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THE RULERS OF THE SOUTH SICILY-CALABRIA-MALTA



FRANCIS MARION CRAWFORD

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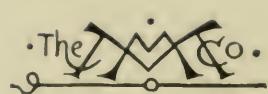


A very faint, blurry watermark-like image of a classical building with four prominent columns is visible in the background.

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THE
RULERS OF THE SOUTH

SICILY, CALABRIA, MALTA

BY

FRANCIS MARION CRAWFORD

AUTHOR OF "IN THE PALACE OF THE KING," "VIA CRUCIS"
"AVE ROMA IMMORTALIS," ETC.

WITH A HUNDRED ORIGINAL DRAWINGS BY
HENRY BROKMAN

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II



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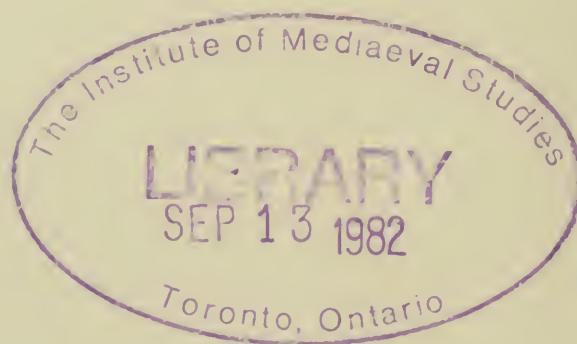
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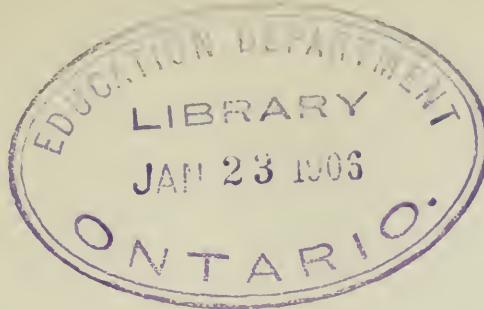
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The Rulers of the South

The Goths and
the Byzantines

THE short domination of the Goths in the south is parenthetic rather than vital, and came to an end as soon as the Eastern Roman Empire, which had created it, stretched out its still powerful hand to undo it. The collapse of the Western Empire had been very sudden. In the chaos produced by the arbitrary acts of Ricimer, the Suevian general of the Roman army, the last rivets were loosened and



A CLIFF AT SORRENTO

the whole construction tottered to its fall. Ricimer being dead, Orestes, who had been secretary to Attila the Hun, seized the power and created his son emperor, being a child of six years old. This was Romulus Augustulus. The mercenary troops, under Odoacer, at once demanded a third of Italy for themselves, and when Orestes attempted to oppose their demands, he was killed in fight and the child emperor was shut up in a villa in the country. Odoacer then sent the imperial insignia to Zeno, Emperor of the East, and asked for the right to administer Italy, with the title of 'patrician.' Half acknowledged, and yet never quite authorized, he governed the country for some time, till in a war with the barbarians he took prisoner one of their princes, who escaped and appealed to Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths. Theodoric invaded Italy and overcame Odoacer in a great battle at Verona in 489. He was supported by the Italian bishops against Odoacer, who was an Arian like Genseric; and before long, in 493, Odoacer made negotiations for peace and a division of the kingdom of Italy. A feast was held to celebrate the conclusion of hostilities, and Theodoric rendered a renewal of them impossible by murdering Odoacer at the table.

In the fewest possible words, this is the history of the transition from the last days of the Western Empire to the Gothic kingdom that followed it, and

which endured for a time in conditions so unfavourable that even its short existence seems almost inexplicable. The only explanation that presents itself lies in the fact that the Goths were physically stronger than the Italians. They were supposed to own but one-third of the soil of Italy, but on the other hand they were the only soldiers in the country, and they were commanded by a man of high military talent who was not at all inclined to enter into small quarrels. Both Odoacer and Theodoric had understood, in fact, from the first, that their best policy would be to maintain the Roman administration, to which the people submitted by force of habit; but to control it themselves and to except all their Goths and other mercenaries from its jurisdiction. There was, therefore, a Gothic law for the conquerors and a Roman law for the conquered, and the iron hand of Theodoric was able to enforce both.

The consequence of this state of things was that the administration of the south scarcely changed at all, and that it peaceably submitted to the government to which it was accustomed, indifferent to the fact that the sovereign was a Gothic king instead of a Roman emperor. There are few records of Gothic actions in Sicily. When Theodoric married his sister Amalafrida to the king of the Vandals, he presented her with the district of Lilybæum, which became Marsala, ‘the harbour of God,’ under the Saracens. It

appears that there was a Gothic garrison there, as well as in Syracuse, Palermo, and Messina; and it is certain that in the division of lands some estates in Sicily and on the southern mainland fell to the lot of the Gothic captives; but there is excellent historical evidence to show that there were practically no Goths at all in the south when Belisarius landed, in 535. The fact that there were none is adduced to explain why the south surrendered to the imperial general without a struggle.

The Gothic law, for Goths, was administered by counts created by the king for the purpose; in differences between Goths and Romans, that is to say, free Italians, the Gothic count was associated with a Roman judge well acquainted with Roman law. This fact implies that there were counts in Sicily, at least where there were Gothic garrisons, and a few letters are extant in which some of them are mentioned by name, and which deal with matters of administration. They are largely of the time of Athalaric, and it is remarkable that a number of them were written to censure the Gothic officials for having collected taxes beyond the amounts due. There is ample evidence that it was the intention of the kings to treat the south well, and that they did so; and the vast amount of corn which Sicily was able to send to Rome in the final struggle that resulted in the victory of the Byzantines, shows clearly enough that under Gothic domi-

nation the island recovered from the ravages of Genseric with its usual vitality and became extremely prosperous. The instructions given to the Count of Syracuse with regard to his journeys when 'on circuit,' as we should say, exhibit a care for the people's interests which contrasts strongly with the rapacious methods tolerated in the days of Verres. His functions are to be exercised for one year, during which he is to be escorted by a detachment of Gothic soldiers; the latter are to be quartered on the citizens, but the count is warned that he is not to allow any rudeness or rough treatment on the part of his men, who are everywhere to take what is given them without complaint and with a modest behaviour.

Nevertheless this Gildilas, Gothic Count of Syracuse under Athalaric, seems to have had an eye to his own advantage, for we find him severely taken to task for oppressing the provincials. He is told that he has received money for repairing the walls of the city, but has used it for other purposes, and must now either refund it or execute the work; that he has appropriated to the treasury the property of natives who have died without heirs, a proceeding only authorized in the case of foreigners; that he has made the costs of judicial proceedings excessive; that he has presumed to judge cases of difference arising between Roman parties, whereas his jurisdiction only extends over Goths; that he has forced merchants to sell him

the cargoes of incoming vessels at a derisory price; and on the whole that he has behaved very badly, in a manner unbecoming to a Gothic count, that he is to remember that it is the glory of the Goths to protect all citizens, and that he must immediately mend his ways.

In order to understand what there is to tell about the situation in Sicily at the end of the Gothic domination, during the wars in which Belisarius, and Narses after him, commanded the Byzantine armies, we must glance at the causes of those wars, which were fought by the Emperor Justinian, against the successors of Theodoric, for the possession of Rome. Their result may be described as a preservation of Rome's identity as a Latin capital; for if the Goths had beaten Justinian, as it at one time seemed probable that they might, Rome would soon have ceased to be a true Latin centre, though it might not have become more really Gothic than Vienna is German in our own times.

We have seen that the powers delegated by the Emperor of the East to Odoacer and Theodoric were undefined, if they were unlimited. They had in fact been granted purposely in such a manner as to make them revocable at the emperor's pleasure, and in this respect the kingdom of Italy resembled a feudal holding of the Middle Ages. Odoacer was a mere adventurer and a general of mercenary troops; Theodoric

was indeed by right a king, but was not King of Italy in any correct acceptation of the title. He was, in the imperial theory, the governor of the country as long as the emperor chose that he should remain in office. In real fact, he was the chieftain of an army of giants who, to use an expression proverbial among seamen, would rather drink than eat, and would rather fight than drink ; huge men, of huge appetites, gifted with a sort of honourable judgment which would have been common sense if it had not been strongly imbued with a spirit half poetic, half theatrical, and altogether barbaric ; guileless as children, and yet dangerous as madmen when thwarted in their immediate desires or when roused to anger, especially by any piece of deception or treachery ; spendthrifts who squandered their possessions, their strength, and themselves, and who, speaking figuratively, would swing a sledge-hammer to crush a fly ; they were, in a word, a tribe of big, handsome, headstrong, quick-tempered boys, among whom a man like Theodoric appeared now and then, who knew how to manage them, and had something of that cool and unerring spirit which, at a later period, distinguished the Normans from other northern people.

It is doubtful whether the struggle for the possession of Rome was brought on by circumstances into which questions of religion entered, but it is certain that the Catholic Church in Italy stirred up the people

against Theodoric in his old age. He was an Arian, but he did not behave like one; on the contrary, he favoured the attack made by the emperor on the Arian Genseric, and had himself assumed the government with the approval and support of the bishops, who already played so important a part in the state. But towards the end of his reign there was something like a religious revival throughout Italy; there was at all events a sudden and great increase of religious fervour all over the country, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that such a movement, proceeding as it did from a Latin and Catholic source, should have produced some manifestation of Latin patriotism as opposed to foreign and Arian domination, by drawing the Latin people more closely together.

Now Latin patriotism had come to mean adherence to the Eastern Empire. The patriotic sentiment of Italians was not for Italy, but for the Empire under which they had lived five hundred years, and the fact that its seat had long been transferred to Constantinople did not affect that sentiment in any great degree. The Emperor Justin was as wise as he was enterprising, and he was quick to take advantage of a change of feeling in Italy at a time when that country had practically been long separated from his dominion and seemed forever lost to the Empire. He was assured that to reconquer it he had only to drive out the Goths, who, though very warlike, were by no means

a military nation, who could therefore be beaten by a scientific general commanding trained troops, and who, moreover, would have to fight in the enemy's country, since the whole south and a great part of central Italy were decidedly in favour of what may well be called a restoration, and of what was certainly a reoccupation. Justin began to seek occasion against Theodoric, and maintained continued relations with the Catholic party in Italy.

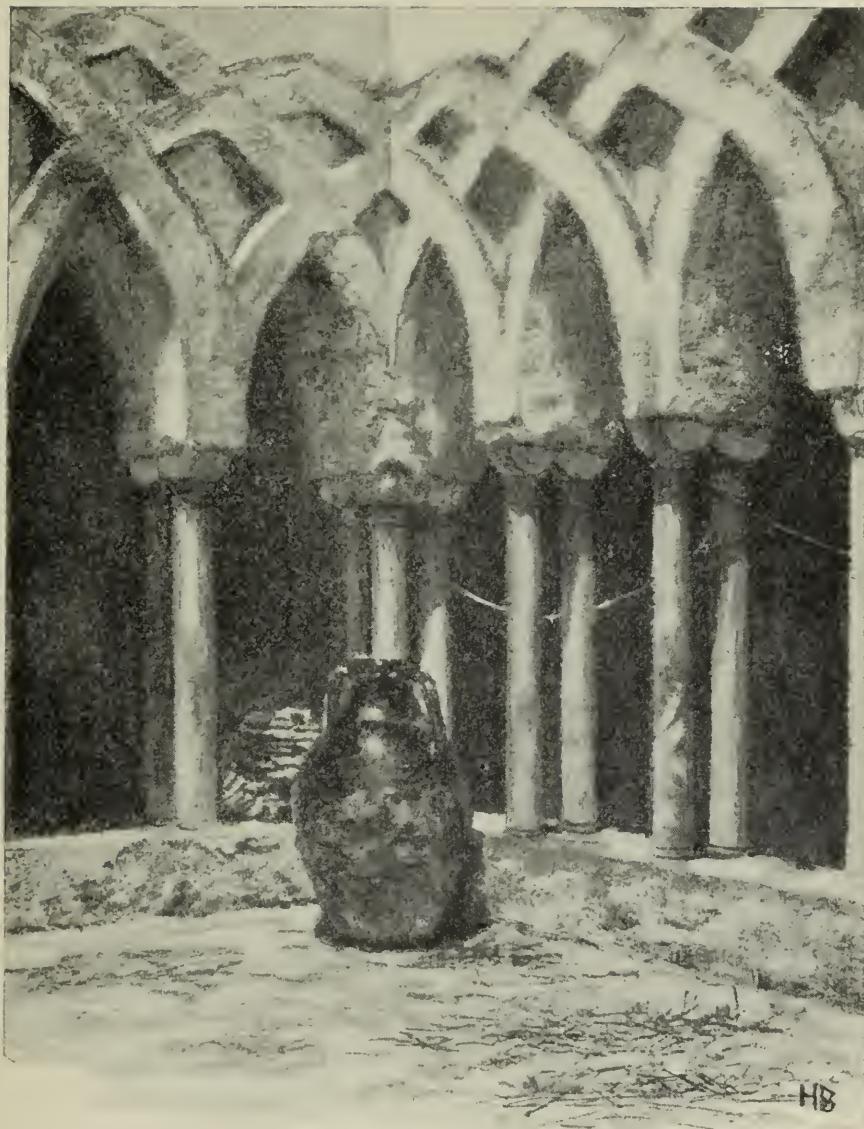
It has been said that Theodoric was at no time an independent sovereign, that he understood what he was made to do by his great prime minister, and approved, so to say, of his own actions, but that he was nothing more than a lay figure of royalty, wholly directed by Cassiodorus. There is much evidence in favour of this theory. The only objection to it which suggests itself to me is that Cassiodorus was a Roman by birth, by character, and by education, and one would therefore suppose that if he had possessed the directing power attributed to him by some historians he would not have used it to widen the breach between himself and all that distinctively belonged to Rome. Yet he had served Odoacer before serving Theodoric, and it was undoubtedly owing to his efforts that the south submitted peaceably to the Gothic rule. He retired from political life in the last years of Theodoric's reign, but he returned to serve the latter's daughter and grandson in his former capacity; he outlived the fall of the Gothic kingdom

and still had nearly thirty years of life to spend in the retirement of the cloister he had founded in his native place, Squillace, not far from Catanzaro, in southern Calabria, near the sea. There he composed a great part of his many books, most of which have been preserved.

The struggle for the possession of Rome, which Felix Dahn has told in one of the most remarkable historical novels ever composed, did not begin until Theodoric was dead. In his old age the king had done unworthy deeds, yielding to the counsels of courtiers who played upon him at his will; he had caused the great Boethius to be put to death with horrible tortures and had beheaded the equally innocent Symmachus, and it is said that Boethius died because he protected the provincials against the extortions of the public officials, a fact which shows how much Theodoric's government had degenerated in his later days. Before his death Justin had issued an edict requiring that the Arian churches in Constantinople should accept the Catholic rite; Theodoric forced Pope John the First to act as his ambassador to the emperor to request a revocation of the order. Justin received the Pope with every honour, but refused the request, and Theodoric retorted by imprisoning the unfortunate pontiff, who died in prison, if he was not actually murdered. In the same year, 526, and only three months later, Theodoric himself passed away, and while the Gothic nation mourned him and buried him

magnificently in Ravenna, a hermit of the south gravely assured the Catholic world that he had seen the shades of Pope John and of Symmachus casting the soul of the dead king bound into the crater of Volcano, the island that lies close to Lipari, off the Sicilian coast. Theodoric was succeeded by his daughter Amalasuntha, for he left no son, and his grandson Athalaric was but a boy. In 527, the next year, Justin died and was succeeded by the great Justinian, his nephew and adopted son. Amalasuntha, brought up in the Roman civilization and culture, effected a reconciliation with the new emperor, but the Arian Goths hated her, and her own cousin murdered her nine years after her father's death. She had allowed the imperial troops to land and collect provisions in Sicily during the Vandal war, and Justinian found it convenient to avenge so useful an ally, since vengeance was an excuse for seizing Rome. Sardinia and Corsica had already declared their allegiance to the Empire, and Belisarius appeared before Catania with a force of which the cavalry comprised Huns, Moors, and several thousand nondescript allies, while the infantry was composed of a few thousand Isaurians. Palermo alone was defended by its Gothic garrison, but Belisarius sent his ships into the old harbour, which was in the midst of what is now the city, and actually hoisted his archers in boats to the mastheads of the vessels, whence they were enabled to shoot over the low ramparts. Palermo hav-

ing been thus easily reduced, Sicily received Belisarius and the imperial power with open arms, Naples fell into his hands by the discovery of a disused aqueduct that led into the city, and the victorious general advanced upon Rome itself. The unapproachable Gibbon has told the story of what followed, and the genius of Dahn has adorned it; to those who come after such writers nothing remains but to quote or to condense the result of their labours. The Goths chose the brave Vitiges to be their leader, but he was unable to prevent Belisarius from entering Rome. Such armies as the Goths possessed were scattered throughout their dominions, whereas the imperial force was concentrated, well trained, and commanded by a general of genius. During the winter, however, the Gothic warriors assembled at Ravenna to the number of one hundred and fifty thousand men and marched thence through the open country upon Rome. With a thousand cavalry Belisarius rode out to reconnoitre the enemy's position. Almost before he realized his danger, the general was surrounded, and a desperate fight ensued in which the leader's life was only saved by his own extraordinary strength and skill. Instead of retiring at once he pursued the Goths to their camp, and it was not until a thousand of them lay dead upon the field that Belisarius was forced to retreat. The vast army of the Goths immediately besieged the city, but Rome was strong, the walls of Aurelian made an almost impregnable



SARACEN-NORMAN COURT OF THE CAPUCHIN CONVENT AT AMALFI

defence, the mausoleum of Hadrian was for the first time converted into a fortress, chains were thrown across the river, and the engines of war were immedi-

ately got ready and planted in position. Before the arrival of Vitiges and the Goths, the city had received from Sicily such a quantity of grain as enabled it to defy the terrors of famine, and during the fruitless siege, which lasted a whole year, it does not appear that the inhabitants suffered any great hardship. The Goths brought fascines, scaling-ladders, and battering-rams against the walls, and wooden towers on wheels; and the Romans opposed these with all the military devices of antiquity, among which were enormous catapults, to provide missiles for which the priceless statues on Hadrian's tomb were broken into fragments. Belisarius himself fought from the walls with a bow and arrows, and so completely was the first assault repulsed that the Goths determined to blockade the city, though it was now defended by scarcely four thousand men-at-arms. Reinforcements arrived at last, which the Goths believed to be only the vanguard of a great army, and they treated for peace. Their forces were greatly diminished; for a vast number of their soldiers had succumbed to the malarious fever of the Campagna, while it is certain that the besiegers suffered more from lack of provisions than the besieged. The Goths at last gave up the siege in despair, burned their tents, and retired. Within a few months all that remained of the Gothic monarchy in Italy had taken shelter in Ravenna, and it seemed as if the Gothic cause were lost beyond all hope. But the Gothic kingdom in Italy was not the Gothic

nation, and the handful of warlike foreigners who remained in the country had friends beyond the Alps both able and willing to help them. Ten thousand Burgundians took Milan and destroyed it, and the king of the Austrasians descended upon Italy at the head of a hundred thousand men, who, if they did not appear out of disinterested friendship for the Goths, were certainly not inspired by any friendly feeling for the emperor. They retired, however, after committing every species of cruelty, and Belisarius was again left to deal with Italy as he could. He forced or tricked Ravenna to a surrender, and the flower of the Goths took service in the imperial army. Belisarius now departed to Constantinople with a vast amount of spoil, and taking with him as a captive the brave but unfortunate Vitiges.

Nevertheless the end of the Goths had not yet come. Belisarius left behind him, as governors of the reconquered country and as chiefs of the imperial forces, a number of officers to whom he gave equal authority, and most of whom proceeded to abuse it. The mistake, or it would be more just to say the crime, of all governments seated in the East has been, and still is, excessive financial oppression. For Italy, Justinian appointed a number of officers who were called 'logothetes,' who acted as tax-gatherers and some of whom soon accumulated vast fortunes by a regular system of embezzlement. They did not confine their operations to the citizens and provincials, but extended them to thefts

from the pay of the army, for they acted also as controllers. One of their favourite methods for making money in this way was to keep down a great number of veterans, who would be entitled to an increase of pay, by pretending that the deceased soldiers who had held the higher rank were still alive, and keeping their names on the rolls as if this were the case. Moreover, the provincials were called upon to render an account of all money which had passed through their hands under the Gothic administration, and in this way a great number of Italians who had been in sympathy with Belisarius were again turned against the emperor. At the time of Belisarius's departure in 540 only about a thousand Gothic soldiers were left in Italy. Within a year their numbers had so increased that they defeated one of the governors near Venice; and though a quarrel for what was no longer anything more than the chieftainship of the Goths soon led to the murder of the chief himself, and though his immediate successor had no hold upon his people, they continued to regain their strength at such a rate that when they at last chose Totila to be their king, they immediately became once more a match for the imperial oppressor. They seized Verona, and Totila pursued the Roman generals with a force of five thousand men. Before long Totila was able to cross the Apennines, and in a battle which ensued at a place once called Mugello, but of which the site is now forgotten, the Goths completely routed

the Roman troops. Avoiding Rome, Totila crossed the Tiber and marched southwards upon Beneventum, which



GARDEN OF THE CAPUCHIN CONVENT AT AMALFI

he destroyed lest it should harbour an imperial force; a little later he besieged Naples, which was defended

only by a thousand men. Justinian now appointed a praetorian prefect of Italy, to whom he intrusted the supreme power over all his forces; but this officer lingered in Syracuse while another general failed to relieve Naples, and the squadron with which he arrived there was seized by the Goths. It was winter when the prefect sailed from Syracuse, and his fleet perished in a storm within sight of Naples, amid the cries and lamentations of the people who were assembled on the walls. The city now surrendered, and Totila dismantled the fortifications, though he treated the inhabitants with great kindness. All sense of discipline was lost in the imperial armies; the generals gave themselves up to a licentious existence in the cities which they still held, the soldiers of Justinian plundered the country, and the emperor was soon informed that it was no longer possible to hold Italy. Totila wrote a sort of open letter to the Roman Senate, boldly stating that it was his purpose to rescue Italy from her tyrants, and copies of the writing were posted in the Forum and in the chief streets of Rome for the people to read. Yet the Romans did not see fit to open their gates to him, and he therefore advanced with the greater part of his army to take it by siege. This happened in the year 544.

Meanwhile, by an extraordinary concatenation of intrigue and misfortune, Belisarius had been utterly disgraced and the command of the Eastern armies had been taken from him. But in the moment of danger

it suited the ends of the Empress Theodora to restore him to favour; he was created Count of the Sacred Stable and was informed that he would be permitted to fight Totila and the Goths in Italy on condition that he would ask for no funds from the imperial treasury. It was with the greatest difficulty that he succeeded in raising a force of volunteers in Thrace, with whom he crossed over to Ravenna, intending to march at once towards Rome. But everywhere he found the Goths opposed to him, the imperial troops were defeated on the shores of the Adriatic, and after fortifying the little city of Pesaro, Belisarius took refuge in Ravenna, whence he sent a desperate appeal to Justinian. After a long time help came, indeed, but the relieving armies were commanded by generals who secretly hated Belisarius. Meanwhile, in 545, Totila had begun the siege of Rome, which was commanded by Bessas, the most corrupt of the governors under whom Italy had suffered. His defence is a record of inactivity, and Belisarius, checked at every turn, was unable to relieve him. The city had not been previously provisioned, as it had been for the former siege, and was driven to the last extremity of famine. Dogs and mice were eaten and were regarded as luxuries, and the dead bodies of horses and mules were sought for with avidity. The people plucked the nettles which grew about the walls, as they still do, and boiled them for food, and when all else failed they began to devour each other.

The citizens sent an embassy to the Gothic king and chose as their representative the deacon, Pelagius, who was made Pope nine years later. Totila treated him with profound respect, but before he had spoken refused to grant three requests which he expected the churchman to make. He declined beforehand to pardon Sicily for having gone over to the emperor and having supplied Rome with corn, to leave the walls of Rome standing, and lastly, to surrender the slaves who had fled to him from their Roman owners. Pelagius, disappointed by Totila's tone, refused to ask anything else; he returned into the city and the frightful state of siege continued. The inhuman Bessas at last sold to the non-combatants a permission to escape if they could, and most of those who attempted it perished by famine or the sword.

