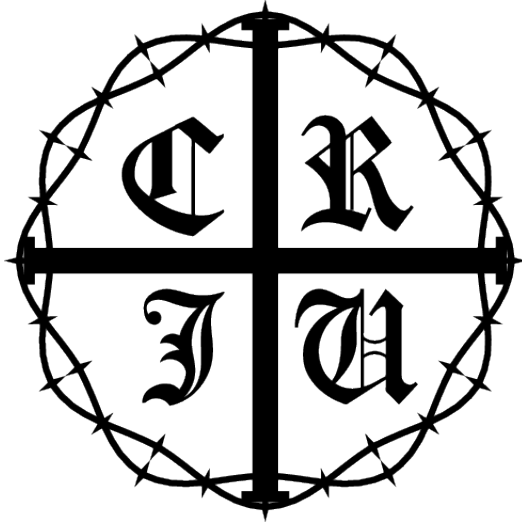


THE
BATTLE
OF
LEPANTO

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PREFACE

THE sixteenth century was drawing to its close, a century marked by the ravages of religious revolution, and destined to be for ever honored or deplored according as men may think of it as the age of reformation or of decay. Among the many such changes which arose out of the new order of things, we can scarcely fail to notice the growth of that exclusive nationality which has lasted until our own time. The great tie of religious unity was broken which had given the nations of Europe a common interest even in the midst of the continual warfare in which they were engaged, and which had inspired them with so many generous enterprises in defence of the faith. But when that bond of brotherhood was lost, there was no longer a common cause to fight for; a profound selfishness may thenceforward be discovered in the whole history of Europe, and the chance alliances of one power with another had no nobler basis than the political interests of the hour.

This change began to be felt immediately after the separation of the northern nations from the unity of the Church, and the circumstance was not unobserved by the great infidel power of the East. The enormous progress of that power was almost coeval with the period of the Reformation; and the distractions and divisions among the Christians that followed that event were so many gains to the Turks, who pushed their victorious arms further and further, till the dreaded Crescent—which the long struggle of the crusades and of the heroic ages of Christendom had kept at bay—was displayed under the very walls of Marseilles and the port of Rome by the corsair-fleets which roved at large over the waters of the Mediterranean, and scarcely found an enemy to oppose them in their course. The republic of Venice, indeed, was still master of many of the island-fortresses of the Levant and the Archipelago; but as the power of that state was now gradually declining, the eyes of her foe were fastened with a bolder ambition upon the dominions which she seemed helpless to defend. The rich and beautiful island of Cyprus in particular excited the cupidity of Selim II,¹ who had succeeded his father, Suleiman the Magnificent, in the empire of the East; and the report of a sudden

¹Known to history as “Selim the Sot.” It is said that he was instigated to the conquest of the island by a Jew, his boon companion, who represented to him how easily he could make himself master of the soil on which grew the grapes which produced his favorite wine.

disaster which befell the republic in the explosion and destruction of her arsenal encouraged him to seize the occasion of breaking, in the face of solemn treaties, a peace which had remained undisturbed between the two states for nearly thirty years.

When the hostile intentions of the Turkish sultan became known, the republic was little prepared to recommence the desperate struggle. Her utmost efforts were spent in the equipment of a fleet which, when assembled, was found wholly inadequate to meet the enemy; and in her distress, crippled as she was by the loss of her vast magazines, and drained of all resources, she implored the assistance of the Roman Pontiff, and, through him, of the other powers of Christendom. Pius V then filled the chair of St. Peter; and his sagacious eye had long foreseen the danger, nor had he spared any efforts to provide the necessary defences. But the times were against him. A famine was ravaging the fair fields of Italy; the government of France was too busy with the Huguenots to have time or strength to bestow on a quarrel with the Turks; and as to England—to use the expression of a writer of the time—its ruler was Elizabeth, “a greater enemy to Rome than the Turks themselves.” Nevertheless, in spite of all discouragements, the zeal of the Roman Pontiff was manifested by an extraordinary activity. Every court of Europe was visited by his ambassadors, who vainly tried to rouse the spirit of the Christian princes against a foe whose conquests were as rapid as they were bloodstained. One after another they excused themselves on the plea of domestic troubles and exhausted treasuries, and in the month of May 1570, when Pius had fondly hoped to have seen his noble appeals as nobly responded to by the universal voice of Christendom, he found himself supported by the king of Spain alone out of all the potentates of Europe.

Meanwhile the fall of Cyprus, attended by barbarities which rivalled in cruelty and atrocity the torments inflicted on the early Christian martyrs, signalled the opening of the war, and gave to the Turkish arms the prestige of the first success. A slight notice of that terrible event may give our readers some idea of the sort of adversary by whom Christendom was at this time threatened.

THE FALL OF CYPRUS

ALREADY the sultan had ordered the seizure of all merchant-vessels that chanced to be at anchor within the ports of the Turkish empire, and the closing of all the avenues by which relief could be afforded to the doomed island; and yet in Venice itself counsels were still divided: the doge was just dead, and the senate was occupied with the nomination of his successor. To the last no vigorous measures were taken by the republic to throw a sufficient force into Cyprus, and the commanders of the allied Venetian and Spanish fleets strove in vain to convey the necessary succours. Sickness and famine made fearful ravages among the troops, and many thousands perished. The ships which had on board Count Jerome Martinengo and 3000 men were overtaken by a tremendous storm; an epidemic broke out which carried off more than a third of the number, and among them their renowned commander himself; and they who, from the shores of the island had long watched for the reinforcements, of which they stood in such desperate need, saw at length but a few shattered vessels come into harbor, bearing with them the dead body of the man on whose bravery and skill they had rested all their hopes of deliverance. To add to the general consternation, Nicholas Dandolo, who had but just taken on himself the office of governor, was one in whose capacity and judgment neither soldiers nor people felt they could place any reliance. Lala Mustapha, a renegade already infamous for his foul and treacherous practices, was the commander of the Ottoman forces, numbering, as some historians have computed, 80,000 men; to oppose which vast armament the Christians could not muster more than 500 or 600 horse, a small body of local militia, and 2000 foot-soldiers fit for active service.

The city of Nicosia, the first object of attack, was taken by storm on the 9th of September 1570, after an heroic resistance of seven weeks, during which the inhabitants had again and again repulsed the assaults of the Turks with a valor which struck such terror into the besiegers, that more than once they all but abandoned their attempts on the town. The ammunition had failed, the fortifications were demolished, most of the distinguished leaders had been slain; the devoted bishop, who had given up all he possessed for the support of the soldiery and people, had himself fallen in a *mêlée*; the Count de Rochas, who ranked next in command to the governor, was killed in defending one of the

ruined bastions, and the Turks, after grossly outraging his body, thrust it into a mortar and launched it into the town. Dandolo retreated into his palace as soon as the enemy penetrated into the town, and the wretched inhabitants were given up as a prey to their infuriated assailants. In vain they threw themselves on their knees before their vanquishers; they were massacred without pity: for seven hours the horrible carnage proceeded. The palace still held out. The pasha offered the garrison their lives on condition of their laying down their arms: they did so, and every soul was put to the sword. The Bishop of Baffo, who, in the estimation of his countrymen, was as capable of commanding an army as of governing a diocese, was butchered among the rest. The unhappy Dandolo, after suffering frightful tortures at the hands of the infidels, was decapitated, and his head sent to the governor of Cerino, the third principal town of the island, as a token of what he might himself expect if he did not instantly surrender the place. The atrocities committed by the Turks defy description. Mustapha, it is related, ordered the children and old men, and all whom it was not worth the victor's while to preserve, to be piled one upon another in the great square of the town and burnt alive; at the same time, to show his hatred of the Christian name, he directed numerous carcasses of swine—for which the followers of Mahomet entertain a religious abhorrence—to be heaped upon his victims, and consumed together with them. For three days the town was given up to pillage, and every barbarity which an infernal malice could suggest was perpetrated upon its despairing population. Women threw themselves from the house-tops to escape from their pursuers; mothers slew their daughters with their own hands rather than that they should fall into the power of the brutal foe. More than 20,000 human beings were slaughtered on the day of the assault; in the first paroxysm of their rage the infidels spared neither sex nor age; 2000 alone were reserved for a slavery more terrible than death. One fearful act of vengeance marked the close of this memorable siege. The Turks had collected in a single galleon the most beautiful youths and maidens of the place, together with the most precious portion of the booty, with the intention of conveying them as presents to the sultan, his eldest son, and the grand vizier. One of the captives, a lady of noble family, knowing but too well the wretched fate that awaited herself and her companions, set fire to the powder-magazine, and blew the vessel high into the air. Two others loaded with the spoils of the town were involved in its destruction; great numbers of the enemy perished, and among

them many Christians of distinction, and the flower of the youth of either sex.

