

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
 1716 master relates how the Turks were driven 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. cccxciii.

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 Brandenburgh, 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.