Meanwhile, after much hesitation, Belisarius and the Byzantine leaders sailed from Durazzo, and Belisarius reached the mouth of the Tiber, while one of the leaders inflicted a defeat upon the Goths near Reggio. With consummate skill Belisarius made his preparations, seized Portus, and would perhaps have relieved Rome but for the foolish blunder of a colleague, who attacked Ostia at the wrong moment, failed, and was taken prisoner. Belisarius lost his presence of mind, retreated immediately, and soon fell ill of a fever. Thereupon certain Isaurian soldiers in Rome betrayed the Asinarian Gate to the Goths, and

the whole Gothic army marched in without striking a blow, while the evil Bessas fled with his army, and in such haste that he left his ill-gotten treasure behind him. The Goths were again masters, but in spite of his previous threat Totila did not destroy Rome, being moved to moderation by a letter from Belisarius, who asked the barbarian king whether he would not rather be remembered in future ages as the preserver of the greatest city in the world, than as its destroyer. He had already torn down one-third of the walls, but he now desisted from further destruction, evacuated the defenceless city, and withdrew his army to the Alban hills. These things happened at the end of the year 546. Six weeks later Belisarius reoccupied Rome, and repaired the walls in a fortnight with such materials as he could collect from the ruins. Totila, enraged at learning that the city was again a stronghold, returned to attack it and was thrice repulsed. He fell back upon Tivoli, with his discontented army, and rebuilt the citadel he had before destroyed.

The stupendous conflict for the possession of Rome was not even now at an end, and though Totila longed to be revenged upon the south for its adherence to the imperial cause, he only succeeded in taking the little fortress of Rossano, near the site of ancient Sybaris, in spite of the efforts made by Belisarius to relieve it. The Byzantine general was rendered almost powerless by Justinian's refusal to supply

him with funds and men, and in the following year, 549, he returned to Constantinople. He had not arrived there before Perugia, which had been besieged for three years by a detachment of Totila's troops, surrendered at last, and the king at once proceeded to besiege Rome again. Garrisoned now by picked troops, it might have resisted long; but the soldiers had already mutinied, in the previous year, because their pay was in arrears, and the promises made to win back their loyalty had probably not been fulfilled: from the walls the men could see the rich dress and accoutrements of those whom Totila had rewarded for betraying the city the first time; they hesitated, discussed among themselves, and decided the fate of Rome to their advantage. The gate of Saint Paul was opened to Totila in the night, and once more he entered without striking a blow. In the short fight that followed most of the loyal garrison were slain, but a few hundreds took refuge in the Mausoleum of Hadrian and were starved at last to an honourable surrender. Instead of destroying the city, Totila now set about rebuilding it, repopulating it, and stocking it with provisions; and he sent an embassy to Justinian to propose a peace. Justinian would not even receive the ambassadors; though the north of Italy was now practically in the hands of the Goths, Rome was theirs, and Totila was able to turn southwards at last, to satisfy his desire for vengeance upon Sicily.

In the beginning of 550 Reggio was forced to surrender. Totila had already crossed the straits, and for nearly two years he ravaged Sicily without mercy, and collected together a vast amount of plunder. Procopius dismisses Totila's deeds during this time with a single short sentence, saying that the Goths then devastated almost all Sicily without opposition; but it is not hard to imagine the horrors that attended his long stay in the country. Dahn, Holm, and Hodgkin have extolled the character of the Gothic king, praising his generosity towards his enemies when he was the victor, his steadfast purpose and courage in adversity, his dignified bearing, his gentleness to the women of the vanquished, and the admirable control which he exercised over his savage soldiers even in moments when they could hardly have been blamed for some excess. But neither these historians nor those from whom they have derived their information have concealed the fact that Totila, like Theodoric, was subject to fits of anger, under the influence of which he sometimes exhibited barbarous cruelty; that he more than once caused a prisoner to be horribly mutilated, cutting off his hands, his nose, his ears, and even tearing out his tongue. It is true that these occasions were rare, and the provocation was often great; but he was a hot-tempered man who felt he had a right to act barbarously when his anger was just, and who remembered injuries long and resentfully. He had

never forgiven Sicily for the help it had rendered Rome against him, he had expressly refused to pardon the Sicilians when Pelagius came to him as ambassador, and, now that Rome was his once more, now that he had regained possession of all Italy, and that Belisarius had been recalled, he gave the rein to his fury and turned his wild soldiers loose upon the peaceable islanders. It is clear that he had no intention of holding Sicily; he understood too well that with the small army at his command it would have been absolutely impossible to extend his power permanently so far. Had he intended to annex the island, he would certainly not have passed by Messina without reducing it to submission. His object was to exact compensation for an injury, and at the same time to make it impossible for the Sicilians to help the emperor as they had helped him before. So far as we are able to judge, he set to work with the deliberate purpose of so crippling the island's resources as to make its recovery within a few years almost an impossibility. We read of no redeeming acts of mercy on his part during this time; we do not hear that he offered the islanders the alternative of serving under his standard; it is not stated, as it is so often in the accounts of his other campaigns, that he spared women and children and abstained from useless bloodshed: Procopius briefly says that Totila laid waste the island, and we know that his raid upon it

lasted nearly two years. He had ships at his command which he must have loaded again and again during that period with the rich spoils of the south, transferring the movable wealth of the island to the strong points he held in Italy; he took not only the corn, the gold, and the silver, but he carried off the herds, the flocks, and the horses in a wholesale spoliation, the like of which Sicily had probably never suffered before. It must have been a reign of terror. He garrisoned the stronger towns, such as Syracuse, Palermo, and Lilybæum. Some of the cities in which there were imperial troops had indeed resisted him, and there can be no doubt that the Sicilians did what they could to defend themselves in the hope of speedy assistance from Constantinople; but all resistance was useless. That he maintained some kind of method in his mode of plundering is evident from the fact that he had created a quæstor or treasurer in the person of Spinus, a Roman, who was destined to liberate the island at last from the presence of the insatiable Goths. It appears that a Roman force was still in the neighbourhood of Catania, of which the walls had been destroyed, and that this Spinus, who chanced to be within the city, fell into the hands of the imperialists. Totila, being most anxious to set him free, offered to give in exchange for him a noble Roman lady whom he held captive, but the Romans objected that a woman was not an equivalent for so distin-

guished a personage as a qua^rtor. In fear of his life Spinus promised the Romans that he would persuade Totila to evacuate Sicily with the whole Gothic army. The Romans required him to bind himself by an oath, and they sent him to the Goths, keeping his wife as a hostage. As soon as he came into Totila's presence, Spinus began to assure him that the Goths were making a great mistake in remaining in the island after having completely plundered it, merely in the hope of taking a few small places that held out against them; and he said that he had just heard that a large imperial force was already in Dalmatia, that it would proceed thence immediately to Liguria, and that it would be an easy matter for the enemy to make a descent upon the Goths there, and to carry off their wives and children and all their possessions. It would be better, he said, to oppose this plan by wintering in that region, and, moreover, if Totila conquered the imperialists there, it would not be hard for him to invade Sicily again.

Whether the Gothic king was only weary of plunder and irregular warfare, or whether, as Procopius says, he was really moved by the argument, which was sound enough, it is hard to determine; he did, however, leave Sicily almost immediately, after placing garrisons in four of the strongest points. Having loaded a number of vessels with booty, he embarked his troops, apparently from Catania, and crossed the

straits again to Italy, leaving destruction and famine behind him. This was in 551.

He never returned. The man who was destined to drive the whole Gothic army to final ruin was already on his way to the Italian shore, well provided with all that he could need, with men and abundant money. He was the old Narses, once the favourite groom of the bedchamber, who had become grand chamberlain, and whose beardless, wrinkled face and sexless looks masked the mind of a great statesman and the heart of a fearless soldier. The young and great-limbed Goth may have smiled at the thought of being opposed to an aged eunuch, a small wizened creature of seventy-five years; but Totila's own days were numbered, and in less than two years the terrible remnant of humanity destroyed him and his successor and all their armies, and drove the handful of survivors out of Italy forever.

The end of the long struggle was short and quick. On hearing that Narses was appointed, Totila pressed the siege of Ancona, which had lasted long, and in Rome he made frantic efforts to increase his popularity by recalling the Roman senators and hastening the rebuilding of the city. At the moment when Ancona was about to fall an imperial fleet appeared a few miles to the northward, engaged the Gothic ships, destroyed most of them, and forced the Goths to burn the rest. Masters of the sea, the imperialists

seized Sicily again under Artabanes the Armenian. In the north the Franks took advantage of Totila's defeat to lay their hands on all they could take, but were as ready as the Goths to oppose the imperial army. Meanwhile the main body of Narses' army arrived, a host made up of all the varied elements controlled by the Eastern Empire, comprising many Lombards and many Huns and thousands of warriors from minor tribes, but all perfectly controlled by the genius of the general, and all thirsting for Gothic blood and Italian spoil. They outflanked and out-fought their opponents, and marched southwards through the Apennines by the Flaminian Way.

There Totila met them and came to his end. Many have described the great battle, telling how the imperial army spread out to the right and left, and caught and crushed the Gothic cavalry when it made its great charge upon the centre. The incidents of that day, the duels of chiefs, the wild advances, the furious fighting round the little hill that was the key of the field, the splendid riding of Totila and his obscure death, all these things are more like the tale of a Homeric battle fought in an earlier world than the romantic encounters of chivalry to which some writers have compared them. Indeed, the battle of the Apennines was almost the last of those that belong to ancient days.

One more such contest was to be fought, and was

to be the very end of the Gothic episode; but before it came Narses had accomplished the greater part of his work in Italy. He took Rome with ease, after what could not be called a siege; many of the Gothic fortresses surrendered, and, though the Goths had elected their bravest warrior, Teias, to be king, he soon saw that nothing was left to him but to die for the cause that was already reduced to the last extremity. In the reign of Justinian Rome had been five times taken, and the keys of the city were now sent to him again, while Narses drove the remnant of the Goths steadily southwards.

The hunted army encamped at last by the bay of Naples; at the foot of the volcano and on the side towards Castellamare, south of the little stream of the Sarno, and the remains of their fleet brought them provisions. Narses encamped on the other bank of the river and waited, for the Goths had fortified the bridge and he had no ships. He knew also what despairing men could do, and he would not attack them until he was sure that the struggle would be short and final, or until they attacked him; and meanwhile he corrupted the commander of their ships. When these had been betrayed into his hands, the Goths retired a little way further inland, to an eminence now called Monte Lettere.

All authors who have described this final battle have, as is usual in accounts of the Gothic war, taken their

material from Procopius. It may interest the reader, therefore, to read a literal translation of his own



ENTRANCE TO GROTTO CHURCH AT PRAIA D'AIETA, CALABRIA

account, remembering that he was a contemporary and a soldier, as well as an historian, and that although

he was not present at this fight, he knew the ground well, and received his information from an eye-witness, probably from Narses himself.

"At last," he says, "a Goth betrayed to the Romans all the enemy's fleet, and innumerable ships arrived from Sicily and from other parts of the Empire. At the same time Narses disheartened the barbarians by placing wooden towers on the river bank. Fearing these engines, and suffering from lack of provisions, they took refuge on a hill near by, which the Romans call, in Latin, 'Milk Hill.' The Roman army could not follow them to that point, as the inequality of the ground was against them. But the barbarians did not cease to regret that they had ascended thither, when their want had so greatly increased that they no longer had food for themselves or their horses. Thinking, therefore, that it was better to die in battle than to perish by hunger, they attacked the Romans, when the latter anticipated nothing of the sort, and suddenly made an unexpected charge. The Romans repelled the assault as well as they could, considering the time and circumstances, their line not being marshalled according to their generals, nor in classes, nor by numbers, and they being neither separated from each other in ordered ranks, nor able to hear the commands given in the battle; but as chance decided, so they opposed the enemy with all their might. And first the Goths dismounted, left their horses, and stood on foot, turning

their faces to the enemy, so that their line was in a high position. Then, when the Romans saw this, they also sent away their horses, and ranged themselves in a similar order of battle.

"I shall here," continues Procopius, "describe this memorable battle, in which Teias, by his splendid behaviour, proved himself equal, in warlike bravery, to any of the heroes, while the despair of their present situation imparted courage to the Goths; and the Romans, seeing them to be desperate, fought with all their strength, ashamed to yield to inferior numbers; and each fell upon those nearest, most furiously, while those on the one side sought death, and those on the other desired praise for their constancy. The fight began in the morning; Teias, protected by a shield, and brandishing his spear, stood out with a few others before the line. When the Romans recognized him, they thought that if he fell the combat would thereupon be broken off, and all who dared united against him, of whom there was a great number. All thrust at him with their spears, and some hurled them, while he, receiving their darts upon the shield with which he covered himself, in a sudden rush slew many in their midst. Seeing his shield full of the shafts that stuck in it, he passed it to one of the men armed with shields, and seized another. When he had spent a third part of the day thus fighting, it happened that he was hardly able to move the shield, in which twelve darts were planted,

nor to repel the assailants with it. Then he earnestly called to one of the shield-armed men, not moving even one finger's breadth from the spot, not drawing back his foot, nor suffering the enemy to advance. On the contrary, he neither turned round, nor set his back against his shield, nor bent to one side, but as if he were cleaving to the soil, he stood fast in his tracks, dealing death to the enemy with his right hand, parrying the attack with his left, and loudly asking for the armour-bearer by name. The latter, having brought a fresh shield, quickly exchanged it for the other, that was heavy with darts. In that instant of time the king's breast was exposed; as fortune would have it, he was pierced through by a javelin, and immediately breathed his last. The Romans set his head upon a spear, and raising it on high, carried it about, exhibiting it to both armies, that the Romans might go forward more boldly, but that the Goths should give up all hope and lay down their arms. Yet even then the Goths would not give over fighting, but persisted until night, though they knew that their king was already dead. When darkness separated the combatants, both armies spent the night in arms, where they were. On the morrow they rose together at dawn, and having drawn up their ranks in the same way, fought on until night, each determined not to yield to the other, nor to turn their backs, nor to break ground, though many had been slain on both sides; and they persisted in action, wild

with bitter hatred for each other. The Goths saw that they must unite for the end; the Romans would not give way to them. At last, the barbarians, sending some of their nobles, made it known to Narses that they understood that they were fighting against God; that they felt His adverse power, and perceived the real nature of the matter, deducing their conjectures from the things which had happened; that they were willing to desist from fighting, not, however, on condition of serving the emperor, but that they might go and live according to their own laws, with other barbarians. They asked that the Romans should neither molest their departure, nor trouble themselves to show kindness, but that each should receive, by way of provision for the journey, the money which he had previously deposited in the Italian military stations. As Narses was deliberating about the matter, John, the grandson of Vitalian, induced him to accede to the request, and to desist from fighting with men who wished to die, and not to make trial of a daring born of the despair of life, fatal alike to those whom it animated and to their opposers. 'For,' said he, 'men possessed of prudence and moderation think that victory is enough; but a vain-glorious eagerness leads surely to ruin.' Embracing this opinion, Narses consented to an agreement by which the surviving barbarians were immediately to evacuate all Italy, taking their possessions with them, and were on no account to wage war further against

the Romans. Meanwhile, a thousand Goths had left their camp, and they reached the city of Ticinum and the region beyond the Po, some following Indulph, who has been mentioned already, and some under other leaders; the rest ratified the compact by taking oath. And so the Romans took Cumæ and all the other strong places, and this was the end of the eighteenth year of this Gothic war, of which Procopius wrote the history."

And here ends the invaluable chronicle of the soldier historian, without whose book it would have been quite impossible to understand the nature of the struggle for Rome, and the transition from the fall of the Western Empire to the temporary supremacy of Pope Gregory the Great, and thence to the story of the Saracen domination. There can be no doubt but that Narses stemmed the stream of history in the battle of the Apennines and turned it at Monte Lettere, and he deserves to be numbered among the world's great generals. The chronicler, Agathias, has given us the best brief description of his character. "He was, above all, a man of sound mind, keen and clever in adapting himself to the times; and though he was not versed in literature nor practised in oratory, he made up for these deficiencies by the fertility of his wit, and did not lack words with which to express his opinions, which was an extraordinary thing for a eunuch brought up among the follies of the royal palace. In stature he was small and of a lean habit,

but stronger and more high-spirited than would have been believed." Such was the general who, in his old age, reduced the story of the Gothic kingdom to the limits of a page in the history of mankind,



GROTTO CHURCH AT PRAIA D' AIETA, CALABRIA

and against whom such heroes of arms as Totila and Teias fought and gave up their lives in vain. Again the difference between warlike spirit and military genius presents itself, and while distinguishing be-

tween the two, and according our admiration to the great general, we need not withhold our sympathy from the fair-haired warriors who fought so bravely and died so manfully under the southern sky.

So far as the south is concerned, the story of the Gothic domination divides itself into two periods, of which the first comprises Theodoric's long reign, a time of peace and plenty and agricultural activity, while the second includes about two years of robbery and violence, that left the land a wilderness and reduced the cities to desolation. The Goths avenged themselves, and Narses took vengeance upon them in turn; but after him, in the changing fortunes of the miserable Empire, there came Franks and Lombards, and all Northern Italy was laid waste with fire and sword. One of their kings, Autharis the Lombard, rode southward far, and reached the straits. For the Deacon Paul says that he went down by Spoleto to Benevento, and took it, and that he went through the country to Reggio, the Italian city nearest to Sicily, and it is said that there a column stood out alone, washed by the waves of the sea. Then Autharis spurred his horse through the salt foam, and he smote the pillar with the point of his spear, saying, 'Here shall be the boundary of the Lombards.' Which column, says the good deacon, is said to be standing to-day, and is called the Pillar of Autharis. But a little further on he tells us that this Autharis died of

poison at Ticinum, which is Pavia, in the north; and he died in 500, in which same year a greater man than he arose, who was Pope Gregory the Great. But by that time the Lombards had taken all that part of Italy from the Empire, and they held it, and made a kingdom.

As for the rest of Italy, the great struggle had meant only that the East was trying to get possession of the heritage of the West, in spite of the barbarians who wanted it for themselves, since it no longer had any emperor. The result of it was that the East got all Italy, then lost a part of it and kept the rest, that is, the centre, the south, and Sicily, governing the provinces by an exarch residing in Ravenna, leaving Rome to a prefect much under the influence of the Pope, when the latter was a strong man, and appointing a *prætor* and a *quaestor*, according to the ancient Roman custom, to govern Sicily, to keep the peace, and levy war taxes, while the regular revenues of the country were under the management of officials controlled by the so-called 'Count of the Patrimony of Italy.'

At this time our notice is first attracted by the existence of vast estates, in Sicily, Italy, Corsica, Africa, and elsewhere, which were the property of the Catholic Church, and constituted what were called the Patrimonies; that is, as we should say, the Patrimony of Saint Peter. It appears that these lands

had been left by will to the Church of Rome, before the final disappearance of the Western Empire, and it was even then customary for individuals to leave property in that way, and also to the churches of other cities. These estates were controlled by the Pope, who appointed a rector to manage them, paid taxes and titles in kind to the imperial government, and enjoyed the income or decided what use should be made of it.

The lands thus held by the Church of Rome in Sicily were so extensive as to enable the popes to supply Rome with Sicilian corn, and it is not surprising to find Sicily again the granary of the Italian capital. It was the possession of these lands that laid a first foundation for the temporal power of the popes, which became a fact when actual possession of a territory on the mainland was necessary, in order to compensate for the financial disaster suffered by the Church through the loss of Sicily to the Empire. Pope Gregory was a man whose intellectual superiority would in any case have led him to distinction, and whose charitable disposition could hardly fail to procure him a well-deserved popularity; but the real power which he wielded with such wholesome energy was based upon the Church's already vast possessions in the south, and was perhaps supplemented by the great private wealth he is generally believed to have inherited from his mother. This fortune

likewise came to him in the shape of Sicilian lands on which he was able to found rich monasteries before he became Pope; and though Gibbon observes with some sarcasm that his devotion pursued the path which would have been chosen by a crafty and



PISITANO, BETWEEN SORRENTO AND AMALFI

ambitious statesman, it is the general opinion of mankind that he deserved the title of Saint and the veneration of Christians, at least as truly as any man since the Apostles and the early martyrs.

The fall of the Gothic kingdom was followed within a few years by the rise of the Papacy. The Eastern Empire was never able to hold and govern Italy

directly, owing, perhaps, to that radical defect in all Eastern governments to which I have already alluded. On the other hand, the emperors could not and would not relinquish such a possession, and where the authority of their exarchs and their *prætors* was insufficient, they supplemented it by increasing that of the popes, which was sure to be exercised in a more or less conservative spirit. A right understanding of these simple facts is all that is necessary in order to trace the evolution of the Papacy, with its organized temporal power, from the chaos that followed the extinction of the Western Empire. In other words, and to recapitulate briefly, chaos was followed by a tremendous effort on the part of the barbarians to get possession of Italy; this having failed, and Justinian having reoccupied the country, he found himself unable to govern it without the support of the popes, who gradually turned their assistance into a domination. The connexion of all this with the story of the south lies in the fact that the popes relied upon their possessions in Sicily for the greater part of their worldly wealth and power, before the union and consolidation of these produced their temporal sovereignty.

The Synod of Constantinople, held in the year 381, had acknowledged the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome by giving him precedence over all others, and this action was confirmed by the Synod of Chalcedon

in 451. Justinian had further acknowledged this precedence of the popes by the manner in which he had received Pope John when the latter came to Constantinople as Theodoric's ambassador, and it was not unnatural, therefore, that the emperor should suffer the popes to exercise such very great influence upon Italian affairs; and since Sicily is spoken of at that time as the 'Asylum and Paradise of the Church,' it is quite certain that the papal influence must have been especially strong in the island, and may have amounted to a positive domination under such a Pope as Gregory the Great.

This extraordinary man was born in Rome about the year 540, and was therefore thirteen years old at the time when the Goths were finally overcome. He was the son of a Roman senator, Gordianus, and of his wife Sylvia, who is believed to have been a Sicilian lady of great wealth. Gordianus himself afterwards entered the Church, and died one of the seven cardinal deacons who administered the seven ecclesiastical districts of Rome. Gregory received an education befitting his birth and fortune, and it is a sign of the decay of Greek influence in Central Italy that he never learned the Greek language. At the age of thirty-four, as most writers think, he was appointed Prefect of Rome by Justin the Second, which means that he presided in the Senate, was the chief magistrate of the city, and was largely responsible for providing

it with food. How long he remained in this high office is not known, but it was probably not more than a year, and on the death of his father he inherited a palace on the Cœlian. His mother, who was still alive, appears to have abandoned to him her Sicilian possessions, for he founded there six monasteries on lands of his own, and he converted the Cœlian palace to monastic uses in 575, and dedicated it to Saint Andrew. It probably occupied the site of the hospital which now stands opposite the Lateran basilica, and within which there is still a church of Saint Andrew. He had always loved the society of monks and ecclesiastics; he now gave himself up entirely to devotion, and injured his health by the severity of his fasting. After this, having seen certain fair Anglian children exposed for sale as slaves, he desired to convert Britain, saying that it was 'a lamentable consideration that the prince of darkness should be master of so much beauty and have such comely persons in his possession; and that so fine an outside should have nothing of God's grace to furnish it within'; and he played also upon the words 'Anglians' and 'Angels,' for playing upon words in this manner was a sort of weakness with him, and many of his jests are recorded. At first the Pope permitted him to undertake the conversion of those heathen; but when he had journeyed three days towards Britain, the Pope sent a messenger after him, because his fame was already so great that

the people murmured and cried out, saying that without Gregory Rome was lost. So he returned, and soon afterwards he was made a cardinal deacon, and was then sent as nuncio, or ambassador, to Constantinople, where the Emperor Tiberius the Second was reigning, to whose grandson Gregory stood god-father; and there he remained long enough to write his work of Morals upon Job, 'in such a manner as to reduce into one body the most excellent principles of morality.' In the year 584 he was recalled, and resumed his tranquil monastic life, of which many anecdotes are told. The Pope died in 590, in the great pestilence, and the clergy, the Senate, and the Roman people chose Gregory to be his successor; but in those days it was the custom to consult the emperor about the election of a Pope, and Gregory wrote many letters to Constantinople, imploring that his own election might not be approved. The prefect of Rome intercepted them all, and wrote very strongly requesting the imperial approval. During the pestilence Gregory publicly prayed with the people, walking in procession and singing a solemn Kyrie, and while he walked through the streets four score of those who went with him fell dead of the plague. When he learned that his letters had not been delivered, he tried to escape from Rome, lest he should be made Pope, and in order to elude the guards at the gates he had himself carried out in a wicker basket, and lay three days

hidden in the woods. But he was found and brought back with great joy and acclamation, and he was consecrated, and made profession of faith at the tomb of Saint Peter, which is called the Confession to this day.