Mustapha now led his troops, flushed with victory and outnumbering by thousands their Christian opponents, under the walls of Famagosta. For eleven months the brave Bragadino, with a scanty garrison and a few thousands of armed citizens, withstood the Moslem hosts.² In vain had they sought relief from Spain and their own republic. The Spanish admiral weakly held aloof; the Venetians succeeded only in throwing a handful of men into the place. The besieged fought with all the strength of despair: women not only labored in supplying arms and ammunition to the soldiers, but combated by their side upon the walls, throwing down stones and boiling-water on the assailants, or precipitating themselves with deadly effect into the masses of the foe, and causing many a Moslem warrior to bite the dust. The bishop of the place, a Dominican by profession, contributed not a little in re-animating the spirits of the garrison, whose ranks were being every day rapidly thinned by famine and the sword: his exhortations, say the chroniclers, elicited prodigies of valor. In the very heat of the assault he might be seen for hours upon the ramparts, surrounded by his clergy, holding aloft the crucifix, and calling on the people to resist unto death fighting for the faith.³ All in vain: on the 1st of August 1571, the walls were nearly levelled to the ground; the defences consisted only of bags of earth and bales of cotton; the Italian and Greek auxiliaries, whose prowess had done such execution on the Turks, were all annihilated; there were left but seven barrels of powder, and of food there was none remaining; the combatants, emaciated by want and incessant toil, could scarcely hold their weapons in their hands. Further resistance was impossible, and Bragadino, yielding at length to the piteous entreaties of the townspeople, consented to sue for terms. But as the intrepid governor bade the white flag be unfurled, he exclaimed, "Officers and men, I call Heaven to witness that it is not I who surrender this town to the infidels, but the senate of Venice, who, by abandoning us to our fate, have given us up into the hands of these barbarians." A capitulation was concluded, by which the inhabitants were to remain in possession of their goods, and to have the free exercise of their religion; all who chose might

²For a short but spirited account of the heroic defence and its fatal catastrophe the reader is referred to *The Four Martyrs*, by M. Rio.

³On one of the last days of the siege he was struck by a ball and killed, while praying in the garden of his palace.

quit the town, and sell or carry off their effects; the garrison were to march out with their arms and with all the honors of war, and to be transported in Turkish vessels to Crete.

The terms were ratified; and on the morning of the 15th August, the Feast of the Assumption, Bragadino, according to agreement, proceeded with two of his officers and a small escort to the tent of the Turkish general to deliver up into his own hands the keys of the town. But no sooner had he entered the pavilion than he and his attendants were treacherously seized on some frivolous pretence; new conditions were imposed; and on the governor's remonstrating against the injustice of such proceedings, Mustapha ordered his companions beheaded on the spot before his eyes. Bragadino himself he condemned to a like fate: three times he compelled the noble Venetian to bow his head to receive the murderer's stroke, and as often—as though he would make his victim drink the bitter cup of torment drop by drop—arrested by a sign the executioner's arm. The tyrant had another and a more terrible death in store for one who had so long defied his most furious efforts; and he contented himself for the present with ordering his captive's nose and ears to be cut off in his presence; which done, he had him loaded with chains, and cast, bleeding as he was, into a dungeon, tauntingly bidding him call now upon his Christ, for it was time that He should help him. Three hundred Christians who were in the camp were butchered in cold blood; the rest of the garrison and the unhappily townspeople, who were already on board the Turkish transports, were reduced to slavery; while the hostages sent into the Turkish quarters before the treaty was formally signed, among whom was Henry Martinengo, nephew of the count, were subjected to barbarous mutilation. The fortifications were now ordered to be rebuilt; and the Turk compelled his noble prisoner to carry loads of earth upon his shoulders for the repair of the walls, and to kiss his feet each time he passed before him; and not yet satisfied with the indignities he heaped upon him, he had him hoisted up aloft on the yard-arm of a vessel in the harbor, where he kept him exposed for hours to the gaze and scoff of the infidels, and then suddenly plunged him into the sea. At last, after trampling him under foot, he doomed him to be flayed alive in the public square. The indomitable commander, who united in himself the resolute courage of a chivalrous soldier with the supernatural patience of a Christian martyr, amidst his untold agonies betrayed not a sign of pain, uttered not a murmur or a complaint

against his torturers, but, as they stripped the skin from his quivering flesh, calmly prayed and recited aloud from time to time verses from the *Miserere* and other Psalms. When the Christians in the crowd heard him breathe the words, *Domine, in manus tuas commendo Spiritum meum*,⁴ they thought he was rendering up his life to God; but there followed in tender accents—as if to show Whose suffering in that hour of agony were most present to his thoughts, and Whose meek and loving spirit then filled his inflexible and dauntless soul—*Pater, dimitte illis; non enim sciunt quid faciunt*⁵ and with this prayer for mercy on his tormentors the brave soldier of Christ passed to receive the martyr's palm. But Turkish malice was not even yet exhausted. Mustapha caused the brave man's body to be cut into four quarters, and each to be attached to the muzzle of the largest guns. His skin was stuffed with straw, and, together with a representation of our Divine Lord in His adorable Passion, paraded through the camp and through the town fastened on the back of a cow. Finally, he dispatched both figures as trophies to the Sultan his master, with the head of Bragadino and those of the two murdered commanders. At Constantinople the skin of the heroic martyr was hung up as a spectacle for the Christian galley-slaves.⁶

After the fall of Famagosta further resistance was impossible; indeed (to their everlasting shame be it written) the Greek population of the island sided actively with the invaders, and, in their obstinate blindness, not knowing what they did, delivered themselves up to the degrading domination of the Turks. Everywhere the most frightful scenes were enacted: the Mussulman soldiery broke into the wine-cellars, and, maddened with drink, indulged in orgies too revolting for description. By the command of the renegade Mustapha the tombs of the dead were opened, and their contents scattered to the winds; the images and pictures of the saints were demolished; the churches defiled with abominations so loathsome that the pen of the historian refuses to record them. Friday the 17th of August, the day on which the noble Bragadino suffered, was set apart for the deliberate perpetration of horrors which rivalled in foulness and atrocity the infamous mysteries of Venus,

⁴“Lord, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.”

⁵“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”

⁶It was afterwards stolen by a Christian slave and taken to Venice, where it was deposited in an urn in the church of St. John and St. Paul; the martyr's bones were also carefully collected, and buried in the church of St. Gregory.

and the bloody rites at which pagans offered sacrifices of human victims to the devils whom the worshipped. A few days after, Lala Mustapha made his triumphal entry into Constantinople with the spoils of a conquest which had cost him 50,000 men.

