flew through Dragut's enormous turban; and though he was carried off to the commander-in-chief's tent, the famous corsair expired—to Christendom's great comfort.¹

Another splinter killed the aga standing by Mustapha; who did not however stir until the drawing was finished. And then likewise was it determined to execute what truly was the immediate cause of St. Elmo's final ruin—a covered way by which the Moslem could advance unseen as far as even the wall they had to storm.

And behold! on the 19th of that same month, the covered way was finished completely and in full use. Yet prior to that a small cannon from the top of St. Elmo killed the head master of the Turkish artillery, which made them add to their battery; so that St. Elmo was now under the fire of thirty-

¹ Bosio : par. iii. 565.

four heavy cannons, as lugubriously ceaseless as ever.¹

About then we had another mishap. The mill for grinding gunpowder at St. Angelo's blew up; and not only a large quantity of the composition was worse than lost, but likewise the materials for composing it burned, and ten of the workmen killed; and to inquire if merely accident (as it was) a commission was sent from Borgo of two; one of whom was Sir Oliver Starkey, and twenty-five stone weight of gunpowder was administered from Citta Vecchia for immediate use.

The heavy Turkish battery still on the increase were now thirty-six.² A second general assault was given, worse than the first; because by the covered way, St. Elmo was entirely insulated and cut off completely from all mortal succour. Still it refused to surrender. The word capitulation had indeed altogether ceased to be named by either party. In this second, Montserrat was among the killed; and Miranda, Eguaras, and Mas of the dangerously wounded. None of them so blind as not to be quite aware of their situation, as not to know it was contrary to military calculation; yet the tenderness of honour and sublime devotedness to the Christian creed, kept them perfectly reconciled to

¹ Bosio: par. iii. 566.

² Id., id. 568.

their sufferings, or rather they prized them very highly, and were quite gay and hopeful, and told the grand master's messenger they could hold on still; although that knight saw how certain and proximate was their ruin, and that they perceived it as well as he; nor was his own coming and returning without excessive danger. For coming, his companion sitting next him had his head swept away by a cannon ball, and in returning one of his rowers was shot dead by a harquebussade.

Valetta himself was astonished at the eagerness of his knights to be appointed to that most forlorn post. In the second assault general two hundred of that male garrison were stretched corpses; whom their companions, little by little, had removed a few paces inward from the parapets. It was all they could do; wounded and weary, more was impossible.

Except that after reposing some moments, they were able to join in shouting Victory! victory! joyously; yet with something of the solemn was it heard at Borgo, which knew the cry of that voice.

"Promptitude, or St. Elmo is totally gone; for two-thirds are killed, and not one of the rest unwounded, and so tired, that they scarcely exist. Yet at daybreak comes the third assault general." Such the tidings in a letter brought towards

evening by a swimmer, under water. Dismal were the Turks, by a consciousness of disgrace; under any circumstances can they blush? With admirable magnanimity did the grand master, with an air of satisfaction, affirm the Christians had a glorious victory, and were in hopes that with succour they could resist until Toledo's arrival; when knights, soldiers, citizens, offered themselves immediately, to the grand master's great wonder. He had but to choose from numbers contesting for election. But he would only suffer a few remarkably brave to go, with much food and ammunition, leaving it at liberty to the chiefs of St. Elmo either to accept the succours, or come back with them, for which he took care to leave room enough in the five boats; his intention being to save that honoured residue, and abandon the dilapidated fortress.¹ But the boats, in spite of every precaution, were obliged to recede, for eighty galleys, and other vessels, and guns innumerable, closed the pass hermetically.

Meantime, the besieged (nor should a Christian deign putting them on a level with Leonidas), showed a tranquillity above all praise, confessed one to another, and embraced cordially and devoutly, as all utterly equal. What other sacra-

¹ Bosio: par. iii. 571.

ments could they expect? They died doing their duty, and had no fear.

The merciless Turk knew they were too weak and wounded a handful to resist, and therefore his third assault general on a few disabled wretches.

It was the vigil of St. John's day, their patron saint. Their resistance was far greater than could have been imagined. But all their military stores were nearly out; of circles, or wild-fire, none; and even gunpowder so scarce, they gathered the grains of it that might remain in the pockets of their dead companions. "Incomparable valour, generosity, high-mindedness," exclaims Bosio, proud of his order, as they deserved.¹

They were soon but sixty alive. For four long hours did they fight, with no other arms than common pikes, swords, stones. Miranda having had such a shot as prevented his standing, got seated on a chair near the parapet, with a pike in his hands, as if to defend it. Through several breaches had the Turks now broken in, and could take deliberate aim at whatever seemed to have still some corporal strength. Then did old Bailiff Eguaras (he too having been forced to sit from his wounds) send a command for part of those on

¹ Bosio : par. iii. 572.

the cavalier to descend, a last resource. But on their coming, the enemy retired, with perhaps a feigned panic. There was breathing time, even some hours.

But lo! when least they expected it, and bandaging their wounds, and otherwise seeking some refreshment, at ten forenoon, sounded is the fourth assault general, and suddenly the foe rushes, and finds a passage open on every side. Already knowing by experience that we were wholly without defence of wild-fire, gunpowder, or anything, and rendered quite harmless from wounds and debility, the infidels no longer employed the least screen, but swarmed and menaced all round.¹ Colonel Mas, seeing all was lost, and determined to sell his life dear, like a brave soldier, since his leg was fractured, had himself seated on a log at his post of command, and brandishing a great two-handed sword—a weapon he used to manage with singular skill—slew several Turks, most valorously, to his ultimate gasp; after which he was cut up into minute bits, by exasperated pigmies. Universal massacre ensued, and all defence ceased. Sir Francis Langfreducci, severely wounded as he was, in many places, contrived to hobble to the post opposite Rennella, and there, where the wooden drawbridge

¹ Bosio: par. iii. 573.

once stood, kindled a smoke, according to the express instructions he had received from the grand master, ultimate signal of the loss of St. Elmo; which the savages observing, and all the hundreds of corpses on the ground (for none had ours been able to bury since many a day), a loud command was heard for Janissaries and Spahis to hurry in, to consummate the butchery of the Giaours, who could no longer hurt them. Then with shouts to deafen the air, in rushed the crescents, and found men only half alive. Yet, even in that hopeless state, heroic were the deeds of several of the knights and highly generous. Honour, though but a word, to their expiring feats! Aged Eguaras, desperately wounded as he was, seized a lance, and limping advanced resolutely, and with the brightest courage opposed the first Janissaries that dared pass the door of the fortress. But few instants, and a scimitar cuts the bailiff's white head sheer off. Sir Paul Avogadro, of Novara, to prevent the savages from, in cold blood, putting him to some strange, atrocious, ignominious death, darted forward like an enraged lion, and chased them wildly out by the breach, wounding them woefully, until he was hurled down headlong into the ditch.

Nine knights alone, and these too severely wounded to be able to make the slightest defence,

were carried away prisoners, not by the Turks, but by Levantine corsairs, from lucre of gain—to sell them into slavery, or perhaps for their ransom. The Turks obeyed Mustapha's orders to give no quarter, but immolate every human creature in St. Elmo; and that he would pay four crowns apiece for every head brought him, which, however, is said to have been commanded by Constantinople. Whether the crime was Solyman's or Mustapha's, admits of hesitation. There it lies between them; it were not unlike either. Five Maltese, who saved themselves by swimming, were the only persons who really got free.

Mustapha entering St. Elmo with the imperial standard, very much wondered so small a place showed so many dead bodies; and judging from the son what the parent must be, perceived he had embarked in a far more difficult adventure than he conjectured.

A fact recounted to this day at Malta is, that of the knights found dead, as well as those of them so wounded that they could not move in bed, and were pulled out and killed with fiercest torments, from each of them (martyred saints!) he had head and hands lopped off, and their arms extended and nailed to two timbers formed like a cross, planted in a hole made with the scimitar through the breast

and back; and fastening those most disfigured relics of humanity in a long line, he had them thrown into the sea, hoping the tide would waft them into Borgo—as indeed it did—by way of a salutary lesson what punishment would follow any resistance to his will.

The Christian deaths in total were one thousand two hundred, including a hundred knights and three servants-at-arms of the order, whose names are registered at full by the good Bosio.

Provence	15
Auvergne	15
France	18
Italy	31
Arragon, &c.	11
Germany	5
Castille, &c.	18

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Immense the Turkish joy for its taking; and Mustapha stimulated it, as if the rest of Malta were an easy matter now. And deep Valetta's grief, no doubt; nor could he bear abiding any longer in the palace from whose windows he had been blasted with the sight of Islam banners on that famed fortress. So he kept changing house after house; but whatever his internal anguish, outwardly his noble

countenance remained serene, and fine his address to the council: "If St. Elmo's fall give us concern, it was also splendid, and exceeding holy, nor should cause us any consternation! Not at its fall should we wonder, but exult that the noble few could hold out so long!"¹

¹ Bosio: par. iii. 577.

CHAPTER III.

OVER was the eventful vigil, and with daybreak floating on the gentle waves, arrived the cadaverous procession just off St. Angelo's, and sometimes even touching the chain. The sad wonder, even at that early hour, brought multitudes to the ramparts; but no one could identify any individual of the melancholy headless swimmers, for their heads were in sacks already sailing for Constantinople. With reverence, therefore, the grand master had the chain opened, and had the whole honoured group lifted from the water and buried together, with all the minute particularities that indicated high respect; no hurry, but profound attention, astonishing for such a time, and if doleful

the wail of the women, tender and pious were the ceremonies, as if all had been peace. Yet scarcely had the large tomb been closed, than Valetta turned to his knights, and as reprisals for that most barbarous extravagance, bade them instantly send circulars to their order everywhere, commanding no quarter to be given to any of those Paynims; and so, till the close of the siege, there was a Turk regularly hanged or shot every day at Citta Vecchia, where there were continual actions of cavalry, and wretches brought prisoners in on purpose.¹ But after that perhaps painful duty, the grand master in his usual mellow tones, and with a most placid aspect, not only deeply affecting to his council, but also to the assembled citizens, and even this promiscuous crowd, said—that St. Elmo's example should only increase our hardihood and hopefulness—that here is a stronger and more extensive station—that we should imitate the heroism of our brethren, in lieu of mourning for their happy, glorious end, and since by washing out in their own blood every sinful blemish, it is, and ought to be our heartfelt belief that they have won a blessed, immortal, eternal diadem—that what else is prescribed by the oath of our illustrious profession?—that what can a knight of St. John's so ardently desire as to die in arms?

¹ Bosio : par. iii. 580.

What greater blessing can be vouchsafed to him by Christ, than to die for His holy creed?—That we should not then lament, but sing songs of triumph;—that much more reason would those accursed infidels have to lament for having lost so many of their choicest soldiers—that if small, feeble St. Elmo cost them so much, what are they to expect from us here?—That ours is certain victory! with God's aid, most certain victory!—that away with impossibilities. In His service are none!—that only think you may, and you can do all things—that it is therefore, you are able to do anything. “In His service I tell you we are omnipotent.” Then addressing more particularly the women, he reminded them that it was St. John's day, so that they must now dry up their tears, and flock as usual to the church, where they would find the accustomed consolations and those holy observances that lift the oppressed spirit, and fill it with joyous ease; and that in the afternoon the popular festivities should take place as usual; for that indeed it would be a great shame if the valiant men of Borgo should not feel as much innocent hilarity as their females. So it was indeed. And when the usual shouts, rattles, bonfires, arose—it may be doubted whether to imitate them was the Moslem wish, and St. John being previous to Christianity, might have been a

saint to them too; howbeit, it is recorded that on that occasion at least the Turks had the very same rejoicings as the Christians.

Well might it be that Valetta had not time then for foreign correspondence. At all events, he wrote to a Spanish knight, Governor of Citta Vecchia, for him to write to Toledo of St. Elmo's fall; that succours of all kinds were necessary, but that he relied chiefly on the order's own, so to send instantly the troops come with the four galleys, and instructs him how to act in case of a blockade; also to write the information touching St. Elmo to the other of their dignitaries not in Borgo.¹ Nevertheless, though Mesquitez performed all the grand master's injunctions exactly, the news of the fall of St. Elmo was sagaciously kept back until the arrival of what is called the small succour, which was landed safely in Malta on the 29th of June.²

It reminds us of Rhodes, that here too the Turk endeavoured to estrange the Maltese from the order; but in truth succeeded no better than with the Rhodians.

With this small succour came what may be termed the cream or most valuable part of the whole: first of all, the Commander, Parisot, the grand master's nephew—

¹ Bosio: par. iii. 579.

² Id.: id. iii. 582.

2nd. A Spanish grandee, Knight of St. James, with his corps of two hundred foot—

3rd. The Prior of Hungary, with some gentlemen—

4th. Sir Augustus Ricca, with hired soldiers, at the expense of the order—

5th. A French Knight, with sixty men from his galley—

6th. The little succour itself; Knights of the order, forty-two—¹

7th. Gentlemen, adventurers of Spain, several being of the highest families, as the Duke of Infantado's brother, twenty; id. of Italy, eleven; id. of Germany, three; of England, two; ² hired gunners, fifty-six; imperial foot, six hundred—in all, seven hundred and thirty-four.

But the knights and gentlemen adventurers were, every one of them, noted warriors, and the gunners and foot were all picked men. That the succours, however limited, should have given much vexation to Mustapha—who was blamed for negligence in letting it pass—and depress the spirits of all the Infidels, is natural, and much consolation to the Christians, as a good omen, and

¹ Of all nations, but chiefly French, Spaniards, Italians, &c.

² John Smith,—Edward Stanley, as becomes his historic house.

sure earnest of what would happen; and therefore it was that the grand master wrote to express his gratitude to Toledo, in a letter dated July 8th, adding, that he feared it would be impossible for any other little succour to enter Borgo, so closely had the enemy blockaded it now; but that with twelve thousand he might easily beat the Turks completely, and perhaps the half would suffice, so broken are they and divided; but that he was very eager for a victorious exit as quickly as possible, from fearing want of water, with such a quantity of helpless people pent up in no vast town.

Andrea Doria at length coming to Sicily with his squadron, and the Duke of Savoy's admiral with his galleys, and those from the Duke of Florence and Piombino, who had received at Terracina, and landed at Messina, six hundred soldiers from the Pope, as a temporary succour, under Colonna, that the grand master might be able to hold out until the arrival of the effectual one, united ardently, requesting to be forwarded to Malta; Doria subjoining that at all events he himself would go. Toledo at first assented, but afterwards considering he should want Doria for the great succour, resolved to transmit immediately, not him, but those of the Papacy, and the adven-

turers, and Zapata, with two hundred Spanish foot, in all twelve hundred men.

But so strict the blockade, that the grand master thought it best to refuse. and made a signal for them to return to Sicily, yet contrived to send the viceroy a letter, that there was no help for it; that rather than a new massacre, and attempts that could not but be fruitless, wait he must, and try to resist until the army came to be master of the pass into Borgo, which implies the entire island; for which twelve thousand men, eighty galleys, and provisions for one month would be quite sufficient. "Yet fearful are our wants." July 11th.

Some believe it was no impossibility, but that the grand master judiciously refused, in order to hasten the radical cure.¹ So the viceroy wrote with his own hand to his Catholic majesty, enclosing the letters of the grand master himself.

Several breaches so wide were effected on the 14th July, that a troop of horse could charge and dismount, and remount quite easily! Yet what served they? In the general assault, thirty thousand pots of wildfire, and the superiority of straight long swords over the scimitar, aided superhuman valour, and the Turks fled with frightful slaughter, while the Christian shout was ever, *Remember St.*

¹ Bosio : par. iii. 596.

Elmo! Consequence was, that a party began to be formed in the Turkish army, favourable to desisting from the Maltese war, as mis-managed from the outset, and therefore could not succeed.

In those sanguinary actions, Commander Parisot, nephew of the grand master, who hoped that high-minded youth, firm, valiant, dressy, handsome, would be his age's staff, was killed with great glory. And memorable and highly generous was the grand master's manner on his being informed of the death of him he loved as his son; and turning to the bystanders, thanked God that his nephew had acquired so blessed and glorious an end, and after pouring out fervently his prayers to the Almighty, "Now" (he cried) "to your duty, and think of it no more," and never did any mortal hear from him another syllable on the subject.

Then originated a dissension between the two pashas, which was certainly a happiness to the Christians; yet not very great, since recorded as a still greater was their finding a spring of potable, though not very excellent water in Borgo.

Sixty heavy cannons now beat on Borgo, and its principal fortress, St. Michael's, and were heard at Sicily. Nor do the Turks think anything of the lives of their soldiery, so they succeed. But the Spanish monarch's answer had arrived for Toledo

to use extreme diligence, and instantly succour Malta at all events, and at what cost soever; wherefore he wrote to the grand master, that by the last of August he would be at Malta with ten or twelve thousand foot;¹ that in a day or two he meant to despatch Doria with four thousand brave Tuscan soldiers; that his royal master had made only one exception in his royal graces, by expressly forbidding him to land in person, as he warmly would have desired, to testify not only his cordial affection for the order, but still more for Valetta himself. The wings of fame and the honoured cry of our defence of Malta had gone forth through the world, and a crowd of volunteers for that noble adventure had met from all parts at Messina; the baronage of Germany, and the counts and practised warriors of France, Spain, Italy, even the remotest spots of Christendom.

Nor suppose that one moment's quiet is allowed to Borgo. No! Just as at St. Elmo. The batteries and every sort of fighting day and night; all along the posts and bastions; landsides, seashores the same incessant conflict never knows the shortest, not truce, but momentary pause. The soldiers necessarily relieved each other for nutriment and brief repose. But scarcely with us the knights. How often had

¹ Bosio : par. iii. 616.

we to drive foes from the parapets to whom a breach had given ingress! How often to root up banners they had planted! Enough that the defence of Borgo was worthy of St. Elmo's. But ended differently! Gallantly did our turcopolier command his foreign companions; and troops for that post of England had one of the two pashas¹ for assailant personally on Friday, 3rd of August, and there naturally fought whatever Englishmen were in Malta at that time, belonging to the order or not. At least those two already named; and probably some few others, whose names are lost. According to a Spanish soldier, who deserted and became a renegade, there remained now but five hundred combatants alive in Borgo; and these extenuated and wounded, every one of them. He stated that the rest of the population consisted of superannuated persons and children and women, the sick, the dangerously wounded, and the blind or lame; that nearly all the ammunitions were consumed; that by the grand master's orders no more cannon were fired, except in cases of inevitable necessity; preserving the powder for the harquebusses; that of war pikes and wildfire there was no more; all broken or bent, and badly ironed, medi-

¹ Piali, the Admiral, and perhaps more formidable than Mustapha.

cines all gone; that however Giaours were too obstinate ever to surrender, so that the only way was to exterminate them all, and take care they get no further succour.