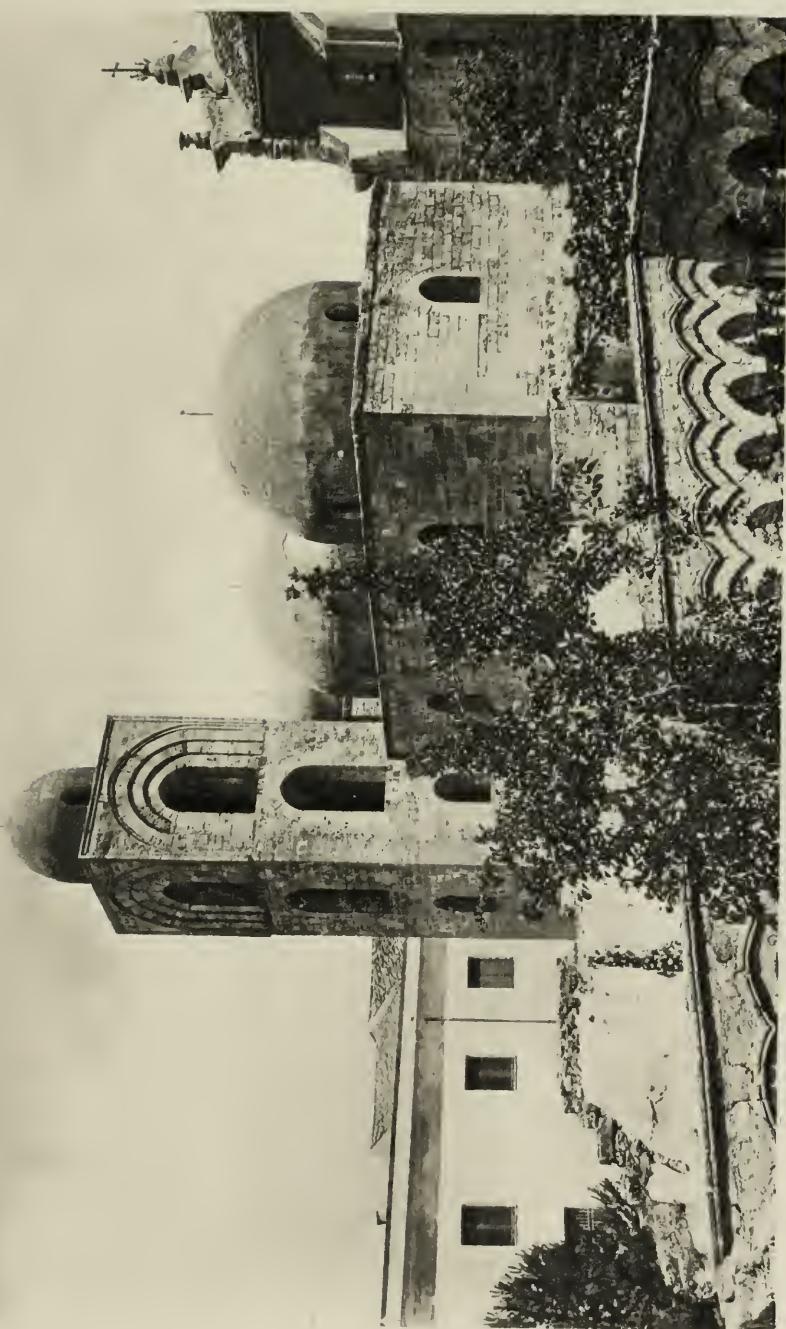
Then, says the best of his biographers, he became the common father of the poor, relieving their necessities with such gentleness as to spare them the shame of receiving alms. He made them sit at his own table, and he made exact lists of them. As each month began he made distribution to all of corn, wine, lentils, cheese, fish, meat, and oil, and he appointed officers over districts and streets, whose duty it was to see that poor sick persons were fed and cared for. He redeemed captives taken by the Lombards, and for this purpose he even ordered the Bishop of Messina to break up and sell certain sacred vessels. He ordered the Bishop of Terracina to restore to the Jews their synagogue, which had been taken from them, saying that if they were to be converted, it should be done by meekness and charity.

He issued the same orders for the Jews of Sicily, as well as of Sardinia, and in his letters to his stewards he constantly inculcates the duty of dealing liberally with the farmers, and even of advancing money to them in bad times, to be repaid in small sums. Yet he was a man of undaunted courage, who could be hot in anger, and he said of himself that he tolerated long, but that

when he had once determined to bear no longer, he would face any danger with delight.

With regard to Sicily and its administration, we find that Syracuse was still regarded as the natural and traditional capital of the island, and Gregory's vicar, the Subdeacon Peter, was established there. The first of the Pope's letters which has been preserved enjoins upon the Sicilian bishops to meet the vicar once a year, either in Syracuse or in Catania, for the discussion of important matters. The monasteries founded by him are believed to have been the following: Saint Herma, now San Giovanni degli Eremiti, in Palermo; San Martino, at the head of a valley not very far from the same city; Saint Maxim and Saint Agatha, called 'Mons Lucusianum'; Saint Theodore; Saint Hadrian; and the Praetorianum or Praecoritanum. With the exception of the first two, their sites are not positively known, and it will probably never be possible to determine them. The influence of these religious institutions, founded as they were by Gregory himself, may have been considerable, and they were most probably not subject to the papal vicar, but were under the control of the superior of the order, who resided in Rome, and occasionally conferred with the Pope himself.

As for the Vicar Peter, he began by being Gregory's most trusted friend and servant in Sicily, but he was guilty of all manner of neglect, he tried his master's patience beyond the limit of endurance, and wasulti-



mately removed from office. As a specimen of the Pope's manner of rebuke, it would be impossible to give anything better than the fragments which Mr. Hodgkin has selected and translated from the vast mass of Saint Gregory's letters; and when we remember that it was this Pope who first signed himself in all his letters, 'Servus servorum Dei,' the Servant of the servants of God, thereby inaugurating a custom which still survives, we cannot but be edified and interested by his manner of admonishing those in service under him, both with sarcasm and with earnest exhortations. He addresses his vicar politely as 'Your Experience,' when Peter had shown his signal lack of that quality, and as 'Your Anxiety,' when the slothful vicar had exhibited the most culpable indifference.

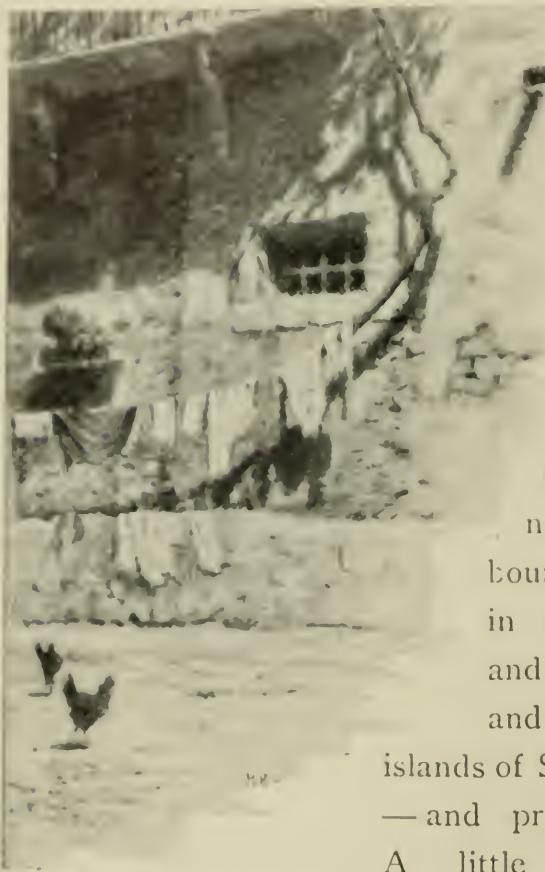
Professor Grisar, cited as a high authority by Mr. Hodgkin, has estimated that the whole Patrimony of the Church in Saint Gregory's time amounted to eighteen hundred square miles of land, and Mr. Hodgkin speaks of these possessions as, 'wide domains,' the revenue of which is calculated by Professor Grisar at three hundred thousand pounds sterling. I do not know how the estimate and the calculation were made, not being able to obtain a copy of the article from which Mr. Hodgkin quotes them; but there is a manifest discrepancy between the extent of the land and the large income supposed to be derived from it. As I have before said, the modern Bronte estate in Sicily is eighty

miles in circumference. If the figure were a square, twenty miles on each side, the area would be four hundred square miles; if a circle, it would be considerably more than five hundred. Four or five such estates

would therefore equal the 'vast domains' that composed the Patrimony of Saint Peter, and which were situated in Rome and its environs, in the country of the Sabines, in Picenum, in the neighbourhood of Ravenna, in Campania, Apulia, and Brutii, in Gaul and Illyricum, in the islands of Sardinia and Corsica — and principally in Sicily.

A little further calculation shows that an even distribution would give only one hundred and fifty square miles to each of the regions named, or an estate in

each equal to about one-third of the Brontë property. Moreover, the revenue calculated would amount to one



A SICILIAN COURTYARD

hundred and sixty-six pounds sterling per average square mile, or five shillings per acre, roughly, which, at three and a half per cent, a very high estimate, would make the land worth over eight pounds an acre in the year 600; which is impossible, especially as much of the property lay in half-civilized regions. If, on the other hand, we suppose that Professor Grisar, cited by Mr. Hodgkin, meant eighteen hundred miles square, instead of eighteen hundred square miles, we should have an area much larger than the whole of Europe. There is, therefore, some radical mistake in the estimate or in the calculation, or in both, which renders them quite useless as a basis of argument. Of the figures given, that of the income actually enjoyed by the Pope is by far the more probable, from whatever sources the revenue may have been derived; and the conclusions drawn by Mr. Hodgkin are just, namely, that the care of such a property must have been a heavy burden on the shoulders of an ascetic Pope, and that the expenditure, as well as the receipt, of the large income derived from the Papal Patrimony imposed severe labour on so conscientious a steward of his wealth as Pope Gregory.

There was less difference between the position of the agricultural classes in Pope Gregory's day and that which they occupied under the Roman Empire, or even under the Republic, than might be supposed, considering the long time that elapsed; but it was during this

first time of papal influence that the population began to be divided into three classes, namely, the clergy, the nobility, and the common people; and the clergy stood between the whole country and the spasmodic government of Constantinople, to protect the one and restrain the other. It was largely because the bishops of that period were truly the shepherds of their flocks, at a time when the officers of the Empire deserved, not unjustly, to be compared to wolves, that the Church acquired that direct influence throughout the country, and won that almost passionate affection of the poor, which she preserved through so many centuries, and has not even yet wholly lost in the south, whatever may be said to the contrary. This position of the bishops is chiefly traceable to the efforts of Pope Gregory, and even Gibbon's sarcasms have not shaken the honourable position he occupies in history. That he succeeded, as he did, in improving the condition of the governed, was in part due to the dominating position he occupied in Rome; but it must not be forgotten that he was supposed to be subject to the emperor, to whom he expressed his wishes in the form of advice in matters of government and of recommendations in affairs that were personal. In a majority of cases the emperor had no choice but to act upon these expressions of the Pope's desires; but a very great amount of arbitrary power was conferred upon the imperial commissioner, who was superior to the governor of Sicily himself, and over

whom the Pope could only exercise a moral influence, not supported by any legal force. At all events, the position was such that the Pope could only restrain him indirectly, through the emperor himself; so that in case a good understanding was not maintained, it was possible for the commissioner to do much harm, before the Pope could hinder him, by the circuitous method which consisted in appealing to Constantinople. Yet such difficulties arose rarely, if at all, during the reign of the wise Gregory, and the rich south put out new blossom and fruit under his careful hand. The clergy, the nobility, and the people lived peacefully under his paternal guidance, if not under his direct and sovereign rule, and the vast wealth began to accumulate which was ere long to fill the treasury of a new conqueror. When



BALCONY AT TAORMINA

the Arabs destroyed Syracuse in 878 they took, with other booty, more than a million pieces of gold, which is said to have been the largest sum of money ever seized by them in any one city throughout all their conquests.

Cultivation had become very extensive in Sicily, and individual estates were of enormous extent. One is mentioned which required no less than four hundred overseers, and with the Empire the custom of letting land to small tenants had arisen, as being more practical in some cases than that of cultivating a great estate for the owner's direct benefit, under the supervision of stewards; these small free tenants were called 'coloni,' and the word is used in its original meaning to the present day in Italy. Of the number and condition of the slaves at the time of Pope Gregory we know little, and are not likely to learn more. The free tenants were evidently a substitute for slaves, as a means of getting the greatest possible income from the land, and this fact alone goes to show that the number of slaves had diminished, and that their value had increased, so that it no longer paid the landholder to employ them. That there were still a number of slaves in Sicily, however, we know. We know also that the introduction of the 'Malvasia' grape took place in this period. Malvasia is a corruption of Monembasia, and has been further corrupted in English to 'Malmsey.' Monembasia is a harbour in the Peloponnesus, called in ancient times

Epidaurus Limera, and a very close trading connexion existed between it and Sicily in the sixth century. Its sweet white grapes were the original stock whence descended those of which the good white wines of Sicily are made in our day, and there is not a farmer in the south who does not pride himself upon having a demijohn or two of the rich Malvasia wine ripening in a corner of his ‘grotta’ for some great occasion. Its flavour is like that of Malaga, and it has as much body, and often as fine a colour; but excepting where it has been made with great skill and patience, it is usually a coarser wine. From the same grapes the Marsala is made, and the principal peculiarity of the Malvasia is that in making it a certain quantity of grapes are used which have been hung in a dry place till they are half dried, and as sweet as sugar.

While Justinian was discriminating between the relative demerits of a dozen heresies, and while his successors were in vain attempting to imitate what they only half understood; and while the wise and saintly Gregory was ruling the Church for the true advancement and benefit of the Empire, as well as of mankind, a man was growing up whose influence was to change the course of history and modify the lives of many millions. When Gregory was elected Pope in 590, Mohammed was twenty years of age. Two hundred years later the Mohammedan Arabs destroyed Syracuse, and made themselves masters of the south.

That period of two centuries, therefore, embraces the first preachings of Mohammed, who began to propagate his doctrines about the year 610, when he gave out that the Archangel Gabriel had appeared to him, declaring those truths which he was to reveal to men. Twelve years later, after converting his family and many other persons to the belief that he was the messenger and prophet of God, he fled before persecution to Yatreb, and thence to Medina, and the date of his escape and flight was the beginning of the Mohammedan era. Seated high upon his swift camel, and wrapped in his Arab blanket, fleeing by night with a few faithful followers, the delicate, red-haired, pale-faced young man was far from dreaming that he too, like his divine predecessor, had brought not peace but a sword into the world; or that the near descendants of those whom his converts were soon to convert should snatch an empire from the midst of a world which, in his own childhood, had been governed by such men as the Emperor Justinian and the Pontiff Gregory. It may be that the amazing progress of the Mohammedan religion was due to the wretched moral state of man in the East, that the natural force it possessed by the simplicity of the appeal it made to human passions was strengthened by the promises of unbounded satisfaction in a future which the Christian shudders to contemplate; it may be also that Christianity had not fulfilled its mission in those

countries where Mohammedanism spread first and most rapidly. Between the death of Saint Gregory and the first descent of the Arabs upon Sicilian shores falls the War of the Images, than which no conflict could give a more precise notion of the condition of Christian worship in the East.

Saint Gregory, who was a practical pastor before he was an enlightened Pope, had declared that the presence in churches of pictures and statues representing not only divine beings, but persons of holy life and death, was conducive to an historical knowledge of Christianity, by affording instruction to the many who could not read. In an age when ignorance of all letters was the rule, and when an overwhelming majority of believers were therefore called upon to accept instruction both in dogma and in history of their faith by word of mouth only, such a point of view as that of the great Pope was not only wise and practical, but seemed to be the only reasonable one. The early Christians had inveighed, with a violence paralleled only by that afterwards displayed by the Arabs, against the heathen idolatry; they had animated the images of Apollo, of Aphrodite, and of Athene with the spirits of devils in order to enjoy, in the destruction of senseless matter, the imaginary delights of vanquishing the Prince of Darkness in his stronghold. The first missionary bishop in Sicily, not yet strong enough to overthrow the oracle in his temple, was

believed to have silenced him by secretly fastening a letter round the neck of his image. The fury of the Christians had never been directed against the images themselves, but always against the demons that were supposed to inhabit them. Never, from the earliest times, had the Christians exhibited that horror of a graven image which was an article of faith with the Jews, and which has remained one among strict Mohammedans. From the beginning the Christian slave was impelled to express upon the stone that covered his loved ones, the thought of that peace which is beyond all understanding; and, unlettered as he mostly was, his expression took the form of a rude image, of a symbol, of a mere sign. The simple faith which at first fulfilled its rites in caves, in subterranean quarries, and in the cellars of deserted palaces, rose to the surface and displayed itself in the upper air with a magnificence which was but the outward sign of mankind's approbation; then the mark grew to an inscription, the symbol to a halo, the rude outline of God's image to an exalted image of God himself. Above the dark catacomb wherein had been laid the torn bodies of martyred saints, and where the poor and the outcast had worshipped in hourly fear of death, but in the perpetual certainty of the life to come,—above those places of refuge and suffering rose the splendid cathedrals of a victorious and universal religion. And that religion, like Agag of old,

lived in the illusion that the bitterness of death was past ; it depicted its past sufferings and present triumphs with all the art which the times could command, it made light of future trials, and it believed that the millennium of the blessed was at hand.

Such was the condition of the Church in Sicily fifty years after Pope Gregory's death ; and it came to pass that Mohammedans sailed up to Sicily out of the south-east, and made a furious raid upon the island, and took much spoil. So strong were the adherents of the new faith become in 652, the thirtieth year of their era. But they were not yet strong enough to conquer the south, in spite of Constantinople, and when they had fought with some imperial troops under the exarch himself, they seem to have yielded to the representations of Pope Martin the First, for they sailed away again to Asia, taking their booty with them, and a number of Sicilian prisoners, who settled in Damascus.

At that time, the emperor was that wretched Constans the Second, who sent the Exarch Olympius to Rome to murder Pope Martin, because the latter refused to accept the imperial opinion as an incontrovertible dogma. But Olympius was converted, and went with the Pope into Sicily against the Mohammedans, and died there of the plague. Then Constans accused the Pope of allying himself with the Arabs, and caused him to be brought from Rome to Messina, and thence to Constantinople, where the venerable pontiff was

condemned to death, and dragged through the streets by the hangman, before he was sent to die in the Crimea.

Then Constans, having satisfied his thirst for vengeance, attempted to chastise the Mohammedans for their attack on Sicily, but was himself ignominiously beaten at sea, and retired to his own capital, which was distracted by schisms and cankered with seditions. At once restless, foolish, and unscrupulous, he conceived the idea of reestablishing the Empire in Rome, since he could not reign peacefully in Constantinople; he would attack Benevento, crush the Lombard power in the south, conciliate the Pope, restore what had been, and make himself a reputation out of the rags of failure. He collected troops in Italy and Sicily. The Lombard Duke of Benevento had seized for himself the Lombard kingdom in the north, and reigned in Pavia, but his son defended the Duchy, some say by the miraculous help of Saint Barbatus, and put the unwarlike emperor to flight. Constans paused for breath in Naples, and then hastened on to Rome. In twelve days he had performed his devotions at the tombs of the saints and had stripped the city of its beautiful bronze statues, and of every bit of bronze and copper on which he could lay hands.

A new scheme had formed itself in his weak brain; he would establish the Empire in Sicily, and make Syracuse his residence. He returned to Naples, and pro-

ceeded thence by land to Reggio. The western side of the south was ruled by Greek dukes, loyal to the Empire, from Gaeta to Naples, Sorrento, and Amalfi, and thence to Taranto; he reached Sicily unmolested by the Lombards, who had no fleet, and he established himself in Syracuse, its last and most despicable tyrant.

Five years he reigned there and ravaged the land that remembered Verres and was soon to be a prey to the Saracens. He seized property by violence, and raised more money by the legal extortion of exorbitant taxes; and when these could not be paid, the miserable debtors were sold into slavery. To fill the measure of his greed, he took the sacred vessels from the churches and convents when there was nothing else left to take.

Then a slave killed him, in the year 668. While he was washing himself in his bath with Gallic soap, the man Andreas—insulted, we know not how, past all bearing—laid hands upon the soap box, which was the only movable thing in the bathroom, and brought it down upon the emperor's head with all his might. Then he fled by an inner way. Either the soap box was very heavy, or the man was very strong, for the work was done, and the last tyrant of Syracuse lay dead on the marble floor. A few courtiers made a puppet-emperor of a certain Armenian, but the soldiers immediately rose and cut off his head, and sent it to Constantinople before the young Constantine the Third reached Sicily with his

fleet. Having restored order he retired, and a Saracen fleet suddenly appeared before Syracuse. The Arabs once more plundered the city, carrying off to Alexandria all the spoils of copper and bronze which Constans had brought from Rome. Then there was peace for a time, while Constantine reigned in his own city, and Sicily once more felt the beneficial effects of papal administration. Several Sicilians were popes within a few years; there was Agatho of Palermo, and Leo the Second, also a Sicilian, and there was the Thracian Conon, who had been brought up in Sicily, and Sergius the First, of Palermo, who refused to sign certain articles approved by a council in Constantinople. The emperor, who was then Justinian the Second, sent an officer to Rome to arrest Sergius; but the militia of Ravenna came to the rescue, and the poor Byzantine officer, in fright for his life, took refuge under the Pope's own bed, and was allowed to escape unhurt. The Church was strong enough to defy the emperor now.

Then came the conflict about the use of images, of which the result was to establish the supremacy of the popes in Rome. I have already said enough to explain the view held regarding images in Italy. In the year 717 the Emperor Leo the Isaurian ascended the throne of Constantinople. Animated by a spirit of reform, but unable to understand that the Church's real danger lay in the theological dissensions which continually distracted Constantinople and the East,

he decreed that all images and pictures should be removed from churches throughout the Empire. A more unwise measure could hardly have been adopted, or one more certain to rouse a storm of opposition in the East and in the West. Had Christianity begun its career, like Mohammedanism, by prohibiting the representation of animate living things, there is no reason to suppose that its followers would ever have fallen into an abuse of symbolism or an excess of images. The Persian Mohammedans have departed from the law of the Prophet in regard to at least two points; they drink wine, and in their arts they depict both human beings and animals; yet they are not a nation of drunkards, and the images they paint and carve have little or no connexion with their faith. With Christians it was otherwise; their history was bound up with countless memories of individuals, and while it cannot rightly be said that the sum of their devotion was divided among many objects, yet, in their worship of those they supremely revered, their doctrine taught them of the constant presence of those who before themselves had died for the faith, of the nameless millions who waited for them on the threshold of heaven, worshipping with them and praying for them in the Communion of Saints, and most of all of those whom they themselves had known on earth and who were gone before to the place of refreshment, light, and

peace. The Latin mind was never imaginative; the Greek intelligence had ceased to be; and to unimaginative minds some representation of the thing believed is all but necessary to belief. Half a lifetime spent among the people of the south has convinced me that, in spite of all that northern writers have said to the contrary, the Italian peasant never really confounds the image with the holy person, divine or human, whom it represents. He may call the image miraculous, and to those who do not understand his mode of expressing himself, it may indeed seem that he is attributing supernatural powers to the wood and stone; but a few questions asked in his own language and in terms comprehensible to him, will suffice to convince any fair inquirer that he looks upon the matter very differently. The souls of the departed blessed, he says, are in paradise; they may be moved by prayer to intercede for man, and, as if retaining some of their earthly attributes, they may prefer that men should address them, when possible, in places which their lives and deaths, or their especial choice, may have more particularly indicated. The peasant who makes a pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady at Pompeii, or of Saint Michael on Monte Gargano, speaks as if he were going to see the Mother of God, or the Archangel, in their bodily reality; but in real truth he goes to places which he believes they have especially chosen, with

the hope of awakening his sluggish imagination by the sight of revered images and objects in the company of many of his fellows. To destroy those images, even when the places wherein they are preserved are not consecrated, would be to attack his right of stimulating his imagination in the manner most natural to him. If such an edict as that issued by Leo the Isaurian were proclaimed in the south to-day, it would produce results that might surprise the world. It is no wonder that in the beginning of the eighth century it should have led to a revolution which established the independence of the temporal power in Rome for many centuries to come. Leo indeed published his edict, but Pope Gregory the Second solemnly declared in a papal bull that the emperor was not concerned in such matters and had no right to decide what belief should be held by the Church; and by way of enforcing theory by practice, he forbade his people in Rome and in Italy to pay taxes to the emperor. The latter retorted boldly by deposing the Pope, so far as a mere written declaration could accomplish such a momentous undertaking. Leo wrote his decree, but the whole militia of Naples and of Venice assembled without delay to protect the Pope. The emperor attempted to enforce his will with a fleet and an army, but the Italians stood by the Pope to a man, and the Lombards of the north took up arms in his defence. The emperor's troops were

everywhere repulsed, and their leaders were put to death: the ancient factions and feuds of the Italian cities were forgotten, and the people united to fight side by side for the holy images. At Ravenna, which was the seat of the imperial exarchate, the fighting was long and fierce; the army of Leo was beaten on land and sought a fancied safety in the ships of the imperial fleet; but the people pursued them in small craft and fishing-boats and skiffs, and in a single day the river Po was dyed so deeply red with Byzantine blood that for six years the people would not taste of its fish. Failing in arms, the emperor made more than one attempt to assassinate his stout opponent; but the Pope was secure in the protection of his fellow-countrymen and thundered a general and major excommunication against his defeated adversaries. Gregory the Second could have assumed the reins of independent government had he chosen to do so; or perhaps Luitprand, the Lombard king, might have taken Rome for himself and re-established an Italian kingdom. But the skilful diplomacy of Gregory the Second turned his strong ally from the path of conquest on the one hand, and on the other, he did not choose to inflict useless humiliation upon his imperial adversary. The emperor's exarch was suffered to live unmolested in Ravenna, and to enjoy some outward semblance of a departed power. Having been beaten by sea and land, driven to an igno-

minious flight, and tacitly included under the ban of excommunication, Leo was nevertheless afterwards designated as Piissimus, the Most Pious, and Rome, liberated from imperial oppression, allowed herself to be ruled in the name of the emperors. And so the administration continued to be exercised until another pope crowned Charles the Great as first emperor of a new Western line.