During the dreadful scenes which accompanied the fall of Cyprus, there were not wanting many who displayed a spirit worthy of the best days of Christendom. F. Angelo Calepius, a member of the Dominican order, has left an interesting and valuable narrative of the taking of Nicosia, of which place he was a native. He himself played a distinguished part in its defence; for during the seven weeks of siege which preceded the entrance of the Turks, he was unwearied in his efforts to rouse the inhabitants to an heroic resistance in the cause of liberty and faith. In spite of the continual fire of the enemy, Calepius was to be seen every where, attending to the wounded and dying, and encouraging the harassed and disheartened combatants. When at length the place surrendered, and was abandoned for three days to pillage and slaughter, the zeal and devotion of this excellent man displayed itself under the very swords of the infidels. The streets were flowing with blood; yet wherever the danger was greatest and the heaps of dead and dying lay the thickest, Father Angelo might be seen, regardless of the ferocious soldiery who surrounded him, administering the consolations of religion to their victims, and endeavoring to comfort them in that dreadful hour by the power of his words and of his very presence.

Among those whose murder in cold blood he was forced to witness, was his own mother Lucretia Calepia and almost all his relatives, with numbers of the clergy and his fellow religious; yet the thought of flight or concealment never seemed to suggest itself to him amid scenes which, with all their horrors, offered him a field for his labors in defence of the faith and in aid of his brethren. "He was," says Echard, "a constant champion and defender of the Christian faith." But at length his own turn came: he was seized, stripped of his religious habit, and placed, loaded with chains, among the other captives. After passing through many hands, he was finally purchased by Osmá, the captain of a Turkish galley, and carried by him to Constantinople. Before long, however, Angelo so far won the good graces of his master, that he was no longer treated as a slave: he was even suffered to sit at the same table, and permitted to go through the city wherever he desired without restraint, the only condition exacted from him being, that he should not leave the

walls. He had no temptation to do so; for the sole use he made of his liberty was to visit his fellow-captives, to console them in their sufferings, and strengthen them in the faith. There are some men who find their apostolate every where, and such was Calepius. True to the great instinct of his order, he was ready, like his great patriarch, "to save souls any where, and as many as he could." In those days the chains and scourges of the Moslems were a less terrible danger to their captives than the temptations to apostasy, with which they were careful to surround them. Men needed a living and a lively faith to be able constantly to persevere in the most appalling sufferings, when a few words would purchase for them ease, liberty, and often the highest rank in the sultan's service—for many of the most distinguished commanders were Christian renegades; and Calepius, who knew this, felt that no more fitting field of missionary labor could have been granted to him than he now found in the dungeons and bagnios of Constantinople, confirming his weak brethren, and sometimes winning back those who had strayed to the profession of their faith.

Meanwhile his order had not forgotten him; his name had long been known in Rome, and Seraphin Cavalli, the general of the Dominicans, who had his liberation greatly at heart, succeeded at length in dispatching four hundred gold crowns to Constantinople as the price of his ransom. Calepius was therefore free. He might have returned to Cyprus, or made his way to Rome, where he was sure of an honorable reception; but ease and honor were the last things of which he thought. He had chosen the damp vaults of the slave-prisons for the scene of his ministry, and without hesitation he determined on remaining at Constantinople, and sacrificing liberty, advancement, nay, life itself if need were, for the salvation of his brethren. So there he stayed, a beggar at the doors of the ambassadors and Christian merchants, carrying the alms he collected to the miserable objects of his charity, some of whom he was even enabled to set at liberty, rejoicing as he did so rather at the deliverance of their souls than the emancipation of their bodies. Many renegades were by his means recalled to the faith, and a far greater number preserved from falling. At length, however, his unwearied labors drew on him the jealousy of the Turks: he was forbidden to visit the slaves; but continuing to do so by stealth, he was at length formally accused of being a spy and an enemy to the Prophet. The charge was a capital one; and on the 3d of February 1572, he was again seized and thrown into a wretched dungeon. Calepius had never looked for any

other result; and joyfully hailing what he trusted was the approach of martyrdom, he prepared for death with his usual calmness. It was not so ordered, however; he had many friends, both among the ambassadors and even among the infidels themselves, and his release was at length procured, on the condition, not a little flattering to his influence and character, that he would instantly quit the Turkish dominions. It was useless to resist; and since he could no longer assist his captive brethren by his presence, he determined not the less to devote himself to their deliverance in another way. He passed over to Italy, and became there what he had already been in Constantinople—a beggar for the Christian slaves. Naples, Bologna, Florence, Milan, and Venice, and every other city whither the Cyprian refugees had retired, was visited by him in turns. He pleaded the cause of their poor countrymen with all the skill of an advocate and all the tenderness of a father, and represented their sufferings with so touching an eloquence, that he effectually roused every one to give according to his means. Another Dominican, by name Stephen de Lusignan, of the royal house of Cyprus, joined him in his work; and together these two men were enabled to ransom great numbers of the captives, devoting their entire energies to this undertaking for many years.

It is at the end of De Lusignan's *Universal History* that the two narratives of Calepius on the taking of Nicosia and Famagoſta are inserted; and it is said that the publication of these memoirs became the means of exciting many to liberal alms on behalf of the sufferers. Some years afterwards Angelo was nominated by Gregory XIII to the bishopric of Santarini, as a reward for his zeal and perseverance.

LEADING TO BATTLE

So was lost the fair isle of Cyprus to Venice and to Christian Europe: it passed under the dominion of the Mahometan, and to this day it remains subject to the same evil sway⁷; a monument alike of the treacherous cruelty of the Turk and of the disastrous dissensions and faithless jealousies of Christian states and princes.

The horror inspired by this catastrophe determined the Catholic League to prepare for more vigorous measures than had yet been attempted; and it is from this period that we shall endeavor to take up the narrative, and lay before our readers the details of a struggle whose result has been found worthy of commemoration not only in the pages of history, but in the office of the Church.

And first, let us see what was the relative strength of the parties about to enter into the combat. A fleet of about 160 vessels, thinly manned, was furnished by the Venetian states, under the command of Sebastian Veniero, who had as his lieutenant Agostino Barbarigo, a man of distinguished merit and courage. The Pope had no naval force at his disposal, but undertook to furnish and equip twelve of the Venetian galleys; Mark Anthony Colonna, Duke of Paliano, was appointed to the command; and, besides the regular forces in the papal service, a considerable number of the Roman nobility volunteered to join the enterprise. Every thing had been done to give a character of religious solemnity to the enrollment and departure of these troops. The venerable Basilica of the Apostles had witnessed a function of singular character and magnificence in the June of the previous year, when after High Mass, sung by the Cardinal Colonna, the Pope solemnly implored the Divine benediction on the Christian arms, and blessed the crimson standard, emblazoned with the crucifix and with the figures of the two apostles of Rome, which was committed to the Duke of Paliano; whilst the words embroidered as a legend on the damask folds were given to him as his watchword and assurance

⁷Dr. Newman thus describes the effects of Turkish domination: "As to Cyprus, from holding a million of inhabitants, it now has only 30,000. Its climate was that of a perpetual spring, now it is unwholesome and unpleasant; its cities and towns nearly touched each other, now they are simply ruins. Corn, wine, oil, sugar, and the metals are among its productions; the soil is still exceedingly rich; but now, according to Dr. Clarke, 'in that paradise of the Levant, agriculture is neglected, the inhabitants are oppressed, population is destroyed.'" *The Turks*, p. 149.

of success—“*In hoc signo vinces.*” Nor was another kind of assurance wanting to encourage him and his followers. When, attended by all his officers and by the crowd of noble volunteers who had joined his company, he presented himself to receive the parting benediction of his Holiness, it was given to them accompanied by words which from the mouth of such a speaker had something in them of a prophetic character: “Go, my children,” he said, “and fight in God’s name against the Turks; it is in His name and on His part that I promise you the victory.” Similar to this had been the message sent by him to the Spanish leaders by the hands of his nuncio Odescalchi, as well as to the other princes who had joined in the enterprise; and to the Count de Carillo, as he knelt at his feet, the holy Pontiff again repeated, “It is in the name of the Most High that I promise you a certain victory.”