True or false, what cared the pashas? But they told it to their troops to encourage them. The two in spite of former disagreements, agreed again against the Christians. Mustapha undertaking St. Michael with Senglea, and Piali, Borgo—dividing their efforts for the second assault before dawn on Tuesday, August 7th.

Then amongst several others fell regretted by all Christendom one of the rarest and most able captains in the whole Spanish army. But both Mustapha's assault and Piali's, though exceeding bloody, were unsuccessful.¹

Our cavalry from Citta Vecchia made a diversion on the enemy's rear; and after one more tremendous struggle, in which every grade, order, condition, and each sex exerted themselves herocially, the day was won. As soon as all was quiet, the grand master hastened to the church to hear *Te Deum* sung for our new victory. To cull an individual from the vast number of infidels then slain, probably the worthiest and best-conducted person in Islam, to say a great deal, was the Bey of

¹ Bosio: par. ii. 629.

Rhodes, as remarkable for acuteness of intellect and valour as for goodness.¹ More horrible and mortal still, were the attacks and batteries of the Turks the 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th of August; perhaps from some intelligence that Toledo was coming, and to reduce the defence to cinders previous to his arrival. However that might be, the firing on the Castille post began to lessen its severity on the 17th, whence ours suspected a mine, as was indeed discovered; so we made a countermine. Mustapha reflecting that summer was nearly over, that he had lost so many men killed or wounded, that no succour was coming from Constantinople for him, while that for the Christians was to appear every moment; having learned from his two spies that same morning, that at the port of Saragossa in Sicily, were thirty-six ships, a hundred and thirty six galleys at Messina, with above ten thousand infantry in the King of Spain's pay, awaiting additional troops from Italy; and that Toledo was quite prepared to sail himself against the Turkish forces in Malta—that St. Elmo had cost him so dear—that St. Michael's and Borgo were not yet taken, and the siege of St. Angelo not even commenced, he had a long consultation with Piali and others of his captains; when the deter-

¹ Bosio : par. iii. 630.

mination, as a last and only remedy, to finish the whole affair, was taken, to recur to three or four general assaults, not separately, but continuously; the most impetuous and terrible they possibly could, with the firm resolution to storm, and always replace the stormers with fresh ones; changing them and refreshing by turns, in such a manner that one-half of the army was always at rest, while the other half was at the combat; so that, without once ceasing, they should oblige the besieged to be always in the extreme of labours and dangers, without one single instant of repose, or for meals. Most clearly it follows, that, having ceaselessly to defend those feeble ramparts against an onset so interminable and furious, without ever changing, or having quiet, food, or sleep—flesh in the long run not being able to resist steel—they must, at last, be consumed away by that intolerable fatigue and those prolonged vigils—extenuated by famine, they could not but fall, particularly with Turkish artillery and their unequalled harquebussiers. “Then must every one of the Giaours be slain. Even already the breaches are ample and numerous, and like an easy walk, or most smooth wide highway. Then is there not the glory! And I the Pasha, promise you a great recompense!” So cried Mustapha, and after many feints and stratagems,

to intimidate us and ours, an immensity of Moslems covering all Scheb-Erras, marched down to the seaside; sure sign the assaults were at hand. The whole night was devoted, by the grand master, to visiting all his posts; yet the next day had nearly passed, when suddenly an attack was made on the post of Castille; and a huge red banner on a golden-headed pole, with a horse-tail flying at its end, was planted on its bastion, that most people thought Borgo taken; but not at all. The grand master, unarmed, and talking in the square, quietly took his helmet from his page, and putting it on his head, advanced thither with a lance that some one put in his hand. Nothing could stop him; not even the revered prayers of one of the chief dignitaries of his order. And hastening to the bastion, where seven soldiers had just been slain by one cannon ball, he placed himself among the pikemen, at the breach, just like a private; and seemed to think on nothing but doing his duty as such.¹

And the urgency gone, he established his residence at that bastion, nor were any intercessions of his knights, repeating Toledo's maxim, able to change his continuing there for the rest of the siege, declaring no other spot so especially becoming him, and that he much preferred a death honour, in com-

¹ Bosio: par. iii. 638.

pany of his own dear knights. Then no doubt it became our habitual usage to sleep armed on the parapets.

The Turks encountering so desperate a resistance, could not be induced the whole of the next night to attack us anew. But at dawn, the pasha having hung out the signal for assault general, his army rushed forward with three shouts, the loudest ever heard. Not to me only (says Bosio), but also to the best writer in the world, it would be impossible to relate properly the many heroic deeds in that day and the two following! nor of any one in particular, but of every one who fought there on those days, the same may be truly said, and deeds of superhuman heroism are to be ascribed to every one of them; nor is that asserted on any other authority than the very highest. Five similar assaults were given to St. Michael's, with similar results. Proclamation was made next, that the sack of the whole city and all it contained were all allotted to the troops by the Grand Seignior's orders, reserving nothing to himself, with the sole exception of the grand master's person.¹

These continuous assaults made many think the pashas had determined a universal massacre, as at St. Elmo; yet even with that belief, only two of

¹ Bosio: par. iii. 646.

the multitude of Christians, one an assistant gunner, and the other a Greek sailor—so neither of them even private soldiers, but of a still lower class—deserted at that solemn moment to save their vile lives. Finally Mustapha, seeing the unconquerable spirit, and that even women and children fought like stout men, yet fearing to return to Constantinople without accomplishing what Solyman had ordered, resolved to stay the whole winter, and starve the besieged out.

To this Piali would not consent, but openly protested he would return home with his fleet, before the bad season came on and would take all the marines, and recall them from the land force, for that for them he was responsible, which some impute to jealousy.¹ Notwithstanding internal agitation, which he only revealed to a few friendly advisers, Mustapha assumed a smiling face, and mounting his horse, assured his troops they had only to continue the assault for the next night and day, and that the worn-out Giaours could not but yield; to which the Spahis and Janissaries replied they were fatigued, and that it was clearly the will of God Malta should not be taken by the Turk. On which, Emirs, Dervishes, Moolahs, and Moors, asked to have the honour of leading next morn-

¹ Bosio : par. iii. 647.

ing's storm; to enter the restive city or die for their faith. Then Spahis and Janissaries ashamed reclaimed their rightful place. But Mustapha only allowed it in half; and that companies of both parties should storm together, and relays of both be prepared to repose in their turn.

The grand master went to the infirmary, where summoning into the hall of arms all the wounded who could move from their beds, said, "Although I too am severely wounded, yet I contrive to continue my duty (instead of calling medical aid, which I sadly want), in my concern for the common benefit and the greatness of the need. Other valiant knights and soldiers do the same, and remain on guard on the parapet, though they are almost all wounded men, and none but are fatigued in the extreme and deprived of the greater part of their bodily strength; but nevertheless stand unconquered in mind and full of vigour. For plainly do they see that things are at a crisis; when it is better to end life valiantly fighting with arms in their hands (in which consists their only hope of safety in this world) than basely wait to be massacred in hospitals or houses, or undergo torments from most cruel barbarians firmly resolved not to spare a single soul of them."

And enough were these few words, which pene-

trated like sharp darts into every one; and drawing power from their very weakness, none remained in the hospital except those already in the final agony. In arms the wounded human beings hurried to the ramparts, where who could, fought; and who could not fight, there assisted the combatants. On that day was shot an arrow from the Turkish line to ours with a scroll containing nothing but Thursday; which carried to the grand master, he recognised as from one of his spies signifying the foe had determined to give one or two other storms, and then depart.¹ Fact is, the next assault general ensued at dawn on Tuesday, perhaps fiercer than any preceding, and it lasted longer in two relays until night, that is twelve hours without an instant interval; and so thick the smoke that they could scarcely distinguish each other. Women and children absolutely showed most astonishing and little short of peerless ability. By the goodness of God, Mustapha neither by threats nor promises could engage his army to a new assault. So there were different snatches of comparative quiet, and the grand master wrote to Toledo complaining of the delay of succours; that all his knights could do was to die in that defence, and that there was too much languor in a matter of

¹ Bosio: par. iii. 648.

such importance. And the Turks found they had lost eighteen thousand of their choicest and bravest men. And now the Moslem scope was to shut up the port entirely by a great many beams of timber joined to each other; which pleased the grand master, since it disclosed they did not know his hopes of immediate succour, and meant to conquer the island first.

The conflux of adventurers of all nations and of two hundred and fifty knights of the order, who had met at Messina, engaged Toledo to move to the succour of Malta at last; after being told by one of those knights that if he left his brethren without aid, and that they perished, it would be a great shame for both him and his royal master, and a mighty loss to the whole of Christendom. Was this ill-will in Toledo? Certainly not! Since many of his family had been in the order, and recently his best beloved son had been killed during this very siege; and he missed no good opportunity of expressing his gratitude to Valetta for procuring his being nominated viceroy, as well as captain general of the imperial fleet. But he was extremely cautious and fearful of squandering the lives of the troops entrusted to him. So in the three or four days next following the 20th of August, he embarked what is called the *Third*. Knights of Provence 29.

Knights of Auvergne 37.¹ Id. of France 42.² Id. of Italy 60.³ Id. of Arragon 56.⁴ Id. of Casille 22.⁵ Id. of Germany 2. Knights of St. Stephen 40. The Italian adventurers under the most illustrious noblemen, Corgna, the two Colonna, Vitelli, Sforza, Palavicino, Rangone, Gonzaga, Peschara, Rocca, Pio, Pallavuini 531.⁶

Spanish adventurers under Cardenas, Cefuentes, Guzman, Granuella 104.⁷ Other Italian and French 18. Other Spaniards 70.⁸

To the above several must be added to make them as said, eighteen hundred.

Spanish regular troops, five thousand; Italian ditto, one thousand seven hundred; so that in all eight thousand five hundred were the body with which Toledo sailed for Malta on the 25th of August.⁹

¹ Of whom a Grammont, D'Aubusson, Beauregard.

² Lions, Boutillier, Beloy, De la Fontaine, Vieux Ponts, Damas, Neuville.

³ Gonzaga, Orsino, Rovero, Grimaldi, Spina, Lomellino, Rocca, Brusca, Malaspina, Alliata, Carmignano, Del Pozzo, Villa, Carretto, Cenami, Valperga, Tapparello, Pucci, Castiglione, Serra.

⁴ Toledo, Sano, Mugnoz, Cabrera.

⁵ Guzman, Henriquez, Lara, Avila.

⁶ Savorgnano, Serbelloni, D'Appiano, Gambacorta.

⁷ Rosalez, Solo, Gomez, Zapata, De la Cerda, Benavides, Lanoy, Cogny.

⁸ Padilla, Molo, Guimeran, Salazar, Aranguela, Ruys, D'Eredia, Vivez, Navarro.

⁹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxxi. 668.

In the meantime, without precisely assaults general, the cannonade and mining went on as before, at Borgo. The breaking of the weather induced hopes in the Maltese that the Turks would sail away. And now the Post of Castille had become so little tenable, that the grand master was warmly conjured by his knights to retire into St. Michael's with the order's archives, and the account books of the treasury; but he positively forbade any such request again, for that he would live or die on that post of Castille. And to end the question, ordered most of the forces in that fortress to leave it, and come to join him where he was, and then had the wooden drawbridge between it and Borgo sawed asunder; thus extinguishing all possibility of getting into the former, reputed one of his noblest actions.¹

Mustapha is said to have published in his army that the Grand Seignior had instructed him to winter at Malta, if he could not take it earlier; whence the Janissaries and their companions, apprehensive of having to abide so long on that sterile rock, determined to storm obstinate Borgo; as they did most resolutely during three hours, but were at last driven back with universal scorn. And then it was that poor De la Cerda,

¹ Bosio : par. iii., lib. xxxii. 675.

who had sustained some blemish for quitting St. Elmo, but now conducting himself heroically, received that bad wound, of which he died, after lingering in torments for ten days in the hospital.¹

Mustapha, hearing firing in the direction of Citta Vecchia, decided on doing what the late Dragut had said he should have done from the first; and as it had been represented untenable, and would not require more than a *coup de main*, he promised the Janissaries they might sack it, and keep all the persons in it as slaves for themselves; which pleased that terrible corps much.

He marched with four thousand infantry the last of August, leaving to Piali the continuation of the siege of St. Michael's and Borgo. The four thousand were almost all Janissaries, along with a quantity of stakes, and engineers and their tools, and about thirty horse; and after having reconnoitred Citta Vecchia within cannon-shot, he surrounded it. But Mesquitez, the governor, making not only his soldiery, but also a number of useless people go to the ramparts with firelocks, caused the place to appear much better garrisoned than it really was. So Mustapha thought better of the matter; and retiring to sup and pass the night at the grand master's house at Boschetto,

¹ Bosio : par. iii., lib. xxxii. 680.

went back next morning to his former camp, where he found Piali had pitched his own tent, exactly facing the post of Auvergne.¹

On the 4th of September appeared Toledo's fleet off Gozo, and began landing his troops on the island of Malta.² Yet had that beginning but a delusive aspect to the Christians; who considered it little better than idle talk, when he sailed, they thought, back to Sicily. However, even his appearance had been favourable to us in this, that it forced Mustapha to give up the assault general he had projected, on the basis of the unwillingness of the Turks to winter in Malta; it cowed them to that degree, that they allowed a small party to venture a sortie, and burn the principal of their besieging machines. Yet replete with persuasion, that his return to Constantinople without having taken Malta, would incur his master's merciless indignation, he rather than face the likes, preferred any other imminent and manifest danger of perishing where he was.

Not so the other pasha, who desired ardently to get back with the fleet whole and healthy,³ believing Solyman a reasonable man, who as a statesman

¹ Bosio : par. iii., lib. xxxii. 684.

² Id. : id., id. 685.

³ Id. : id., id. 687.

could not but prefer saving his fleet and army after such mighty efforts; when remained but provisions for twenty-five days and neither artillery nor ammunition for the siege of St. Angelo, even if they had taken Borgo and St. Michael's; so it was concluded to expend an extreme effort in storming the ramparts once more with utmost vigour; and then, whether successful or not, at all events go home; for that in the one case they would return with glory, though they did not take St. Angelo; and in the other they would have done all that man can do, his best; and so neither have merited, nor should undergo punishment. Again did several of the Janissaries openly assure Mustapha it was certain Allah chose they should not take Malta.¹

Nor were the Christians deficient in preparing for resistance, not only with courage, but with pride that Malta should have sufficed without succour from Toledo or any one else; relying on themselves alone.

Andrea Doria, arriving from his cruise, learned with surprise and vexation that succour was not as yet landed. So at length on the 7th of September it was disembarked in the island of Malta at that part called Tremeca, over against Gozo. Yet was it neither twelve nor ten thousand men, but what

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxxii. 688

some reduce to eight thousand and three hundred.¹ Toledo after seeing it forwards about a mile, and having promised it a re-inforcement of five or six thousand foot, to be brought by himself in that same fleet within five or six days, retired on board, and straight for Sicily.

Two hours before dawn at the tinkling of a bell, "Ho Paynims, come on!" from our impatient wall shouted the already risen Christians—not one of whom was aware of the landing of the succour, and that it was marching towards them.

Full of mental energy and confidence at this to be the last assault, they lined the ramparts with utmost heroism; and even the lowest class threw stones towards the enemy, on whom they poured execrations and defiance. But of the infidels none were advancing, although now it was clear dawn. Christians thought they overheard Turkish whispers about what some interpretations referred to dissensions between the two pashas, and others between Spahis and Janissaries, as to which should head the storming party, and many to complaints regarding our fortifications being better manned than ever. And behold, to the excessive wonder of ours (it was now sunrise or later) the Turks, emerging and defiling from beneath our walls, be-

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxxii. 690.

gan retreating. Not one of us divined the truth. Whether Piali's small craft had brought him intelligence of the Spanish succours; or that nothing certain had arrived, but only an uncertain rumour slid around; fact is, Mustapha commenced suspecting what really occurred opposite Gozo, and his troops instead of mounting to the assault, took quite a contrary direction.¹ However a mistake in the signals prevented the grand master from knowing of any disembarkment in any part of the island, and left him still more ignorant than the rest. Until within half an hour of noon, he disbelieved all such reports as idle fables. Nor even was quite persuaded although he headed the people to thank God, and had all the church bells ring a merry peal, after a silence of three months; but no salutes of cannon, seeing little gunpowder remained. As soon as it was sure that the Spanish army had landed, the Turks determined to profit of that night to embark their artillery and burn their camp. And one of them pondering on the miraculous defence, and the ignominious sequel, concluded that the Christian faith was much better; so with a resolve to be Christianized, deserted to Borgo before light, and announced that the Mahometans had em-

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxxiii. 693.

barked and sailed off. And he was veracious as to the greater part ; but a few lingered yet, amongst whom Mustapha himself, and ventured some ineffectual attempts. At length the grand master wrote an announcement of his victory to the Pope, and through him to all Christendom, dated September 11th. That letter still exists to tell its own story, and shall be in the Appendix.¹ Toledo would have everything to be attributed to his succours. The Maltese, with proper pride, to their own efforts, and that the cause was won prior to the Spaniard's arrival. It was the demon of ill, who was at his function, disseminating dissension.² But finally the whole remaining Moslem force, quite dispirited, made sail back for the Levant, on the 20th of September.

Toledo came at last to Malta, and the grand master went down to the beach to meet him; and there those two renowned captains cordially shook hands, which softened the bystanders to tears. And the grand master gave a splendid supper to the viceroy and all his officers; and after it he and Valetta spent most part of the night in consulting whether it were better to pursue the Turkish fleet or undertake the siege of Tripoli in Barbary—but finally

¹ Appendix, cexxx.

² Bosio : par. iii., lib. xxxiii. 704.

decided for the last. So in that direction Toledo sailed with the greater part of the Third.¹

Yet very grave must have been Valetta's thoughts, when given leisure to collect them; for he saw but ruins all around, and an uninhabited waste, where a populous island had lately stood, and his order reduced desperately. A plan occupied his intellect, and appeared the only way to put down that terrible despotic power; by depriving it of the means of making a similar invasion any more. Yet the destruction of the arsenal shall not be attempted in his life-time! If any effect it ever! Borgo was then changed into Vittoriosa, its present name. About nine thousand of the victors were killed at Malta. Yet of the knights here is an abstract. In Bosio are the names: Provence, 18; Auvergne, 4; France, 21; Italy, 50; Arragon, 14; Germany, 4; Castille, 18.

These are the victims registered in the Order's Church, and for whose souls anniversaries are solemnized. If included in the nine thousand, how small a fraction of it they make! But they were not other than the superior officers of their hired and volunteer troops, as often observed. Besides in the registers are only the downright and immediately slain, or those, whose mortal wounds produced death during the siege; and not even all of these. In no list are

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxxiii. 707.

given the (however grievously) wounded and maimed for life.

When Solyman received the despatch of the two pashas he let it fall, as thunderstruck with astonishment, and exclaimed, "It is only in my own hand that my sword is invincible!" The despatch rated the Turkish loss at thirty thousand men.¹

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxxiii. 714.