The result of the War of the Images was the final establishment of the temporal power ; but in the changing chances of the times it came about that the south, or at least that part of it which was not controlled by the Lombard Duchy of Benevento, began to occupy a new position. The emperor had succeeded in confiscating the Patrimony of the Church in Calabria and in Sicily, which practically meant that the Sicilian Church was thenceforth to be controlled by the Patriarch of Constantinople, instead of by the Pope of Rome. In Sicily, and the south, the edict against images was enforced during more than a century, and Sicilian ecclesiastical writers speak with pride of the persecution suffered by their countrymen. Antiochus, governor of Sicily, and others who refused to submit to what they considered an heretical domination, were martyred in the Hippodrome, at Constantinople, in the year 766, with a cruelty that might have satisfied Nero. In 772, Jacob, Bishop of Catania, died a martyr's death ; Methodius, of Syracuse, was scourged, and confined for

seven years in a subterranean prison with two thieves, and when one of the latter died, the jailors refused to remove his body. But this same Methodius was freed at last, attained to great dignities, and ended his life as Patriarch of Constantinople. To punish them for their attachment to Rome, the unfortunate Sicilians were forced to pay taxes one-third higher than those levied upon the other subjects of the Empire. As if such misfortunes were not enough, Sicily was exposed to the raids of the Arabs, who as yet had not the power to conquer and hold the island, but who swarmed about it like wasps about a peach tree laden with sweet fruit, and against whom the Byzantine troops seem to have been well-nigh powerless ; and it was not until the ninth century that the respectable people of Sicily followed the example of the Italians of Venice and Ravenna, and armed themselves, forming a regular militia for the general protection of the country.

The oppression suffered in consequence of the war of the holy images was not without interruptions. From time to time, when it was known that the Mohammedans were so near Constantinople as to paralyze the forces of the Empire at their centre, or when other circumstances produced a similar state of things, the people of Sicily rose, under the leadership of a discontented Byzantine general, or a disaffected governor. It was the last of those insurrections that led directly to the Mohammedan conquest. Before that took place,

however, another event happened which produced results of the greatest importance to history. Gregorius Asbesta, Bishop of Syracuse, quarrelled with Ignatius, Patriarch of Constantinople, and in the course of the conflict won the friendship of the celebrated theologian Photius, who was the emperor's favourite. Ignatius appealed to the Pope, who took his side, and condemned both Photius and Gregorius Asbesta. Thereupon the emperor deposed Ignatius, and made Photius patriarch in spite of the Pope, causing him to be consecrated by Gregorius. The Pope and Photius then disagreed upon the dogmatic point of the Procession of the Holy Ghost, Photius declaring that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father alone, while Pope Nicholas the First maintained the Catholic belief embodied in the words of the Creed, 'proceeding from the Father and the Son.' The result of this disagreement, after a prolonged struggle in which Photius was alternately condemned and rehabilitated, was the great schism of the East and West, that divided the so-called Greek Orthodox Church forever from the Roman Catholic. Few persons remember that a Sicilian bishop was the original cause of difference.

It must not be forgotten that there were now two Empires, and that the vast conquests of Charlemagne, which outdid in extent those of Julius Cæsar, had not included Sicily. The separation of the island from Rome was finally accomplished, and it remained attached

to the tottering Empire of Constantinople, until it pleased the Saracens to take it for themselves. It was included in the same military 'thema,' or circuit, as we may say for lack of a better word, with Calabria and Naples, and the boundary that separated the two Empires was that which for a long time had divided the Duchy of Benevento from the small Greek Duchies that followed the western coast of Italy, from Gaeta to Reggio. The value of this region to Constantinople was twofold; its agricultural wealth made it a most valuable possession, though one not easy to keep, and it served as a basis for attempts at regaining influence in the west. Charlemagne, who never meant to reside in Rome, was not willing to renew his quarrel with the east for the sake of giving back to Rome her ancient granary. Had he chosen to seize Sicily, he could have done so, of course, and if he had taken it, and had unified it with Italy under a good government, the subsequent history of the Holy Roman Empire might have been very different. The popes did not cease to exert their influence to bring about such a result, in the hope of recovering some of their best possessions; but every effort was in vain, and the separation was complete. It was soon to be made still more irrevocable by the Mohammedan conquest of the south. From the very earliest times there seems to have been something fated in the division of Italy into north and south, which more than sufficiently accounts

for the hereditary ill-feeling that still exists between the two.

At the close of this period of southern history in the early part of the ninth century, the Byzantine Empire was in possession of the great island and of the western side of the mainland, a great part of which, however, enjoyed more independence than Sicily itself. The east side, from some point north of Benevento to the Gulf of Taranto, was a single Lombard Duchy, comprising the rich lands and pastures of Apulia and Lucania, and the Lombard Dukes threatened to annex Naples. At this time, about two hundred years after the Hejira, the Mohammedan dominions extended from the borders of India, through Persia, Arabia, Egypt, and Northern Africa, to the straits of Gibel-el-Tarik, or Gibraltar, and Spain. The conquest of those countries had continued without interruption since the days of Mohammed, and though the Mohammedans were supposed to live under one sovereign, the Khalif of Bagdad, they had, in fact, founded a number of perfectly independent kingdoms, united only in their hatred of Christianity, but sometimes at war with each other, especially in Africa. Perhaps no one of them would have been a match for Constantinople in a regular naval war at that time, but as the Mohammedans were practically masters of the sea, and collected their pirate vessels from time to time in small but active fleets, they were able

to concentrate enough ships and men at any point from Gibraltar to the shores of Asia Minor to bid defiance to the scattered navy and unready soldiers of the Empire. Their conquest of Sicily and of the south was not an isolated action, but formed a part of their national career, and it was to be foreseen that they must succeed in the enterprise with no great loss to themselves, as soon as they should choose to attempt it seriously.

The Saracens

THE end of the Byzantine domination in the south was brought about by one of those insurrections against the injustice of the rulers to which reference has already been made. The north of Africa was under the domination of an Arab chief who had succeeded in inducing the Khalif of Bagdad to countenance his independent supremacy. This Ibrahim appears to have had some inkling of civilized government, and in order to promote the commerce of his people with the Sicilians he agreed to a peace which was to last ten years. Unfortunately Ibrahim could not make himself responsible for the peaceful conduct of other Mohammedan princes, who continued their depredations for some time unhindered, and his successor returned to the traditional ways of his race. He prepared an expedition which had no definite

object except to plunder Christian countries. On this occasion the Mohammedans fell upon the islands west of Naples, and took what plunder they could gather from Ponza and Ischia; but some part of the fleet having been lost, a new treaty was ratified. It was not observed with good faith, however, and before the time of its expiration another flying attack was made upon Sicily.

The event which was to have such great and lasting results for the south was finally brought about in the following manner. In the year 826, the Emperor Michael Balbus was obliged to exert every energy to preserve his sovereignty and Constantinople against the attacks of a rival. It being known that he was thus occupied, the troops in Sicily seized the opportunity to rise against the governor. They had momentarily underrated the emperor's strength, however, the insurrection was partially repressed, and a new governor named Photinus was sent to reduce the unruly province to order. Among those suspected of favouring the revolution there was a certain rich landholder named Euphemius, who appears to have had a great following. Unable to find satisfactory proof against him, Photinus trumped up an accusation which, if proved, would have ruined him. Euphemius, it was said, had been guilty of no less a crime than that of carrying off a beautiful nun from a Sicilian convent. The accused man gathered his

followers about him and defied the governor; a pitched battle ensued, in which he was victorious. He took possession of Syracuse, and not content with the result of the contest, actually declared himself emperor. The idea was novel and daring, and presented so many attractions to adventurous minds that a counter-insurrection almost immediately followed; but in the confusion the Byzantine troops, who seem to have acknowledged some sort of authority, got the better, and Euphemius fled from Syracuse to Africa and to the Mohammedans. He proposed that they should help him to conquer Sicily and establish himself as its sovereign, on condition of paying a yearly tribute forever afterwards. In the execution of this scheme, Euphemius came into contact with a force of which he had not expected the existence. Among the chief persons at the Mohammedan court was the Kadi of the capital, the aged Ased, a man who had the reputation of being a profound jurist, and who was certainly a religious fanatic, willing to go to any length for his convictions. In answer to the representations of Euphemius, he replied that if the war were fought at all, it should be fought in order to carry the Mohammedan faith among the Christians of the south, and he let it be understood that it would matter little what became of Euphemius himself, provided that an unbelieving country could be brought under the rule of the faithful. He himself was ap-

pointed the general of the Mohammedan forces, and on the thirteenth of June, 827, he sailed for Sicily with a fleet of a hundred ships, in which he embarked no less than ten thousand foot soldiers, and seven hundred horsemen. According to the Sicilian chronicle, given by Muratori from the Cambridge manuscript, the expedition landed in Sicily in the middle of the month of July, but Amari says that the Mohammedans landed at Mazzara on the sixteenth of June, which allows only three days for the passage. Be that as it may, the Mohammedans overcame the Byzantines in the first engagement, and marched with little hindrance along the south coast in the direction of Syracuse, while the imperial troops took refuge in the stronghold of Henna, now Castrogiovanni. Ased made a bold dash at the capital of the island, but he encountered the same difficulties which, long ago, had wrought the ruin of Athenians and Carthaginians alike. The resources of the immediate neighbourhood were exhausted, and the besiegers suffered severely from lack of provisions; with the first autumn rains the fatal miasma of the Lysimeleian swamp spread a deadly pestilence through the Mohammedan army, and the aged general himself fell a victim to the sickness. The Mohammedans now attempted to leave the harbour with their ships as the Athenians had done, but, like them, were beaten by the Syracusan fleet, and like them, also, were driven by sheer necessity to

attempt a retreat by land. Where the Athenians had been finally destroyed by the superior activity of Gylippus, however, the Mohammedans succeeded in making good their retreat, and though they had failed to take Syracuse, they were never again driven from the shores of Sicily. Taking refuge in the strong retreat afforded by the citadel of Mineo on the northern slope of the Ereian hills, they soon recovered from the effects of starvation and fever, regained their courage and energy, and prepared to carry on the war with unabated vigour. Descending in force, but no longer in the direction of the capital, they seized Girgenti and boldly attacked Henna itself. Of its name they made Kasr Janna, meaning ‘the fortress of John,’ and the city has retained the appellation in modern times. So sure were they of reducing the almost impregnable stronghold, that they even coined money which bore its name. But an attempt made by Euphemius himself to induce the defenders to surrender ended in his death, and shortly afterwards a Byzantine army came to the rescue; the Mohammedans were obliged to abandon the siege and to withdraw to Mineo, while the garrison they had left in Girgenti retreated to the little island stronghold of Mazzara, less than twenty miles from Marsala. These were the only two places held by the Saracens in 829, but they succeeded in keeping possession of them until the following year, when they renewed the

war with large reënforcements, and they took Palermo in 832 after a siege in which more than nine-tenths of the population perished. They now commanded the western portion of the island, while the Byzantines still held Syracuse and the east. The Cambridge ‘*Chronicon Siculum*’ recapitulates the events of the forty-seven years during which the Saracens completed the conquest, beginning with the statement that they came to Sicily in the middle of July, 827. In 831 they took Messina, and the Patrician Theodotus was slain, and in 832 Palermo fell. Ten years later, in 842, Sicily was plagued by locusts. In 845 the Saracens had advanced so far southward as to capture the fortresses of Modica, on the crags above the river Magro, where the wild cactus grows against the ruined castle walls. The next year the Moslems fought the Byzantines before Castrogiovanni, and slew nine thousand of them. In 847 they had moved round Syracuse far enough to take Leontini, and a year later they completed the chain of strong places behind them by seizing Ragusa the first time; and, moreover, there was a great famine. Six years passed after this, during which nothing happened worth recording, and in 854 the Saracens took Butera near the south coast, not far from Licata; but another source informs us that they besieged the strong place five months and departed at last, being bribed to give up the attempt by the surrender of six thousand of

the inhabitants as slaves. Four years after this a number of ships, commanded by a certain Ali, were taken by the Byzantines, but in 859 Castrogiovanni



BELL TOWER AT PAOLA IN CALABRIA, THE BIRTHPLACE OF SAN FRANCESCO DI PAOLA

was at last taken, and from that lofty height the Saracens overlooked and dominated most of the island. The strong place fell by treachery, every man able to bear arms was slain, and the rest of the

people were made slaves. Some of the beautiful women and boys were thought worthy to be sent as a gift to the Khalif of Bagdad.

Ibn Khaldoun says that Aghlab, the governor of Sicily, died in Palermo in the year 858, having governed the country for nineteen years, and that the Mussulmans at his death chose Abas for the emir, and that he was officially invested with the governorship. Until he had received this he had only sent out small expeditions to plunder the country in divers directions, but as soon as he had received full authority he went out in person and overran many parts of Sicily, sacking everything in the direction of Catania, Syracuse, Butera, and Ragusa; and that after several engagements he took possession of Castrogiovanni. The fullest account of the events that preceded the taking of the latter place is that of Ibn-el-Athir. According to him Abas was in hopes that by laying waste the surrounding country he might tempt the Byzantine patrician to come out against him, but that he was disappointed in this; that he attempted again to take the place two years later, and that he besieged the place which the Arab historian calls Thira for the space of five months, took it, and 'pardoned the garrison for the price of five thousand heads.' In 865 Abas repulsed the troops which came out against him from Castrogiovanni and besieged a place called Kasr-el-Hadid, of which the population offered him a large

sum of money, which he refused, and thereupon, as he continued the siege, they surrendered on condition that he would grant liberty to two hundred of their number. He sold the rest as slaves, and razed the walls. With regard to Castrogiovanni Ibn Khaldoun tells us that Abas was about to put to death certain captives, when one of them, who was a man of importance, offered to betray the place in exchange for his life. Abas consented, and the Mussulmans were led by night to a place that was but weakly defended, and the traitor introduced them by a secret entrance. The Arab adds that the fall of the Greek power in Sicily dates from that day, although the emperor made the most tremendous efforts to regain possession of the island. The mortification of the Byzantines at the loss of their great fortress was boundless, and everywhere the people rose against the conquerors. Noto was taken, indeed, but was lost again; the Byzantines seized a number of Saracen vessels; Ragusa had to be recaptured, and as a basis of operations against Syracuse, the Saracens took Malta in 870. In 872 a Mohammedan army had advanced upon the mainland as far as Salerno, and perished there. At last the fate of Syracuse was at hand; the Mohammedans held the main strongholds throughout the island, reaching hands, as it were, from hill to hill, and constantly narrowing the little territory left to the Byzantines.

We possess a full and graphic account of the last

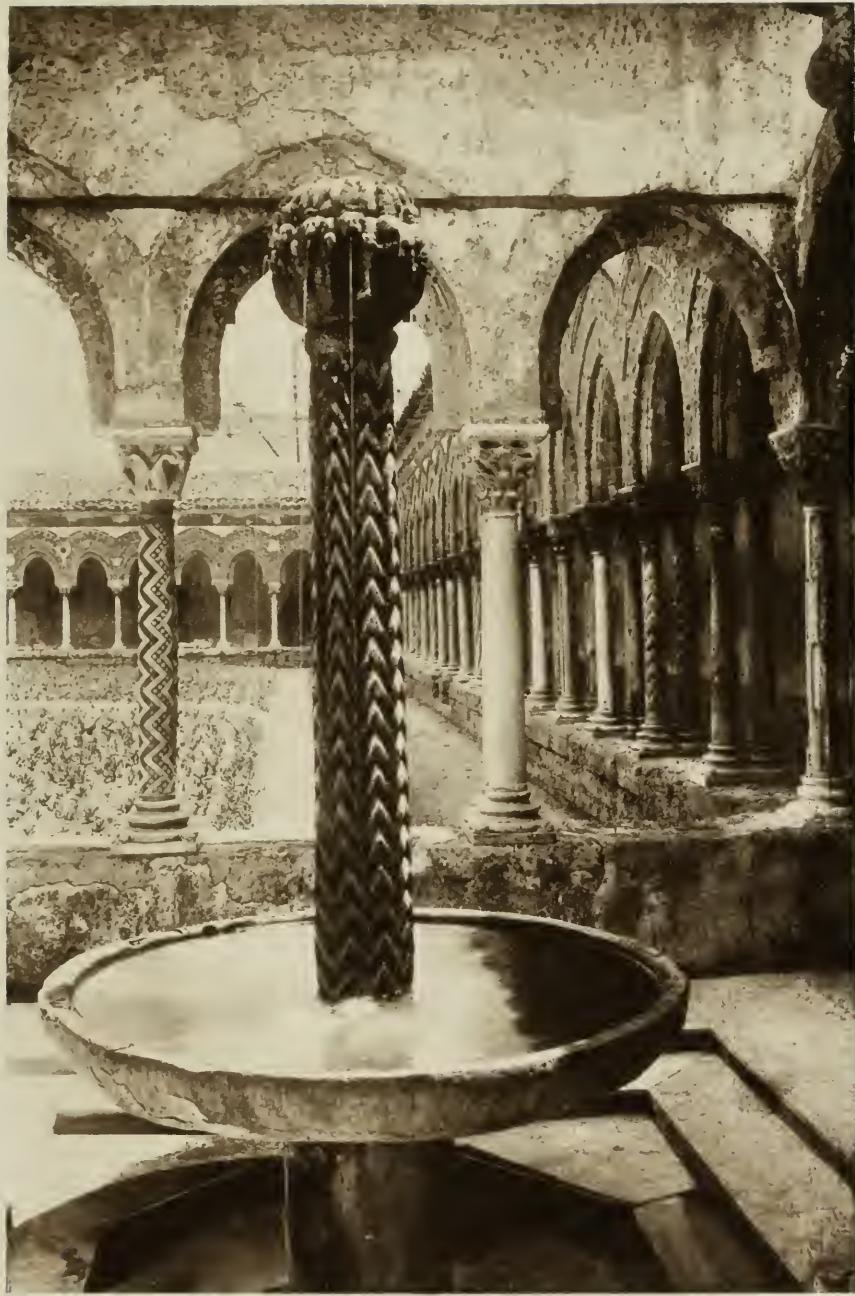
great siege which ended in the destruction of Syracuse. Theodosius, a monk, was in the city and escaped death, though he remained some time a prisoner; the long letter which he wrote on the subject to the Arch-deacon Leo has been used by every historian as the only accurate source of information, and has been so often paraphrased that it may interest the reader to know by a literal translation exactly what the good man wrote.

“The Epistle of the monk Theodosius to the Arch-deacon Leo concerning the capture of Syracuse.

“**MOST DIVINE SIR:**—To follow out the details of those things which have happened to us, a longer time and a more convenient occasion would be necessary, and a letter is too short to contain the whole series of the things that have been done. On the other hand it seems to me that to be silent about these things, and about the common grief felt by almost the whole world — for I can readily believe that all must pity us who have even heard the name of Syracuse — to keep silence, I say, would seem to be the part of a paralyzed intelligence and of a man overcome by indolence; of which one of the prophets has spoken, as by the mouth of God, saying, ‘I have received them with scourges but they have not repented.’ But if I undertake the narrative of these events, no matter how, it will be of some use to both of us. For it will bring me some consolation to speak, since by

speaking I have some hope of being relieved from the evils by which I am now tormented, because it is a fact in nature that if one explain in words those things by which one is troubled, the bitterness of the soul is tempered; but you on your part shall at least receive the fee of tears if, perchance, you shall bestow them in pity upon the narrative you follow.

"O you, sir, who have enjoyed divine honours, we are fallen into the power of the enemy, and we are taken at last, nor did Jerusalem, when it was taken, experience worse things, neither Samaria which was overcome before Jerusalem; such ruin have we suffered as never the isles of Chetim knew, nor barbarous countries, nor any cities that can be reported. Such was the slaughter that on the same day every weapon with which defence had been made was broken to pieces, bows, quivers, arms, swords, and all weapons; the strong were made weak, and the violence of the foe drove to surrender those defenders, those brave men whom I may well call giants, who laboured with all their might, who hesitated not before that day to suffer hunger and all labours, and to be pierced with numberless wounds for the love of Christ, and who were all put to the sword after the city was taken. At length we are fallen into the hands of the enemy, though for a long time we defended ourselves from the walls, and though many times there was fighting on the sea, which indeed was a horrible sight, filling



with consternation the eyes of those that looked, for the vision is indeed dismayed by the atrocity of those things which are often brought before it. We were vanquished after many attacks made upon us by night, and many a hostile ambush, after engines had been brought up against the walls with which these were pounded almost all day, after a grievous storm of stones hurled against our works, when the tortoise-shed that destroys cities had been used against us, and those things which they call subterranean rats; for not one of those things which are of use for taking a city was left untried by those who were in charge of the siege; the intense desire to possess our city had already inflamed their hearts, and they contended to the utmost with one another, excogitating new engines from day to day, the more easily to take and destroy the city. Nevertheless, in the admirable wisdom of His councils, God protected us in a measure from these. But of what use is it to continue any further in tragic strain, complaining of the chaos of evils which our enemies heaped upon us by their enormous ingenuity? Did they leave anything uninvented or untried, which seemed to them capable of inspiring terror in the besieged, and of filling their hearts with dismay?