Yet this assurance could scarcely be thought to arise from the extent of the martial preparations. So far as the co-operation of the European governments was concerned, the embassies and negotiations of his ambassadors had almost utterly failed. Nevertheless we must remember that the influence of the Roman Pontiff over the heart of Christendom rests on something deeper and more powerful than the success of a political negotiation. And so, notwithstanding the coldness and backwardness of the Christian princes, the appeal of the Pope had been royally and warmly received by many in every nation whither his nuncios had been dispatched. Besides the regular armaments of Spain and Venice, and the forces contributed by Genoa and the Duke of Savoy, by the Knights of Malta, and several of the lesser Italian states, the volunteers who joined the troops of the allies, to the number of more than two thousand, were of all nations, and included some of the most distinguished soldiers of the day. But, more than this, it cannot be doubted that the confidence which filled the heart of St. Pius had another and a surer foundation. He could not command the arms of Europe, but the prayers of Christendom at least were at his disposal. Up from every church in every country that owned his obedience there had been arising for months a swell of fervent and united supplication. The religious order to which he himself belonged had been foremost in the use of this great weapon of intercession; and every Confraternity of the Rosary throughout Europe attached to the Dominican body had been unwearied in their processions and devotions for the success of the Christian arms. How strong a feeling had been excited by the efforts of the Pope may be judged by one fact: it was the period of so-called reformation, when throughout a vast portion

of Europe the devout practices of former ages were sinking into contempt; and yet we are told Loretto had never seen such a year of pilgrimage. Every road to the Holy House was crowded by devotees of all nations; and all crowded thither with but one object—to place the cause of the Christians under the patronage of Mary.

The Spanish fleet had been hitherto commanded by John Andrew Doria,⁸ and some symptoms of jealousy had arisen in the first movements of the allies between him and the Roman leader, Colonna. These were, however, happily placed at rest by the appointment to the chief command of one whose rank as well as his reputation raised him far above all the subordinate generals of the league. This was Don John of Austria, the natural son of the emperor Charles V, and the captain-general of the navy of Spain. Colonna was, with the consent of all parties, declared his lieutenant; and his arrival was anxiously expected at Messina, where the various squadrons of the allied powers had assembled towards the close of the month of August. It was the 25th of the same month when he arrived at the place of rendezvous; and his entrance into the city seemed rather the triumph given to a conqueror than the reception of one whose victory was yet to be hardly earned. All the showy magnificence of the times was displayed in the preparations made for welcoming him. The city was filled with arches and triumphal columns, and the shores covered with the gaily-emblazoned banners of the various chiefs, whose martial appearance recalled to the eye the costume at least, if it did not represent something also of that chivalrous spirit which was fast expiring before the progress of modern civilisation and the eager pursuit of material interests. And indeed there was much in this, almost the last of the Christian leagues against the infidel, which was worthy of the best days of chivalry. A great principle, even when it has received its death-blow, is long in dying; and the embers of that generous fire blazed up in many a bright and flickering flame before they were wholly quenched in darkness. We can scarcely fail, for instance, to admire the generosity evinced by the Spanish government; for, apart from the religious considerations of the war, its main object was undoubtedly the relief and protection of the Venetian states—those very states which but a short time previously had refused to assist the Spaniards against the Turks, and by their refusal had been in great part the cause of the fall of Rhodes. Yet Philip II,⁹—a monarch whose traditional unpopularity

⁸Nephew of the great admiral of the emperor Charles V.

⁹In 1587, when the armada was in preparation, Queen Elizabeth tried to draw Sultan Amurath

in England, as the husband of Mary the Catholic, has obscured the memory of his many great qualities—never seems to have given a moment's place to the petty yet not unnatural feeling of resentment which might have led him to seize so favorable an opportunity for retaliating on a humbled rival. No sooner did the appeal of the Pope reach him than he gave orders to Doria to render every assistance to the Venetian fleet, without the exaction of an condition, or a symptom of any sentiment but that of hearty and devoted adherence to what he deemed the cause of God. There was, moreover, a deeply religious feeling among those now gathered on the shores of Messina. Many of the most distinguished leaders in their ranks had earned their laurels in the defence of the Catholic faith; not a few of the most renowned of the French volunteers, such as the Count de Ligny, and others, like the two Sforzas, had gained their military reputation in the Huguenot wars; whilst that of Don John himself had been in great part acquired in long and successful struggles with the Moors of Africa. But above all, a distinct religious character was given to the enterprise by the presence of Odescalchi, the papal nuncio, whose mission in the Christian camp was not merely to bestow the apostolic benediction on the soldiers, and to animate them to the combat by the assurance of the favor of Heaven, but, as we are told, to drive away all bandits, assassins, thieves, and other public sinners, who might have enlisted from the hope of booty, and who, unworthy of fighting in a holy cause, might rather draw down the anger of God by new crimes.

III into an alliance with her against Philip and the Pope. Von Hammer gives the letters written on the occasion. With characteristic astuteness she appealed to the religious sympathies of the Turk, making common cause with him as the “destroyer of idolatry,” and declaring that together they could “strike down the proud Spaniard and the lying Pope with all their adherents.” Such were the representations made by the English envoy as to the religious belief of his queen and nation, that one of the Irish ministers remarked to the Austrian ambassador, that “nothing more was wanted to turn the English into good Mussulmans than that they should lift a finger an recite the Eshdad” (or creed of Mahomet).

THE ORDER OF BATTLE

THE chief appointed to lead the Christian forces, whose arrival was being welcomed with such enthusiastic manifestations of joy, was one every way worthy of a great command. His German biographer thus describes him: "He was of sanguine temperament and lordly presence; in stature somewhat above the middle height; of a frank and generous nature, possessing a strong sense of justice, and gifted with a ready wit and a retentive memory. He was remarkably vigorous and strong; so much so, that he could swim in his armor as if he had nothing on him. He was agreeable and courteous in manner, a great respecter of letters and arms, and an excellent horseman. He had a noble, clear, and spacious forehead; his blue eyes were large and bright, with a grave and kindly expression; his countenance was handsome; he had little beard, and was of a light and graceful figure." By the terms of the league the squadron was to consist of 300 vessels and galleys, and 50,000 men. The actual combatants, however, were not more than 29,000, although there were more than 80,000 altogether in the fleet that was now assembled under the eye of its commander. The council of war having determined on seeking battle with the Turks without loss of time, only a few days were given to the marshalling of the armament, which then sailed out of the port of Messina, presenting a spectacle of naval magnificence which in those days had rarely been equalled. One by one each vessel passed in its allotted order out of the harbor, and fell into its appointed place, whilst the nuncio Odescalchi stood on the pier-head, blessing each in turn. The vessel which bore the Spanish prince was conspicuous for its beauty and decorations; it was the royal galley of Spain, ornamented after the fanciful taste of the day with "delicate carving and ingenious allegories." The order of battle, which was to be inviolably preserved during the whole time of the expedition, was as follows: Doria led the right wing, having fifty-four galleys under his command, with orders to keep about six miles in advance of the main body, so as to give the ships plenty of sea-room. The left wing was under Agostino Barbarigo, and consisted of an equal number of galleys. The main body of sixty vessels was under the personal command of Don John himself; whilst the reserve of thirty more was intrusted to Don Alvaro di Bazzano, Marquis of Santa Cruz. Don John of Cardona was dispatched with some Sicilian galleys a few miles in advance, with orders to reconnoitre the enemy, and fall into

his place at the extremity of Doria's wing, so soon as he should have discovered him. The hoisting of the consecrated standard was to be the signal for the whole fleet falling into line and presenting a single front; whilst a number of galleys were selected to form a circle around the leading vessels of the three chief divisions of the armament to act as a support. Besides the advanced galleys of Cardona, Andrada, a Spanish knight, had previously been sent by Don John, in a light and swift vessel, to make secret observations on the position and preparations of the Turks; whilst the Christian squadrons meanwhile proceeded to the harbor of Gomenizza, where the whole fleet was reviewed by the commander in person, not without symptoms of jealousy and opposition on the part of the Venetians.