CHAPTER IV.

As Innocent VIII. to D'Aubusson, so Pius IV. offered the cardinalship to Valetta, yet with more delicacy leaving him a choice, by consulting him beforehand, of which he availed himself and refused; extremely courteously of course, supplicating it should be rather given to his brother, a true ecclesiastic, then Bishop of Vabres; whereas he himself had grown old in the profession of arms. "Very different from the holy spotless life of my brother, who has all which qualifies for that sacerdotal elevation." But it was too late—Pius IV. 1566 could no longer confer anything in the world, for he died on the 9th of December, 1565;¹

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxxiii. 720.

and it was now in 1566, the 5th of January, as is the date of the instructions Valetta gave to his ambassador at the Court of Spain: "That he should ask his majesty for a garrison for Malta, that otherwise the order would be obliged to give it back to him; of which, if he approve, then to beg him to assign a spot to which we might remove. To fortify Malta would be absolutely necessary, in case we are to remain there. The knights are quite ready to spend their lives, and all their worldly means, but if the whole be not enough, what more can they do. Others must do the rest, if done it should be. And, in returning through France, repeat to its monarch all that you will have said to him of Spain; and, besides, that if his Catholic Majesty do not, then it will be for all the Christian princes in Europe to resolve. That, to keep Malta will require an established force of fifteen or twenty thousand men; which the order makes known in this perplexity and confusion, that if the Moslem fleets come back, it may not be imputed to us, if the island be lost. That, with three thousand of our most excellent hired troops, and our body of knights, we will undertake to keep and fortify St. Angelo, St. Elmo, and Citta Vecchia, which is more than can reasonably be expected from so small a commonwealth. That, much above its force, is

the being responsible for the entire island, which, however it will try to defend; but without the slightest hope of success, and we now protest as much, in anticipation, for the purpose of disculpating ourselves to the Almighty, in every event, and in the eyes of the world.¹ I and my companions, we shall have done our very utmost."

To repair St. Elmo, alone, the engineer declared the labour of four thousand workmen for four months would be requisite; and that even so, it would be always liable to being taken again, from its narrowness; a natural imperfection, not to be remedied, "and therefore it is my opinion, it is far better to fortify the whole mountain, on an angle of which St. Elmo stands; otherwise the present situation will require twelve thousand foot, and two hundred light cavalry." And more to urge the chill tardy conclusions of the Spanish council, a circular to all the order's priors, cited to Malta every knight, and commander and servant-at-arms, to present themselves armed, accoutred, and equipped, not later than the end of next April, under the same date of January 5th, 1566.

But, on the 10th of the following February, met the chapter wherein the English language, under Sir Oliver Starkey, as Lieutenant of the Turcopolier,

¹ Bosio : par. iii., lib. xxxiv. 725.

had to be represented by a French knight, in the absence of any English one.¹

A law, by this meeting, that every knight taken by the infidels, and enslaved, should preserve his station amongst the knights during his slavery, and this be as favourable to his promotion as if spent on actual service, at the order's head-quarters, was surely in clear contradiction to both the words and the spirit of the old rule; that a knight made prisoner, and a knight dead, were one and the same thing, of which are to be found various instances in their brightest period. Yet high minded and rare bravery were the Hospitallers still to show, nor did it not encounter this of opposition, that for the nine knights at St. Elmo, since all too severely suffering from their bad wounds, for their consent to be either asked or given, it would be only just to make an exceptionable clause; but that a universal law were no compliment to them, and to it may be demurred on the best grounds.²

Only some months, and the succeeding Pope, in the name of Christendom, sent to exhort Valetta to set about creating his new city; and it having been observed that many decrees of the Council of Trent

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxxiv. 728.

² Id.: id., id. xxxv. 730.

were irreconcilable with the order's privileges, his Holiness notwithstanding confirmed said privileges, only adding a clause to his confirmatory brief.¹

Then returned the grand master and ambassador from Madrid, with a letter bidding Toledo pay the order two thousand crowns' worth of provisions and ammunitions, and a thousand other crowns for a much larger debt due to it by Spain several years. Yet were such petty matters soon drowned by what went through all the Levant, that Constantinople was preparing a second invasion of Malta; which hostile rumour at length alarmed the better class of the Maltese to that degree, that they began selling their things to remove their wives and children to Sicily; preferring the most disastrous exile to the horrors of last year. And willingly the grand master gave them leave, to unload himself of so many mouths—of slender utility in war. Hence those Sicilian ports became colonies of Greeks, Rhodians, Maltese.²

On the 14th of March began the building of the new city of Valetta, by laying the foundations with many religious ceremonies. But there was, besides the map, a model of it in wax laid before several of

¹ Bosio : par. iii., lib. xxxv. 737.

² Id. : id., id. 738.

the most experienced engineers in Christendom.¹ And another very consolatory brief came from Rome, conjuring Valetta not to put into execution his threat of leaving Malta, and going to abide in Sicily; "But rather remain, dearest child, in the fortress where you have already won immortal praise and glory throughout every land. The succours of his Catholic Majesty cannot be wanting, for therein is interested not only his fame, but the very safety of his own dominions. Nor ours; for we would be ready to spill our blood for love of our Redeemer and the benefit of this Christian republic. Above all, the Eternal will succour you, even He who so evidently saved thee last year. Nor will be wanting His supernal aid to your knights and soldiers. . . . All religious and faithful Christians listening to our invitation, will invoke a blessing on you. We instantly will write to the King of Spain and Sicily," dated Rome, at St. Peter's, under the fisherman's ring, 22nd March, 1566. Nor is to be forgotten the present by the Spanish monarch immediately after the siege, in testimony of his extraordinary ability and valour—a sword and dagger, both of which had hilts of the purest massive gold, beautifully chiselled, and of immense value.²

¹ Bosio : par. iii., lib. xxxv. 741. ² Id. : id., id. 767.

It was at this time that among several French youths, volunteers for the Turkish war, came Vignacourt to Malta, and shortly afterwards entered the order; and in process of years was to become its chief. Nor was Toledo any longer tardy; but transmitted five thousand Spanish and three thousand German foot—to be commanded by Valetta, “with as full authority as if he were my own person,” were the words of the King of Spain; which forces added to the knights, and their hired troops and some corps of Maltese, made in all eighteen thousand infantry and three hundred cavalry—a body quite sufficient to face whatever Turkey could convey to Malta.¹

But the Moslem fleet, instead of attacking that island, sailed up the Adriatic, and entering the port of Venice in a friendly way to refresh, vomited its ill-humour in a hostile demonstration on poor little Ragusa, and in cannonading some of the imperial towns along the coast of Dalmatia.²

Meantime the grand master took delight in superintending the construction of his new city—for the working at which on all festivals (even Sundays included) there was a Papal dispensation, so urgent did it seem to all Christendom. The hod-bearers to assist the masons amounting to eight thousand; and

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxxvi. 770.

² Id.: id., id. xxxvii. 773.

inhabitants of other countries will certainly smile at the solemnity with which the historian Bosio speaks of the discovery of a little spring of fresh water in cutting the rock—spring of no greater dimensions than a man's thumb. But people who have ever been there, will be nowise surprised; considering its aridity even now.

On the 22nd September, 1566, Selim ascended the Ottoman throne, his father having died in Hungary, of which new sultan tidings reached Malta on October 2nd, and were forwarded to Rome and Vienna, who were ignorant of the fact (much more the other Christian capitals) except, what is worse, that the imperial ambassador at Venice had written to his master that there was a similar vague rumour—not to be traced to any good source. So Malta
1565
at that time was the direct road for Levant news to get to Europe; and it was Europe rather than any one else, that first named the nascent town Valetta. It was the interest and care of all nations. All nations laboured to build it. It was considered from the beginning as much theirs, as the islanders'—a cosmopolitan city—the only one of that kind that perhaps ever existed from the foundations. The property of all the civilized people in the world a thousand times more than of the, however faithful, natives.¹

¹ Bosio: par. iii., xxxlib. vii. 788.

Selim was then forty-three, and being addicted to wine, women, and all luxurious habits, was no valiant warrior like Solyman (the better for Christendom), nor an irreconcilable enemy of the sacred, most illustrious Hospitallers. But no event distracted the grand master from his usual most diligent assiduity respecting the growing city. Nevertheless, not unmentioned must be the assassination of his private secretary, a renowned knight, by a bullet, in the dark, within a few paces of the palace, as he was returning to his house, to the deep vexation and grief of Valetta; who made many unavailing attempts to discover the murderer, whose harquebuss indeed remained on the spot, but led to nothing, being filed over with such care that it could not possibly be identified. Not but Valetta had to attend to all the order's concerns, as well as to an agreement still extant, and then made with a corps of hired soldiers; where are observable :— 1st. That the order kept usually three thousand of such; 2nd. That they had what would be enormous pay at present—forty dollars a-month each—which included sub-officers to be sure, and perhaps some of the very lowest officers likewise; but the rest and all the superior officers being Hospitallers, cost nothing. Even the superior officers of whatever allies marched with him, were generally in the same category, and, as Hospitallers, cost nothing.

The very ground on which Valetta was built was bought from the Maltese, and paid to them by the knights; in which sense also it has a right to be called a cosmopolitan city, and belonged much more to all Christians than to a nation, who had scarcely ever a single member in the order. The first name given to it by the knights was *Humblest*. And to assimilate themselves in some degree, exteriorly at least, a bye-law condemned them for the future to wear plain black; except in uniform and during campaigns. And that chapter met certainly in the *humblest* of halls—two temporary wooden huts, which the grand master had erected to defend himself and chancery from sun and rain, that he might be near the buildings, few of them, as yet, covered in. However, it was there he received an ambassador, sent expressly by the French King to ask the grand cross for his brother, the Duke of Angouleme; who professed, with the hope of one day becoming Prior of the Language of France.¹

But Selim, however unwarlike himself, headed a nation that loved war with the Christian; so prepared an expedition against Malta. And it being now the winter of 1567, the grand master was persuaded the threatened siege would take place next spring; so sent a citation to every

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxxvii. 793.

knight and servant-at-arms, not generally to the priors, but also to each individual separately, to hasten to join his language at Malta. And a Neapolitan nobleman—Signor Carlo Spinelli, Prince of Cariati and Duke of Semmara—on learning the grand master's urgency, and that the order was using every exertion to be ready to face the Turkish invasion, to provide him with that nerve of war, money—heroic generosity—sent a gentleman to Malta most affectionately to beg Valetta's acceptance of one hundred thousand crowns; or rather a security on his whole estates for that sum, for the merchants to cash in any way the order wished; and the agent presented to him the appropriate deed legally, with all the due formalities, with the duke's seal and signature—piece which Bosio gives in full, dated 17th December, 1567. And as frankly as it was offered, was it accepted by the grand master and council; and they had the fact registered regularly on their books, without making use of it however. And hearing it was the Moslem's intention to stop first at Gozo, Valetta went thither on February 8th, 1568, and remained there six days.¹

Yet soon ceased every doubt respecting the Mahometan fleet, whose intention was not to make any

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxxviii. 808.

real attack either on Malta or any Christian state; but clearly only to disturb all Christendom.

To this period the interference belongs which renders the town of Valetta so unsightly, with stairs as necessary as numerous from its standing on such different levels; but the idea was to have the whole city on one level, and the rock was to be cut far more down in a platform large enough to contain all the streets and houses; but that menace of a Turkish invasion caused the work to be left half undone—content with having the grand master's palace, St. John's, and the Languages, and the chief commander's house on a level, and the other habitations were built as they could; which probably at first was intended for only a temporary expedient; but the building once broken off, was never taken up again. And indeed a radical change and return to the primitive design became very difficult, from the foundations; if not quite impossible, and every year got worse and worse. Had the original plan been adhered to, and the rock cut down as far as was intended, the town would have been much more commodious and beautiful, and the batteries much stronger—however strong they be at present. In July, 1568, Valetta, very jealous 1563 of his new city, had several precautions taken. Also he wrote the Pope a sharp remonstrance at so

many of the order's privileges being broken by the Papacy; particularly in giving away dignities that ought to go to the impoverished knights, who had faced death with such surpassing gallantry, and endured such fearful wounds, for the defence of Christendom—and this return ensued before the perspiration was well rubbed from their blood-stained fronts, or their wounds were entirely closed.¹

In some brief dream of hope, or momentary resurrection of the English Language—how, is not quite apparent—but a Sir Richard Shelley is somewhat suddenly mentioned by Bosio as Prior of England;² though it be decidedly affirmed, that Weston was the last of our priors up to the dissolution of the monasteries.

The English Language fell then of inanition; and though some melancholy bystanders, and even doctors, retouched its pulse, and considering life not wholly gone, may have essayed a palliative, yet has it ever really lifted up its head since? Parties notwithstanding, in this all Englishmen will perhaps agree that it was not quite generous to hurl destruction on a body that had for ages been a glory to their country, and to whom all Christendom owed so much. If all be innocent

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xxxviii. 815.

² Id.: id., id. 817.

till proved guilty, these were not even accused; why then confiscate their property? But that was over long since. Regret is now as vain as defamation. Yet he, who does not take it upon him to blame those times may lament their severity—which, if not necessary, was extremely unjust. But quietly in his closet, he ought not to forget that the statesmen of that age were exposed to thousands of difficulties, and a thousand hostile passions.

But on the evening of the 21st of August, 1568, Valetta could no longer brook what passes away with time, yet survived a stroke of apoplexy for about an hour, and even uttered, "Oh, my God, send me one of thy blessed angels to assist me in this extremity!" And the pious prayer was indeed heard—but thus, that instantly he left the shadow of pain. In his attached household it had been considered ominous that, one by one in the three days preceding his death, his three favourite animals had died—a falcon, presented to him by the King of France in allusion to that bird's being the crest of the Valetta house; his pet ruby-coloured parrot, that at a distance might be mistaken for a miraculously large ruby; and his tame lioness, so tame (at least towards him) that she used to sleep in his bed-room at full liberty.

Neither at his funeral, nor his successor's elec-

tion, any other Englishman than Sir Oliver Starkey appearing, the English Language had to be represented by a foreign knight.

One or two days after, Sir Peter del Monte took the usual coronation oath:—I swear solemnly, in the Divine presence, to observe the established and good ancient usages of our order, and to act in all state affairs by the advice of the members of the council. So help me, God!¹

On the 25th of the same month he ordered the late grand master's corpse to be carried into the new city founded by him, and buried there as he had prescribed. To his epitaph were added, and cut on the tombstone, some Latin verses composed on the occasion by Sir Oliver Starkey, a good scholar, then Lieutenant to the Turcopolier, and afterwards Bailiff of the Eagle.²

Del Monte had distinguished himself as head of the Italian Language during the siege—then being seventy. The order's marshal having died in France, his place was given to the Commander John le Vesque de la Cassiere. Again was Sir Oliver's rather quaint Latinity put in requisition, and over one of the gates of the new city is still to be read.³

¹ Bosio: par. iii. 822.

² Id.: par. iii. 825.

³ Id.: id. 828.—Appendix, ccxx.

The celebrated *Sixiena* in Spain, which had left off its original dependence on the grand master since above a century, returned to it by an oath taken by its ambassador before the entire council of Malta on the 17th of May, 1569, in eight 1569 articles, which being approved by the order, those nuns obliged themselves to obedience and the annual payment of a silver vase as feudal recognition.

Long had that nunnery existed with royal splendour; and when Alphonso II., of Arragon, died, his widow and their daughter retired thither, and took the veil, as others of that sovereign line did afterwards; and those ladies used to wear the white cross on their left side, like the knights, and the prioress on her chest. Nor were they founded under the grand master Berengario, as said by many generally—and not even by any grand master at all—but one hundred and seventy years earlier, and by another Berengario the order's provisor among the Spaniards, as is completely proved by the document shown on that occasion. The nuns were of all the royal and most illustrious houses—not of Spain alone, but of all countries as well; nor paid entrance or income, but were maintained every one gratis. In choir they bore little silver sceptres in memory of their august foundress, and

had a particular prayer-book, which, when Bosio wrote, was four hundred years old, and more.¹

In 1569, Sir Oliver Starkey, promoted to the Eagle—vain title in a vainer expectancy of the English Language's restoration—had the same melancholy satisfaction of sitting as bailiff in the chapter general without seeing any of his countrymen.²

Some pretext never wanting, Selim claimed Cyprus, and declared war on Venice, whose doge wrote to the grand master; but Loredan dying suddenly, his successor, Moncenigo, sent it on the 11th of May, 1570, begging his assistance. But Del Monte, who had long wished to abdicate, yet put it off while the Turks threatened Malta, now that their vengeance turned towards the Queen of the Adriatic, thought he might indulge his desire. But the Pope wrote with his own hand to exhort him to refrain; that it would be to go against that Providence that assigned him that glorious load; that he ought not to allow himself to be intimidated either by age or weakness; "on the contrary, become more animated the shorter the road you have to travel; for He will not fail to give you strength for whatever He ordains you to perform.

¹ Bosio : par. iii. 837.

² Id. : id. lib. xxxix. 842.

Without Him not a leaf falls from the tree; so this be your prayer, not mine, but His will be done. Remember, in the tribulation of the world, you must not lose confidence, for He has said I have conquered the world. As to your death, it will happen at the time assigned by Him." Rome, 8th December, 1570.¹

So good, aged Del Monte was consoled, and followed the Papal advice, and remained and made the whole order remove into the new city—deeming it little less glory to give it a soul, by giving it inhabitants, than to have built it. On the early days of March, 1571, the general removal was decreed; and on Sunday, the 18th, it took place. Publicly did he declare that none should have his benevolence who did not do everything in their power to benefit Valetta—the name coming into use instead of *Humblest*. And he engaged his own nephew to build himself a fine palace there, which the order subsequently bought to be the magisterial residence. So where the English governor now resides was erected by a private knight for his own dwelling; which gives us an idea of what the knights then were, and that it was a vast advantage for a small spot to have them for sovereigns. So persuaded was the Pope of the

¹ Bosio: par. iii., lib. xl. 870.

superiority of the Hospitallers' galleys, that he writes to thank the grand master for his promptitude in sending them to join his own Papal squadron at Messina—assuring him that it would not be the least disagreeable to the King of Spain.¹

It was a preparation for the great sea-fight of the age—to take place a little better than four months later. Certainly Lepanto was a defensive battle, and gained all it aspired to—the saving of Christendom. That was far from nothing; it was everything. Fair are they who put the Christian victory on a line with the Grecian Salamis, only on a larger scale; for Lepanto saved not a single country, but all the countries in Europe. The description of the day is spirited in the Venetian sketch,² adding, that it ought not to have been nearly silent about the Hospitallers; since Don Juan of Austria, supreme leader there, was himself a knight of our order, which took a great part in that victory; indeed almost a greater than Venice herself, as Contarini confesses, and likewise the Venetian commander-in-chief, Morosini. Nor were their praises from partiality, but an almost forced echo of universal beholders. Don Juan, of Austria, may be called no competent evidence, because sup-

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccxviii.