“Time admonishes me to turn to those things which were done within the city, and I shall say a few words at length concerning these matters; without, the sword

laid waste our strength, and fear did so within, so that I might well say that in that ancient prophecy Moses spoke of us. For as before we had sinned against God like the people of Israel, we have drunk of the same cup of the divine wrath that Israel drank ; we were taken captive after we had suffered hunger long, feeding upon herbs, after having thrust into our mouths in our extreme need even filthy things, after men had even devoured their children—a frightful deed, that should be passed in silence, although we had before abhorred human flesh—oh ! hideous spectacle—but who, for his own dignity's sake, could weep such deeds in tragic strain ? We did not abstain from eating leather and the skins of oxen, nor from any other things soever which seemed capable of relieving men exhausted by hunger, and we spared not even dry bones, but dressed them to make ourselves a cheerful meal—a new sort of food abhorrent to the custom of mortal men. What will not unceasing hunger force men to do ? Many of the Syracusans were driven to grind the bones of four-footed beasts in the mill, and these wretched men stilled their hunger with the stuff, after wetting it with a very little water. The fountain of Arethusa supplied us abundantly with water for such uses. A measure of wheat was sold for a hundred and fifty pieces of gold, but the millers sold it for more, even for two hundred gold pieces, so that, strange as it may seem, a roll weighing two

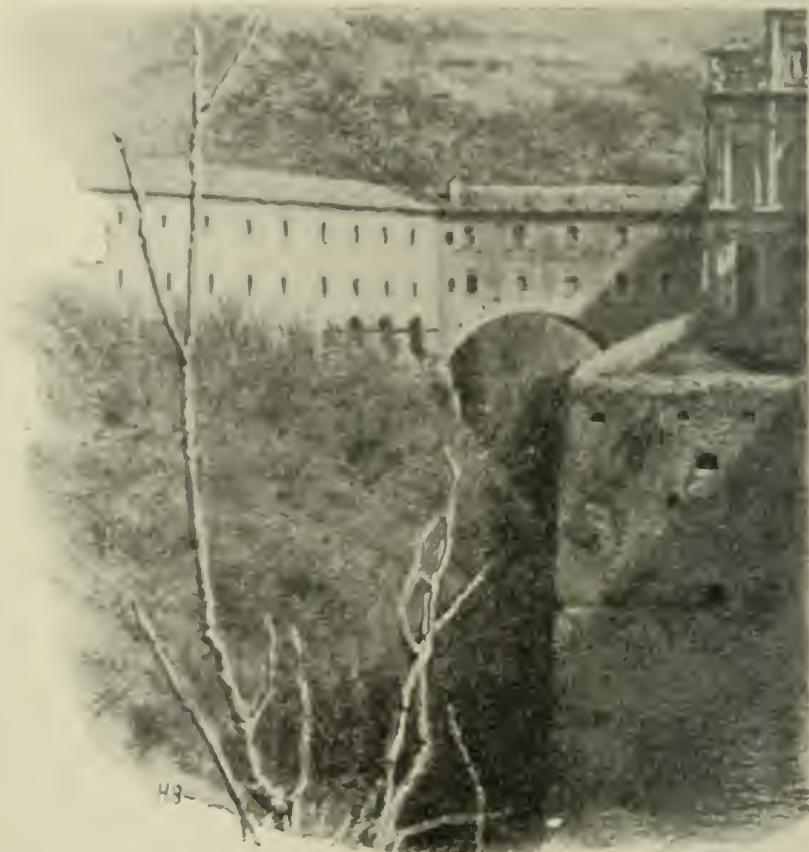
ounces was sold for a piece of gold. Add to this, that a beast of burden was sold for as much more than three hundred gold pieces as it was the more fit for food when put up for sale, and the head of a horse went to fifteen gold pieces and sometimes even to twenty; the flesh of asses was considered something most delicious. No sort of domestic bird or fowl was left, and oil and all sorts of salt provisions had long been eaten up, even such things which, as Gregorius Theologus says, are usually the food of the poor; no cheese, no vegetables, no fish. Already the enemy had forcibly taken possession of the two harbours between which Syracuse lies, having previously levelled to the ground the defences which were called the 'brachiolia,' and which once kept the enemy from entering the harbours. Now this thing came to pass, by far the most terrible thing; a most grievous pestilence, alas, followed upon famine, and some were tormented by the disease called lock-jaw, so named from the contraction of the nerves; apoplexy dried up half of the bodies of some others, it killed others instantly, but many who were attacked by the same disease could only move half their bodies or were altogether deprived of the power of motion; others, their bodies inflated like bladders, presented a horrid spectacle to the beholder, and though death was always hanging over them, it hardly set those wretched creatures free in the end with the severest suffering, for even death

was obeying the divine command, and was thereby not a little retarded. Indeed, to those things which I have already mentioned, very many more could be added, which would require a longer narrative than can be sent by a man given up to custody. For what else can I do than condense and crowd such great things into few words, being shut up in prison where I have not one hour of peace and quiet? The thick darkness of my prison, which hangs over my eyes, weakens and dulls my sight, and the noises made by the others who are confined in the same place agitate and disturb my mind.

"The tower, which was built at the greater port, at the right-hand angle of the city, was first struck and then partly fell down under the violence of the catapults with which the enemy hurled enormous stones. Five days after the destruction of this tower, the wall of the rampart, which had before been connected with the tower, was destroyed by the force of the catapults; thereupon great terror entered into the hearts of the besieged, but nevertheless those noble and truly brave men sustained the attack of the enemy under the leadership of his blessedness the Duke and Patrician, and did their best to second his tremendous exertions, beyond all that can be expressed in words, during twenty days and as many nights, when a wall fell down upon those who were bravely and nobly defending the approach on that side, and who thus manifested their inborn nobil-

ity of spirit, and held it to be the highest praise to be wounded in every part of their bodies for the defence of the city. And now, indeed, whoever chose to go to that rampart, which was called by the people the Unfortunate, might see there many men mutilated in divers and strange ways ; for some had their eyes dug out, and others had their noses cut off, some had lost their ears, others their eyelids ; the jaws of others were red with blood from wounds of darts and arrows, and some were wounded in the forehead, and some in the heart, and in many ways ; the bodies of some, the breasts of others, lay open from the wounds they had received ; they suffered, in a word, not here and there, but in every part. For the enemy besieged the city with all their forces, and was so far superior in numbers, that although it is hardly to be believed, a hundred of them fought hand to hand with one of us, covering their antagonists with no common glory in dangers which it required the highest courage to face. But I used to call to mind the zeal of the athletes whenever I came to a place where they were fighting fearlessly and splendidly and earning great glory for deeds well done. But when the number of our sins had so greatly increased that the drawn sword of the wrath of God was drunk with them, then, on the twenty and first day of May, and on the fourth day after the wall had fallen, the city was reduced into the power of the enemy ; and the manner in which it was taken is well

worth describing, for it was full of horror. For when the stern displeasure of God against us had scattered hither and thither the stoutest of those who resisted the enemy, and had called away our famous Patrician



CLOISTER OF SAN FRANCESCO DI PAOLA

with his companions from the walls to their own houses, in order that they might take some food for their bodies' sake, then it was put into the hearts of the barbarians to renew the attack at that fatal tower of which I have

spoken; and when they had advanced those engines which they used for throwing stones, the murderous traitors who invaded our city enjoyed the spectacle. Nor had they undertaken a hard matter, since but a few soldiers were guarding the tower, and the citizens did not suppose that it was a time for fighting, so our defenders felt safe and thought of nothing less than of going to the ramparts. Therefore, while the enemy were hurling stones into the city in a fearful manner, and compassed it all round about, a certain wooden ladder, over which the half-ruined tower was usually reached by the garrison, was broken down, and there-upon a great din arose; when the Patrician heard this, he sprang up at once from the table without finishing his meal, full of great anxiety for the ladder. As soon as the barbarians perceived that the ladder was broken down, for they were hurling their stones in its vicinity, they approached the walls with the greatest alacrity, and seeing but a few men guarding the tower, vigorously drove them back and slew them; and among them was the blessed John Patrinus. After this they ascended without opposition and took possession of the place, and thence they spread through the city like a river in the sight of those who were gathering together to defend it. First they slew to the last man those who were drawn up in line against them at the porch of the Church of the Saviour, and with a great rush they opened the doors and entered the temple with drawn

swords, seeming, as they panted for breath, to emit fire from their nostrils and eyes. Then indeed people of all ages fell in a moment by the edge of the sword, princes and judges of the earth, as we sing in the psalms, young men and maidens, old men and children, both monks and those joined in matrimony, the priests and the people, the slave and the free man, and even sick persons who had lain a long time in bed. Merciful God, the butchers could not even spare these; for the soul that thirsts for human blood is not easily satisfied by the death of those who first face it in anger. And I may use the words of the holy Sophonias to tell of that day of disaster and of woe, that day of fear and ruin, that day of darkness and of gloom. But of what use is it to narrate in many words each separate thing that happened to the chief men, since such an account would strike horror to the ears that heard, and even to the very soul?

"Our great Patrician, who had retired into a certain fort, was taken alive with seventy men on the next day, and on the eighth day after the fall of the city he was executed. He bore his fate with so high and brave a heart as to admit nothing unworthy of his constancy, nor did he show the very smallest sign of fear; nor is that strange, since it had been impossible to induce him by any means to betray the city for his own safety, though there were many about him not only ready to approve the plan, but to help in its execution, had he

wished it ; but he chose to die without stain, trusting to save those who were with him by sacrificing his own life for many, after the example of our Lord, rather than to let his mind dwell upon anything unworthy of his honour ; yet he moved not the hearts of his murderers to any pity whatsoever. His courage was so great, and his readiness to suffer the last extremity, that even Busa, the son of the Emir Hajeb, who commanded his death, was filled with great admiration. But he himself had gained this fortitude to die in such good and holy fashion because he had spent the whole time of the war in the contemplation of death, and had excellently exhorted those who were besieged with him, showing them the way that leads to immortality, wherefore, by these deeds of goodness, he had learned to fear the end of life but little ; for to those who have prepared themselves by a continual meditation, lest they should find their hearts unready to suffer the end, the journey hence to heaven is not joyless, when it comes at last. But the barbarians took those whom they had made prisoners with the Patrician, all born in Syracuse, and of high station, and some other captives also, and led them out of the city, and made them stand together within a circle ; and they fell upon them with a rush, like wild dogs, and slew them, some with stones, some with clubs, some with the spears they had in their hands, and others with such weapons as they found by accident, pressing upon them most cruelly ; and furi-

ously raging in their hearts, they consumed their bodies with fire. I cannot pass over with silence the barbarous cruelties they perpetrated upon Nicetas. This man was of Tarsian family, most wise and brave in war, and during the siege he used daily to heap many curses upon Mohammed, who is held by that nation to be the greatest of the prophets. So they separated him from the number of those who were to be slain, and they stretched him upon the ground on his back, and they flayed him alive from his breast downward, and they tore to pieces his protruding vitals with spears; and, moreover, with their hands they tore the heart out of the man while he yet breathed, and lacerated it with their teeth, most monstrously, and dashed it upon the earth and stoned it, and then at last were satiated, and left it; but of these things elsewhere. Now I, who had already returned to favour with the bishop a second time, and was with him in the cathedral assisting him at prayers at the sixth hour, heard with my ears how the tower was taken by the barbarians, as we came to the end of the canticle. At this news no small fear entered into the hearts of those who heard, for what thing not terrible could we expect, being about to fall most certainly into the blood-stained hands of our enemies? Nevertheless, taking courage as we could, and while the enemy were engaged in plunder within sight of the church, we fled with two other clerks to the altar of the cathedral, naked and ashamed, for we had cast off

all our garments, excepting what we wore that was of leather. The most blessed father (our bishop) had been accustomed to conciliate the wrath of God at this altar, and to ask help for his children, and his prayers had been answered ; and this wonderful thing experience had shown very often, although at this time his prayers were rejected by the mysterious counsels of the heavenly judges. When, therefore, we found ourselves thus in peril, each asked pardon of the other for any sin he had committed, and we forgave one another ; and we gave thanks to God that He had allowed us to endure these things. Now, therefore, while the bishop was commanding his church to the Guardian Angel, behold the enemy were suddenly there, with drawn swords wet with blood, and they wandered through the whole building, turning hither and thither ; and one of them departed out of the throng that moved round, and came to the holy altar, and there he found us hiding between the altar and the (bishop's) chair, and he took us ; yet he did nothing cruel to us, for God had certainly softened his heart a little ; he said nothing wrathful nor threatening, feigning timidity in his face, though he was armed with a naked sword which smoked and dripped blood still warm. He looked at the bishop and asked him tolerably clearly who he was. As soon as he knew, he asked, ‘Where now are the sacred vessels of the Church ?’ But when he had learned concerning the place, he led the bishop out of the holy temple

apart from all the disturbance and tumult, and us also with him, like lambs following their shepherd. When he had reached, by our guidance, the chapel where the sacred vessels used to be kept, he shut us up in it and went about to see that the elders of the barbarians should come together as quickly as possible; and then he began to tell them concerning us. We learned that his name was Semnoës, and that he was of illustrious birth; and moved by his speech, or rather, as I should say, because God brought it all to a good ending, our enemies began to be well disposed towards us. On the same day they plundered the sacred things, and when they had done, the weight of all was five thousand pounds; and they made us go out of the city, overwhelmed with vehement grief, to say nothing of our other ills, and led us to the emir, who had encamped in the old cathedral (San Giovanni).

"He had us shut up in one of those vaulted chambers that are therein, and there it was inevitable that our poor bodies should be afflicted in every way; for the place was naturally filled with evil smells, and with worms that breed and abound in a day, as well as with the mice that were always there, and with swarms of lice and bugs, and literally with armies of fleas; and when it was night, we were overwhelmed by the falling darkness, and the house was filled with smoke which chanced to be made outside, and choked our miserable breath and almost entirely hid us from one another's

sight. We were thrown into this chasm with our holy bishop and the other clerk of the brethren, for the rest were all butchered when the city was taken; and there we spent thirty days, because the enemy required that time to destroy the defences of Syracuse. Throughout that period the buildings within the circuit of the walls were burned, and the value of all the booty taken was so great that the reckoning when cast up was found to be one thousand thousand gold pieces.

“ Not long after this we began the journey to Palermo, which we accomplished in the space of six days, borne on beasts bred to carry burdens, but we were conducted by rough and savage Ethiopians. At length, much vexed by the heat in the daytime and by the nocturnal chills, and not having ceased to travel by day and night, we entered the extremely famous and populous city of Palermo; and as we went into the city, the people came out to meet us. They thronged out in great joy, and they sang songs of triumph, and as they saw the victors carrying the spoils into the city we at length saw the multitude of the citizens and of the strangers who had assembled, and that the number of the citizens, as compared with all accounts, had in our opinion not been overrated; for you would have thought that the whole race of the Saracens had come together there, from the rising up of the sun even to its going down, from the north and from the sea, according to the accustomed speech of the most blessed David.

Wherefore the people being crowded together in such a press of inhabitants, began to build and inhabit houses without the walls, to such an extent that they really built many cities round the original one, not unequal



CLOISTER OF SAN FRANCESCO DI PAOLA, SEEN FROM THE REAR

to it, if one choose, either for attack or defence. But since, as I began to say, this most evil of all cities possessed a Contarchus — that is the name of the office — he deemed it unworthy of his fame not to make us pass

under the yoke. And not only does he promise himself that he will do so, he even threatens to bring under his power peoples that live far away, and even the people of the imperial city (Constantinople). This being then the state of things, we were brought before the chief emir after the fifth day. He was sitting haughtily on a throne, on a terrace, much pleased with himself and his tyrannical power ; and, like a towel hanging in the midst, he showed himself to us first from one side and then from the other. The attendants made the bishop stand forth, and through an interpreter the emir asked : ‘Hast thou our manner of praying to God?’ Our most wise superior would not admit that. ‘Why in that manner?’ asked the bishop ; ‘since I am the high priest of Christ and the leader of the mysteries of the servants of Christ, of whom the prophets and the righteous prophesied of old.’ ‘They are not prophets to you, in truth,’ answered the emir, ‘but only in name, since by them you would not be led away to your false doctrines, nor turned from the right path. For why do you assail our prophet with blasphemies?’ ‘We do not blaspheme the prophets at all,’ returned the bishop, ‘seeing that we have learned not to inveigh against prophets, but to speak in their behalf and to feel proud of them ; but we do not know that one who is revered among you.’ Amazed by these answers, the emir at once ordered that we should be again thrust into prison, and being led away we walked through the principal

open place of the city, in the sight of the people; and many Christians followed us openly mourning our misery, as well as men of the contrary sect (Mohammedan) who were impelled by curiosity and pressed closely about us and kept asking which was the very famous Sicilian archbishop, and in this way we escaped from the people. At length we were thrown into the common prison; and this is a den having its pavement fourteen steps below ground, and it has only a little door instead of a window; here the darkness is complete, and can be felt, the only light being from a lamp, or some reflection by day, and it is impossible ever to see the light of dawn in this dungeon, nor the rays of the moon. Our bodies were distressed by the heat, for it was summer, and we were scorched by the breath of our fellow-prisoners; and besides, the vermin and the lice, and hosts of fleas and other little insects, make a man miserable by their bites; and promiscuously with us there were confined in the same prison, to trade (as it were) with these miseries, Ethiopians, Tarsians, Jews, Lombards, and some of our own Christians, from different parts, among whom was also the most holy Bishop of Malta, chained with double shackles. Then the two bishops embraced one another, and kissed one another with the holy kiss, and wept together awhile over the things that had happened to them; but presently they gave thanks to God for it all, and combated their grief with arguments drawn from our philosophy. While we

were living in this way, the abominable day of the sacrifice appointed among these people recurred ; on which day they boast that they hold in memory that sacrifice which Abraham made long ago, when he sacrificed the ram given him to God for a victim, in his share of the covenant ; this, out of ignorance, they call the Pasch, but they do not name the day thus from the fact, for they had no passing over from Egypt to the land of promise, according to the ancient naming of the Pasch, nor from that land to the celestial shore, nor from death to life, as the Christian faith teaches us to use this word ; but from life unto death and from this corporeal destruction, which falls under sensation, to that everlasting perdition, and to that fire which shall have no end. In the celebration of this day—strange madness—they took council to burn the archbishop and to offer the most holy Pontiff of Christ as a victim to their evil demons ; for a certain man of those who were over the people, having a mouth that breathed like an open sepulchre, said, turning to those who stood round about, ‘O fellow-citizens, let us keep this feast of the Pasch as joyfully as may be, and make it famous now, if ever, by laying hands upon the bishop of the Christians for our own salvation, for so I am sure that our affairs shall turn out fortunately and shall obtain even a better increase.’ So he spoke, but certain old men with wise gray heads, and elders honourably clad in mantles, turned to the people and condemned the thing for the

following reason. They said that these things were not true, and that they considered that the record of that day was made sufficiently honourable by the signal privilege of having accomplished the destruction of the city of Syracuse. Thus, God being willing, was the advice of the evil counsellor against the archbishop set at naught. Now from that day to this we have remained captive, in many sorrows, daily awaiting death itself, which perpetually hangs over us prisoners. But thou, O dear and venerable head, remember always thy Theodosius, and mayest thou render our God kind and propitious that He may calm these tempestuous bil-lows, that he may stay them and check them, and that he may turn our captivity, as the flood under the south wind, according to the word of the Prophet King who was of the kindred of Christ. Amen."

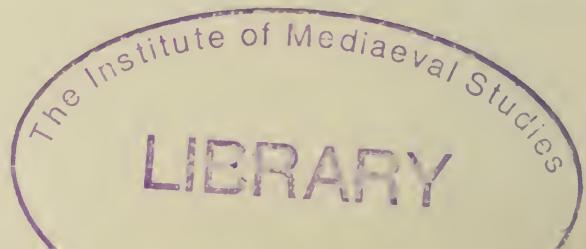
Here ends the letter of Theodosius, which was evidently composed in the prison he describes. It is some satisfaction to find it believed among historians that he himself and the good bishop were at last ransomed. The account bears evidence in every sentence of having been written by one who had both seen and suffered the terrible things he describes. It cannot be doubted that the Mohammedans acted elsewhere with a cruelty quite as atrocious; the condition of the unfortunate Christians who now became their slaves is more easy to imagine than to describe, and one might not unnaturally think of the Saracens as

utter barbarians, or at least as possessing no higher culture than that of their Semitic predecessors in Sicily, the Carthaginians. We know that this was not the case, and we may well start in wonder at the picture drawn by Theodosius. But we might as reasonably call Oliver Cromwell a barbarian, or the French Huguenots iconoclasts — or, for that matter, Catherine de' Medici. There is only one form of passion which seems able to destroy temporarily every good instinct of humanity, and that is mistaken religious zeal. The conviction that the enemy is predestined to eternal flames easily leads to the instinctive belief that he has deserved every torment in his earthly body; and such a belief, when bound up with such a conviction, and stimulated to madness by the sight of human blood, can make men worse than wild beasts. The barbarians with their dripping swords who terrified poor Theodosius were those same grave Mohammedans to whom we are indebted for so much true science, for the preservation and transmission of so many priceless books, and for so many things of beauty that still remain, from the Taj Mahal to the Alhambra; and they were the men who were about to fill Sicily with a civilization in many ways superior to that older one which they destroyed. They tore Nicetas piece-meal, and trampled upon his Christian heart; but Theodoric the great Goth put the good heathen Boethius to death as cruelly, on an accusation that

was palpably false, and Everard Digby, who has been recently proved wholly innocent of any connection with the Gunpowder Plot, was torn to pieces alive by the hangman under James the First. The French are a most civilized people, but in the French Revolution educated men among them behaved with no more show of humanity than the Saracens at Syracuse, and about the year 1900 men who can read and write, and who vote in a free country, have burned negroes alive. No nation has much right to reproach any other for cruelty in times of war or popular excitement; it is only in peace that a fair judgment may be formed of the tendencies of any race, and then only when that race lives under some form of representative government. Countries are too often judged by their capital cities, and nations by the character of their sovereigns, though the rulers of most nations are of foreign descent.

In connection with the fall of Syracuse I take the following strange story from the annals of Georgius Cedrenus, a monk of the eleventh century, as a specimen of the inventive powers occasionally displayed at that time, even in works that have some historical value.

While the Saracens, whom he calls the Carthaginians, were still besieging Syracuse and pillaging the surrounding country, the Emperor Basil sent a fleet to Sicily under the command of the patrician, Adrianus,



'although the sailors were at that time engaged in building a temple'—a singular occupation for men-of-war's men, it must be confessed. Adrianus put into a harbour of the Peloponnesus to wait for a fair wind, and while he was wasting time there, Syracuse was taken. He learned the disaster in the following manner. 'There is a place in the Peloponnesus called Helos, on account of the thick woods amongst which it is situated, and the Roman ships were moored near the spot. One night some shepherds heard the voices of the devils that dwell there, talking together, and relating that Syracuse had been taken on the previous day, and this tale, after spreading among the people, reached Adrianus. He called the shepherds before him and examined them, and finding that they confirmed the story he had heard, in order to ascertain the truth of the thing with his own ears he had himself led to the spot by the shepherds, he inquired of the devils by their help, and he heard that Syracuse was already taken. Being overcome by uneasiness at this warning, he sought to reassure and comfort himself with the belief that it would be wrong to put faith in the words of lying Genii, but he noted the day they had mentioned. Ten days later, certain persons who had escaped from Syracuse arrived and announced the calamity.'

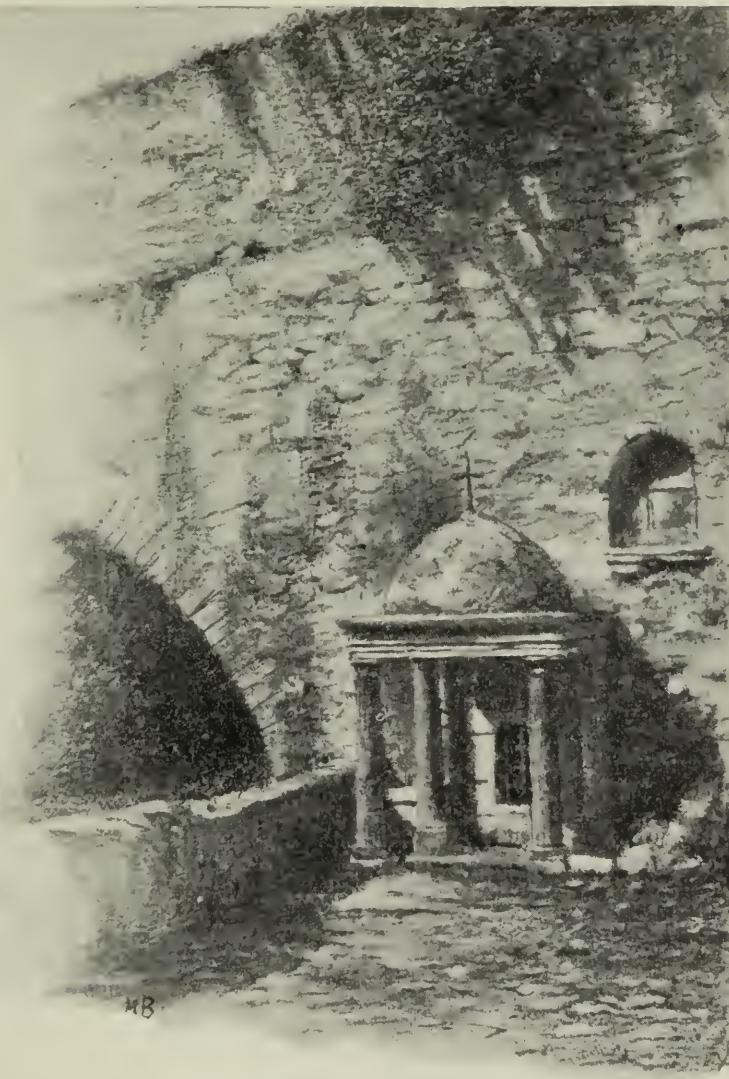
This curious tale is found in the first volume of Caruso's valuable work. Another story, taken from

the same author and much more worthy of credence, gives a very good idea of the wars that were waged at the same time on the mainland, between the forces of the new Frankish Empire, the Mohammedans, and the Byzantines.