But there was little time for the settlement of mutual disputes; and the intelligence brought by the Spanish spies soon induced all parties to lay aside their rivalries and prepare for the combat. The tidings of the fall of Famagoſta were now fully confirmed; Cyprus was lost past recall; and the Turkish fleet, under the command of Ali Pasha, was drawn up in the bay of Lepanto, with orders from the sultan to seek and fight the Christians wherever they might be. Some, indeed, were found who, even at this juncture, advised defensive measures; but their votes were overpowered by the ardor of the Colonna and of Don John himself, who, we are assured, had such faith in the sanctity of Pius, and in the assurance of victory which he had received from his mouth, that he relied more on his words than even on the number and valor of his soldiers. But it seemed as though his purpose of giving battle must perforce be deferred. A sudden obstacle presented itself; an adverse wind arose, which rendered the advance of the armada all but impossible. For two days it had kept steadily blowing from the same quarter, and there seemed no indication of a change; nevertheless (to use the words of the Spanish historian, Rosell) "on the morning of the 7th of October, a little before daybreak, Don John, defying the opposition of the elements, and as though impelled by an irresistible power, to the astonishment of all gave the signal to weigh anchor." It was obeyed; and laboring against the contrary wind, the vessels began to make their slow and difficult way, tossed and beaten by the waves, as the morning light was breaking over the horizon. Just as the sun rose over the glorious coast of that island-group, anciently known as the Echinades, the watchman on board the prince's galley made signal of a sail. It was quickly repeated by the lookers-out in Doria's squadron, and many who eagerly ascended the rigging plainly discerned not one sail alone,

but, like so many dark specks on the flashing surface of the western sea, the distant array of the whole Turkish fleet. A battle was therefore felt to be close at hand; and whilst the crimson folds of the consecrated banner, to which a blessed rosary was affixed, were displayed aloft on the royal vessel, and the signal-gun gave notice for all to fall into position, loud acclamations burst from every part of the Christian host in token of their enthusiastic joy. The Turkish fleet consisted of upwards of 400 vessels of all sizes,¹⁰ manned by not fewer than 120,000 men; in strength, therefore, the Moslems far surpassed the Christians, and they had the prestige of their late conquests in their favor. As the fleets were still distant, the interval was spent by the leaders of both parties in encouraging their followers and preparing for hostilities. Some of the Spanish generals, who still doubted the prudence of provoking the contest, appeared on board the royal galley to learn the final decision of the prince. They received it in a few words: "Gentlemen," he replied, "you mistake; this is not the time for council, but for combat"; and turning from them, he continued issuing his orders. Then, taking a small and swift galley, he went the rounds of the fleet, animating their crews with a few of those brief and heroic phrases which fall with such powerful effect from the lips of a great commander. He had an appropriate word for all. The Venetians he reminded of their injuries, and of the slaughter of Famagosta. Sebastian Veniero, whose irritable and stubborn temper had, at the first departure from Messina, betrayed him into excesses which banished him from the prince's council, still bore himself morose and sullen under his disgrace; but the judicious and courteous kindness of Don John so won upon him, that he laid aside his angry feelings and distinguished himself in the subsequent battle among the most valiant and devoted of the combatants. His address to the Spaniards has been preserved: "My children," he said, "we have come here to die—to conquer, if Heaven so disposes. Give not occasion to the enemy to say with impious arrogance, 'Where is now your God?' Fight, then, in His holy name; fallen, a victorious immortality will be yours!" And now might be seen other galleys passing from vessel to vessel on a different mission. These conveyed the religious appointed to attend the armada by the Pope, who

¹⁰Von Hammer makes the Turkish fleet consist of 240 galleys and 60 vessels of smaller size, just 300 in all. His account of the Christian fleet is as follows: 70 Spanish galleys, 6 Maltese, 3 Savoy, 12 Papal, 108 Venetian; in all 199 galleys, to which he adds 6 huge galosses contributed by Venice; making the sum-total 205 vessels.

went through every squadron publishing the indulgence granted by his Holiness, hearing the confessions of the soldiers, and preparing all for death. Their labors were crowned with abundant fruit. So soon as the prince had returned to his vessel the signal throughout the squadrons was given for prayer; all the soldiers, fully armed for the combat, fell upon their knees, the crucifix was upraised on the deck of every vessel, and for some minutes, as the two hosts drew rapidly nearer to each other, every man on board the Christian fleet was engaged in humbly imploring the Divine blessing on its arms.

THE BATTLE

GRADUALLY the whole battle-front of the enemy displayed itself to view; and the sun, now risen high above the horizon, shone over a spectacle as terrible as it was magnificent. Three hundred and thirty large Turkish vessels were to be seen, disposed in the form of a vast crescent, and far outflanking their opponents' line; but the courage of the Christian leaders remained unmoved by the terrific sight. Although it became evident that the reports of the Spanish spies had greatly underrated the numbers and strength of their opponents, yet, as Rosell relates, the heart of Don John was unappalled; and placing his hopes in God, and fixing his eyes upon the crucifix he ever carried with him, he gave thanks aloud for his victory as already won. No sooner were the words uttered than a token seemed to be given him to assure him that his trust was not ill-founded. We have said that hitherto the wind had been all in favor of the Turks, whose enormous crescent was bearing rapidly down on the Christian host, like some fierce bird of prey with outstretched wings, when suddenly the breeze fell, and the sails flapped idly on the masts; there was a dead and profound calm. The sea, but a moment before crested with foam, became motionless and smooth as a sheet of glass: it seemed as though they were going to fight on land rather than on water, so still and quiet lay the ships but just now tossed and beaten by the angry waves. Presently a soft rising breeze was heard sighing among the cordage; by and by it gathered strength; but this time it filled the Christian sails, blowing right against the prows of the Turkish ships, and the whole state of things was changed. The Turkish line, which but a minute previously had seemed to extend its wide arms as if to enfold its helpless foe in a deadly embrace, was thrown into some confusion by this sudden and extraordinary veering of the wind; while the Christian vessels, carried forward by a brisk and favorable breeze, bore down with impetuous gallantry on the foe, and thus gained all the advantage of attack. The Turks, however, fired the first shot, which was quickly answered by the Spaniards; then, placing himself in full armor on the prow of his galley, Don John ordered the trumpets to sound the charge; whilst in every vessel the crews and soldiers knelt to receive the last general absolution, and this being given, every thought was turned to the approaching struggle.