² Family Library, Num. xxiii.

posed over favourable to his own order. But in fact he only spoke like the others. He Knight of Malta; they were both reciprocally worthy of each other. No more, and the eulogium of both is perfect. It was on Sunday morning, the 7th of October, that the two fleets met in awful conflict two hours after daylight—not on the 1st, as related by some moderns. The original pieces still exist. You have only to read them. The *Capitana di Malta* was not in either wing, but No. 6 in the centre of the line of battle.¹ Why leave out Contarini's words? "The Prior of Messina, a Giustiniani, Admiral of the *Capitana di Malta*, was so badly wounded that he was all but killed!" Of known valour, he saved the lives of several.² But 1572 alas! the grand master, under whom so many fine things happened, died on the 20th of January in 1572, as his gravestone shows;³ and was succeeded by that Cassiere, whose heroic feats on the coast of Barbary have been noted. Leaving France in 1522 as a volunteer, on his way to the siege of Rhodes,

¹ Sansovino: Hist. dei Turchi, 480.—Impresa del Regno di Cipro di G. P. Contarini etc.

² Yet dreadful the carnage! Of the Christians were killed seven thousand six hundred and fifty; and thirty thousand of the Turks, writes Galucci, best authority on that subject. Tentori: ix. 286.

³ Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii.

he then met L'Isle Adam at Messina, and received the cross of profession at his hands; and he now had risen to be Marshal of Auvergne when elevated to the supreme dignity. About two years later is the leave from Grand Master Cassiere to a knight who had fought in the Turkish wars with distinction, to live at the order's expense even out of Malta, or wherever he pleased. He had been in the *Capitana di Malta* at Lepanto, and fought until he
1574 could no longer stand, and fell so desperately wounded that he passed for dead; yet so recovered that he lost but an arm, a leg, and an eye.¹ Alas! what a state! Is that recovery? Howbeit, he survived, and that there is slight mention of Lepanto in the Cod. Dipl. Geros. is a new proof of to what glorious feats they were accustomed. For them there had been many a Lepanto; and even that renowned action was nothing new, nor of surpassing consequence.

But to one of the Barbary pair succeeds that other—Verdale; and under this latter it was that Gregory XIII. writes that, lest the ancient title of Turcopolier, distinctive of the head of the English Language, from the very beginning, as a memorial of all days, after having been so long pre-eminent over

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccxx.—Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni. See Appendix ccxxvi.

every other conventual dignity of the order, should be at any time exposed to neglect or profanation, the grand master is requested to assume it to himself, and incorporate all its rights and privileges with the grand-mastery unlimitedly; until (if that desired epoch ever arise) this lamentable secession come to a close, the then grand master shall be quite able to return the turcopoliership, without a single loss or blemish; on the contrary with each iota de jure of its antique advantages in no way deteriorated, tarnished, clouded, but sedulously preserved like a most precious jewel, deposited by a tender father, in a secure treasury for his beloved child.¹ With whomsoever the idea originated, it was lofty, fine, piteous. A regular document of this nature will obtain the veneration, not only of the order, but probably of all mankind.

Yet neither Cassiere nor Verdale shone as grand masters; both were on unhappy terms with their knights. The former, after having been a prisoner in his own palace, was called to Rome; to which he went, and had an honourable acquittal, but it broke his heart and he died there; though his remains being afterwards brought to Malta, we find his tomb among those of the grand masters. Verdale appears

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccxxiv., dated the 9th of June, 1582.

also to have been a haughty, severe man, and had a not dissimilar end.¹

From a letter to the grand master in answer to a petition from the monastery in the island of Patmos is clear, 1st, that he exercised still a protecting power in the Levant; 2nd, that where St. John the Evangelist wrote the Apocalypse had belonged to the order during its stay at Rhodes.² Undoubtedly it must have contributed to nourish self-esteem highly, that the order obtained the highest praise from the most venerated sources; nor was *laudari a laudato viro* ever more exemplified than in their case; and whoever collects the encomiums of the Hospitallers, will form several huge volumes; and strenuously is it repeated that theirs was then the most useful of human institutions, and the small spot where they resided ark and bulwark of Italy, nay of the whole civilised world.³

Verdale, however, also ended his sojourning in 1595, and was succeeded by Garzes,⁴ who may not have been extremely prudent; for I find Clement VIII. complaining of discord at Malta, and attributing them not to the Languages, which he seems to

¹ Seb. Paoli : Serie ii. 477.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccxxxi.—Appendix, ccxxi.

³ Id., Id. ccxxxii. Id., ccxxii.

⁴ Seb. Paoli : Serie, ii.

regard as having been always in the order (whereas they were an innovation that had caused discords before, and might again), but to the form of electing the grand master, which indeed remounts to Gerard himself; so the knights are desired to decide on a new form of election. Now this was most manifestly to deprive them of all independence, and extort openly what, if sought by other Popes, they at least sought it under a cloak.¹ But the reply was becoming, that in most humble accordance with the Pontiff's desire, the knights during eight months had kept trying and trying without success, but found every change for the worse; so that his Holiness is besought to let them adhere to their olden form, that had almost invariably worked excellently and been so often confirmed by his holy predecessors.² The advice is dated 17th Sep., 1599; and the answer signed by grand master and council, July the 14th, 1600.

But on Garzes' going to his mansion in Feb., 1601, the choice fell on Wignacourt, a Frenchman, who in his long reign of twenty-three years showed himself an able and worthy sovereign.³ A new proof how idly superfluous was the idea of condemning the ancient

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccxxxv.

² Id., Id., Id. ccxxxvi.—Appendix, ccxxiii.

³ Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 477.

form of electing the grand masters; since two years had scarce elapsed ere the same Pope had to write in high praise of Wignacourt, as most zealous for the usual discipline, and therefore animates him to continue what he had so well begun.

In 1609 in November, that grand master wrote a letter to the King of Persia offering him the order's alliance in a war against the Turk;¹ and the answer of his Persian Majesty, translated from the original, preserved in the archives of Malta, shall be given in the Appendix.² Which may have rendered it the more advisable to cite to Malta all the knights of his order in a circular of 15th of February, 1614.³

But, in 1622, a Papal letter, both lamenting Wignacourt's death, and congratulating his successor, Vasconcellos, a Portuguese⁴ who, however, reigned for only about six months; and was succeeded by De Paul of Gascony,⁵ and to sharpen his sense of responsibility, a generous descant is rung on the glories of the order, and its valour, which terrifies the barbarian, and is the shield of Europe.⁶

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccxlv.

² Id., id., Id., ccl.—Appendix, ccxxiv.

³ Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, ii. 506.

⁴ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cclvi.

⁵ Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 479.

⁶ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cclxiii, 17th of June, 1623.

It seems Urban VIII. had recommended the Franciscans of Holy Land to the grand master, in general terms. But a letter from the Father Guardian at Nazareth, on the strength of that recommendation, asked him for *four slaves*—though the proper term, at present, would be prisoners of war—of whom the order must at all times have had many, for the greater part employed to row their galleys, and without similar unfortunates, there could be no navies then. Yet, as the Father mentions none in particular, they were probably for a present to Constantinople. In whatever case, it was a charitable deed.¹

A reply of this grand master to a despatch from the King of France, shows the meaning of the latter,² coinciding with a note of the council to the French Ambassador at Rome,³ and another of the same to the Prior of Thoulouse,⁴ which three documents shall, in substance, be given together in the Appendix. Other letters from the grand master and council, to the emperor,⁵ to the King of Spain,⁶ and to the King of France,⁷ supplicating

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cclxx.

² Id., Id., Id. cclxxvi.—Appendix cexxv.

³ Id., Id., Id. cclxxvii. Id.

⁴ Id., Id., Id. cclxxviii. Id.

⁵ Id., Id., Id. cclxxxv.

⁶ Id., Id., Id. cclxxxv.

⁷ Id., Id., Id. cclxxxvi.

them to request the Pope to cease interfering with the commanderies belonging to the Languages, but permit them to follow their forms and usages, and not dispense any favours regarding the same
1625 —this was in June, 1625. That they obtained what they wanted, and the expostulations of the order's ambassador, Imbroll, were at length attended to, and that Rome prohibited its court of cardinals and prelates to decide on matters appertaining to the grand master and his council, but simply allowed Papal ministers to take preliminary informations; which only tended to render the decisions of the order more respectable—we have a proof in another diplomatic document.¹

That the order lost two galleys, offers a fine opportunity to its own Prior of Aquitayne to make it a present of four thousand six hundred gold crowns;² a new instance of the benevolence of its members towards their common stock, very characteristic, and highly laudable trait, which an historian would be singularly inattentive to his duty not to notice.

Another attempt of his Holiness, in 1627—like that of Clement VIII., in 1599—to introduce again the new form of electing the grand master, was

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cclxxxvii.

² Id., Id., Id. cclxxxviii.

met by a similar negative from him and his council,¹
which bold refusal, who but will approve of? 1627
The rather considering those difficult times.
Nor less Urban VIII. persisted, and discharged the
thunderbolt of his spiritual authority,² and perhaps
they must have submitted, at least in appearance.
But they can bide their time, and war and circum-
stances allow them to retain much of the spirit of
their ancient liberties, and the substance of 1628
popular self-government, in spite of exterior
and transitory shackles; so they remain true to
themselves. That undying resolution, and the
tempest quickly subsides. What has braved six
centuries, will not expire now. True, peace and
luxury are secret worms that feed on our very
vitals, and are far worse than war with Turks or
Tartars, or any desolating troubles of murder and
famine. But, for a long time yet, the 1629
knights are to run no risk from too much
quiet—if ever. The grand master convened, on
the 18th of January, 1629, a chapter general; but
soon saw how it was, and that although they,
perhaps, might abstain from violence, they would
by no means assent, as desired; so, in his letter to
the Pope, on that subject, respectful as are his

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii, Num. cxcxi.

² Id., Id., Id. cxcxiii.

terms, and though he sent his own nephew with it, imply a fear that his Holiness wished for some other forms in their sittings, which his knights would not at all tolerate, nor subscribe to the smallest innovation.¹ Not that De Paul did not perceive it was the Pope's intention to strengthen the grand mastery, but he who held it now, preferred their ancient constitution, to any private interests of his own. It is but justice to him to say that he appears to have been wholly without any undue ambition. Much less did he wish for the hatred of his knights, and to leave the sad renown of having subverted the body who had elected him for other purposes. Yet, whatever De Paul thought, or however pure the Papal motives, the fact is the order was deprived of the mainspring of its liberties, the chapter general, during above a century; and though the heavy expenses it cost, was the specious
 1634 excuse, the real cause might be that it was easier to manage a restricted council, than a numerous, and, as it were, popular assembly. Nevertheless, Urban VIII. did not change his mind; but obstinately confirmed his bull, regarding the form of electing the grand master, in a document, from Gandolfo Castle, on the 21st of October, 1634.²

¹ Boisgelin : i. 265.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccii.

But a truce to all theological or civil squabbles! Here is what must eclipse them, and is more consonant with our order. The Turks are not slumbering. On the 27th of March, 1635, comes a despatch from one of the chief ministers of the King of Spain, El Conde de Monte Rey, with 1635 intelligence of a large armament preparing in Constantinople, against, it is said, Persia, but perhaps against Malta; and if this last case turned out, the grand master may be sure of succours being ready in Spain, and that they be sent instantly, and in sufficient number, and of artillery forthwith.¹ Which may have roused the grand master into a still greater conviction of the necessity of his labouring to remove every discontent from the minds of his people; so he wrote a letter to the emperor, supplicating his imperial majesty not to send an ambassador to beg the Pope to yield grand crosses of the order by dispense to some young Italians, who have not the merits requisite; as is the rumour amongst their language, to the grievous dissatisfaction of all that body of knights.² This, under date of the 15th of August, 1636. But on the 21st March of the next year, Cardinal Barberini, by the pontifical com-

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccciii.

² Id., Id., Id. ccciv.

mands, writes to the grand master, informing him that the Greeks, and their patriarch at Jerusalem, having, by means of the Turks, possessed themselves of the keys both of the *præsepio* at Bethlehem, and of the Holy Sepulchre taken violently from the Franciscans, though belonging of old to the Latin Church; and therefore he requests of him to indicate the surest expedient to get back the keys, and holy places, and advise with the other Christian princes, regarding the same.¹ To which the grand master, that this is his council's answer, in which he also joins; "a war of all Christendom would be perfectly just, but only available in a way that those at Rome do not perhaps mean; for a crusade as of yore would be too long, and hardly practicable at present; the great omnipotent God of armies being able of course if He pleased, but not man. But thus it would be easy, and of instant result. It is most allowable to wage war against the really culpable, Greeks and Turks. So the Christian potentates should send out a few ships, and give leave to all individuals to do the like, and seize on the person and property of those two people; the rather, that it is certain nearly all the merchandise sold as Greek, is in reality Turkish, but marked with a

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cccv.

cross, and Greek names on the bales. Almost instantaneous the effect would be; that on their knees the culprits would restore the keys and places. Such reprisals would be strikingly fair. True and only remedy after mature reflection, and consulting with those who know the Levant well. This evidently just way of impartial reprisals would at once bring the usurpers to be the first to conjure you to receive back everything, and cease further hostilities." And on the 8th of the next June, grand master and council again join in a letter imploring the King of Spain to ask the Pope to revoke his brief in favour of a French knight of the name of Saurè, on whom his Sanctity confers the grand cross with an active and passive voice in the council, grievous injury to his own, and likewise solemnly and unanimously protested against by all the Languages, Spanish, Italian, German, French. And this is probably the last letter written by the Grand Master, De Paul; for his tombstone says he died on the 7th of the Ides of June, 1636;¹ and he must have been succeeded nearly immediately by Lascaris, since here is a Papal brief, dated Rome, the 2nd of July, 1636, congratulating him as already grand master.²

¹ Seb. Paoli : Serie, ii. 479.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cccvi.

Sir Paul de Lascaris Castellar, Bailiff of Manosca, was born of the ancient Counts of Ventimiglia in Piedmont, originally of the imperial house of Constantinople. "In his election soon appeared the validity of the new reform" (which Urban had after all effectuated—notwithstanding the knightly oppositionists), "and deluded was the sagacity that dictated it;" are the words of an eminent commander of Malta, no vulgar historian.¹

In the chapter general a few years earlier, a number of mere boys had been admitted to the votes by a dispense from Rome, who might even then have sufficient to give the grand master a majority whenever he liked; and now this new grand master asked and obtained a similar dispense to raise them to the full complement of one hundred, which certainly deprived the order of its former freedom, that the grand master and Pope might at any time command the order's supreme tribunal, the chapter general.

The new reform was manifestly calculated to put the election of the grand master in the Pope's power, had not He whom all things obey, decided otherwise. Every human contrivance appeared to concur towards the destruction of our liberties; yet matters did not proceed as intended. How

¹ Pozzo : par. ii., lib. i. 2.—Verona in 4to.

weak and blind are mortals! Why should not that petty assembly have its troubles, as well as the illustrious British Parliament? Both have known how to overcome all the wit of man. It was far easier to manage the grand master than the rightful superior meeting.¹ On the 5th of February, 1638, is an extremely courteous letter to the grand master from the then Doge of Venice, 1638 Francisus Erizo;² as well as a somewhat similar to the whole order, from Louis XIII.;³ and another to the grand master, from the Queen of France 1639 signing herself his good cousin Anne, a St. Germain, ce 17 Avril, 1639.⁴

Most determinedly following his design of lifting the grand master into absoluteness, that same Pope, now in his sixteenth pontificate, restricted all diminution of the magisterial authority, during the vacancy between one grand master and another, when the knights indulged in comparative liberty, and whether willing or unwilling, the grand master's name was used as having applied for such a Papal rescript.⁵

On further rumour of an invasion of Malta by

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccex.

² Id., Id., Id. ccxiv.

³ Id., Id., Id. ccxvii.

⁴ Id., Id., Id. ccxviii.

⁵ Id., Id., Id. ccxxi.

the Turks, the same Pope concedes a dispensation for a hundred little boys, of six years old, to be made knights professed, on their paying so much a head, to be laid out in the defensive armament; a great lure to an avaricious grand master, and an easy way for the Papal quota—the Pope offers no other; yet money was the least evil, where a popular government was to be converted into despotic. Happily the temporal power of the Holy See changes, usually, with every Pontiff.¹

Three months later, the King of Spain sends to his viceroy, in Sicily, to aid Malta in the threatened Turkish invasion, his command being signed *Yo el*

*Rey. De Madrid, ade Hebraro, de 1640.*²

1640 In the following August, the French king alleviated the taxes, regarding those of the order in consideration of its services to Christendom, both by land and sea.³

A King of Poland, in 1642, to the grand master, announces a new priory for Poland alone, about to be founded in favour of the Radzivil family; since not only the Polish knights, but the entire nation of Poland, consider it an injury and insult to be

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cccxxii.

² Id., Id., Id. cccxxiv.

³ Id., Id., Id. cccxxvi.

any longer allowed to remain united with the Priory of Bohemia, Moravia, and Austria, as before. So the Poles had resolved to erect a priory for themselves, and humbly apply for the magisterial sanction, *Wladislaus Rex, Warsaw, 4th of April, 1642.*¹

And follows another of his Majesty to the council, on the same, and of the same date.²

To which we have two years later one of especial courtesy from Louis XIV.,³ and a similar from the queen mother,⁴ both to the Grand Master Lascaris.

Within some months Grand Master Lascaris directs a circular to the Prior of France, bidding him cite every dignitarian, knight, or servant-at-arms, as well as novices, and those youths who in their childhood had become professed by dispense, and were now eighteen—even such as may have entered into the French army, or any other military service—to set out instantly for Malta, without a single exception for those too decrepid to fight, but that they must appear and be judged on the spot, whether to be declared invalid or not—all with their

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cccxxix.

² Id., Id., Id. cccxxx.

³ Id., Id., Id. ccexl. Appendix, Num. cccxxiv.

⁴ Id., Id., Id. ccexli.

arms, and having servants twenty years of age at least; otherwise they should be deprived of the cross and insignia, besides other severities, and this to front the siege of Malta, which the Turk is said to be about undertaking, January 24th, 1645.¹

1645 To corroborate which the King of Spain wrote to the grand master, to promise prompt succour, in case the Turks invaded Malta.² The real cause of this warlike threat—no more than a threat respecting the island of Malta—for the storm burst on Candia—was according to Pozzo, the anger of the Grand Turk at the taking of his favourite sultana and child, by the Maltese ships, who were admitted into Candia, where the beautiful young mother expired, having been already poisoned by a rival in the Constantinopolitan seraglio; but her infant was given to the grand master, who had him bred up a Christian, with real care, and afterwards he travelled through Europe, and came back Prior of Porto Salvo, to Malta—his home until his death, in 1676. The story at large is very romantic, but probably true.³ The council's decree by which the volunteer, Viscomte d'Arpaion, is made captain

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccexlii.