While the Saracens were fighting their way through Sicily, other Mohammedans had extended their incursions far into the interior of Italy and along the eastern coast, and had overrun a great part of the Lombard Duchy in the south, making their headquarters at Bari; whereupon the Emperor Basil appealed to the Pope and to Lewis the Second, called ‘King of France’ by the monk’s chronicle, instead of King of the Franks. Their joint armies overcame the Saracen force in Italy, and they recaptured Bari and took the Mohammedan chief captive. He is called the Soldanus, the Sultan, which is manifestly a mistake, but his story is worth telling for the light it throws on the times.

This soldanus, then, was carried away a prisoner to Capua by Lewis the Second, and during two years he was never seen to laugh. Therefore the king promised a present of gold to any one who could make the soldanus laugh outright. Now when a certain man came and told the king that he had seen the soldanus laughing, and brought a witness, the king called the soldanus to him and asked him the reason of the change. Then said the soldanus: ‘I

was looking at a cart and at its wheels, how some parts of them turned downwards and others up; and per-



CHAPEL IN THE GARDEN OF SAN FRANCESCO DI PAOLA

ceiving that this was an image of man's changing and inconstant fortunes, I laughed; and when I con-

sider how miserable is everything wherein we boast, then also I judge it possible that as I, who was the highest, am become the lowest, so also from this depth I may be lifted again to the summit where I stood.' When the king heard this he considered his own state also, and he thought of the soldanus, and of the command he had held, and of his old age and experience of good and bad fortunes; and judging him to be wise, he allowed the soldanus from that time freely to converse with him and to come and go.

But the soldanus was an astute man and crafty, and he laid a trap for the king, by which he drove him from Capua and prepared his own return to his people. The two Italian cities of Capua and Benevento had not been long subject to the king, and the soldanus knew that they would not remain constantly faithful, but were dreaming of liberty; nor was he ignorant that the king was making every effort to retain possession of them. He therefore addressed the king, and said: 'I see that you are deeply concerned in considering how you may keep these two cities in your power. I will give you advice in this matter. Be sure that you cannot keep a firm hold of these unless you remove their chief men to France. For it is natural that men who are in service against their will should wish for freedom, and that they should seize a favourable opportunity to rise and obtain what they desire.' The king was pleased with this speech; he thought the advice good, and he deter-

mined to act upon it. Therefore shackles of bronze and chains were made ready secretly, as if for some other purpose. But the soldanus, having thus deluded the king, went to the princes of the people, for he had acquired familiarity with them in habitual intercourse, and he told them that he had a secret which he would show them, but that he feared lest if they betrayed it they should cause the destruction of their informer, and bring themselves into danger. They promised silence with an oath, and he told them that the king had determined to send them all to France in iron bonds, because he saw that he could not otherwise keep his power over the cities. They were in doubt, and could not quite believe his words, desiring further proof of what he said; so he took one of them with him to the smith's and bade him ask of them why they were working so industriously. Having learned that they were making chains and shackles, he went back to his companions and convinced these that the soldanus had spoken the truth, out of good will to them and to the advantage of their country. Thereupon the princes of those cities, being persuaded of the fact, considered how they might be avenged upon the king; and one day, when he went out to hunt, they shut the gates, and when he returned they drove him away. So when he found himself shut out of the cities, and unable to effect anything by his presence, he returned to France. But the soldanus went to the princes, and desired as the price of the informa-

tion he had given that he might be free and return to his country; and being thus rewarded for the good he had done unto them, he returned to Ca:thage, regained his former command, undertook a great expedition against Capua and Benevento, and besieged those cities with all his strength, surrounding them with a great encampment.

Then the townspeople, being hard pressed by the siege, sent ambassadors to the king, imploring his help, but he sent them away scornfully, answering that their destruction would be a joy to him. On the return of the ambassadors, after this failure, the people, not knowing whither to turn, and being driven to great straits in their defence, sent an ambassador to Basil, the emperor of the Romans. And he sent back the ambassador at once, to bid his people be of good heart, and to announce the present coming of abundant aid. But the ambassador was taken by the enemy on his return, and the soldanus, before whom he was brought, said to him : ‘Thou shalt have a choice; choose therefore the better part. If thou dost wish to be safe, and to receive very splendid gifts, say to those who sent thee, and in the presence of them all, that the Roman emperor has refused to help them; but if thou dost proclaim the truth, thou shalt perish instantly.’ The ambassador promised to do what the emir had commanded him, and when they were at an arrow’s flight from the walls, he commanded that the chief men of

the city should come forth. When they were come, he spoke to them these words: ‘Ye fathers, howbeit certain death is hanging over me, and the sword is at my throat, I shall not hide the truth from you, and I beseech you to show kindness to my wife and my children. I, my lords, though I am now in the hands of our enemies, have fulfilled my embassy, and presently help will be surely sent you by the Roman emperor. Therefore stand fast. For he cometh who shall deliver you, though not me.’ When he had said this, the ministers of the soldanus instantly cut him into very small pieces with their swords. But the soldanus feared the army of the emperor, now that he was sure that it would be sent, and raised the siege and went home. And after that, there was alliance and faith between the cities of Capua and Benevento.

Such is the story of the Lombard Duchy, told by Georgius Cedrenus, and romantic as it is, and closely as it recalls the embassy of Regulus to the Carthaginians, we may safely accept it as authentic in the main. To complete the picture, it must be remembered that Italy and the south were now overrun in all directions by hosts of Moslems, that the sea was at their mercy, and that they had stained the waters of the Mediterranean with Christian blood from Gibraltar to the Bosphorus, and from the Adriatic to the mouth of the Nile. We cannot but see them in our imagination as dark-skinned barbarians, black-browed, and turbaned to the eyes, lean

and fierce, bringing with them the strength and endurance which the desert breeds, and clothing themselves in the purple and gold of a vanquished civilization. We cannot but think of them as more like Huns than Vandals, as more like devils than Huns. Yet this was the age of Harun al Rashid, whose court in Bagdad delighted in every luxury while exploring the secrets of every science; and if Harun eight times invaded the Byzantine Empire, it may be remembered that it had become the plaything of the evil Empress Irene whose deeds have left upon her the marks of mankind's execration, while Harun will forever and not undeservedly bear the surname of the Just. Had the Mohammedan Empire been united under such a man, controlled by such a heart, and directed by such an intelligence, and had a worthy successor taken the place of Harun on the throne of the Abbassides, the power of the Moslems might have been consolidated into a despotism of the world, at a time when Christianity was divided against itself. But while the Empire of Constantinople was as yet separated from its final destruction by an interval of six hundred years, the newly risen domination of the Mohammedans was already broken up into small powers, of which the sultans and emirs did not hesitate to make war upon each other almost as readily as upon the Christians. The khalifs ruled indeed in Bagdad, and Harun had destroyed a Byzantine army each time that a Byzantine ruler had refused to pay him trib-

ute ; but the khalifate had lost its power in the West, the house of Aghlab and the Fatimites had become independent rulers in Africa, and the Emir of Sicily soon made himself as independent as they. Still farther west the Mohammedans of Spain had founded a kingdom which was to defy the armies of Christianity even longer than Constantinople was destined to withstand the attacks of the Moslems. But the chiefs of these divided kingdoms, though sometimes highly gifted and acquainted with the advantages of civilization, were in reality little more than robbers of tremendous power ; depredation and pillage were the business of their lives, and religion was a sufficient excuse for both. Civilization was but an amusement fit for short intervals of unwelcome peace. It was their nature to delight in the discoveries of astronomy, the investigations of medicine, and in the study of the Aristotelian philosophy, and most of the sciences are indebted in some measure to their acuteness and spasmodic industry ; but to all such pleasures, to intellectual pastimes of the noblest kind, as well as to the refinements of a sensuous existence which happily is without parallel in modern times — to these things the true Saracen preferred the din of ringing blows exchanged in battle, the hideous carnage of the hard-won field, the heaps of Christian slain, and the confusion of victories that spoiled the world in a day.

They had won the East, they had conquered the West, the central basin of the Mediterranean was

theirs, and the time came when they aspired to seize Rome itself. Collecting the squadrons of their pirate vessels into a fleet manned by a host of fighters who had survived a hundred deaths, they appeared at the



CLOISTER AND COURT OF SAN FRANCESCO DI PAOLA

mouth of the Tiber, and ate up the land like locusts. Nevertheless, the worn-out and tottering walls of Rome sufficed to discourage an army that was more warlike than military, and was little accustomed to the orderly

operations of a siege. They plundered the basilicas of Saint Peter on the one side and of Saint Paul on the other, but they made no attempt to enter Rome, and presently retired to their congenial south, bearing with them the spoils of the most magnificent temples in Christendom. They might have taken Rome with ease, and could have established the Mohammedan dominion amid the ashes of the Roman Empire, but they neglected an opportunity which they had failed to estimate at its true value; and when another Moslem host came against Rome a few years afterwards, in 849, the energy of Pope Leo the Fourth had built up the ruined defences, and not only were the walls standing throughout their entire circuit, but they were also protected at the most important points by fifteen great towers, one of which, still unshaken, was occupied by Leo the Thirteenth as a summer residence one thousand and fifty years later. To complete the defence, the city was provided with new gates made of the most massive timber. Nor was this all. The wise and untiring pontiff had formed valuable alliances with the states of Naples, Gaeta, and Amalfi, and the pirate squadrons of the Moslems were opposed before the port of Ostia by a well-ordered fleet. They had already been repulsed with loss when a storm arose, such as no man of those times could remember, and the ships of the invaders were driven to destruction upon the dangerous lee shore. The rocks and islands with which Gibbon adorned the

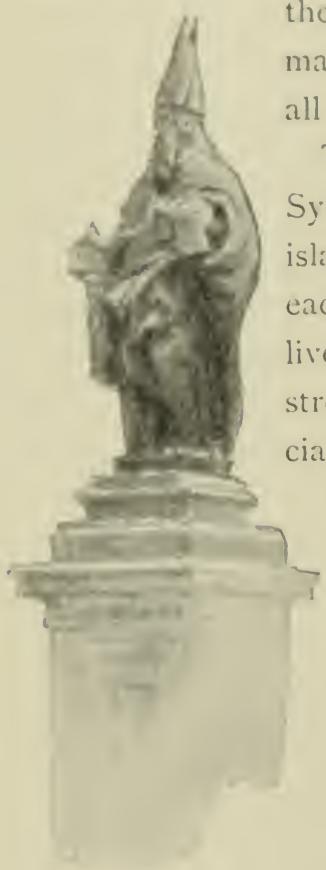
coast at that point had no existence except in his imagination, or in some source of information other than those he names; but in their stead there exists a real danger quite as terrible to mariners. The long low shore of the Roman Campagna is accompanied from end to end, at a cable's length or less, by a bar, over which there is less than a fathom of water in calms, and upon which, in southwesterly gales, the surf breaks with enormous force; and therein those 'sons of Satan,' as Anastasius the Librarian calls the Moslems, utterly perished, both themselves and their vessels.

This was the last attempt made by them to extend their power northwards, and when the Saracens at length entered Rome as conquerors, they came as the soldiers of a Norman ruler, to establish the power of a pope.

Though it is true that the Greek power fell in Sicily when the Mohammedans took Castrogiovanni, the most important date which occurs for a long time is that of the destruction of Syracuse in 878. That city had been the centre and fountain head of Sicilian life during more than fourteen hundred years; the great struggles in which the fate of the island was concerned had almost all been fought for the possession of its chief jewel and treasure. The Moslems took it, crushed it, and threw away its fragments as though it had been a worthless thing to them, which might easily have been of value to

their enemies. When the emir marched westwards with his train of captives, his caravan of plunder, and his load of gold, he left behind him a heap of smoking ruins, among which lay the unburied corpses of a murdered population. Never again should the fair walls of a great city mirror themselves in the still waters of the wonderful harbour; never more should Christian maidens come down with their earthen jars to take the cool water from Arethusa's spring; not again should the walls below Achradina reecho the blows of the shipwright's axe and hammer, or the rasping of the busy saw; nor, on the brink of the deep quarry, wherein handsome Athenians had died of hunger and thirst and sickness, should the holy monks chaunt matins and evensong in the cloisters of Saint John. Men should not go out from the city, so long as history was to last, to cut the great papyrus at the roots and bring it home to make books for the wise man's pen. No living thing was left amid the universal death, and there was to be no possible renewal of life thereafter. The Mohammedan had made his home far to westward in the Golden Shell, and he meant not to leave behind him any good place wherein his enemy might take refuge. He returned indeed not many years afterwards and brought ships into the harbour of Syracuse and built up the walls of Ortygia, and the sea wall of Achradina; but it was not that the city he had built might live again, it was

rather because no power he possessed could destroy the safe port which nature had made, and he found himself obliged to prevent others from taking that which he would not use himself. His heart was in the western city, and he loved it and made it his own, and beautified it with all the skill he could command.



The statue of a Bishop, standing on a tall, fluted pedestal. The pedestal is inscribed with text.

Thenceforward Palermo became what Syracuse had been, the centre of the island's history and the chief goal of each succeeding invader. Syracuse lived again, and lives to-day, a military stronghold, a naval station, a commercial town; but its life as a source of power and as a fountain of individuality was arrested forever on the fatal day. Much of it that was beautiful fell to the base uses of commerce, and the money-changer's booth was set up in the ruined corner of the matchless Greek temple; where Agathocles had feasted in tents of fine linen and purple silk rose the rough defences of a castle

STATUE OF A BISHOP,
OUTSIDE THE CATHE-
DRAL, PALERMO

that was already mediæval, that was not a glory but a menace, a thing not of beauty but of fear. On the height the great wall of Dionysius still stood in part,

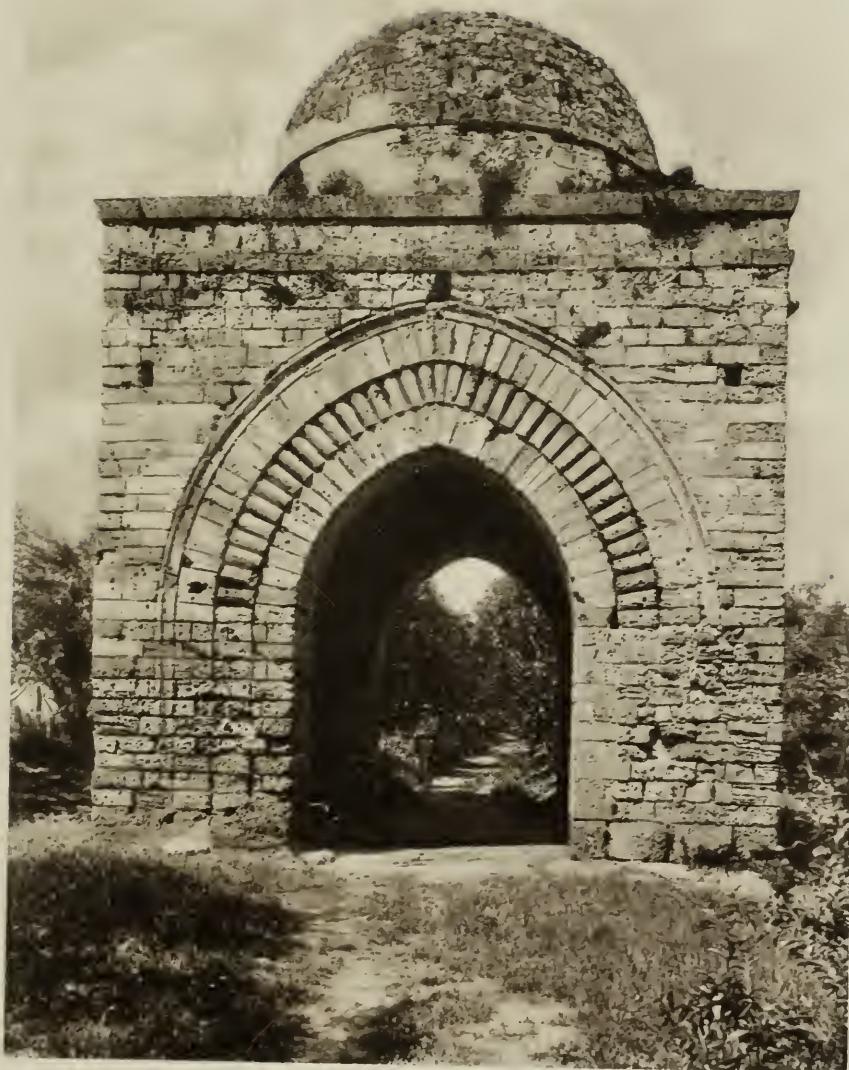
because it would have taken human hands a year to destroy what human hands had built in twenty days; and the indestructible fortress of Euryalus still amazes the traveller with its labyrinth of well-hewn passages, its perfectly designed and marvellously preserved embrasures, and its ramparts of solid rock. But the five cities upon which Marcellus looked down with tearful eyes have sunk out of sight, never to rise again, and a small Italian town, crowded together and irregularly cut by quiet little streets, covers the island, and extends over a few hundred yards of the opposite peninsula. That is all there is left of her that rivalled Athens and Alexandria, and that once far outdid Rome in extent, in wealth, and in beauty.

No such melancholy reflections assail the traveller who ascends the heights of Monreale and pauses, where the road sweeps up the last turn, to look back upon the distant splendour of Palermo. The scene is indeed full of associations that bring back the past, and evoke the grave and terrible memories of an elder time. But that past is not dead beneath a funeral pall of ruin through which the eye guesses only at the outline of the fallen limbs. It is alive still, clothed in royal robes of beauty, and calmly resting in a dignified repose. From the height a keen-eyed man can descry the lofty fortress by the Porta Nuova, wherein Roger the Norman held his court, as the Saracen emirs had held theirs before him; and the vast cathe-

dral that holds the tombs of emperors and kings; the bastions of the great walls are gone, but in their stead there are the graceful outlines of a hundred churches against the broad sea beyond, soft against the softer sky. Between the city and the hill on which the beholder stands, and round by his right and up the valley, the Golden Shell is bright with flower and yellow fruit, and rich with the deep foliage of the lemon and the orange; here and there, among the taller cypresses and spreading pines, the white walls of a half-shaded villa speak of that cool retirement and peace which every Italian loves, and as the glow of evening fades, the sweet and melancholy note of distant bells is borne up on the scented air.

Palermo is not dead, like Syracuse: its ruins do not stretch far and wide beyond its shrunk walls, like those of Girgenti, cropping up in vineyards and olive groves and in scattered farmhouses, each a mile from the other; it is there still, as it was there a thousand years ago, in the third century of the Hejira, when Ibn Haukal came thither about a hundred years after the captivity of Theodosius, the monk.

This Ibn Haukal was a merchant of Bagdad, who left that city in the year 943, and travelled through many Mohammedan countries, during more than thirty years. At that time, the first great Mussulman Empire had begun to fall to pieces, from lack of uniform organization, while Mohammedan energy was still as



active as ever, and the Saracens in Sicily fought to become independent of the African domination, under which they had got possession of the island; but the turbulent Sicilians had long been fighting with each other, and the rivalry of the principal cities had led to endless bloodshed; and it was not until Palermo and Girgenti made up their differences, and united to make common cause against the African emir, that the latter conceded to the island the freedom it desired, retaining a more or less empty suzerainty over it. Soon after this event Ibn Haukal visited Palermo. He came on the morrow of a great struggle, before all the damage done by the civil war had been repaired, when the people were still suffering from past evils, and when the aristocracy, which had been chiefly responsible for the internal troubles of Sicily, still kept aloof from the people, in scornful isolation; for of all races, the Arabs were always the most aristocratic. He describes a city surrounded by most formidable walls, around which were built four suburbs, each of which had a strongly individual character that distinguished it from the others; and the walled portion occupied what is the middle of Palermo to-day, and was called the Kasr, the fort, and Sicilians still call the main street the 'Cassaro,' though it was named the 'Toledo,' by one of the Spanish viceroys, and has of course been officially christened 'Corso Vittorio Emmanuele,' since the annexation of Sicily. But it is safe to say that its old

name will remain in common use, no matter how often the island changes hands. The Saracen's seal is upon it, and the impression is indelible.

In the days of the Bagdad merchant there was 'a great Friday mosque' in this quarter 'which was formerly a church of the Christians,' which had been first built by Saint Gregory, and stood on the site of the Norman cathedral: and Ibn Haukal was told that it contained the body of Aristotle, who had been held in the highest veneration by the Christians, and was always ready to answer their prayers for rain, for recovery from sickness, and for every ill that causes man to offer prayers to Allah, whose name be praised. The body, it was said, was in a coffin suspended between heaven and earth, and Ibn Haukal says that he saw a large chest which might perhaps have contained it.

The Kasr was the abode of merchants; the great suburb, called the Khalessah, now the Kalsa, or Gausa, contained the sultan's palace, and the habitations of his courtiers; there were also baths there, a mosque of average dimensions, the sultan's prison—he appears to have kept one for his own purposes—the arsenal, and the government offices. The Khalessah had walls of its own, and it lay between the Kasr and the sea, to the east of the present harbour. It is not easy to define the other ancient quarters, owing to the great changes in the topography of Palermo caused by the gradual filling of the two inlets that once extended far

into the city, divided by a tongue of land of which the extremity still projects into the modern harbour. Ibn Haukal tells us, however, that the great markets, and the shops of the oil sellers, were all situated southeast of the Kasr, between the Saracen Norman castle at Porta Nuova and the mosque of Ibn Saklab which stood in the place that was called, until recently, Piazza della Moschitta. Here, also, and outside the walls, were the stalls of the money-changers, and the shops of the drug sellers, tailors, armourers, and braziers. The corn market was also beyond the circuit of the walls. The merchant of Bagdad observed that there were a hundred and fifty butchers' shops in the city, and on visiting the butchers' mosque,—for they had one of their own,—he calculated that more than seven thousand persons connected with the trade were assembled at prayers, for he counted thirty-six ranks, in each of which there were two hundred people. Those who have been present in the mosque of Saint Sophia, in Constantinople, during the great prayer meetings that terminate the month of Ramadhan, will doubtless remember the extraordinarily precise order maintained by the ranks of worshippers, which makes it an easy matter to calculate their numbers. It has been estimated, by those who have commented the merchant's accounts of the city, that the population amounted at that time to three hundred thousand souls. It exceeds that figure at the present time.

Ibn Haukal was much struck by the great number of mosques he saw in all parts of the city, and he observes that the greater part of them were 'standing with their roofs, their walls, and their doors, and were actually in use'; a statement which shows that even a thousand years ago the Mohammedans were accustomed to allow their old mosques to fall to ruins when new ones were built, just as they continue to do in our own times; but he adds that the mosques of Palermo were places of meeting for 'all the wise men and the students of the city, who gather in them to exchange and increase their information.' In vivid contrast with these resorts of the learned, were the so-called 'rabats,' built by the water's edge, outside the city, and which were the quarters of the wild militia that alternately begged and fought for a living, 'a band composed of cutthroats and ruffians, of men who know no law, and have grown old in a disorderly life, and of corrupt youths who have learned to pretend piety in order to extort charity from the faithful, and to insult honest women,—wretches who live in the rabat because they are so vile and universally despised that they could find no refuge elsewhere.' The commentator on this unpleasant picture remarks that the number of these irregular fighters was large at the time of Ibn Haukal's visit, because the new government of the Kalibites was actively pushing the war of extermination against Christians. The passage throws some light on

the nature of the atrocities described by the monk, Theodosius, and on the composition of the Mohammedan armies in those times. The ruffians seen in the rabats by Ibn Haukal were, doubtless, the lineal descendants of those who had sacked Syracuse a hundred years earlier.

He dwells at great length on the nine gates by which the city was entered, but of most of which it is now impossible to determine the situation. The most famous, he says, was the sea gate, and of this one we know that it was somewhere in the lower part of the modern Cassaro, or Toledo, that it was destroyed in 1564, in order to widen and straighten that thoroughfare, and that it was ornamented with long Arabic inscriptions in the Cufic character which gave rise to much controversy. For centuries the letters were believed to be Chaldean, and the writing was interpreted to mean that the tower of the gate was built by Sapho, the son of Eliphaz, the son of Esau, the brother of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham. Consequently it was believed even by learned men, that Palermo had been founded by the great-great-grandson of Abraham, a supposition which, for its absurdity, quite equals the story of the veneration of Aristotle's body by the Christians, which was told to Ibn Haukal. He, however, does not even mention the supposed origin of the gate in question, but merely calls it 'the most famous.'