It was noon before the fight began; the brilliant sun rode aloft in the clear

azure of the Grecian sky, and flashed brightly on the casques and armor of the warriors. The Moslems received their assailants with loud and horrible cries, which were met on the part of the Christians by a profound silence. The flag-ship of Ali Pasha commenced the cannonade; but the fire of the Venetians opened on the Turks so suddenly, and with such overwhelming violence, that at the first discharge their advancing vessels recoiled as though from the shock of a tremendous blow, and at the second broadside two of their galleys were sunk. In addition to the discouragement produced by this first incident in the fight, the adverse wind carried all the smoke of the Christian artillery right upon the decks of the Turks, who were thus blinded and embarrassed; whilst their enemies were able to direct every movement with facility, and fought in the clear light of day. After this first encounter the battle became general; Don John eagerly made his way towards the pasha's galley, and Ali, on his part, did not decline the challenge. To form any thing like a correct idea of a sea-fight in those days, we must remember the nature of the vessels then in use, propelled as they were by rowers seated on several tiers of benches, and defended less by artillery than by the armed combatants, who strove to grapple hand to hand with their opponents. The galleys of war were armed with long beaks, or pointed prows, with which they dashed against the enemy's vessels, and often sunk them at the first shock. Terrible was the meeting of the leaders of the two armaments; the long beak of Ali Pasha's galley was forced far among the benches of the Christian rowers: his own rowers, be it said, were Christians also—slaves chained to their posts, and working under the threat of death if they shrank from their task, and the promise of liberty if the Turks should gain the day. Then there rose the clash of arms; the combatants met face to face, and their swords rang on the armor of their opponents, whilst the waters were lashed into fury by the strokes of a thousand oars. Wider and wider the conflict spread: the Bey of Alexandria, at the head of his galleys, made a furious attack on the Venetian squadron; but he was met by Barbarigo and his men with the most eager and determined courage; for the memory of the cruelties practised on their countrymen at Famagosta was fresh in their minds, and animated them to vengeance. A shower of darts rained around them, but they seemed regardless of all danger. One of these deadly weapons struck Barbarigo himself in the eye whilst in the very front of the battle; he was carried to his cabin, where, after lingering three days, he expired of his wound. The slaughter on both sides was terrible,

though the Venetians were finally successful in repulsing their enemies; the galley of Contarini, the nephew of Barbarigo, narrowly escaped being taken, from the fact of almost every man on board of it being slain, Contarini himself among the number.

Whilst matters proceeded thus in the left wing, the right was engaged in an equally desperate struggle. To the Spanish commander, Doria, was opposed, on the side of the Turks, the famous renegade corsair Ouloudj Ali, who, from the rank of a poor Neapolitan fisherman, had risen, through his apostasy from the faith and his extraordinary and ferocious valor, to the sovereignty of Algiers, and had become one of the most distinguished admirals of the day. In the course of the preceding year he had surprised a large squadron of galleys belonging to the Knights of Malta, three of which he succeeded in capturing, whilst others, including the admiral's vessel, were severely injured and run aground off the coast of Sicily. This circumstance had for the time so crippled the squadron of the order, that it was able to contribute no more than three¹¹ galleys to the Christian fleet. They were commanded by Peter Giustiniani, grand prior of Messina, one of that illustrious race which was ever foremost when the cause was that of the Church, and the enemy was the Mussulman, and whose boast it was to reckon the names of fifty saints among its lineage. Giustiniani's own vessel, the *Capitana di Malta*, was posted in the very center of the line of battle, the place of honor being granted without opposition to the banner of St. John; but the other galleys were attached to Doria's division, and received the first attack of Ouloudj Ali. In spite of their heroic defence, they were overpowered by numbers; the *St. Stephen* was assailed by three Turkish vessels at once, and was in the utmost danger of being taken, when Giustiniani, perceiving the danger of his knights, hastened to their assistance, and forced two of the enemy's vessels to strike. The third was on the point of doing the same, when Ouloudj Ali brought up four other galleys, and then ensued one of the most desperate and bloody combats that was witnessed throughout the day. Every man on board the prior's vessel was slain, with the exception of himself and two knights, who were all, however, severely wounded. One of the knights fought till he could no longer stand, and fell, as was supposed, dead; yet he afterwards recovered, and lived for several years, with the loss of an arm, a leg, and an eye, and was looked on in the order as one of their trophies of Lepanto. Giustiniani himself

¹¹Vortot. Von Hammer, as has been said, mentions six.

was wounded in fourteen places; and his galley, now without defenders, fell into the hands of the Turks, who immediately brought up their seven shattered vessels, and towed her off in triumph.

It was with inexpressible grief that the Christian fleet beheld the fall of the Maltese standard and the capture of its chief galley; but the success of the infidel was of short duration. The knights inspired with fresh courage by the spectacle of their admiral's misfortune, attacked the vessel of the corsair-chief with redoubled fury. He defended himself with extraordinary obstinacy; but at length, after the loss of all his bravest men, the banner of the Hospitallers was once more seen to float over the *Capitana di Malta*, and Giustiniani and his two wounded comrades were rescued from the enemy's hands.¹² No less than seventy-three knights fell in this struggle. Among those who most distinguished themselves was the Gascon hero, Maturin de Lescat, better known as "the brave Romegas." In his own day he enjoyed a kind of romantic celebrity; for it was said that in all his combats with the Moslems they had never been known to gain a single advantage over him. In the course of five years he is said to have destroyed more than fifty Turkish vessels, and to have delivered one thousand Christians from slavery. Many of his most daring exploits had been performed on the coasts of Sicily, where he was so great a favorite, that, as Goussancourt informs us, whenever he entered any city of that island, the people would flock out of their houses only to behold him; not knowing which to admire most, so much courage adorned with such rare graces of person, or those graces sustained by so undaunted a valor. Much of the old chivalrous spirit was to be found in his character, defaced, indeed, by an ambition which afterwards obscured his fame; but at Lepanto that fame had as yet lost nothing of its brilliance, and Romegas was never higher in estimation than when he led on the galleys of his order to the rescue of the admiral. Before the battle began he made a solemn vow that the first Turkish captain who might fall into his hands should be offered to God: it chanced that his first prisoner was a most ferocious Turk, who had lost the use of his right arm, as was said, in consequence of the violence he had used in inflicting the torture on his Christian slaves. This man was given by Romegas, in fulfilment of his vow, to the church of St. John at Malta, and had good reason to thank the brave Gascon for his happy fortune: for his heart changed in his

¹²Von Hammer says that Ouloudj Ali struck off Giustiniani's head with his own hand. Contarini, on the contrary, writes that he was "so badly wounded that he was all but killed."

captivity, and he learnt to weep over the actions wherein he had formerly placed his glory; so that, embracing Christianity, he solicited baptism from his masters, and died happily in the true faith. The gallantry displayed by the Hospitallers in the engagement forced the Venetian Contarini to acknowledge that, in spite of their insignificant numbers, their part in the victory almost surpassed that of Venice herself; and in fact, when we remember that Don John of Austria was himself a member of the order,¹³ we are bound to admit that their share in the honor of the day has not been sufficiently acknowledged by historians.

Among the combatants in Doria's division, whose courage equalled any of those engaged in the battle, was one whose celebrity, great as ever in our own day, rests, strange to say, rather on the wit, whose ridicule gave the last blow to the chivalry of the middle ages, than on the valor which made its owner himself worthy of the highest chivalrous renown: it was Miguel Cervantes, "brave as the bravest." He lay sick of fever in the cabin of his ship when the tumult of the battle began; but he could no longer endure to remain inactive. In spite of the entreaties of his friends, he arose, and rushed into the hottest of the fight. Being covered with wounds, his companions again urged him to retire; but he replied, "Better for the soldier to remain dead in battle than to seek safety in flight. Wounds on the face and breast are like stars to guide others to the heaven of honor." Besides other less important wounds, Cervantes lost in this battle his left arm¹⁴; his right hand was destined to gain him another kind of immortality.