² Mi muy Amado Amigo. Yo el Rey. De Zaragoza a 9 de April de 1645.—Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccexliii.

³ Pozzo: Istoria, ii. 91.

general of the army and fortresses of Malta, during the siege, with the order's marshal second in command, but superior to all except the said viscount, is dated May 27th, 1645.¹ It certainly caused sorrow, quite the contrary of satisfaction, at Malta, when they heard the Turkish fleet had sailed against Candia instead; so prepared were the knights, and so confident of victory.² Truth is the Candian war is as much of Malta itself, as of Venice; and so the knights always considered it. Therefore if they were the primary cause of it, it is only fair. Nor does Venice disagree, however dear to her—and with good reason—be the glories she earned at Candia, as will be fully proved by the documents to be cited. Yet what seemed must have
1656
blown over, since no document of importance till ten years later. In 1656 is a letter from the Doge of Venice, Bertuccio Valerio, to the Grand Master Lascaris, imploring his *usual* aid to withstand the fiercer than ever Turkish attacks on Candia; knowing that in the worst of peril is when those much noble Knights of Malta will come with their troops, both by sea and land, to try to win back what we have lost; not only from their own

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cccxlix.

² Pozzo: Istoria, ii. 114.

thirst of glory, but for their compassion for universal Christendom, and its interests.¹

But the fifty-seventh Grand Master, Lascaris, died
1657 on the 14th of August, in the next year,
after reigning twenty-one years, and living
ninety-seven, as his tombstone shows.²

And next came Redin, Prior of Navarre, elected fifty-eighth grand master, who had been Viceroy of Sicily, and a great warrior, and even in his last years had offered either to be the Godfrey de Buglion of a new crusade, or take part in it as a private gentleman.

There is a bull of Alexander VII. praising Redin as he merited, and that he was right in standing by the Venetians, who had the constancy and fortitude of rejecting the peace offered by the Turks on such conditions; an illustrious and generous refusal, which deserves all commendation, and is, in truth, heroic and worthy of the egregious and signal high-mindedness of the true glorious hospital. "This marvellous example calls forth even our energies," exclaimed the aged Pontiff, "so that we are preparing eight or ten triremes, as strong and as properly furnished with artillery as we possibly

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lii. Giunt.—Dato in Nostro Ducali Palatio, 9 Decbr., 1656.

Seb . Paoli: Serie, 2.

can." Rome, 26th January, 1658.¹ But that G. M. died on the 6th of February, 1660, in the seventieth year of his life. And Clermont 1660 de Chattes Gessan, who reigned next, had been Bailiff of Lyons, and was indeed of an ancient royal house, but in three fugitive months after his elevation (in consequence of the breaking out of an old wound received in his youth, in the African wars) he expired on the second of June, in the same 1660.

On which succeeded Sir Raphael Cotoner, Bailiff of Majorca, and as the Candian war may be as properly called Maltese, his first act as grand master was to send a party to aid the Venetians in the Levant.

So it was to R. Cotoner, to whom was directed the letter of the Doge of Venice, Domenico Contarini, that in the war of so many years, the sacred cross of Malta has ever been ready and true, in all circumstances, to the standard of St. Marc, nor will the Venetian republic be slow in due gratitude 1661 to the conspicuous and glorious deeds which have been worthy of the sincerest esteem and love; 17th of August, 1661.²

On the 1st of October of that same year another letter from Doge Contarini to the same grand

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccclii.

² Id. Id., Id. cccliii.

master, is concerning a naval victory gained over the

1663 Turks, off Khania.¹ But towards the close
of 1663, Raphael Cotoner died, and another
of that family name, Sir Nicholas Cotoner, Bailiff
of Negropont, succeeded.²

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccclv.

² On the 20th of October.—Seb. Paoli : Serie, ii.

CHAPTER V.

THE war of Candia from its beginning in 1644, —when after the usual preliminary in Constantinople, of sending the Venetian bailiff suddenly to prison, the Moslem fleet sailed against Candia,¹—lasted indeed twenty-five years; and was all that time a sharp struggle, in which the order had throughout taken a great part, considering it nearly as much Maltese as Venetian, with good reason too, if the Hospitallers were the real cause of it; but perhaps it was not exactly so. However, a recent Venetian repeats it, and that there were six galleys under a knight of the French Language, and that the sultana was among the

¹ Pozzo : par. ii. 114.

prisoners. "Although some Venetian historians doubt, I believe it to be the exact truth, on the authority of Graveson, a most veracious and learned writer."¹ Then allowing all that to be certain fact, and that it was the proximate cause, it equally follows that the cause in reality may be found far deeper and further off. War between Turkey and Venice was always ready to break out, and the smallest occasional whim was sufficient, particularly as to the Mahometans, who always became the more suspicious the more their commerce kept on decreasing; and decreased it had always since the passage by the Cape of Good Hope, which was injurious to Venice likewise. But the Venetians knew better how to husband their wealth; so that they never displayed more fortitude than at the league of Cambray, long after their mortal wound. But without entering into the details of that course of heroism—whether the chief secretary of the Council of Ten was despatched by the Doge Erizzo to Malta, to guide and foment that fervour,²—it will be sufficient to take a view of its twenty-seven last months—supreme continuous siege of the city of Khania, during which there was not one single spot in it

¹ Tentori: *Istor. Ven.*, x. 125

² Pozzo: 119.

safe, day or night, from the tempest of bombs, cannon, musketry, flaming rocks, and every kind of flame; the hissing of balls, and echoing detonations of all sorts, but chiefly blowing up of mines.

In November, 1668 (as during the whole war), the Order of Malta sent thither sixty knights and three hundred of their choice soldiery, 1668 as well as a present from the grand master of one hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds of gunpowder. Alas! Such succours prolonged, but could not prevent the loss of that town. Only all Christendom could have, and would not. The hopes of Venice were in France. And indeed Louis XIV. sent a fleet with the Duke of Beaufort and twelve of the finest French regiments under the supreme command of the Duke of Noailles, added to a selection of the ablest and noblest officers of that kingdom; likewise three hundred of the royal guards, and two hundred picked musketeers, who all arrived at Candia on the 19th of June, 1669. But in spite of these volun- 1669 teers and of the renowned Pico della Mirandola with ten thousand Modenese levied for the most part in his own duchy, though at the expense of the Pope; the heroic efforts of the Venetian garrison, and the Hospitallers, and the faith-

ful Candians, who were almost the whole population—and vied in fidelity with the Rhodians themselves—Candia had to surrender. The French beaten in a sally with the death of the Duke of Beaufort, the Duke of Noailles, deaf to the warmest entreaties of the valiant captain general, Morosini, recited at length by the historical chroniclers of that time, obstinately determined on departing from the place in its most needful crisis, and embarked to return home; “a conduct so irregular, proceeding either from want of fidelity or of courage, was ruinous to our republic,” exclaims the exasperated historian without another word on the subject.¹

If in speaking of Lepanto, there was reason to complain of the too slender mention of the Hospitallers, far worse is it with regard to Candia. In both cases it was unfair, but in the latter particularly so. For though the English author allows the departure of the French to have preceded, he leaves it to be inferred, that also the Hospitallers withdrew unnecessarily from the hapless city; without saying that they had struggled as much as the bravest and most devoted men could, that of four hundred knights, who little by little had joined the siege within those few months, very few

¹ Tentori: Istor. Ven. x. 130.

remained alive, and none of these few or of their hired soldiery but were severely wounded; not one single one of them but had several ghastly evident wounds: nor has that writer the least allusion to the fine eulogium by Morosini, who in deep grief declared he much preferred their small corps to all the other military he had ever been sent. Nor content with saying it, wrote it also to his government, and his words are now before my eyes.¹ Yet he did not ask them to remain, for he saw it useless; yet they seem to have lovingly deferred till the very last moment, to judge by the extract about to be given from one, who is reputed most trustworthy, particularly on this subject; and who by grand master may have meant the Hospitaller commanding there; for I find no proof that Cotoner was there in person, and considering his great age, suppose he was not; but am far from affirming he was not. "Thus was the end of Candia. Morosini and Noailles had ever agreed from the beginning in this, that Candia was in a most desperate state and could not hold out, but for the French succours; and that a regular defence was not enough, for that the enemy had already advanced his works within theirs, so it became

¹ Perdo, più dalla partenza di quei pochi ma bravissimi guerrieri, che da quella di tutte le altre truppe."—Pozzo: par. ii. 381.

absolutely necessary to make a vigorous sally, and completely raze those works of his before Candia could be tenable. Well this sally Noailles was determined to execute immediately, and by French troops; no others would be permitted to join them. In vain Morosini and others entreated Noailles to reflect well whether it would not be better to wait for the other succours expected in a few days; above all Mirandola's corps of considerable renown. However, the French not only refused to wait, but insisted on no one's being allowed the honour of accompanying them. So to it they went, most wilful men, and advancing in high style, had some great success immediately. But the blowing up of a small powder magazine was mistaken for a mine; so thinking the field of battle was all mined, every effort of their officers was unable to prevent a panic terror, and they bent and retreated with the loss of many, and amongst them the lamented Duke of Beaufort; a French grenadier declaring he saw his grace slightly wounded, a short time before the blowing up, and that he then sent one of his gentlemen to have his horse brought to him, he having left it under one of the batteries; but that in the interval the confusion had ensued and the Turk came rushing on, cutting everything to pieces. No more was ever seen of Beaufort, but hopes were

entertained awhile, that he was among the prisoners, and a flag of truce went to the Moslem camp, but was assured no such person existed there; so, no doubt he was butchered. Upon this Noailles embarked his remaining forces, and departed; notwithstanding all the dissuasions of Morosini, and his protest that it was to France the town owed its downfall. The whole was lost. And then only the small remnant of the Maltese likewise ascended their ships. Yet at least some of them appear not to have sailed, but rather disembarked—being represented as still on shore during the capitulation. The last reply of Noailles was, that if the French sally did not succeed, it at least cost no other lives than French, and that France had spent enough of its blood at Candia, and of its most illustrious blood. All that mortal courage and ability could do, was done at Candia. Few soldiers except the chiefs were Venetians, but of every Christian nation. What but capitulate? and so they did on the 6th of September, upon terms generally esteemed *honourable and advantageous*, and certainly not disgraceful either to the vanquishers or the vanquished. And admirable were the discipline and good faith of the Moslem; for during the twelve days allowed for departure, crowds of Turks sitting on the works, so near the Christians as to be able to touch them, kept quite

silent, that instead of soldiers, you might have taken them for Pythagorean scholars, or religious hermits. Among the objects they most distinctly admired was the Grand Master of Malta, and whenever he passed, they viewed him with extraordinary veneration;¹ and looking on St. Andrew's Gate, where his knights had stood, they wondered, and expressed to each other their high respect." Yet if some of even that valiant nation, the French, to a certain degree erred, be it not forgotten, that it was only from too much precipitancy, which cost their own blood; and if their second in command was slain, the first, Noailles himself, was wounded; so that any irritability he showed, may in fairness partly be ascribed to physical sufferings. The fidelity of the Candians to Venice reminds us of that of the Rhodians to the order.

Likewise the first line of defence had been all lost before the French came, so it was only the second they could have kept, and it would have never sufficed at the long run; but from the moment they embarked on the 20th of August, the fall of Khania was at hand necessarily; and the Turk coming to the assault before Mirandola's arrival, though in sight with the succours on the night of the 22nd of August, General Grimaldi visited the

¹ Brussoni: *Guerra dei Turchi*, ii. 299.

post of Malta at St. Andrew's Gate, and had the grief to see that valiant corps reduced to few indeed ; corps which he too held dear above all other soldiers, and also because he knew they were in such high repute above all other armies in the world, that their name alone was a defence ; on this account he called them away into the middle of the city, to be sent anywhere in the most desperate case.

The captain general, since all was in vain, and that the Turks had penetrated into the city (which would have been the case days before, but for the incredible valour of that heroic band of Malta), had a mine fired which blew up St. Andrew's Gate, and the redoubt beside it, with terrible carnage of the multitude of infidels, who had taken possession of it, which drove the enemy back for some moments ; nor though their officers kept menacing them with their scimitars, was it possible to make their soldiery advance a step. The city, with the whole island of Candia, was at the mercy of the foe, who for an instant might stop, but was already within their walls, and no defence remained. It was now the 29th of August, when the residue of the order of Malta had the summons from their supreme commander to embark ; who gave what they had still of biscuit and other food, to the friar, who undertook to divide it between the famishing poor creatures of

the town; and General Grimaldi, with deep sorrow, exclaimed, "They are the bravest men I have ever known." What few were still alive of the knights were miserably disabled, and of their hired soldiery the same. A large portion of each had been killed already.¹

The fall of Candia appears to have made Cotoner
1670 more laudably intent than ever on adding to the fortifications of Malta.² Neither did Candia appear very tenable to the Moslem, from the mufti not permitting the erection of mosques (churches) in it, but only of simple (meschites) chapels.³ And the order surveying its own walls, found them very insufficient, and called Count Mauritius Valperga, of Savoy, the greatest engineer then in Christendom, to undertake fortifying the *Floriana* of Valetta; so four galleys being sent to take him, he came on the 9th of February, 1670. His drawings were presented to the council, and accepted on April 2nd, after which he visited Gozzo, and decided on new works to strengthen those already there. It was no vain flourish, but the real truth, when a great authority still at that time called them "those most distinguished

¹ Pozzo: ii. 382.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccclviii.

³ Villa: 114.

for bravery above all men, those surpassingly dear to every class of human kind, and to whom universal Christendom owes immortal praise, the renowned Knights of Malta.”¹

The English ambassador, Finch, on his way to Constantinople, visiting the grand master, was of course most honourably treated; but what was most observable was, that not a single word dropped implying that one of his majesty's Norman predecessors had been founder, and several of them chief protectors of the order, which defended Christendom, and to which all its princes were therefore indebted greatly; but all symptoms of friendship, or of anything resembling gratitude, appeared too antiquated to be thought of. It seemed to be considered much that they met courteously, like condescending strangers.

What must have flattered the grand master infinitely more, is, that the Duke of Savoy, in 1674, constituted a regiment, of which all the superior officers from captain up, should be Knights of Malta, giving them certain privileges, and to be called *Regiment of the White Cross*, and be acknowledged the best and finest corps of that day in those parts.²

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii.. Num. ccelviii.—App., Num. ccxxix.

² Pozzo, par. ii. 437.

In 1675 the English Admiral, Narborough, commanding his country's fleet in the Mediterranean, frequented the order's island with his ships a great deal during war with the Tripolitan pirates; and indeed he received all due honours, and extreme civility from Malta.¹ But in the following year the plague broke out there, to the grievous misfortune of that people, and lasted seven months.² Nor indeed did they care much to see the English return victorious, though they brought them free the Malta slaves as some acknowledgment for their kindness to the fleet; because they thought it was the English shipping had introduced the contagion, and to boot that in their present woful condition to bring them additional mouths to feed, was highly distressing. That was not England's fault however, and Charles II.'s letter was extremely courteous.³ In that mighty plague the knights who died were only ten, less than in many of their battles; which only shows more palpably that the knights were never numerous, so never could have been more than superior officers of the excellent hired troops they led, and kept permanently in their pay.

There were then (and shall be often again, which

¹ Pozzo: par. ii., 437, 439. — Cod Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccclix. Appendix, cccxvii.

² Pozzo: par. ii. 441.

³ Id.: par. ii. 445.

may perhaps be passed over, so this observation applies to them all) several questions that now seem very unimportant respecting etiquette, military or diplomatic; in which methinks the order were right to struggle hard, before yielding any one of its ancient distinctions. Such, however little in themselves, were revered memorials of ancestral feats, and had been acquired by the blood, possibly, lives, of illustrious men, whose fair fame their descendants (as far as lies in them) ought not to allow to be thrown into the shade, and forgotten.¹

The Grand Master, N. Cotoner, now very old, so drawing near his end, was not an uninteresting figure, in spite of considerable corporal debility.² His admirable eloquence, nobleness of spirit, and uncalculating generosity, were rather for an imperial station, than a constitutional one. He rose from the rank of a private gentleman, to that which was the very highest in his profession, and beyond doubt a sovereign; but yet sovereign of a republic, and not of a despotic government, whence rose disputes he could not bear, and his haughtiness disgusted many of the order. The income of the grand master at that time amounted to one hundred thousand a year.³

Besides having a permanent engineer, the order

¹ Pozzo: par. ii. 458.

² Id.: par. ii. 466.

³ Id.: par. ii. 467. Crowns, about £15,000.

appears to have been in the custom of having at heavy expense whatever eminent engineer won an elevated fame in any country in Christendom. So Grunenberg, the imperial engineer, came to Malta in 1680; and, besides his observations on the fortifications, showed the knights how to construct a machine for drying a lake, or taking out all the water from an arm of the sea; and which, worked by only two horses, there arose as if a mighty river rushing from the bottom of the waves, and was employed to draw off all the water from the dock of Bormola, and would be equally applicable to a marsh.¹

But on the 29th of April of that year, N. Cotoner went to repose with the just, and the Prior of Rocella, a Neapolitan, Caraffa, was chosen grand master, and proved, even then that the servant-at-arms in the election was no vain show, but a reality; since between three candidates there was a parity of votes, when it was the servant-at-arms gave the casting vote that decided the fierce struggle.² And it is a remarkable proof of what was observed before, that the grand masters were never, or very rarely, of any reigning house (though there were, at all times, several of the younger branches of them in the order, who were often also of much personal merit), that the hero of Lepanto, Don Juan of Austria, who was not only a knight professed, but

¹ Pozzo: par. ii. 483.

² Id.: par. ii. 472.

moreover one of the highest dignitaries of the order, grand prior, lost his election.¹

To Caraffa did the Emperor Leopold write a letter to thank him for keeping off the 1683 Turkish fleet from Christendom ;² but what every one will find splendid, is that the renowned John Sobiesky does something similar ; when not forgetful of the duties of a good knight, he writes to the grand master a full account of his two famous victories ; one under the walls of Vienna, the other some weeks later at Barcan, fortress beyond the Danube.³ The next year on the 25th of February, 1684 Caraffa writes to his Holiness to offer himself as part of any league against the Turks.⁴ Again the same to the same, on the same subject in August.⁵ But in December the Doge of Venice again expresses his sense of the generous kindness of the sacred knightly order, which is as usual ever ready to come to the aid of Christendom in any of its mishaps ; and with the co-operation of those renowned cavaliers of St. John of Jerusalem, whose valour is so celebrated through the world, the

¹ Pozzo : par. ii. 477.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccclx.

³ Pozzo : par. ii. 503.—Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccclxi. and ccclxii.—Appendix, Num. ccxxix.

⁴ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccclxiii.

⁵ Id., Id., Id. lii.—iii. Giunta.