He tells us, further, that in the midst of the city there was a depression almost entirely filled with papyrus plants, then still used for making writing paper, and he adds that he does not know of any papyrus in the world, except that of Sicily, which rivals that of Egypt, and that the greater part of this papyrus is twisted into rope for ships — it would make something like our Manila rope — while the remainder is made into paper for the sultan, and only in quantities just sufficient for his use. In the southwestern part of the city, and within the modern circuit, but outside the ancient walls, there is still a Piazza del Papiroto, and a street of the same name leading out of it. The square is only a few steps from the southern end of the cathedral. It is known that until 1591 the place was a swamp, in which the papyrus was still growing abundantly, and in that year it was drained by subterranean channels and filled up, because it was a cause of fever in the neighbourhood. The few specimens of papyrus now cultivated in Palermo have been brought from Syracuse. Judging from the words of Ibn Haukal, the plant not only flourished in Egypt, where it is now extinct, in the tenth century, but in other parts of the world.

He enumerates many springs of good water, both in the city and in the neighbourhood, but presently contradicts himself flatly, and ends his description of the people with the following comments. ‘The

greater part of the water consumed in the various quarters of the city is dirty and unwholesome rain water. The people drink this stuff, owing to the lack of sweet, running water, and because of their own folly, and because of their abuse of the onion, and their evil habit of eating raw onions in excess; for there is not a person among them, high or low, who does not eat them in his house daily, both in the morning and at evening. This is what has ruined their intelligence, and affected their brains, and degraded their senses, and distracted their faculties, and crushed their spirits, and spoiled their complexions, and so altogether changed their temperament, that everything, or almost everything, appears to them quite different from what it is.'

The onion has certainly never suffered a more sweeping condemnation, and we are reminded of the exceeding and virulent bad temper with which Horace attacked garlic when it had disagreed with him. What Ibn Haukal says about the degeneracy of the people of Palermo, however, must have been founded on fact, and the fact may have been in part attributable to bad water; but he saw a population only half recovered from the horrors and sufferings of civil war,—men who had been starved, and whose parents had starved, and who were still haunted by dreams of fear, dulled by past pain, half dazed and stupefied by a generation of suffering. Palermo is one of the

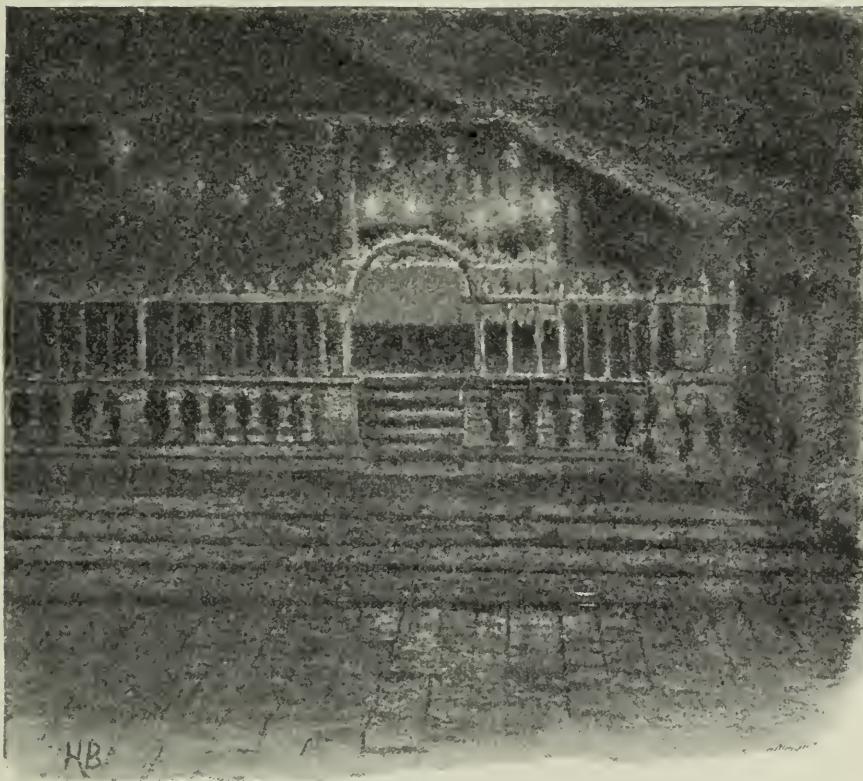
healthiest towns in the world at the present time, and its people compare favourably, both in looks and intelligence, with the inhabitants of any other city in Europe.

The Normans

ABOUT the year 500 a certain rich man named Garganus possessed a great estate in the land where the city of Manfredonia was afterwards built; and a high hill which is there, and which looks out over the sea, was called by his name, Mons Garganus. It chanced one day that one of the steers of his herd went astray and could not be brought back; and when Garganus and his servants found it, the beast was lying before the mouth of a cavern on the summit of the hill. The creature could not be induced to move, and Garganus, wearied by the long pursuit, and in an ill temper, flung his hunting javelin at the steer's head. To the amazement and terror of all who saw it, the weapon left the steer unhurt, and turning backwards, wounded Garganus himself.

The bishop of that region, having been consulted as to the meaning of this prodigy, commanded a rigid fast of three days, and at the end of that time he himself was favoured by a vision of the Archangel Michael, who appeared to him clothed in a scarlet cloak, and in radiant glory. The saint announced

that he himself was the author of the miracle, and he ordered that henceforth he should be venerated in the cavern before which the steer had lain down. In obedience to the supernatural command, a basilica, dedicated to Saint Michael, was soon raised upon the



SHRINE OF SAINT MICHAEL, AT MONTE SANT' ANGELO

spot; the scarlet cloak, which he had left behind him as a proof of his visit, was preserved in the sanctuary, together with treasures of gold and silver; and before long pious pilgrims from all parts of Europe visited the shrine. It has been venerated in like manner

ever since, and the silver lamps that burn before the dim altar within the cave have been filled, lighted, worn out, and renewed during fourteen hundred years.

More than a thousand miles from Monte Gargano, on the borders of Brittany and Neustria, a bold rock juts out into the sea, and is daily cut off from the mainland by the flowing tide. In the beginning of the eighth century, the Bishop Aubert was visited in a dream by the Archangel Michael, who bade him build a sanctuary on the summit of the rock. By a coincidence more familiar in legend than in reality, Aubert found a steer lying in a cavern when he first visited the summit, and regarding this circumstance as a direct instruction from the archangel, he commanded that the church to be built on the spot should be the counterpart of the sanctuary of Monte Gargano, both in shape and size. It stands to-day, and has been a place of pilgrimage ever since its foundation. The existence of these two shrines is the link between Normandy and Italy, and all the early chroniclers laid stress upon the affiliation of the more recently founded one to its predecessor.

The rise and spread of Mohammedanism in the East had not deterred devout persons from visiting the holy places in the eighth and ninth centuries, and as the pilgrims who came from Normandy never failed to visit Monte Gargano on their way to the East, or on their

return, taking back with them to their own shrine in the West full accounts of what they had seen, there was a much more lively interchange of news between the two places than might be imagined. Delarc, whom I shall follow in telling the story of the Normans, points out that the two shrines were pillaged, the one by Norman pirates, the other by Saracen corsairs, at about the same period, that is to say, during the greater part of the ninth century. When Charles the Simple had invested Rollo with the sovereignty of Normandy,—for the very good reason that he was quite unable to do otherwise,—the new duke restored tenfold to this shrine of the archangel the treasures which his countrymen had taken from it; for the Normans had adopted Christianity with the readiness they afterwards showed in changing sides when any advantage was to be gained; and having suddenly transformed themselves into a nation of devout Catholics, speaking a Latin tongue, they also imitated their Neustrian predecessors in making pilgrimages to Southern Italy and the East. Being cautious people, they wore coats of mail under their pilgrims' robes, and though they carried the stout staff of the palmer in their hands, they carried at their belts their long Norman swords, merely on the possibility that they might be needed. They regarded the Archangel Michael with most especial veneration, on account of his warlike attributes, and accepted his victory over Lucifer as a satisfactory

substitute for their Scandinavian hero's destruction of the dragon.

In the year 845, while the Mohammedans were still fighting for the possession of Italy, and were attempting to get possession of the western coast of the mainland, the warning note of their own destruction already sounded in the west of Europe. In that year a party of fair-haired Norman robbers, sailing southward in their long-beaked ships, came upon the mouth of the Seine, and entering the stream, pushed up as far as Paris itself. It was on Holy Saturday, and the chronicler dryly remarks that they had probably not come so far with the object of performing their Easter devotions; and though Charles the Bald came out in time to meet them at the monastery of Saint Denis with a handful of men-at-arms, the inferiority of his force lent to the opposition he made the appearance of an almost peaceful reception, and that which had promised to be a battle degenerated to the ignominy of a bargain and a ransom.

But the Saracens knew not of these things, and pursued their course with occasional checks. In the same year their motley fleet, sailing up to get possession of Ponza and of the other islands which lie in the same waters, was met by the combined forces of Amalfi, Gaeta and Sorrento, under the valiant Duke of Naples, and suffered signal defeat. Sergius drove them southward before the wind, chasing them past Ischia and

Capri, and across the wide Gulf of Salerno to the distant islet of Licosa. There the Saracens had gained a foothold, not far from the ancient city of Elea, which was that same Velia where Verres had landed his ill-gotten Sicilian spoils. Thence also the Neapolitans dislodged them and drove them still further down the coast. Soon, however, they repaired their fleet in Palermo, and came back in force; the armament of the Christian allies had already dispersed, and Sergius was unable to prevent the Saracens from taking the strong castle of Misenum, which is Capo Miseno. It was from that point that the young Pliny had watched the stupendous eruption of Vesuvius that destroyed Pompeii, and the harbour and fortifications, of which the Romans had made such an important naval station, became a source of strength to the pirate Moslems.

As an instance of the readiness with which the Norman pilgrims could lay down the staff and draw the sword, I shall translate the following passage from the history of Amatus of Monte Cassino, as it is quoted by Abbé Delarc.

“Before the year 1000 of the Incarnation of our Lord, there appeared in the world forty valiant pilgrims; they came from the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, and reached Salerno just at the moment when the city, being vigorously besieged by the Saracens, was about to surrender. Before that time Salerno had been tributary to the Saracens, and when the payment

of the tribute was in arrears the Saracens immediately appeared with a numerous fleet, collected the sums due, slew the inhabitants, and ravaged the country. On learning this, the Norman pilgrims were angered by the injustice of the said Saracens, and because the Christians were subject to them; they therefore went before the most serene prince Guaimar, who ruled Salerno in the spirit of justice, and they asked arms and horses of him that they might fight against the Saracens. They told him that they did not this thing for the hope of any recompense but because the pride of the Saracens was intolerable to them. When they had attained what they asked, these forty Northmen fell upon the Saracen host and slew a great many of them, so that the rest took to flight both by sea and land; and the Normans had the victory, and the Salernitans were delivered from the bondage of the Pagans. But these Normans, having acted only for love of God, would accept nothing in return. Then the Salernitans gave the Normans lemons, and almonds, and preserves of nuts, and scarlet mantles, and iron instruments adorned with gold, that they might induce their fellow countrymen to come and inhabit a land flowing with milk and honey, and rich in good things. So the victorious pilgrims, when they returned to Normandy, bore witness as they had promised, and invited all Norman nobles to come into Italy, and some took

courage to go thither on account of the riches that were there."

From the year 996 Normandy was under the rule of Duke Richard the Second, whose vassals were generally in revolt against him, and at war among themselves. About the year 1015 two Norman gentles, Gilbert Buatère and Guillaume Répostelle, quarrelled about the latter's daughter, and Gilbert, who was the better man of his hands, settled the difficulty by throwing his adversary over a precipice. Fearing Duke Richard, however, Gilbert joined himself to certain other Normans, who were also at odds with their sovereign, and with their men-at-arms they departed together to go into Italy. Among these men was Raoul de Toëni, who at once became their leader.

At that time Pope Benedict the Eighth was alarmed by the growing influence of the Eastern Empire in the south of Italy, and was doing his best to reconcile the Lombard princes of Capua, Benevento, and Salerno, in order that they might lay aside their private enmities and join forces with him against the Greeks.

Now at this time, also, a certain Meles, a Lombard and a citizen of Bari, which was the capital of the Greek possessions in Italy, made an attempt to free his country from the Byzantine domination, and he had actually got together a force with which he fought a battle against the Byzantines. He was beaten, however, and retired within the walls of Bari, which

he held for some time, but was at last obliged to abandon. He then wandered far and wide through

Italy seeking allies, but finding none.

It was at this time that Raoul de Toëni and his companions came to Rome, craving the blessing of Pope Benedict the Eighth; and the Pope, on granting it, strongly advised them to join forces with Meles against the Greeks. They did so, and met him at Capua, and became the nucleus of a little army of free-

ENTRANCE TO CHURCH OF SAN NICOLA, BARI

booter patriots who lost no time in devouring whatsoever the Greeks had left untouched throughout the



south. The Emperor of Constantinople sent his troops against them, but the wily little Greeks were not a match for the colossal Northmen at hand to hand, and the allies of Meles carried everything before them. More pilgrims and adventurers reached Italy from the north, while Constantinople sent legions upon legions, so that the lances of the Greek army seemed as close and thick as canes in the brake, and its camp was like a hive of bees. At last the Byzantines were so many that they won the day, and on the right bank of the Ofanto, on the very ground which Hannibal had drenched with Roman blood, the little army of Meles was cut to pieces. Out of two hundred and fifty Norman nobles who rode into that fight, ten came back alive; but the dead had sold their lives dearly, and the plain that is called the Field of Blood, for the many battles fought there, was strewn far and wide with the bodies of the Greeks and their mercenaries.

This battle was fought in October, 1019; Meles and Raoul were among the survivors, and were well received by the emperor, Henry the Second, with whom they took refuge, but Meles died in the spring of the following year, and the cause of Apulian freedom seemed lost.

Before this battle of Cannæ a few Normans had separated themselves from their countrymen and had taken up their habitation in a small town built by the

Greeks in the pass of the Apennines, which was considered the key of Apulia. The stronghold received the name of Troy, Troia, and afterwards played an important part in the struggles which took place. This small party of Northmen seem to have taken service on the Greek side, but they were, of course, not engaged at Cannæ, and after that battle they found themselves on the winning side. The survivors of those who had fought against the Greeks, and certain others, were presented by the victors to the Abbot of Monte Cassino, who, with the Lombard princes, had immediately made advances to the Emperor of Constantinople.

At this point, however, the Emperor of the West, Henry the Second, interfered, and sent an army under the Archbishop of Cologne, a famous fighting prelate, with orders to chastise the Lombard princes and the Abbot of Monte Cassino for their defection to the Greek side, to take Troia, and to reduce Apulia to submission. The first part of this military expedition was accomplished without difficulty, but the handful of Normans in Troia defended themselves throughout a long siege against the German troops, and Henry was forced to content himself with a general statement on the part of the non-combatants that they neither had done nor would do anything against the will of the Holy Roman Emperor.

The only free Normans now left in Italy were those

in garrison at Troia, and a few who had been given to the Greek Abbot of Monte Cassino and were set free by Henry the Second and established by him in the imperial domain of Comino, in the neighbourhood of Sora. The first, while pretending loyalty to Constantinople,



CASTLE AT MONTE SANT' ANGELO

were really independent in the south, and held a position of the highest strategic importance; the others, with a few more of their countrymen who came down from Normandy, at once set about increasing the domain given them by the emperor. One of the persons most directly injured by their depredations very nearly

proved their destruction. With two hundred and fifty men-at-arms he prepared an ambush in the defiles of the mountains, and sent forward a score of his men to decoy the Normans from their camp. The Northmen fell into the trap and rode out at once; but the others turned and fled as they had been instructed, and the Normans, who were but five and twenty in number, dashed after them in pursuit. In a few moments they found themselves face to face with the enemy's full force, and hemmed in so that they could not retreat. Seeing that they were matched against overwhelming odds, they sheathed their swords and threw up their empty hands, but the leader of the enemy would not be cheated of his revenge, and in a loud voice commanded his men to fall upon them and slay them. Then those five and twenty horsemen drew their swords again, and fought for their lives, being one against ten; and they killed of the enemy sixty out of two hundred and fifty, and put the rest to an ignominious flight, and carried back the rich spoil of arms to their camp, having themselves lost but one man.

But now Henry the Second and Pope Benedict the Eighth died in the same year, and the Lombard princes whom the German emperor had deposed at once made a league with the Greeks to regain their possessions. The Normans, having nothing better to do, and always wisely anxious to find themselves on the winning side, promptly joined them. Capua resisted the siege during

eighteen months, but was at last taken, and the Lombard Pandolph, surnamed the Wolf of the Abruzzi, got possession of his own again. As soon as he had established himself, he proceeded to distribute the lands belonging to the abbey of Monte Cassino among those who had helped him, and in the following year he even succeeded in getting possession of Naples, which he held for a short time. The Neapolitan duke, however, soon turned the tables upon him by engaging the Normans on his side, and as they had got all they could hope for from Pandolph, they were easily persuaded to take Naples away from him again and restore it to the good Duke Sergius. They now founded the first Norman city in Italy. In 1030, Randolph, or Rainulf, built Aversa, a few miles north of Naples, and surrounded it with a moat and with very strong fortifications ; and with the land on which it was built he and his companions received a broad territory in that country which is to this day the garden of Italy.

The year 1030 is therefore a date of high importance in the story of the Normans, for it marks the period at which they ceased to be mere soldiers of fortune, fighting for any prince who would pay them, and began to be rulers in their own right. The way had been prepared for conquest ; history paused in expectation of the conqueror.

In the days of Robert the Devil, otherwise called the Magnificent, there lived in a castle that dominated

the village of Hauteville-la-Guichard, a few miles north-east of Coutances, a certain Tancred. He was neither great nor rich, but he was a strong man and wise as the Normans were; he was simply a Norman gentle, like many hundreds of others. Within fifty years his sons had taken for themselves Sicily, and all the south of Italy and the islands; they made and unmade popes, bid defiance to the Emperor of Constantinople, and treated the Emperor of the West as best suited their own purposes.

Of this Tancred it is told, that when hunting the wild boar with the old Duke Richard, being then a very young man, he dealt a memorable sword-stroke that helped to make his fortune. It was a law then that no man should strike at the game put up by the sovereign, and on that day a boar of vast size and strength had escaped the duke's own spear and was driven by the dogs through a thick wood to the foot of a cliff. Tancred, being swifter and stronger than the rest, came upon the beast there, and saw how he was tearing the poor hounds with his tusks, being at bay where he could not escape. Then Tancred, pitying the hounds greatly, and having lost his spear, pulled out his long Norman sword, and the boar came at him. He stood his ground, and dealt a single thrust at the beast's forehead, and the good blade pierced hide and skull and throat and body, and the cross-hilt struck the bone. But Tancred, fearing for himself because he had slain

the duke's game, turned and slipped away through the woods, leaving his sword in the boar, for he trusted that the duke might not find the place, and that he might come back himself and get the blade. Presently, however, the duke and his followers came crashing through the woods, and they found the dead beast lying there; they dragged out the sword, and many of them recognized it. Duke Richard was not angry, though the rule had been broken, and he praised the blow, and made a friend of the man who had dealt it. Tancred, therefore, established himself at the court of Normandy. He was twice married, and had twelve sons — five by his first wife and seven by the second; and it is easy to understand that the estate of a poor Norman gentleman should have seemed an insufficient provision for so many. Tancred, therefore, brought up his sons to know that each must make his own fortune with his own sword. Three of the eldest soon joined one of those parties which now continually left Normandy for the south of Italy, and reaching Naples soon after the foundation of Aversa they took service with Count Rainulf, and soon acquired an extraordinary reputation for courage and quickness of resource. Their names were William, called Bras-de-Fer, or the Iron Arm, Drogo, and Humphrey.

At that time the feudal system of the middle ages had already reached a great development. The idea which was at the foot of it, was that all lordship

depended from the sovereign in a regular chain of decreasing links, and that no man could hold large estates, nor small, without owing allegiance to one more powerful than himself, who in turn did homage to a greater, and so on up to the emperor himself, or the Church of Rome. Though Rainulf had a city and a territory of his own, he had nevertheless attached himself in a sort of military service to the powerful Prince of Capua, Pandolph the Fourth, the cruel and unscrupulous Wolf of the Abruzzi. He does not, however, appear to have attached much importance to the idea of fealty towards the feudal lord he had chosen, for soon afterwards, when Pandolph quarrelled with the Duke of Sorrento, who resented the old Wolf's too pressing admiration of his wife, Rainulf did not hesitate to go over, with all his Normans, to Guaimar, Prince of Salerno, who was the lady's uncle; and the consequence was that Pandolph was soon obliged to take refuge in his castle, while the Emperor Conrad himself appeared in Capua, in the year 1038. From his stronghold of Sant' Agata, Pandolph purchased a sort of pardon from the emperor for the sum of three hundred pounds of gold, but the emperor nevertheless deposed him from his principality and presented it to Guaimar, with the standards, or gonfalons, of Salerno and Capua. Guaimar, who knew that he should not be able to take possession of the new principality without a struggle, in which the help of the Normans would be indispensable

to him, seized the occasion of recommending them to the emperor, who therefore solemnly confirmed Rainulf in his county of Aversa, and presented him with a lance and a standard blazoned with the imperial arms, thereby creating the chief of the Normans a vassal of the Holy Roman Empire. Guaimar made use of his new position to extend his territory in all directions. In April, 1039, he had got possession of Amalfi, then one of the most prosperous commercial cities in the Mediterranean, and so situated at the mouth of a rugged ravine, protected on both sides by enormous cliffs, that it was altogether impregnable to an attack by land. The Duchess of Sorrento, who had been the indirect cause of so much misfortune to her admiring Wolf, was destined to bring destruction upon her husband; with some show of reason the latter repudiated her, whereupon her uncle of Salerno seized Sorrento, adding it to his wide possessions, and investing his brother Guy with the Duchy. The somewhat hardly treated husband was condemned to a solitary confinement, in which he was permitted to reflect upon his honourable errors of judgment until death relieved him from the contemplation of his misfortunes.

Pandolph, seeing himself at so great a disadvantage, now undertook a journey to Constantinople, in the hope of getting help from the emperor; but the wily Guaimar was before him, and had already sent ambassadors who practically offered, on his behalf, to

help the Greeks in driving the Saracens from Sicily, and the emperor accepted his advance without hesitation.

Now in 1034 the Saracens of Sicily, being involved in civil war, had requested the Byzantines to intervene, which they had of course done in the hope of reconquering the island; but the other party appealed to the African Mohammedans, who very soon got the better of the struggle. The death of the leader with whom the Greeks had allied themselves relieved them of all obligation, and they immediately resolved to forget that they had been called in as allies and to assume the part of conquerors. Under the orders of George Maniaces they sent out one of those extraordinary armies, such as only the Eastern Empire could have raised. Mercenaries were collected from every territory that owed allegiance to the Eastern emperor,—Scandinavians, Russians, Calabrians, Apulians, Greeks, and Asiatics of every race; and the wise Guaimar of Salerno, who was put to much inconvenience by the turbulence of his Norman friends, was glad to lend them to the Greek general, and promised that if they agreed to help the invasion of Sicily, they should be rewarded both by the Greeks and by himself. Three hundred, or perhaps five hundred, Normans volunteered for this service, under the orders of William Bras-de-Fer, Drogo, and Humphrey; and with them went also a certain Lombard of the north, named Ardoin.

In 1038, the Greeks and this little band of Normans crossed the straits, landed at Faro, a little to the west of Messina, and marched upon the town. The news of the Greek invasion had put an end to the civil strife of the Mohammedans, and they met the army of the emperor with fifty thousand men at Rametta. They fought bravely and were beaten, and with the true instinct of the Greek for the old Greek capital, Maniaces at once advanced upon Syracuse. Here the Moslems defended themselves in the fortress they had built among the ruins, and the siege lasted some time. The city was under the command of a Moslem governor, and with him William Bras-de-Fer fought to the death in single combat. Brave as the bravest, and far stronger than other men, the Moslem had long been the terror of the Christians; but his hour was at hand, and the vanguard of a race stronger than his was before him. He fell before the walls of Syracuse, pierced by the Norman spear, and his fall foreran by a few days a surrender of his city. Then the Greeks and the Normans went in together in triumph, and from every nook and hiding place, from the city of tombs, from the catacombs of Saint Martian by the Church of Saint John, from the recesses of those vast quarries whence the Greek tyrants had hewn the stone that built five cities, gathering in such numbers as no man had guessed, the long-oppressed Christians came forth to meet their deliverers, and to

show them the treasures of gold and silver vessels, and the relics of the saints and the body of the holy Lucy, which was found whole and fresh as on the day when it had been laid to rest. And the chronicle says that the coffin which held the saint's body was overlaid with silver and was sent to Constantinople. Forthwith Maniaces began to build the castle on the



CASTELLO MANIACE, SYRACUSE

southern point of Ortygia which still bears his name, and to strengthen the other fortifications as a base from which to effect the conquest of the island.