The combat soon became too general for the different divisions of the two armaments to preserve their respective positions. Every portion of the hostile fleets was engaged; but the most desperate fight was that between the galleys of the rival generals, Ali Pasha and Don John of Austria. Both commanders fought in the thickest of the fray, regardless of their rank, and with the bold temerity of simple men-at-arms. By the side of the prince's galley were those of Colonna and Sebastian Veniero; and in them, and in the other vessels that surrounded them, were assembled the very flower of the Christian host. Here for the most part were

¹³ All the members of the order did not live in community; some were scattered about, and were liable to be called in, in case of emergencies—*e.g.* we find several Knights of St. John among the early governors and settlers of Canada.

¹⁴⁴ A trifling price to pay (he says in the Preface to the second part of *Don Quixote*) for the honor of partaking in the first great action in which the naval supremacy of the Ottoman was successfully disputed by Christian arms."

the noble French and Roman volunteers; hardly a great house of Italy but had its representative among the combatants: two of the Colonnas; Paul Orsini, the chief of his name, with his brothers, Horace and Virginius; Antonio Carrafa, Michel Bonelli, and Paul Ghislieri, nephews of the Pope; and Farnese, prince of Parma, who played a very hero's part in the flag-ship of the Genoese republic. The battle in the center, led on by such men, and met with equal valor and determination on the part of their adversaries, lasted more than two hours. Already had the Christians made two gallant attempts to board the vessel of the pasha, and each time they were driven back with loss so soon as they reached his decks. The burning midday-sun added to the heat of the engagement, and the thirst of the soldiers was almost intolerable. The decks were heaped with dead, and those still living were covered with wounds, and well-nigh exhausted from loss of blood, and still they maintained the conflict with unabated courage. At length the signal was given for a third charge. It was obeyed with an impetuosity nothing could resist; and whilst Ali Pasha vainly strove, as before, to drive back his desperate assailants, a shot from an arquebus struck him in the forehead. Staggering from his wound, he fell, and his head was instantly cut off by a blow from one of the galley slaves, and thrown into the sea. The event of the battle after this was no longer doubtful; Don John with his own hands pulled down the Turkish flag, and shouted, "Victory!" whilst Santa Cruz, profiting by the confusion, pushed forward with the reserve, and completed the discomfiture of the foe. At this critical moment the corsair Ouloudj Ali, seeing that the whole Turkish center was broken, and the day irretrievably lost, hoisted all sail, and with forty galleys, the only vessels that escaped out of that bloody battle, passed safely through the midst of the Christian fleet.

The Turks struggled long and desperately before they finally gave way. It was four in the afternoon ere the fight was over; and the lowering sky betokened the gathering of a tempest. The remains of the Turkish fleet fled in all directions, pursued, though with difficulty, by the allies, whose wearied rowers could scarcely hold the oars; whilst their numbers were so thinned by the slaughter that it was as much as the commanders could do to find crews for their vessels. Crippled as the Christians were, however, the infidels were seized with panic, and ran their vessels madly against the shore of Lepanto. In their terrified efforts to land, many were drowned; whilst the galleys were broken by the waves, or fell an easy prey to the conquerors. The whole sea for miles presented most terrible tokens of the

battle; those clear waters, on which the morning sun had shone so brightly, were now dark and discolored by human blood. Headless corpses and the fragments of many a wreck floated about in strange confusion; while the storm, which every moment raged in wilder fury, added to the horror of the scene, lit up as the night advanced by the flames from the burning galleys, many of which were found too much disabled to be of any use to their captors. Twelve¹⁵ of those belonging to the allies were destroyed; but the extent of their victory may be estimated by the fact that eighty vessels belonging to the Turks were sunk, whilst 130 remained in the hands of the Christians. The pasha's galley, which was among those taken, was a vessel of surpassing beauty. The deck, says Knolles, was of walnut-wood, dark as ebony, "checkered and wrought marvellously fine with divers lively colors and variety of histories"; and her cabin glittered with ornaments of gold, rich hangings, and precious gems.¹⁶ The enemy's slain amounted to 30,000 men; and 15,000 of the Christian slaves who had been compelled to work the Ottoman galleys were liberated. Yet the victory, complete as it was, was dearly bought; the loss of the allies was reckoned at about 8000 men; and their ships, riddled with balls, and many of them dismasted, presented a striking contrast to the gay and gallant trim in which but a few days previously they had left the harbor of Messina.

¹⁵Von Hammer says fifteen; and that the Turks lost 224 vessels, of which 94 were burnt or shattered on the coast; the rest were divided among the allies. But this calculation leaves 36 vessels unaccounted for after reckoning the 40 which Ouloudj Ali succeeded in saving. The number of prisoners he estimates at 3468.

¹⁶Sutherland, vol. ii. p. 244.

THE AFTERMATH

THE conduct of Don John of Austria after the battle justifies us in ranking him among the true heroes of chivalry. He had been foremost in the day's conflict, where he had been seen, sword in hand, wherever the danger was greatest and the blows hardest. He was now equally conspicuous for his care of the wounded, his generosity towards his prisoners, and his frank and noble recognition of the services of a rival. Sebastian Veniero, the disgraced leader of the Venetian forces, had distinguished himself in the fight by a valor that had made his gray hairs the center round which the most gallant of the young volunteers of France and Italy had rallied during that eventful day. The prince sent for him as soon as the confusion of the victory had subsided, and (adds Rosell in his history of the battle), "to show him that he harbored no resentment for past offences, he advanced to meet him as far as the ladder of his galley, embraced him affectionately, and, calling him *his father*, extolled, as was just, his great valor, and could not finish what he would have said for the sobs and tears that choked his utterance. The poor old man, who did not expect such a reception, wept also, and so did all who witnessed the scene." Whilst this interview was taking place, the two sons of Ali Pasha were brought prisoners into the prince's presence. "It was a piteous sight," says the same historian, "to see the tears they shed on finding themselves at once prisoners and orphans." But they met with a friend and comforter in their generous captor; he embraced them, and expressed the tenderest sympathy for their misfortunes. The delicacy of his kindness showed itself in more than words; he treated them rather as his guests than as captives, lodging them in one of his own cabins, and even ordering Turkish clothes to be provided for them at his expense, that they might not be pained by being obliged to adopt the European costume. Neither was he less forward in returning thanks to God for the victory granted to his arms than he had been in commending to Him the event of the day's conflict. Thus the night closed: the vessels cast anchor amid the wreck of battle, and the wearied combatants took a short and necessary repose. So soon as day again broke, the sails were hoisted, and, securing their prizes, they proceeded to the port of Petala, to repair their damages and provide for the necessities of the wounded.

THE EFFECTS OF THE VICTORY

SUCH was the celebrated battle of Lepanto, whose results were in one way insignificant, owing to the losses incurred by the Christian allies, and the limitation put on the power of Don John by the cautious policy of the Spanish king. Yet we should be wrong to estimate the worth of any victory by the amount of its territorial conquests, or its lists of killed and wounded. The moral effects of the day of Lepanto are beyond calculation: it was the turning point in the history of the Ottoman Turks; from it may be dated the decline of their dominion; for though indeed, during the following century, the terror of Europe was still constantly excited by their attacks on the frontier of the empire, yet their naval power was never again formidable, and the long prestige of continual success was broken.¹⁷ Moreover, whilst it is impossible to deny that the advantages of the victory were never followed up, and that, in consequence of the desertion of the Venetians, the league itself was soon dissolved; yet it is also certain that the further progress of the Ottomans westward was checked from the hour of their defeat; whereas every campaign during preceding years had witnessed their gradual advance.