Venetians have just now taken Santa Maura and
 1685 Prevesa.¹ Another similar informs the same
 of the attack upon Coron, and that one of
 the cannons taken at Santa Maura is sent to Malta
 as having belonged to L'Isle Adam.² Again the
 same to the same some days later.³ A note concerns
 Maina.⁴

Full of the same praises of the order is this letter
 from Morosini, the Venetian captain general, to the
 1686 grand master in date of Napoli di Romania
 6 Sept., 1686.⁵ The doge to the grand mas-
 ter anew returns to speak of the valiant order and
 informs him of the gallant way General Count Cava-
 lier Heberstein directs his companions, the marvel-
 lous Knights of Malta, dated in our Ducal Palace die
 27 Septemb., 1686.⁶ Same to same on the 27th
 of the same month.⁷

Indeed a great martial figure in the wars of that
 time is the Prior of Hungary of the order of Malta
 Count Heberstein, general in the imperial service,
 and of the league of Malta and Rome with Venice;
 whose commander-in-chief was Morosini.

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccclxv.

² Id., Id., Id. ccclvi. 22nd August.

³ Id., Id., Id. lii.—v. Giunta, 29th August.

⁴ Id., Id., Id. lii.—iv. Giunta.

⁵ Id., Id., Id. ccclxvii.

⁶ Id., Id., Id. ccclxviii.

⁷ MS. Sex.

In August of 1687, the doge,¹ unweary of the glorious name of Lepanto, couples it with that of Prior Heberstein.² The same to the same speaks of the sanguinary encounters during the constant and resolute defence of Castelnovo,³ where the attack was directed by the known experience of the general of the Knights of Malta Count Heberstein 9th of October, 1687.⁴

Even the Pope lauds *strenua Castrinovi expugnatio*.⁵ In this year was some notion of re-creating the English Language. But it soon failed.⁶ Which whether it had anything in common with the event next recorded is not specified; that on the 29th of November, 1687, a youth about fourteen, a natural son of the monarch (James II.) along with the Duke of Grafton (natural son of Charles II.) Lord High Admiral of England, put into Malta. What appears to have been greatly more important in Pozzo's eye than anything appertaining to England, is, that the illustrious course of Heberstein terminated this

¹ Pozzo : ii. 626.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num., lii.—vii. Giunta.

³ Small insignificant hold, that cost a thirty days' siege, and the lives and hurts of many, among whom ten Knights of Malta killed, and twenty-four badly wounded.—Castelnovo lies near Cattaro.

⁴ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccclxix.

⁵ Id., Id., Id., ccclxx.

⁶ Pozzo : ii. 673.

year; for he came to Malta regularly to take leave on his departure to die in Germany, and resolving that his heirs should have no mortuary expense on his account—not even the usual per centage which the next of kin of every deceased knight has to pay on any chattels he leaves—under the title of spoglio; he came to an agreement with the treasury to pay a given sum himself at once, in lieu of every demand of the kind after his death; and when the Priory of Hungary going back naturally to those to whom it belonged, the knights, all the remainder of his vast estates and his property real or moveable, went to his lawful heirs without any defalcation whatever. So having made his last obeisance to the grand master and embracing his colleagues for the last time, he embarked; and in fact the very
1688 next year his Priory returned without a word to the order.¹ But whatever petty intrigues were on the restoration of the English Language went out long prior to the death of Caraffa.² And on the
1690 26th of July, the sixty-third grand master succeeded; for we have the Papal brief of the 9th of the next August congratulating him. Yet though the Pope was their ecclesiastical chief says Boisgelin, “it was only for form that the knights

¹ Pozzo: par. ii., anno 1688.

² Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 484.—Boisgelin: i. 39.

asked his approbation of their election," and not in the least as an acknowledgment that his Holiness had right either of accepting or refusing."¹

It was to Wignacourt that the famous Doge of Venice Franciscus Maurocenus, wrote on the 30th September, 1690.² Six weeks later the Pope again writes to the grand master "expressive of his deep gratitude, as was his duty, not to let slip any opportunity of testifying by documentary evidence his sense of the order's splendid benevolence."³

The Emperor Leopold to the grand master, recommends him the Czar of Muscovy's ambassador.⁴ Which czar carries on a ten years' war against the Turk.—That therefore he has strongly recommended his ambassador to the Pope; and also gives him a letter of most friendly introduction to the grand master January 4th, 1693.⁵

And indeed there is the czar's own letter to the grand master.⁶

1693

The Doge of Venice to Wignacourt, announces the conquest of Scio at cost of the lives of two

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccclxxi.—Boisgelin : i. 192.

² Id., Id., Id. lii.—viii. Giunta.

³ Id., Id., Id. ccclxxiii. App. Num. ccxxviii.

⁴ Id., Id., Id. cclxxiv.

⁵ Id., Id., Id. cclxxv.

⁶ Id., Id., Id. ccclxxvi.—Imperii, 15 anno.

Knights of Malta dated 13th November, 1694. But
 1697 on the 4th of February of 1697 died that
 grand master, and was succeeded by Perellos
 of the Language of Arragon, and at that time Bailiff
 of Negropont.¹ And that Innocent XII. should
 immediately send him a congratulatory brief is only
 that things took their natural course.² It is rather
 more singular that the King of Persia wrote to the
 grand master in 1699; as shall in part be given in
 the Appendix, but translated into Latin.³ Again the
 Doge of Venice, as head of that republic, expresses
 the gratitude of senate and people for the exertions
 of the valiant and noble Knights of Malta at the
 price of their blood.⁴ From all has been seen, there
 is nothing strange in the Pope's consoling with the
 grand master on the order's having lost its headmost
 1706 trireme by shipwreck.⁵ But in June, 1706, the
 same to the same has a more pleasing theme,
 congratulation on a naval victory over the Tunisian
 pirates.⁶ And another of thanks for his promptitude in
 succouring the fortress of Oran.⁷ For mainly to the

¹ Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 485.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccclxxviii.

³ Id., Id., Id. liii. Giunta. — Appendix, ccxxiv.

⁴ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. lii.—x. 456. App. Num. cexxxii.

⁵ Id., Id., Id. ccclxxix.

⁶ Id., Id., Id. ccclxxx.

⁷ Id., Id., Id. ccclxxxii.

valour of the knights was due that Oran prolonged its heroic defence for four whole months; since it was still resisting on the 31 October, 1707. Brave Spaniards! But the same to the same not vainly promising, but really sending excellent troops to Malta to aid in its defence in case the Turk attack it; with this proviso that if he attack any other spot in Christendom, then the Knights of Malta will immediately hasten to defend it with the force of Genoa and Tuscany and others added to the Papal.¹ Likewise a similar letter on a maritime victory off Tripoli in Africa.² Next appears a commission of Stanislaus, King of Poland, regarding some property of the order in a memorial dated Barthè, 29th of January, 1711, and confided to the generous Jacob George Gordon going to Malta.³ We have now to transport ourselves to Germany, where a chapter general of the whole German Language, with its grand bailiff and grand crosses, commanders, knights, met at Wesel to subscribe a protest against any act of the congress of Utrecht confirming the confiscation of any part of the order's property, after the flagrant injustice of having refused to listen to their rightful claims.⁴

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccclxxxiii.

² Id., Id., Id. ccclxxxiv.

³ Id., Id., Id. ccclxxxv.

⁴ Id., Id., Id. ccclxxxvi.

A Papal brief to the grand master observes,—

1713 “Although the recollection of how unhappy had been their former invasion of Malta, will in every probability be quite sufficient to prevent the Turks from sending their expedition against it; still his Holiness cannot but highly applaud the grand master’s preparations of defence, and promises his own troops; and hopes all the princes of Christendom will aid him, in case of an attack.¹

A letter from the Doge of Venice to the grand master relates how the Turks were driven
1716 from before Corfu, and forced to re-embark after repeated assaults, all in vain.² One from the Pope to the same, declares that his Holiness approves of the
1717 Bailiff, Belle Fontaine, as Vice-Admiral, and head of the entire fleet of the league.³ That, from the Doge of Venice to the grand master, nar-
1718 rates how at cost of their blood and lives, the Knights of Malta aided us; for which we present to you and them our sincerest thanks.⁴

That Perellos died about the middle of February, 1720, and was succeeded by Zondadari before the 17th, we know; not only from

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccclxxxvii.

² Id., Id., Id. lii.—xi. Giunta.

³ Id., Id., Id. ccxciii.

⁴ Id., Id., Id. lii.—xii. Giunta.

the diplomatic series, but also from the Papal brief to the latter, congratulating him on his election.¹ Again from the same to the same, is for the good omen it is to the first year of his pontificate, that the Knights of Malta have captured two notorious ships of piracy; *binas infensissimis hostibus in præsens ereptas naves.*²

Abdi Aga, Commander of the Five Sultanas in sight of Malta, 28th June, 1722, to the grand master was received and answered by Zondadari and council; conformably to the translation preserved in the archives, forming two documents that shall both be in the Appendix.³ But it is the last act come down to us of that grand master, who died 1722 in 1722, we do not know exactly on which of the last days of August;⁴ but it must have been on one of them, since we find the Pope's congratulatory to the new grand master, in date of September 2nd of that year, to wit, Sir Anthony Manoel de Velpena, a Portuguese, who, born of a most illustrious, nay royal family, acquired much personal glory in the order, both as warrior and statesman,

¹ Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 485. — Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. cccxciv.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii., Num. ccxcv.

³ Id., Id., Id. ccxcvii. and ccxcviii. — App. ccxxxv.

⁴ Seb. Paoli: Serie, ii. 406.

in his passing with singular distinction through an immense variety of charges; wounded off Tripoli in taking two vessels; then Commander of the headmost of the ships of war, Colonel Commissary of War, Grand Cross, Grand Chancellor, and finally Bailiff of Acre, when chosen Grand Master.¹ Amongst Vilhena's actions merit especial notice his admirable foundation for invalids, in his project dated the 16th October, 1732, where the sentiments are not unworthy of those that in after years induced his Majesty William IV. to erect that magnificent hospital at Malta. "The Prince has obligations towards his poor subjects, so having an hospital for the indigent sick, we have thought of one for indigent invalids;² which thereupon obtains confirmation and approval.³

We are now entering that period pretended of peculiar degeneracy, yet I humbly submit
 1732 whether it be the fact, and whether any of our grand masters hitherto were inferior to the common run of European sovereigns? As to the superiority of D'Aubusson, and L'Isle Adam, and such like, over those of their time, probably none will be so extremely unjust, as not candidly to avow it at once.

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., ii. Num. ccxcxvi.

² Id., Id., Id. cccciy.—App., Num. cexxxii.

³ Id., Id., Id. ccccv.

In 1742 Vilhena died, and was succeeded by Sir Pinto de Fonseca, who came to a long truce with the sultan; excepting that each side retained their prisoners, who were in a sort of slavery. For against the spirit of the knights howsoever, yet, as the Turks would not relinquish that barbarous custom, it was forced upon the others as equitable reprisals; which if not a good reason, at least palliates a bad; besides to have galleys, how to do without galley slaves? Nor is it quite clear whether it be worse to have to row, than what the French prisoners-of-war had to endure a few years ago in our own hulks. But many of these called slaves were raised from the galleys to a far easier existence, domestic servants in the houses of nearly all of the order, beginning with the grand master himself. Particularly confidential servants out of livery, as secretaries, pages, butlers, and own men, were almost invariably Mahometans. Not but the situation of slavery be not totally and entirely contrary to the spirit of our order, and even of Christianity itself. And here it is that I observe the first indubitable evidence of the knights degenerating from their ancestors. Far from imitating the Turks, they should have avoided it the more. The primitive knights would have disdained to copy the infidel even in his good; so modern knights might well

have refrained from copying his bad. To palliate their degeneracy is not to defend, but sorrowfully avow it in some degree. If the facts which remain to cite do not prove greater weakness than has been common to almost the whole of Europe, I am better pleased to be accused of severity, than of partiality to those who do not need my favour, nor that of any one. Here as everywhere, plain truth is the best, and enables one patiently to unravel many Gordian knots. This usage of having domestic slaves produced familiarity, and familiarity blindness; which, under the cloak of compassion, was in truth an error that, like all vices, brought its own punishment with it; for the result was a horrible conspiracy, whose accidental discovery alone prevented the grand master's throat being cut in the middle of his sleep, and that of every knight in Malta, by the very persons whom each relied on the most, and who were entrusted with the key of the bed room. No doubt some of the conspirators were really attached to their masters, who were remarkable, perhaps without exception, for their kindness towards their domestics; but even
1742 so, none of them resisted to the threats that assuredly were used there, as well as in other secret societies. But for a mere casualty, the multitude of atrocious murders would have been committed. It is said those villains amounted to four

thousand, many of them rich and made free, and all of them benefited by their masters. Some few of the slaves from blood-thirstiness or avarice, or desire of liberty, or fanaticism, but the rest from abject fear, all would have mercilessly bathed themselves in their masters' blood that hideous hour. This comes of slavery! If the tree is to be judged by its fruit, what bitter fruit have we here! Why should it not be a salutary example? Treat slaves with what humanity you please, it cannot be greater than that of the Knights of Malta. Yet slavery has poisoned them, and they will murder you when they have an opportunity. You have done them the greatest possible harm, that beyond human compensation. If they are ungrateful, you are still worse. Then away with slavery, horribly injurious to the enslaved, and more so to the enslavers.

A captain in the Prussian service being appointed by his king in 1763 to repair to the Grand 1763 Prior of Germany, to demand the confirmation of Prince Ferdinand in the new dignity to which he was elected in the branch of the order in Brandenbrough, it was finally agreed that the ancient connection between the Protestant knights and those of Malta should be renewed, and that the Protestant commanderies should pay their responsibilities in the same way as the Catholic; from which

time the Protestant knights were treated as brethren, and allowed to take the title of Knights of St. John of Jerusalem.¹ "The Order of Malta, though it regrets the difference in religion, does not refuse their Protestant fellow knights a place among its members in fighting against the enemies of Christ. Although this may seem contrary to general opinion, it coincides completely with that of Pius VI., when he approved the association of the Russian knights of the Greek Church with the Order of Malta; as it does also with the instructions given to the deputies to Augsbourg, as in a former chapter; and with the magisterial bull, 9th of May, 1764."²

The next grand master was Ximenes, in 1773; under whom took place what is called the "sedition of 1773 the priests," regarding which a member of the council thus: "The great Baracca" (meaning a battery of that name, and now a delightful resort of children and loungers, its wide arches and seats, like immense boxes in some immense theatre, being far superior to what the Roman Colosseum ever was) "has, it appears, become the meeting place of sacerdotal conspirators; yet not of any worthy members of their holy profession, for such remain at home

¹ Boisgelin: i. 254. Note.—Appendix, Num. ccxxxiii.

² Id.: i. 261.

at their studies ; or, if abroad, it is attending to their sacred duties. But those of whom I speak are mischievous demagogues. Still, as unworthy priests, let them be visited rather with ridicule than anger. It were a pity to bleed capons, or to damage a spot whence there is so fine a prospect. Wherefore my opinion is, that the rebellious clericals be well deluged with no very clean water from above." And his advice was followed ; men ascended by ladders unseen, and with buckets of water and large leather squirts, soon dissolved their noisy reverences into a shameful rout, and laughter extinguished the whole plot. Yet is there a recent party¹ who treat it seriously, and affirm that though called of the priests, it comprehended a numerous body of Maltese, who were true patriots, desirous of recovering their ancient liberties. But whether these ever existed causes a demur in some, who also question the validity of their mastra, and, at all events deny its right to be considered a golden book. Certainly they must have fallen amazingly from their ancient grandeur, when the commissioners were sent thither in Charles V.'s reign. If the Maltese had any privileges, and wished not to be given away without asking their own consent, then was the time to have said so ; and there being a large portion of knights, and

¹ Appeal of Malta, &c.; London : 8vo., 1811.

particularly the French knights, against accepting Malta, if to these, though a minority, and the disheartening account of the commissioners, were added information that the offer was not of attached, like the Rhodians, but of unwilling subjects, the probability is that the order would never have inhabited that island. That they were not merely priests, but also laymen, is thought to be proved by their possessing themselves of St. Elmo; but another doubts it as a *non sequitur*; for if they took St. Elmo by a trick, they gave it up without a struggle. Well for the Hospitallers if they had refused Malta, and kept sternly to their refusal. Their abode in it so long, was almost at variance with the very spirit and letter of their creation.

But a troublesome epoch draws close; truly their income had always decreased a little, ever since the extinction of the English Language; while as to their expenditure, it was greater than before. Not indeed their war expenses, particularly while they were in Palestine, and almost exclusively cavalry; for then the price of horses was as high, or much higher than at present, meaning of good chargers, indispensable to knights; but all other necessities of life cost more in Europe than in most parts of Asia. Certainly living costs more in Malta than Rhodes.

The storm is thickening around you, dearest com-

panions. Towards fourteen years hence your wants shall be extremely pressing, and in eight more — Yet shall I not stop here, but continue my not inglorious theme, and with the same exact veracity as I used in recounting your former three, recount also your fourth great disaster, doleful as it needs must be ; and if I obtain little attention, impute it not so much to any wilful backwardness in me, but rather to nature, which has not perhaps gifted me—I do not say with eloquence, for of that indeed I have none whatever, as you well know—but of the common faculty of relating plain facts clearly. Still, notwithstanding my misgivings, should the world hear me, it shall hear the very truth, and may then fairly judge.

CHAPTER VI.

EARLY in November Ximenes' hour was come ; so he was succeeded, on November 12th, by Rohan,¹ whose perhaps most distinguished acts were, first, his having convened a chapter general in 1776 1776—a novelty to all men then alive, except those who had perused our history, and who could not but know it was the order's supreme tribunal.—

Secondly, the formation of the Anglo-Bavarian 1782 Language, in 1782 ;² though England had nothing to do with it, but in name.—Thirdly, the order's most magnanimous charity during the Calabrian earthquakes in 1783.³ It may be 1783 doubted whether it be possible for any human pen to do anything like justice to the conduct of the knights on that most lamentable occasion. They, facing all the dangers of shipwreck, pestilence, and war, aided with money, food, clothes, bedding, the distressed Sicilians and Calabrese, much more than their own sovereigns ; and thinking

¹ Boisgelin : iii. 1. ² Id. : iii. 9. ³ Id. : iii. 11.

of these things, who can impute degeneracy to men so courageous and so generous? Even fallen as they are said to be now, and shorn of many of their members, there was something of cosmopolitan in all their actions; and wherever there was distress in Christendom, thither they hurried, calling countrymen not merely those of their birthplace, but all Christians; quite as eager to assist Protestants or Greeks, as Catholics; asking your wants, not your creed; you might make sure of their life and purse, most cordially offered in any calamity. Is it entirely certain any other people would have done the same? But these had been formed of a choice from the whole of Europe, and had thousands of illustrious examples in their annals, whom they had been always urged to follow; it was the common discourse of the Knights of Malta; so these remnants of a fine body had in them still what challenges admiration. Nor can we suppose that in a few years no high-minded men remained amongst them—though broken up and flung adrift, and themselves exposed to the pitiable emergencies they were now relieving, and as long as they have the means, shall continue to relieve. A long sequence of misfortunes, it is said, wear out too frequently the very best; but if so, there are exceptions, and to be chiefly looked for in who still exist of that famous order. Certainly it appears that its

galleys were of no mean repute even so late; for when Spain, that possessed one hundred sail of vessels of war, thought it necessary to withdraw its fleet into harbour in winter, off the coast of Algiers, it requested the grand master to instruct his galleys to keep the sea there; as indeed they did during the whole winter, to their excessive danger and no trivial detriment.