¹⁷Cervantes calls it "that day so fortunate to Christendom, when all nations were undeceived of their error in believing the Turks to be invincible at sea." *Don Quixote*.

NEWS OF THE VICTORY

IT only remains for us to speak of the manner in which the news of the success of the Christian arms was received by those who were so anxiously awaiting the result of the expedition at the courts of Rome and Madrid. Pius V, who may be considered as the originator of the whole enterprise, had, from the first departure of the fleet, ordered continual fasts and prayers for its success. On the memorable 7th of October on which the battle took place, and which fell that year on a Sunday, all the confraternities of the Rosary had assembled in the Dominican church of the Minerva to offer their devotions for victory under the intercession of Mary. All Rome was in prayer that day, and her prayer was the *Ave Maria*. The Pope himself had attended the procession; and on returning to the Vatican after the conclusion of the ceremony, he was walking to and fro through the long suites of rooms in the pontifical palace, in conversation with some of the cardinals and Baffotti, the treasurer, on various matters of business. Suddenly he stopped as if listening to a distant sound, then, leaving his companions, he approached one of the windows, and threw it open; whilst those who watched his movements observed that his eyes were raised to heaven with the expression of one in ecstasy. They themselves also listened, but were unable to catch the faintest sound that could account for his singular behavior; and whilst they gazed at one another in astonishment, unable to comprehend the scene, Pius (says his biographer Maffei), “whose eyes had been fixed upwards for a good space, shutting the window again, and seemingly full of great things, turned graciously to the treasurer, and said, ‘This is no time for business; let us go and give God thanks, for our fleet has fought with the Turks, and in this very hour has conquered.’ He knelt down as he spoke, and gave thanks to God with great fervor; then taking a pen, he wrote down the day and the hour: it was the decisive moment at which the battle had turned in favor of the Christians.”

The actual intelligence of the victory did not reach Rome until the 21st of October, owing to contrary winds which delayed the couriers of Colonna; so that the first news was brought by a messenger from the republic of Venice. It was night when he arrived; but when word was brought to the holy father of the happy realisation of his hopes and of the Divine assurance he had received, he sprang from his bed, and bursting into tears, exclaimed, “There was a man sent from God,

whose name was John"; then, hurrying to his private chapel, he summoned all his attendants and officers to meet him there, to offer their thanksgivings for the great event. A more solemn function was performed on the following morning in the Basilica of the Apostles, and none of those who had joined in the previous and reiterated prayers by which the patronage of Mary had been invoked on the Christian arms failed to ascribe the success which had been granted, to the power of her intercession, especially as invoked in the holy devotion of the Rosary, under whose banner, as it were, the battle had been fought and won. The emotion displayed by St. Pius was in accordance with the simplicity and tenderness of his character. Not less characteristic, nor less religious, though possibly less calculated to engage the sympathy of our readers, was the calmness with which the same intelligence was received by Philip of Spain. He was at Vespers when the news was brought him, and heard it without the smallest manifestation of joy or surprise. When the office was concluded, he desired the *Te Deum* to be sung; and on the following day proceeded to Madrid, to be present at a solemn Mass offered in thanksgiving for the victory. An entire and rigid self-command was at once the virtue and the cause of the unpopularity of this singular man. As a virtue, it was the effect of natural impulse subdued and annihilated; but along with this there doubtless mingled much of constitutional reserve and coldness. As to the Venetian republic, the charge of insensibility could not certainly be brought against either its senate or its people. The religious emotion of St. Pius, and the austere self-restraint of King Philip, were there exchanged for the tumultuous expressions of popular rejoicing. The great Piazza of St. Mark was like a fair, where doge and senator, nobles and citizens, all met to congratulate one another; whilst the shouts and *vivas* of the crowd rang far over the waters of the Adriatic; and by an edict of the senate the prisons were thrown open, and none of those whose relations had fallen in the battle were allowed to wear mourning, or show any outward demonstrations of grief; for their loss was rather counted to them as glory.

We shall not dwell on the tokens of gratitude showered on the victorious chiefs—on those revivals of the classic triumphs which filled the streets of Rome on the entry of Colonna—nor on all the laurel-wreaths and orations, the poems and painted galleries, and other similar memorials of the great event, which the gratitude and the genius of the day presented to the conquerors of Lepanto. There was another kind of gratitude owing, and to a different victor; and the Church

well knew how to pay her debt. The voice of Catholic Christendom agreed in attributing the victory to the intercession of Mary; and the invocation, "Help of Christians," was introduced into the Litany of Loretto in memory of the fact. But St. Pius was scarcely content with so slender an acknowledgment as this. "In the revelation granted to him of the victory," says Maffei, "it had been also made known to him that the prayers of the brethren of the Holy Rosary had greatly contributed to the same. Being therefore desirous of perpetuating the memory of this, he instituted a feast, appointed for the 7th of October, in honor of "Our Lady of Victories." But Gregory XIII, admiring the modesty of his predecessor, who, being a religious of the Order of Friars Preachers, had not chosen to make mention of the Rosary, for fear he should be thought rather to have sought the honor of his order than that of truth, desired that in future the feast of Our Lady of Victories should be kept on the first Sunday in October in all Dominican churches, and wherever the Confraternity of the Rosary existed, under the new title of the "Festival of the Holy Rosary," which was thenceforward no longer to be celebrated on the 25th of March, as in time past it had been. This was finally extended to the whole of the Church by Clement XII, who changed the wording of the Roman Martyrology to its present form: "The Commemoration of our Lady of Victories, which Pope Pius V ordained to be observed every year, in memory of a famous victory gained at sea this day by the Christians over the Turks, through the help of the Mother of God: and Gregory XIII likewise ordained the annual solemnity of the Rosary of the same most Blessed Virgin to be kept on the first Sunday of the month for the same cause."

Baronius, in his notes on the Martyrology, has commented on these words, saying they are but the confirmation from the hand of Clement of that which had been already declared by Gregory XIII, namely, that by the common consent of the Catholic world the victory of Lepanto was due to the intercession of Mary, invoked and obtained by the prayers of the brethren of the Rosary, and of the Dominican Order; not only the prayers offered up before the battle, but those especially which were rising to Heaven at the very moment when the tide of victory turned in favor of the Christian league.

On one of the northern hills of Rome may be seen another monument of the Church's attitude to her mother and protector: it is the Church of our Lady of Victories. There, upon walls dazzling with the rich colors of their jaspers and

marbles, hang the tattered and discolored banners of the infidels. The church was raised to receive them, and to be a witness to all ages of the omnipotence of prayer.

Nor, considering how slight were the immediate and apparent results of the victory of Lepanto—so slight, indeed, that historians have spoken of them as null—will the pious mind fail to note and admire how, with prophetic eye reading futurity, the Church saw in that event the crisis in the fortunes, and the incipient decay, of that monstrous anti-Christian power, whose advances, so far from being arrested, seemed only to be accelerated by any check it might chance to encounter. The commemorations of the Church are not only preludes of victory, but triumphs already accomplish and secured.

NOTES ON THE TEXT

THIS text was taken verbatim from a chapter in *THE KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN: WITH THE BATTLE OF LEPANTO AND SIEGE OF VIENNA 1499–1529* (London: Burns & Oates, Ltd.). The chapter, entitled *The Battle of Lepanto*, is only one part of a much broader history of the Knights of St. John, which is well worth the reading.

Spelling has been Americanized, in accordance with the editor's preference, and punctuation has in general been modernized. The spelling of the sultan's name has been modernized from "Solyman" to "Suleiman," the general current spelling. Also, all the interior headings have been added.

COLOPHON

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