The Code Rohan appears to have displeased the people of Malta,¹ perhaps reasonably, though party exaggeration may not have been wanting; but at all events the knights were nowise identified with these laws, and Rohan must have been deceived, for he was a good man; and that he had no despotic desires is proved by having convened a chapter general, that surety of the order's ancient liberties, and of which it had been deprived above a century, the chapter general being to the grand master pretty much what the parliament is to a King of England. Only it is more like a republic in the

¹ Appeal, &c. Rohan is dear to freedom; for he restored the mainspring of our ancient liberties—the chapter general, a century and a half out of use, from De Paul in 1631 to Rohan in 1776. That nothing very remarkable happened during that long interval and the chapter general's restoration at such a momentous juncture, proves liberty is best suited to great circumstances: and that equality within its own body, and the most free liberality in its politics, are as characteristic of the commonwealth of St. John of Jerusalem as valour and discipline in the field; where alone we permit of a dictatorship.

grand master's case, who becomes somewhat like a cypher while the chapter general lasts.

The very fact of its convening is substantial evidence that the order had not fallen into the abasement pretended maliciously by the French (and by some English dupes too¹), who fostered that idea carefully, because they meant it should soon furnish an excuse for confiscating its property throughout all France. Nor was the interval long, for in 1789 began radically what quickly 1789 deprived the Knights of Malta of nearly all their revenues. Of a large annual sum that was imported every year into that island, nearly the whole ceased at once. Already the finances of the order were in some confusion. But henceforward, what possibility of retrieving them? The chapter had indeed retrieved somewhat of the spirit of liberty. Yet that which should have been a good was turned into an evil by the malignity of the times, for it only served to exasperate some fine minds, who were really attached to their order, and its genuine, well-regulated, constitutional freedom; and to lead astray into the contagion of the revolution some other cavaliers not deficient in natural or professional talents, but without deep intellect, without much experience, and with no wisdom; while

¹ Mr. Eton; and others like him.

the great majority were unsettled, and even to a certain degree terrified by the surrounding heats, and violent discordant opinions of those rival factions they read of in the Parisian newspapers; their own corps as sovereign, giving rise to a fierce error. Besides, were not the French knights reduced to comparative poverty; and is not unwonted poverty (except some very lofty-minded individuals) the ready road to unbridled passions, and strife, and wild, perhaps dishonourable expedients, and even madness?

Rohan received those unfortunate French with the kindest generosity; which would have been only becoming towards the knights from any land, much more from his own; nor can any one blame him on this matter, for he ordered the expenses of his own dinner to be reduced to two shillings a-day, and all the other monies in the treasury to be dedicated to the support of his indigent brethren. As to financial balances, no farther about them. The greatest genius in the world can effect nothing where the outlay is great, and the resources little. A cabinet was formed by the modest Rohan, to assist him with their advice; one of whom was the Bailiff Hompesch, in consideration of his great understanding; he having been a distinguished diplomatist, and at that very moment was the emperor's minister to

the grand master; nor openly did he on any question swerve from his established reputation, of being a friend of his own order.

What had been the Templars' residence, and so called the Temple, even during its long occupation by the Hospitallers, whose ambassador to Paris lived there, had now been converted into a prison for innocent Louis XVI. Not a ship arrived from Languedoc, or Provence, but brought some additions to the sorrows of one party, and the exultation of the other. Amongst which was the answer of the last ambassador that the order ever had at Paris; and which, while it shows the high nobility of character (Boisgelin rather superfluously gives it as a proof there were still some high-minded men in the order—whoever doubted it?) showed also that all was illegality and anarchy in miserable Paris. "Be under no apprehensions," said the prime minister—"I am under no apprehensions," was the gallant old diplomatist's reply;—"for now the moment has arrived when a man of honour, who faithfully performs his duty, may die as gloriously on a gallows, as in the field of battle." And the noble-minded Bailiff de la Brillhane went down stairs, and expired suddenly. Those frightful times are too well known to need farther elucidation; already have we had enough to turn the stomach.

When all at Malta should have been union to confront the approaching tempest, on the contrary all was division. Hard was it for these fine young French knights, accustomed to be the most open, off-handed, gay-tempered, best-dressed gallants in Europe, to go meanly about, and live at the expense of others. And if some of them lost every regard for their reputation, and fell into a bad course, and a few even joined the revolutionary party, and took up with the false humbug in which it dealt, we may pity rather than severely blame them.

In the cabinet may have been less flux of words; but from the discordancy of those who composed it, no mighty quiet could be expected. But in the council (which had more of the chapter general than council-board), boisterous were the sittings. One whose name matters nothing (but he is said to have been meagre, and sallow-faced, and with an envious look), spoke thus:—"Many of our knights are indeed worthy members of our most honourable confraternity; but some of you are turbulent self-seekers, and fond of vanities and gadding abroad. Yet ought we less to think of our individual selves, and more of the true interests of the entire order. Therefore it is that I propose we should totally give up the galleys, as a superfluous expense; and also the incomes given from our common treasury to so

many idle young fellows, who would be much better away earning their bread, than here doing nothing but idling, or causing tumults, and consuming our means !”

But he was stopped by Ransjat, who had long since acquired the fame of being rather favourable to the dreams of the Jacobin; and after several somewhat desultory speeches, broke out: “This moment have I heard it rumoured that the cruel and avaricious pedlars are to come with their Sepoys from the distant East; but they will find young Europe very unlike those timid Indians. The French, no more than themselves, are eaters of nothing except rice, and drinkers of only water and coffee, or believers in Bramah; but even like the shopkeepers, we enjoy all kinds of meats, and wines and spirits; albeit with less voracity, and drunkenness, and hypocrisy. No doubt we had long ago to cashier the paltry bankers, who have been against us ever since, and will be against us now also. What matter? The blessed doctrine of the rights of man will continue its glorious course, in spite of a few tyrants; who, as well as other stumbling-blocks, must be subverted, utterly consumed from the very root, and brushed away; so that the next generation will never for one hour have been degraded by the nonentities of which they’ll read; as we

do of Paganism and the Cæsars. Fortunate descendants, for whom our blood will have bought what never should have been lost, reducing our foolish ancestors to slavery, and us also, until the ecstastic moment which opens our eyes, and lights up that God-like energy which cannot but vanquish; and is growing universal to a resumption of the imprescriptive, undeniable birthright of mankind. Hear it, ye priests and despots, and tremble,—that divine, omnipotent shout, ‘Liberty and Equality!’”—But this outburst was not without its reply: “Never did this brotherhood reject them; it is not true that it ever did! The English ceased coming among us; their own choice, not ours! Nor will we ever, nor (be not so presumptuous as to flatter yourself) will the order ever more join your doleful cry. We are free, not slaves. But aristocratic pride humbles itself to the ferocity of a mob. You were once too supercilious, and are now too base. That tacit, voluntary separation of England from us might at any time have ceased; and might cease even now. She has only to wish it and come half-way towards us; and if she will not take our ancient oaths, reducing them to be, word for word, the same as at our foundation, and which our primitive members made no objection to, and which our predecessors slightly and perhaps uselessly varied, not altering the spirit—why not propose

and carry a reasonable modification of them, in the chapter general, which is our supreme tribunal, and certain to consent? Such a reform and development as become us to accept, and her to propose, have nothing of Jacobinical; and are merely a wise conformity to the times. Such things have been, may be. Why not? Ask our histories! We, as well as all things human, go on changing; I hope, progressing in the direction of good. Change is synonymous with time. Are any of us one instant without changing? That beneficial, honourable, practical renewal of what is best in our glorious institution, and its application to whatever is permanently useful to mankind, this aptitude to fit any circumstance of life, is a proof of our lofty origin. This candid modification of our habits, and an however limited income, as much as their own Parliament considers sufficient to maintain them as gentlemen, and the English are our brethren at once. And sincere will be our joy at receiving them. I am borne out by the fact that in our brightest of times, when heroic deeds were as common as they are uncommon, at present, in that dazzling orient, where the order of St. John of Jerusalem began, and soon acquired that illustrious fame, which whoever mentions without ardent aspirations is unworthy to bear our cross—then were the English our pride, and always treated

with a peculiarity of esteem ; as splendid examples of what mankind produces of most generous, most noble. Nor mean I aristocratic distinctions—and doubtful such were at that time — but the true nobility of nature. Nor is that wondrous, if antiquity be right that they are of Norman blood, like our founder and his first knights ; and that the Normans were far superior to all others of the human race.” And he might have advanced to still more exciting sentiments, were it not for an elderly bailiff, who seemed to be of the majority : “ Neither any one who has read his Bosio can fail to know that inflexible neutrality between Christians is the very basis of our institution ; and so I maintain we are bound to it, and that it is idle to intermeddle with what is not our own ; and we should occupy ourselves simply with what strictly belongs to us, the state of our finances, which are in a wretched condition, and will quickly destroy us unless we find some remedy.”—“ But that is not merely hard, but quite impossible,” cried another, “ for every day our expenditure goes on increasing, and our means to meet it frightfully lessening.”—And a fourth : “ That being an impossibility, then is it useless to debate upon it ; and, therefore, instead of vain labour to our lungs, I propose we retire.”—So the assembly dissolved itself, like so many others, a usual daily event during months. On another

occasion is recorded, "Some persons speak of a war with the Saracens as if it were at any time optional, or aggressive, which it was not, but simply defensive. The Mahometans were attacking Christendom from the very beginning—that being over, so are our wars. What part of Christendom do the Turks ever assail now? So the grand master has done very well to abolish both galleys and caravans; a foolish expense." And perhaps the dolt did not see that, this inutility of the order conceded, its fall was the logical conclusion. Indeed, a mischievous set were bent upon working that up into a truism, with the design of employing it as a cogent argument for the abolition of the order; with a shrewd eye to the plunder which on such occasions is to be scrambled for, and the most adroit is sure to get rich. But that malevolent avarice was in but a very few of the knights, if in any; but was rife in several about the order, though not exactly knights, and in the consuls, and a number of the Maltese; not excepting their principal merchants. Nor is it singular, for a similar delusion was in most countries of Europe. Admiral Neuville, with a large fleet, arriving from France, obtained leave for a certain number of his ships to enter the harbour, and thus was able to land himself, and judge of things by his own eyes. Now we know he had secret orders detrimental to the sovereignty of Malta; but we

likewise know that he informed the Directory it could not be taken by his forces, nor as easily as they thought. It is clear, however, that Rohan, in keeping to a strict neutrality, had no screen from the overbearing regicides; and though he tolerated a French ambassador at Malta, no ambassador from the knights was allowed to enter Paris. All the kindness and most scrupulous fair dealing was on the side of the grand master, without any reciprocity whatsoever. The more every self-support vanished, the higher parties ran. They were, in truth, innumerable; for it was a time of anarchy rather than factions. Every man of any repute stood for himself, and had a way of thinking of his own. Yet, however they were split up into subdivisions beyond counting, they substantially consisted of four; the existing government, who were desirous of leaving matters pretty much as they found them; those knights who wished for a prudent reform; those knights who advanced the revolution; and the Maltese, the people of Malta, looking to their island as a thing quite separate from their knightly sovereigns. Poor Rohan endeavouring to steer among such a confounded storm, that menaced something ineffably worse, and
1797 to be got through by none except a man of rare steadiness and intrepidity of mind; he, not being such, had no other refuge than death—and he sickened and died.

Of the munificent decisions of the Emperor of Russia respecting the order, alas ! Rohan never knew ; for he was on his death-bed when the courier with that consoling intelligence arrived.¹ Yet at the moment such a benefit availed nothing, and only disturbed men's minds, still more by adding a most uncertain gleam of hope, that freed from the necessity of deciding between calm resignation to their fate, or a manly resistance. However it happened, no one of distinguished merit coveted magistracy. The only candidate who appeared was that member of the cabinet already spoken of. Perhaps it was advisable, in such tumultuous times, to hurry the election. Truly his antecedents, and his Austrian diplomacy, united him, apparently, to the aristocratic party ; and although he is reputed by some to have been secretly upheld by the revolutionists, from his real want of talents, he concealed sentiments quite at variance, in either case, with his exterior. Many were grievously surprised and alarmed when Hompesch was presented to them as grand master.

His first act was to expedite an embassy of thanks to the Emperor Paul with Valetta's cross (which the order had always preserved with the most affectionate respect) wherewith his imperial majesty permitted

¹ Appendix, Num. ccxxxiii.

himself to be installed and saluted the order's protector. If the empress and princesses were then received as Hospitalleresses, it would certainly not have startled Gerard (who called females from the very beginning), much less L'Isle Adam or La Valetta, who could not but have hailed it as a return to the finest times of the order; presenting them with fit companions in those olden centuries, Queens of Spain, royal daughters of France, and Empresses of Germany. It is likely those high Russian dames knew very well, they in wearing that cross, were only wearing what is worn at almost every Court; even now by an elect few of the most distinguished ladies in Europe—not at all excepting St. Petersburg.

Imagine at what a crisis, which such an event could only sharpen. Then had the order had a man of eminence—a Cæsar, a Washington—he would have come forward; but as it was, all those of any considerable talents took care not to be candidates for the grand mastery. And those of no talents would have had no votes. But there was one individual who of talents and information had unfortunately just enough to betray him into a pitfall, not to get him out of it. That he had got so high in the diplomacy is a sufficient proof that he neither wanted a good common intellect nor assiduity; and

those who have invidiously observed that he was the only German grand master the order ever had, only exhibit some petty malevolence, for really persons of that calibre exist in tolerable numbers in every country. It is said he had not intended to be a candidate, since it was usually conferred on persons of age, who had earned a considerable reputation by their conduct in youth and manhood; so that Hompesch would have been too young, and was not engaged to do so, till a priest laid before him that a Frenchman could not be chosen at that moment; for that no Frenchman could maintain himself between two such furious parties. To side with either the Directory, or Legitimists, were alike destruction. Which advice that ought to have kept him aloof from the same rock if he had much judgment, easily lighted up his miserable ambition. Nor were his principles perhaps very bad. But he had not the firmness necessary to a grand master in even the commonest times; more especially he had not that analogous to the situation his temerity had courted. It would have needed a greater genius than Napoleon Buonaparte himself, to succeed with the feeble discordant means possessed by the knights then; while France, however shaken by internal dissensions, was still a splendid nation.

It had been supposed Bonaparte had some design

of getting a Spaniard, the Prince de la Paix, Godoy, made grand master; but if so, it soon evaporated. And on the contrary. There were councils and insane meetings without number. Day nor night was there a moment's quiet; but every one went roaming and blustering about. Except indeed some; and the terrified women, who kept pining in corners. If Hompesch retained his principles, he did not dare avow them. The reverse, and that he was rather in favour of the revolution, was the vulgar opinion. There were multitudes of extravagant play. An Italian knight astonished the elder members of the council by expressing at length what he hesitated to propose till called upon by the public voice.

"Seeing that our finances are going to utter ruin with a velocity increasing every hour; nor do I for an instant object to our maintaining the three French Languages, for it is our bounden duty after their having lost all in France; seeing nothing in these quarters but ruin, and that similar dangers threaten all Europe, is it not better for us to leave this region of despair, to gather all we can of our moveable property, and sail off? Nor do I mean towards Russia, or any part of Europe, nor any island in the Asian division of the Mediterranean, where we should be soon followed, and subjected to every sort of persecution. Yet England forms an exception,

and we formerly had a Language there, but now not —nor have we any reason to expect it at present; even the contrary, since France is her declared enemy, and we have so many knights of that nation. Still England, which is at this moment the greatest maritime power in the world, will not persecute, but rather aid us a little from the natural love of aristocracy for a like body; and that pity for worthy people which, it is said, has almost invariably distinguished the English. Then I see but one road to success, if we have the energy to take it; I mean sailing for the antipodes, as would be one of the South Sea Islands, of which there are several uninhabited, according to the recent circumnavigators. We should not be in a much worse state than our ancestors when they left Rhodes. So far off in those fair antipodal places, I dare say no one would assault us. And better still, if we returned to the ancient customs of our founders, and the two first centuries of our order, on the continent of Asia. Jerusalem is inland. The primitive Hospitallers knew nothing of ships. We might establish ourselves in some parts of Chili or Peru, which would not be ungrateful to the inhabitants there; particularly if we paid them some small equivalent. Long the arms that could reach us there; even Madrid could come to no effective hostilities

against us. There wild horses are in plenty, and we might become expert riders and lancers, like our ancestors. And we might have our hospital like them; exercise hospitality as well as here. If no Turks to fight, the age for that is over. But here we have no choice; there we should have. Besides, have we not Spanish and Portuguese knights to instruct us? Without any idea of giving up any scope of our creation, we might execute all proposed, and return after this tremendous hurricane blows itself out, and blow itself out it assuredly will. But at present what possible safety, but in escaping from the blast? Are we not like other willows? But on its cessation, we might return; not indeed to this petty island, but nearer to the Holy Land!"

What would have come of this proposal cannot be told; for the council broke up in confusion, some unwilling to look the danger in the face, but misled into sliding towards it by chance; others in open anger, readier to talk of a bold defence, than provide for such a crisis. Many loved believing that the Christian countries would never permit persons belonging to the noblest families in Christendom to be ill-treated or slaughtered; and that the worst that could happen would be to have a little increase of taxation. Some of the best knights were not

sorry that a reform would be necessary, in which all the plate and similar finery of the order would be consumed, and force them to resume the frugal and simple manners of their heroic ancestors, as more befitting their profession, whether in a military or sacred point of view. In short, nothing was done; nor do I find the subject was ever taken up again. The noble and magnanimous conduct of Russia (in whatever it originated), which certainly meant pure good, yet produced this of bad, that it blinded the Knights of Malta to their imminent destruction.

Here is Napoleon Buonaparte close on the footsteps of the Admiral, who, as well as the indefatigable diplomatist, who had concealed his political under the disguise of his consular function, the French Consul at Malta, had disseminated sedition and treason all through Valetta; not at all excepting the knights, particularly the French knights, and their well-known chief, Ransjat, who indeed was an eloquent fanatic, a grand cross of the treasury. 1798

Buonaparte was then on his way to Egypt, with an immense fleet of transports, some two hundred merchantmen, laden with all the troops and stores requisite for that expedition, inclusive of the scientific body, with their books and instruments. Nor were the Maltese aware of what is well known now, that

the Directory's strict orders were not to stop at Malta, if there was any resistance, which might create a delay extremely injurious to the main object, which was Egypt; so that if the grand master had made even the show of defence, Buonaparte would have continued on his voyage; the more that Nelson was already on his track. This visit to Malta had the effect of a short respite, for it misled Nelson to the West Indies. And if returning he at last found the French fleet off the Nile, he would have performed his exploit much more effectual before. Buonaparte had unwittingly given him an opportunity, of which he, unfortunately for the knighthood, did not avail himself. Then both Directory and Nelson combined to save Malta; but the total want of firmness in Hompesch, and all the treasonable preparations in the island, such as the spoiling of the gunpowder, and the flight of the treasurer, secured its fall. Yet when the conqueror was off the harbour, there were not wanting some courageous voices still in the council: "Often has the Holy See rescued creatures otherwise forlorn. Whatever unfortunate exceptions may have been, yet charity is its basis, and generally it is true to it, although the democrats pretend the contrary, and would force us to believe them. I am then for following the policy proposed to our grand master—appeal to

Rome. And still better appeal would be to our own swords. If decision and promptitude be necessary to our own body, more so as to the island at large. What we submit to ourselves, no one can reasonably blame as to the inhabitants. Mutual should be our hardships and valiant defence. Then we may crush the head of the serpent, or we are destroyed; make your minds up to it. Meekness, and we shall have our throats cut quietly. Their guillotine is soon erected! And what is worse, this ancient, most noble, most beloved order extinguished! Hope for no protection from any one; Russia is too distant. Do you not perceive how every sovereign in Europe trembles? Every state totters? Our own good swords alone are to be depended on. They are our only resource! I am ashamed to go on, as if you wanted to be put in mind of your ancestors and encouraged. Not all, but some of us have had their hearts and souls spirited away, I fear; and a base panic terror has begun creeping over us like other European sovereigns. But it ought not—must not be so! If this invader frighten us, we are decidedly gone—infallibly ruined—not only our state, but our very existence. It is not only exile, but abject poverty and death. Let him promise, but not one of his promises will he keep. To crouch to him is dis-

honour, famine, scorn, beggary, the vilest servitude ! Respond to my defiance ; there he is, but here are we !” There was a shout, but was it of the majority ? And there were popular shrieks without ; it was evidently a revolutionary noise—and the deputation which had been sent to visit the great magazine entered in evident dismay. “ Not only the gunpowder dealt out to the various batteries has been spoiled, as you know ; but the great magazine itself, all it contains ; the provisions for four years utterly spoiled—not an ounce worth a farthing. How it came to pass may ask chemical inquiry ; but as to military and immediate use, it is beyond the smallest doubt entirely destroyed, we think.” And that bailiff, though of a green old age and perhaps not timid, appeared petrified. And in ran another and said, “ Buonaparte has landed.” On which Ransjat got up and approaching Hompesch handed him the key of the treasury, saying hurriedly that he could not fight against the French. It was the only instance of the kind says Boisgelin—and a plain declaration of high treason ; but it was also bold at least and candid. A great confusion ensued, during which Hompesch retired through a kind of private door, which shut after him ; and opened only on the outside. Perhaps Ransjat would have followed ; but how could he ? There was the pub-

lie door, but it was at the bottom of the room; and how get to it? But certainly Ransjat is said to have become deadly pale. Perhaps he thought he never might be allowed to leave that room. "Neither should," opined more than one of those cavaliers. "If there be traitors amongst us," with a voice like thunder cried a knight (after having locked the great door inside, which Ransjat seeing is reported to have got, if possible, still paler), "which I prefer not believing, in spite of all that noise about the gunpowder and at such a critical moment too—such culprits ought instantly be put an end to. There was what sufficed for valiant men before the discovery of gunpowder, and why not now too? Our cannons are useless, that is all; but the works and drawbridges are serviceable the same; and this invasion may be easily prevented from penetrating into our city."

How it had ended it is vain to attempt divining; for a loud report was heard from a platoon of wild Maltese militia in open sedition, and indeed mixed with a rabble of rioters of the lowest of the people, and among them some young scamps of citizens; all armed, who fired into the keyhole and at once burst in the door, and Ransjat running to them put himself into security in their centre; and their bayonets having in an instant cleared the room, they issued with

loud republican cries and bearing Ransjat with them ; so some of Hompesch's servants came and shut the door again as well as they could. And all was for the moment over.

Terrified by no few of the revolutionary Maltese, who strutting through the rooms of the palace, gave it clearly to be understood, that not only they counted on the grand master as nothing, but that they themselves were the real lords and would deliver up the city to Buonaparte, whether the knights liked it or not ; yet the very difficulty of his situation appears to have elevated Hompesch's spirit a little once ; resolving to go forth and present himself to the mob and call upon them to return to their former fidelity, and defend the island against all invasion. The great probability is that they would have shot him—which many of the order representing to him and that his murder at that moment would be assuredly the signal for a universal murder of all the knights, and that his life had ceased to be his own property from the day he had become grand master ; he allowed himself to be persuaded to abstain from the project. Yet if he had realised it, who knows but it might have succeeded ? A band of stout men executed the sentence of the grand master, and carried Ransjat into prison at St. Angelo's. But what use of it ? The mob broke into that fort and liberated him.

Then, under colour of armistice, Buonaparte himself came into the city without any fear whatsoever; for it was clear the grand master had lost all power. Not however to lodge at the palace did he come; but in the house of a Maltese of consideration. The grand master asked Buonaparte to supper that very night; which he refused, and pretended on the contrary that the grand master at the head of his knights should first come to visit him. This was too humiliating; still after a day or two of reluctance, Hompesch was obliged to submit to it. The interview was cold and of no importance whatever; as to what was called the capitulation, curious document, which then first appeared, pretending to be between the grand master and Buonaparte, and had not the former's signature at all! The only Hospitaller who signed it, was Ransjat himself; no longer a member of the order he had renounced.¹ Yet on the whole it cannot be denied that, "Hompesch had done what could never be repaired, and gave a mortal stab to his order; and he and his party (if he had any) cannot prevent their names from being delivered down to posterity among those celebrated villains who have betrayed their country and caused all its misfortunes," cries one of his knights not unreasonably; although perhaps with somewhat of exaggeration as regards Hom-

¹ Appendix, ccxxxvi.

pesch, who may have been rather a feeble creature totally beneath his difficult situation, than a villain. As to the celebrity it certainly came entirely from the order he had the honour to head—and not in the least from him. The capitulation was in substance ; that the knights give up Malta to the French army, that the French shall try to engage the Radstadt congress to procure a principality for the grand master equivalent to the one he gave up ; that in the meanwhile the Republic promises to pay him an annual pension of three hundred thousand French livres, besides two annats of pension as an indemnification for his personals ; that he shall be treated with the usual honours during his stay at Malta ; that the French knights may return to France, as if they had never left it ; that the French Republic will use its influence with the Cisalpine, and all Italy and Switzerland, to do similarly regarding the knights of those nations ; that the French Republic shall give an annual pension of seven hundred French livres to each knight now resident in Malta ; and one thousand to each above sixty years of age ; that the French will employ its credit with the different powers, that the knights may dispose of the property of the order in their dominions ; that the knights shall not be deprived of their private property in Malta, and that its other inhabitants are

left their religion, privileges and property, and not be subject to any extraordinary taxes, and that all civil acts under the late government shall be valid." But these conditions were by no means kept. Neither the three Maltese, the Sicilian or the Spanish ministers had anything to do with the order. So that one of the chief parties gave no assent whatever; and *de jure* the entire deed is as if it never existed. But *de jure*, only a risible jeer at that time, had its whole validity from brute force alone.

Disastrous was the aspect with which the Buonaparte star first rose on troubled Europe. It was proclaiming the extinction of all the laws of nations, and that treaties were only binding just as long as it suited the stronger party; and that no appeal of the weaker was of any avail whatsoever. Some instances of the kind were at every period to be found; but it may be doubted, if that immoral practice was at any time so universal and openly established as during the next ten years and better. With the single exception of England—which some attribute to her insular situation exclusively, and not at all to steadier and superior principles of action, or real grandeur or any riches infinitely mightier, not only than those of commerce, but those of the most aristocratic of landed proprietors—with England's single exception, the governments of Europe (each in its

turn) were to fall into a decline of more or less duration. The grand master began a long list of who had ceased to govern. Never has the direct contrary of honesty is the best policy, prevailed to so barefaced an extent as throughout the times alluded to. An armistice of twenty-four hours was proposed; but Buonaparte's people set about making preparations for his entry, as if the city was already taken, and explained the flag of truce into surrender; and a capitulation not signed by both the principals, as had been even of the barbarous Turk at Rhodes, allowed invaders to walk into Malta and insult the grand master within his own fortress; round which the invading artillery were being placed by who knew very well that their commander-in-chief was sleeping there; the terror they had caused was enough, and no need of firing. By this most insidious operation, work of secret treason, to which that of sappers, miners, is as nothing, was taken without a shot one of the best-fortified towns in existence. Indeed even Buonaparte thought it inexpugnable; and looking on some of the pieces said, "Well for us that we had friends to open the doors!" The whole night between the 10th and 11th of June was spent in the most tumultuous manner. An insurrection of the people was tried at with unexampled diligence and treachery—accusing the French knights of being in

league with their countrymen ; the very reverse being the truth, with few exceptions. The order was now indeed critically situated ; not counting above four thousand defenders. The grand master offered money and in appearance at least, attempted to lead back the people to good behaviour, and take courage ; but quite in vain. All respect was lost. Confusion and disorder were at such a pitch, that the Maltese Militia shot each other in the streets. The people, roused to blind fury, directed it towards the most innocent commanders, who were pointed out as the guilty, instead of the real criminals, who were under the mob's protection ; not but some of the citizens, with tears in their eyes at this ungovernable anarchy, waited on the grand master, as if spirited and noble conduct in him might possibly have brought over a portion of the troops, and some of the riotous rabble ; but it was too late. Householders had become frightened at beholding the populace turned savage and in revolt, and seeing they were capable of sacking the whole town, and destroying everything. Too true ; but they should have added that they themselves were the traitors, who had misled the multitude, and caused the misfortunes they were now bewailing. Spacious and splendid apartments and the drawing-rooms of a court were now filled by a promiscuous crowd of nobles, lawyers, merchants, shop-

keepers, shop-boys, perhaps shop-lifters, lowest of the low, who proudly strutting, as if those rooms belonged to them, and pompously threatening, bawled they had just signed a paper before the Dutch consul, that they would submit to the French, and deliver the city up into the hands of General Buonaparte, without attending to knights or order. There were stout-hearted cavaliers, but yet none of them possessed the energy requisite for so difficult a situation, and worthy of their ancestors. It was an avowal of weakness, and consciousness of inability to face the boaster in the saloons, that they had retired into a back room. This was towards sunset. Liberty and equality and long life to Ransjat, resounded. He had got out of Castle St. Angelo by the mob's breaking into it, and they were now carrying him in triumph to the palace. He seems to have been in the Orient and signed before his imprisonment. But it has a mystery that is not explained by his own justification, and his declaration that many knights and the grand master had entreated him to go on board for the capitulation, which may be true or not.¹ An hour after sunset, the French were reported to have entered in one body into the city, which increased the tumult.

¹ Ransjat : Paris, 9th year of the republic, and re-printed Malta, 1837. But it is rather a justification of Vaubois (who did not need it), than of himself under Hompesch.

Then it was that the council really met. Emissaries had poisoned the popular mind during so many hours night and day, that they deprived the grand master of the little authority still left to him. Huzzas, cries of rage and fear, and shots could be heard from the square in its front, ringing through the palace even so as to penetrate into the council chamber in its rear. "Whether it be that the gunpowder was spoiled, or that there were means used for its not being rendered effectual by being served out, it is equally certain there was treason; which is also proved by yonder man having been forced in upon us by a popular sedition, which has ruined our order and Malta. They call him a grand cross, as he was once; but he has himself renounced our order, so is no member of it, and vitiates this our, perhaps last, sitting. Yet I am far from voting him out." "No," thundered Ransjat. "It is not the people that have ruined our order; but itself, its own finances. Which of you is a better judge than I am, who have been your Minister of Finance for twenty-one years? In 1788 the revenue of the order was above three millions of francs, in net revenue, and its expenses about two; leaving a clear gain of two hundred thousand. But from the year 1790, there has been a deficit every year, and since 1792, when the property in France, Germany, and Arragon, was

confiscated, has become ruinous. The order had four millions of francs from France alone, of which one half went in expenses, chiefly in France; so that its net here might be valued at one and a half. The French confiscation must soon have ruined you, without any sedition—nor was it I who ruined, but I am he who would have prevented the ruin of our order; for I would have reformed it, to be worthy of the glorious era we begin, of liberty and equality, and of the holy rights of man. Papal bulls, electioneering broils and pecuniary distresses, all diminished or ceasing, it is not quite impossible but we might have found out how it might be employed in some way not unworthy of the new-born glories of our age.”—“Hold your peace, most infamous Ransjat. Would that your eloquence could excuse you! But words cannot; not even yours. No necessity for hushing to hear the shouts and shots outside. They cry for our blood, you know. Why, behold the Russian ambassador who put his life in great danger in endeavouring to save an innocent man from those revolutionary furies; nor did he succeed, for they murdered several before his eyes.¹ But it is revolution outside; here we are shut in, and nearly every one of us armed. Why should we not defend ourselves and the state? The capitulation is all a sham. All on one side, as invalid for us, as unbinding on them. Who has signed it? None of us but

¹ MS. Coll.

Ransjat ! who by his own word is no longer of our order.¹ But he is of our order still, or why is he here? Only this day is full of contradictions. One thing is sure, that we ought not to fall and disperse without resistance. If there be traitors amongst us, they ought instantly—and there is no severity in what I demand—be put an end to. We have not a moment to lose ; those furious howls tell you so. A little energy may save us yet. Trials are for those who have hours to dispose of. A strong suspicion must suffice in this extremity. None of us should be even suspected. Begin with me. Willingly I put my life to the vote, ready to die without defence. Sentence, and I submit. There the scimitar, and here is my bosom—bare, as you see ! So of each within these four walls ! Only death ; rather die guiltless than guilty. One after another be the life of every one of us balloted, and the instant he is condemned likewise executed by the sword next him. So the traitors may be got rid of, or we not live to see them triumph. Then we shall be sure of each other, and darting forth like one man, be certain of it, that even our small corps imitating our ancestors, will be more than sufficient to put all those undisciplined soldiers and vociferous rabble to flight ; and drive every one of them and our few invaders out of the town. And closing the gates and lifting up

¹ Appendix, Num. ccxxxvi.

the drawbridge, we may still remain masters within this city. And may then decide in a chapter general what is to be done for the safety of the order; even when it be to renounce our wealth and most frugally secluded from the world live within this same inexpugnable fortress; resisting whatsoever force may come against us; after some weeks perhaps extending our possessions to the whole island—if these islanders cordially unite with us—and in this state of honourable penury wait until the actual storm be over; though it may blow hard for several”—perhaps years he would have said, but the bursting in of the doors by a whole body of French bayonets with poor vile Hompesch held forcibly at their head, dissolved the assembly, and unfortunate Boisgelin had but to sheathe his sword and retire with his companions. Yet his proposal however extravagant, was not more so than several that succeeded in history. Though it afterwards seemed superfluous and bombast. Perhaps it only proved that he was not capable of executing what he nobly thought; not in the least equal to those historic heroes who in one included both thought and act. Both must be in the same person in such situations. No time for infusing your idea into others. Example not by words but action is the only thing. Yet such simultaneousness, is it not cruel to expect it? Here it was not, and everything was gone!

The Turks never destroyed so much at Rhodes, as French during their first days at Malta; pulling down all the statues of renowned heroes, and chiselling out the coats-of-arms everywhere, and even over the palace—Hompesch himself present. The French have been distinguished lovers of the fine arts since; and even at that very time their army contained a deputation of scientific men, and able artists, who should have prevented such barbarous profanation, but did not—perhaps could not. That he had not the power, is possibly the best excuse for Buonaparte himself, whose wishes must have been quite the contrary to similar mischief. Denon, whose rich mind must have been already prepared for the splendid book he was so shortly to compose, could not but have been opposed to such Vandalism. It were a grievous injustice to him not to be certain of it. Whatever be your opinion as to his artistical prominence, and qualifications to be the historian of Egyptian antiquities, still is it incredible that any one should take him for so utterly denuded of all respect for works of art; which, whether of the lowest class, or any class, merit at least some degree of consideration. Deliberately with a chisel! If they were however bad, they became worse.

The fronts of the houses in Malta are still there defaced, and will perhaps for many years bear evidence to the truth of what I am sorry I cannot

but relate. The broken statues have disappeared naturally ; but not so with the edifices, that have that awful accusation written ineffaceably on their marble foreheads. Pardon the poor Bedouin !

Three or four days of continual insults sufficed to teach Hompesch it was not enough to have abdicated, but that he must quit Malta. Abdicated Hompesch was as unlike L'Isle Adam, as the Directory (for to them, not Buonaparte, his persecution is to be imputed) were to Solyman. "Some of the French Knights of Malta joined the tri-coloured flag ; yet I will not blame, but pity them," wrote the high-minded Boisgelin afterwards in London. To wound Hompesch the more, it was Ransjat was sent to him with an ungrateful message, as to how much, or rather how little, the capitulation was to be followed—the very he who is accused of having plundered much of the grand master's effects, and sold even his cypher seal—he now came to say that all his plate and jewels were confiscated, and that therefore he handed him several of his reliques, from which all their precious stones, and setting, and gold or silver, or other rich cases, had been subtracted—that in place of these, and all his personal property, he was to receive seven hundred thousand francs ; but that one-half of that sum must be left in the island for his creditors ; that of the three hundred and fifty thousand he was to receive he gave him two-thirds in

paper (whose real value was extremely problematic, whatever the nominal), and the remainder, less than four thousand pounds, was all he got in money, and could reasonably be sure of; with this too, that he was to embark for Trieste, not on board a ship of war, but of a common merchantman, and that whoever pleased to accompany him, would be held to be individuals at their own expense, and not forming any part of his suite; and that to keep him to his course, and prevent him touching land anywhere else, or having any correspondence with the enemy, he like any other convict, should be subject to the inspection of the marine police, a corvette, until at a certain point. The cruel and humiliating interview over the night preceding, he embarked about a couple of hours after, and cleared the harbour just at sunrise on the 19th of June, 1798, accompanied by five knights, a page, and two servants-at-arms.

Thus, far from their natural orbit, sort of exile from the land of their predilection, in the small island of Malta, ill adapted to their duties of hospitality, yet endeavouring to consult utility to mankind, main scope of their profession, even there did the knights continue through their fourth period of above two centuries and a half, under twenty-seven grand masters.¹

¹ Appendix, Num. ccxxxvii.