The Saracens who had been beaten at Messina had retired to Palermo. The Greek admiral, Stephanos, was not able to hinder their retreat by sea, and Maniaces was so enraged at the failure that when Stephanos arrived in Syracuse he fell upon him and beat him with a stick, in the presence of the troops.

A similar and a worse indignity had been inflicted upon the Lombard captain, Ardoine, most probably after a battle which was fought somewhere between Messina and Syracuse. During the engagement, Ardoine had got possession of a very beautiful horse, after slaying its Saracen rider with his own hand. The battle being over, the grasping Maniaces commanded that the horse should be given to him, which Ardoine refused to do. In a fit of rage, Maniaces commanded that the Lombard should be scourged through the camp, and that his horse should be taken from him. The consequence of these two outrageous acts was that the Normans deserted in a body with Ardoine, while Stephanos, the admiral, who had interest at court in Constantinople, caused Maniaces to be recalled. On reaching the capital of the East, he was cruelly mutilated and thrown into prison, where he remained two years. Ardoine and the Normans retired to Aversa and Salerno, vowing vengeance upon the Greeks; and thereafter they kept the oath they took. The Normans were as remarkable for the subtlety with which they could lead their enemies into a trap as they were conspicuously brave when forced to fight against odds in the open field, and in some degree they have transmitted both those qualities to the Englishmen of to-day. Still smarting from the Greek lash, Ardoine hastened to visit the Greek captain of the Byzantine provinces in Italy, gained his confidence and friendship by rich gifts, and

persuaded the deluded official to confide to him the government of Melfi, the stronghold which overlooks the plains of Cannæ and the river Ofanto, and is the true key to the possession of Apulia from the north-west side. The keen Lombard at once set about secretly stirring up the people against the Greeks, and as soon as he saw that revolution was ripe he made pretext of a pilgrimage to Rome in order to consult Count Rainulf and the Norman chiefs at Aversa. There, in the city they themselves had founded, the daring little band of fighting men distributed the south among themselves. Ardoïn was to hand over Melfi, whence it would be easy to expel the Greeks from Italy altogether, and he was to take one-half of the conquered country, while the Normans were to divide the remainder. The Northmen swore a solemn oath, and, as the Abbé Delarc briefly expresses it, three hundred Normans, led by twelve chiefs, followed Ardoïn to fight in open warfare against an empire that still held a great part of Europe and Asia, and ruled over many millions of subjects. Among these chiefs were William Bras-de-Fer and Drogo, Tancred's sons, as well as Ardoïn himself. With the compactness and energy of those sudden storms which, in the flash of a minute, drive straight clearings through the mighty forests of Suabia, tearing up thousands of ancient trees in their path, the little army fell upon Melfi. The few Greeks that were there fled almost without resistance, and the Nor-

mans were masters of the place in a day. With the instinct of true conquerors, they lost no time in fortifying their position ; but it was by the habitual methods of highway robbers and pirates that they began to extend their conquest, pillaging Venosa in the south, Ravello in the east, and Ascoli to northward, while none dared stand against them, but all people were amazed and terror-struck under their furious raids.

And now their victims, seeing that the Normans had not come to free them but to devour them, appealed to the Greeks again, and the captain of the south, who had given up Amalfi to Ardoine, came against the Normans with a great army, and met them near Venosa. There a herald of the Greeks rode forward, mounted on a splendid charger, to offer the invaders terms of peace if they would ride away and harry the country no more ; and while he was speaking a big Norman, whose name was Hugo Tudextifen, stood by his horse's head. But when he had said all, the giant raised his ungloved fist and smote the horse between the eyes, so that he fell down dead ; and this he did that the Greek might know what manner of men Northmen were.

So the next day, which was the seventeenth of March, 1041, the battle was fought, and the Normans had seven hundred mounted men and five hundred men-at-arms who fought on foot, for they had recruited many among the discontented people of Apulia. The Greeks were thirty thousand, and some have said that they were sixty thou-

sand, and they came against the Normans drawn up in a wedge, as was their wont. They were utterly and completely vanquished, and besides the thousands that fell under the Norman sword, many were drowned as they tried to cross the stream in their flight.

But such was the energy of the Greek general that in little more than seven weeks after his humiliating defeat he faced the Normans again, on the fourth of May, in the great plain of Cannæ, ever thirsty for blood. Again the same fate met him, again the Normans slew until they could slay no more, again the waters of the river swallowed up thousands of terrified fugitives. On the field of battle were found among the dead two great churchmen, Angelus, Bishop of Troia, and Stephen, Bishop of Acerenza; for in those days bishops rode out to battle like other men, and in the south the Church was bound to Constantinople.

With a tenacity unusual in the Greeks in those days, the Byzantine general collected the remains of his troops, brought over others from Sicily, and prepared to face the Normans a third time; but the Eastern emperor had lost confidence in the unsuccessful leader, and replaced him by another. The Normans on their side made use of the booty they had taken in order to raise fresh troops, and with their usual diplomatic skill they chose as their commander-in-chief a brother of the Lombard Prince of Benevento.

The third battle was fought on the third of September, in the same year, 1041, almost on the ground where the last had been fought. The Normans had



SARACEN-NORMAN WINDOW IN THE OSPEDALETTI, TRAPANI

suffered great losses, in spite of their victories, the people of Apulia believed that the Eastern Empire was in earnest at last, and the little army of invaders could muster but seven hundred men to face ten

thousand. William Bras-de-Fer himself, ill of the quartan fever, sat on his horse at a little distance, looking on. The Greek general harangued his troops in a heroic strain, calling up legends of Achilles and stories of Philip and Alexander. The Greek host came on in even order against an adversary that was despicably inferior in numbers; the Normans faced them like men, and fought like lions, but were driven back by the sheer weight that opposed them. Then William Bras-de-Fer, ill as he was, drew his great sword and rode at the foe for life or death; and the Normans took heart and struck ten times while the Greeks struck once, and hewed them in pieces upon the plain; and when there was no Greek left to fight them, they bound the Greek general upon his horse, and with great joy rode back to Melfi, bearing of the rich spoil as much as they could carry. The victory was decisive, and its consequences were destined to be enduring.

The history of the following years chiefly concerns two struggles of a very different nature, one of which took place between the Normans of Melfi and the Greeks, for the possession of Apulia, while the other was entered into by the monks of Monte Cassino, in the hope of regaining those territories which at various times had been taken from them. In this war, Normans found themselves engaged on each side, and seldom hesitated to go over from one side to the

other when their interests could be served by so doing.

It would be impossible within such narrow limits even to recapitulate the events which took place at this time in Constantinople. It is enough to remind the reader that Maniaces had been disgraced and thrown into prison, and otherwise ill treated, and to add that he was now set at liberty after a revolution in which an emperor was deposed, and a former empress brought back to power. The unfortunate general was restored to all his honours, and was immediately sent with a large army to reconquer Apulia. In the spring of 1042 he landed in the safe harbour of Taranto, and rapidly collecting such native troops as would join his standard, he marched northward in the direction of the old fighting ground. The Normans of Melfi had quarrelled with their chief, and had recently chosen for their leader Argyros, the son of the Lombard patriot, Meles. At the approach of the Greek army he made energetic efforts to increase his force, calling upon all Normans in Italy to fight the common foe. In spite of every effort, Maniaces was unable to check the panic which took possession of his army when it was known that the Normans were at hand, and he regretfully followed his men in their precipitate flight to Taranto. When the Normans reached the sea in pursuit, the Greeks had disappeared within the stronghold on

the islet, which was connected with the mainland only by a narrow bridge. The chronicler, William of Apulia, quoted by Delarc, compares the manœuvres

of William Bras-de-Fer and the Normans before Taranto to the tricks of the serpent charmer endeavouring to lure a snake from its hole. But nothing availed; the Greeks were thoroughly frightened from the first, and the Normans, who could not hope to take the town, contented themselves with their favourite diversion of pillaging the country wholesale.



STATUES IN FRONT OF THE CHURCH OF
SAN DOMENICO, TARANTO

They were no sooner out of sight than Maniaces led out his timid troops and marched them along the coast. His progress was marked by a series of the most atrocious cruelties; wherever he suspected

the people of having sympathized with the Normans, he ordered wholesale executions; the wretched peasants were hanged and beheaded without mercy, many were buried alive up to the neck and left to die, and the dastardly Greeks hewed little children in pieces in that blind rage of cruelty which only cowards can feel. Meanwhile the Normans, who were now in force, proceeded with their conquest of Apulia, taking one city after another, and they would soon have been in possession of the whole country by force of arms, if a new turn of affairs in Constantinople had not brought about the recall of Maniaces and an attempt on the part of the Byzantine port to bring about an alliance with the Normans. The emperor now offered Argyros the titles and honours of a Byzantine catapan and of a patrician of the Empire; the son of the devoted Meles had the weakness to yield to these blandishments, and immediately proclaimed the supremacy of the emperor in Bari. By this step he at once lost the confidence of the Normans, who refused to own him any longer for their chief, and elected the valiant William Bras-de-Fer for their count and leader. Without hesitation he presented himself before Guaimar, Prince of Salerno, as his liege lord, and was acknowledged by him as Count of Apulia; but it appears that in the peculiar scale of suzerainties that made up the feudal system, Rainulf of Aversa became the nominal

suzerain of Apulia, a sort of intermediary between Guaimar and William.

Maniaces did not accept his recall with the humility which Constantinople had expected of him; on the contrary, he promptly revolted, proclaimed himself Emperor of the East, and besieged Argyros, the emperor's new ally, in Bari. Failing to take the place, he now appealed to the Normans, who indignantly refused his proposals. He still held Taranto in the south, but before long was driven from that position by another Greek army, crossed the Adriatic, and perished in Bulgaria, while attempting to continue the struggle. His death so far simplified the political situation, that the contest was now continued between two parties only, the Normans under William Bras-de-Fer on the one hand, and the Greeks of Bari under Argyros the Lombard on the other. These events bring us to the year 1043, and during their development the quarrel about the lands of Monte Cassino had begun and continued. I shall try to sum up the question in a few words. The abbots of Monte Cassino had invoked the assistance of certain Normans to defend them, and about the same time Pandolph the Wolf had presented other Normans with extensive lands belonging to the same abbey. The Emperor Conrad had contented himself with the promise of the latter party to respect the power of the Abbot Richer, who, on the departure of the emperor, got some help

from Guaimar of Salerno, and recovered at least one fortress. Pandolph the Wolf, who had meanwhile



NORMAN DOORWAY AT TRAPANI

gone to Constantinople to ask assistance in recovering Capua, and who had been exiled by a capricious court, now returned to Italy, having been set at liberty by

the death of the emperor; and he returned as the open enemy both of Guaimar and of the Abbot Richer. As allies he had on his side the two Norman counts of Aquino, who had married his daughters, as well as the Normans whom he had established on the abbey lands; against him were ranged on the side of the abbot, Guaimar of Salerno and Rainulf of Aversa. Early in the struggle the abbot was defeated at the head of his men and taken prisoner, while one of the counts of Aquino fell into the hands of Guaimar. The two prisoners having been exchanged, Richer began a journey to the north, in order to appeal to the Emperor of the West; he was wrecked near Rome, but was provided with means for continuing on his way by the Roman nobles. In his absence a plague broke out in Aquino and the neighbourhood, and the counts, who were devout men and regarded the epidemic as a visitation from heaven, went up to the abbey as penitents, on foot and with halters round their necks, to implore forgiveness for their evil deeds. Richer now returned, bringing with him five hundred Lombards, but was soon persuaded by Guaimar to travel northwards again in order to recruit a larger force. The plague and the abbot having disappeared simultaneously, the counts of Aquino repented of their repentance, attacked the abbey again, seized it, and installed the former abbot, who had fled with Pandolph the Wolf to Constantinople. This roused Guaimar to

action at last, and appearing with a Norman army, he once more set the monks at liberty. Richer now returned from the north with a considerable force, and the Normans who held the abbey lands were brought to reason, and swore fealty to the rightful abbot. There is much confusion of dates in the accounts of these events, but it is certain that after the death of Maniaces the old quarrel broke out again, and matters looked so ill for Richer that he thought for a while of returning to his native Bavaria. He appears to have been prevented from so doing by the following incident and its consequences.

A certain young Norman noble named Randolph, son-in-law to Rainulf of Aversa, came one day to the abbey on the mountain with a number of his followers. Before going in they entered the church to say their prayers, and, according to the custom of that time, they left all their arms, excepting their swords, outside the door. Whether the monks had any reason for expecting a hostile intention on their part does not appear, and Randolph's father-in-law had usually taken their side. Possibly it was on general principles that they thought it not good that a party of Norman knights should be within their walls. While the Normans were on their knees in the church the monks and their Lombard men-at-arms fell upon the visitors and slew fifteen of them within the church; Randolph was taken prisoner, and the rest escaped. The imme-

diate result of this treacherous victory was a regular campaign against the Norman holders of abbey lands, who were in a very short time obliged to abandon all their castles and retire to Aversa, where they were well received in consequence of the attacks made upon the monks by the count's son-in-law. These things happened in 1045, and in the same year Count Rainulf died at a good old age. In accordance with the laws of the feudal system, the Normans of Aversa now requested Guaimar to name Rainulf's successor, and his choice fell upon one of the latter's nephews, a youth of great endowments, who unfortunately died almost immediately afterwards. An attempt on the part of the people of Gaeta to make one of the counts of Aquino their chief was crushed by Guaimar, and Pandolph the Wolf, seeing the county of Aversa at odds with Salerno, his most dangerous enemy, immediately persuaded the former to join him in a fresh attack on Monte Cassino. In the meantime Adenulf of Aquino, whom Guaimar had taken prisoner, besought the latter prince to set him free, promising that he would immediately go to the assistance of the abbey. Guaimar agreed, and Adenulf was received with joy by Richer, who named him protector of the monastery, and presented him with a splendid charger, a standard, and a suit of armour. Adenulf, on his side, gave back to the monks a golden chalice and a rich cope which Pandolph the Wolf had stolen from

the monastery and presented to him. At first Pandolph refused to believe the news, but on finding that Adenulf was really at Monte Cassino and ready to defend it he retired, leaving his adversary in possession of Gaeta.

Even now the monks were not out of danger, for the young Randolph was at large again, having been liberated at the request of Drogo, Count of Apulia, who paid the monastery a thousand pieces of silver for his ransom, and if an early death had not cut short his career, the young man would probably have taken vengeance for the injuries he had suffered at the monks' hands. The quarrel about the abbey lands, however, was at an end, since the monastery had regained possession of them, and the ground of those differences without which the Normans were still unable to bear the monotony of a prosperous existence, was now removed to another matter. On the premature death of Rainulf's nephew, another of his nephews, also called Rainulf, and surnamed Trincanocte, claimed the county, but fell into the hands of Guaimar of Salerno, who insisted on his right of presenting the county to a man of his own choice. The young Rainulf was imprisoned in that dark fortress which still hangs above Salerno, and to which so many gloomy stories are attached. With him there was another Norman and two men of Amalfi. Before long they gained the sympathies of their jailor, Martin, who allowed the Amalfitans to send

to Amalfi for a few measures of drugged wine. The jailor gave the liquor to the soldiers of the guard, who drank it and fell asleep, and he then allowed the four to leave the castle. Swift horses, held in readiness by the men of Amalfi, bore the escaped prisoners by the pass of La Cava to the strong castle of Maddaloni beyond Naples on the highroad to Rome. Of course the irrepressible and indefatigable Pandolph seized the opportunity of allying himself with the young Rainulf; together they drove Guaimar's count from Aversa and planned an attack upon Salerno; but their plans were disconcerted when they learned that Drogo of Apulia was in arms to help his liege lord, Guaimar, and though the two armies came face to face almost at the foot of Vesuvius, the matter was brought to a peaceable conclusion. Drogo had the wisdom to intercede for Rainulf with Guaimar, who at last consented, though much against his wishes, to invest the young man with the gonfalon of Aversa. Rainulf Trincanocte had gained his end, but was now, of course, Pandolph's enemy. All these things seem to have happened in the year 1045. At the same time the struggle in Apulia was continuing, and Argyros of Bari was badly beaten by William Bras-de-Fer at Trani. The combined forces of Guaimar and of Bras-de-Fer had also accomplished the difficult feat of marching down through Calabria, and had built a strong Norman fort at Squillace on the Gulf of Taranto, almost, if not quite, in sight of Sicily.

In 1046, the population of Apulia seems to have revolted against Constantinople, Argyros was replaced by another catapan, who lost Taranto or Trani, or both, in the last battle which William Bras-de-Fer was destined to fight. After a career of little more than ten years, the Norman hero passed away, we know not exactly when, nor where. It is said that he was buried in the Church of the Trinity at Venosa, but I believe that no trace of his tomb is to be found.

It is needless to say that the death of such a man in such times caused new trouble, but the Norman power had already reached the straits, and it was a foregone conclusion that it should before long embrace all the south. Drogo, who seems to have been associated in the leadership with his brother William, succeeded him, and received in marriage the daughter of Guaimar with a great dowry.

At this time the troubles in which the Papacy was involved by the simultaneous existence of three popes, namely, Benedict the Ninth, Sylvester the Third, and Gregory the Sixth, called for the presence and interference of the Emperor Henry the Third, surnamed the Black. With an energy remarkable even in those times, the young sovereign descended into Lombardy at the head of a large army, held a synod at Pavia, deposed the three popes by a stroke of the imperial pen, and proceeded to Rome. Without delay he imposed upon the cardinals the election of the German bishop

of Bamberg under the name of Clement the Second, by whom he immediately caused himself and his Empress Agnes to be anointed and crowned. His direct action put a stop to the hideous evils which had begun during the domination in Rome of that extraordinary woman known as Theodora Senatrix, and which had continued under the popes and princes of her evil race; but Henry the Black would have done better had he confirmed Gregory the Sixth in the Papacy.

In 1047, accompanied by the Pope he had made, he marched southwards to Monte Cassino, and was received with the highest honours in the now prosperous abbey. At Capua he convoked the rulers of the south, Guaimar of Salerno, Drogo of Apulia, Rainulf Trincanocte of Aversa, Pandolph the Wolf, and all other lords who were supposed to hold their lands from the Empire. His intention was to pacify and organize the south, but he was no longer dealing with antipopes and clergymen; he was face to face with the strongest and most cunning men of the age, and with men, moreover, who now commanded wealth that could dazzle even an emperor. Pandolph brought such splendid offerings that Henry was persuaded to restore to him the long-lost principality of Capua, to the inexpressible chagrin of Guaimar, who had now held it for nine years. Drogo and Rainulf prevailed upon him by presents to confirm them in their domains as imperial vassals, thus liberat-

ing them from the suzerainty of Guaimar, who thereby lost the title of Duke of Apulia and Calabria. This was the beginning of the end of the great Lombard house of Salerno.

Proceeding on his way, and accompanied by his faithful Pope, Henry suddenly found himself opposed at Benevento by the loyalty of its inhabitants to the now almost forgotten Empire of the East. Having already sent back a portion of his army to Germany, Henry contented himself with burning the suburbs of the city, and by way of vengeance, presented the whole country to the Normans on condition that they could take it. His obedient Pope then and there excommunicated the entire population, and the two departed, leaving the Normans to work their will unhindered.

There can be no doubt but that Henry's intentions were good, but his visit to the south was the beginning of many troubles between the Papacy and the Normans; he certainly did wrong in restoring Capua to Pandolph, and his gift of Benevento to men who had no sort of claim to it was most unjust. His departure from Italy and the events just narrated coincided very nearly with the appearance of a new and most extraordinary character upon the scene. It was at this time that Robert, afterwards surnamed Guiscard, the eldest son born of the second marriage of Tancred of Hauteville, followed the example of his elder half-brothers and came to seek his fortune in Italy.

Imitating the example of the Abbé Delarc, my guide through the intricacies of this period of history, I shall quote here the portrait of Robert, which is found in the '*Alexiad*' of Anna Comnena, a princess of Constantinople.

"This Robert was of Norman origin and of an obscure family; he united a marvellous astuteness with immense ambition, and his bodily strength was prodigious. His whole desire was to attain to the wealth and power of the greatest living men; he was extremely tenacious of his designs and most wise in finding means to attain his ends. In stature he was taller than the tallest; of a ruddy hue and fair-haired, he was broad shouldered, and his eyes sparkled with fire; the perfect proportion of all his limbs made him a model of beauty from head to heel, as I have often heard people tell. Homer says of Achilles that those who heard his voice seemed to hear the thundering shout of a great multitude, but it used to be said of this man that his battle-cry would turn back tens of thousands. Such a man, one in such a position, of such a nature, and of such spirit, naturally hated the idea of service, and would not be subject to any man; for such are those natures which are born too great for their surroundings.

"Being, therefore, so constituted and utterly incapable of obeying, Robert set out from Normandy with five horsemen and thirty men on foot, all told,



RUINS OF THE ABBEY AT MILETO

and came and lived in the fastnesses and caverns and mountains of Lombardy (at that time meaning Calabria), supporting himself by robbery and plundering

travellers, thus procuring horses, necessaries, and arms. So the beginning of his life was filled with bloodshed and many murders."

It is needless to say that after the Emperor Henry's departure, Guaimar at once made a vigorous effort to regain the principality of Capua; and by the help of the Normans he took the city and received the submission of the old Wolf. The two, however, soon quarrelled again concerning the person of a certain Count of Teano whom Pandolph had long kept a prisoner and had treated very cruelly. Guaimar had caused him to be set at liberty, and Pandolph now attempted to imprison him again. Guaimar again appealed to the Normans, who responded to his call; but Robert, who had received no favours from his brothers since his appearance in Italy, turned against them and fought for Pandolph, who promised him a castle and one of his daughters in marriage. The promises were, of course, not fulfilled, and Robert departed, vowing the destruction of Pandolph's house.

His brother Drogo, wearied by his importunities, now gave him a small castle in lower Calabria, overlooking the valley of the Crati and the site of ancient Sybaris. The place was in a dangerous situation, in the heart of an enemy's country, and Drogo perhaps hoped that his wild young brother would not attempt to hold it, and would leave Italy altogether. But he had misjudged a man far greater than himself. Robert left the place

indeed, but only to move up the valley to the famous rock of San Marco, where he established himself and led the life of a desperate marauder. With the true Norman instinct, he made friends also by means of the booty he took from others. In this way, besides his own men, he had a small force consisting of a few score natives, desperate ruffians whose interests were bound up with his own. Once, being almost reduced to starvation, he sent them out by night on a marauding expedition, then secretly dressed himself like one of them and accompanied their march, lest the natives should lead his own men into a trap, and he only showed himself at dawn when the fighting grew hot; and he and they brought home great spoil. The careful chronicler of Monte Cassino, who detested all Normans with good reason, made an extraordinarily accurate list of Robert's thefts, counting up a number of oxen and brood mares, thirty head of horned cattle, ten fat porkers, and so on, and adding that Robert used to capture even peasants, whom he caused to pay ransom in bread and wine. Furthermore, the chronicler, as if speaking of a great hardship, says that Robert was more than once actually obliged to drink pure water from the spring, and that he visited his brother Drogo again and told him of his great poverty, and that what he said with his lips he showed in his face, for he was very thin.

A trick he played upon a friend about this time

describes the man who was to conquer the south. He was on very good terms with a certain knight, the Lord of Bisignano, a man of considerable possessions. One day they met by agreement, and Robert commanded his men to halt at a little distance, while he embraced his friend. He embraced him indeed, for riding up to him, he threw his arms round him, brought him to the ground, and placing his knees upon his chest held him fast, until he promised to pay a ransom of twenty thousand gold pieces. While the money was being collected, he kept him a close prisoner in San Marco, but came to him in his cell and confessed on his knees and in tears that he had committed a great sin, but that his friend's wealth and his own poverty constrained him to do this deed. 'Thou art my father,' he said, 'and it is meet that a father should help his poor son, for this thing is commanded by the law of the king, that a father who is rich in all things should succour the poverty of his son.' When the money was paid, and he was riding sadly homeward, the Lord of Bisignano must have made some curious reflections upon filial piety, and the spontaneous choice of parents.

In spite of such deeds, however, Robert continued to be relatively poor. He suddenly improved his fortunes by matrimony. Being on his way to visit his brother Drogo, probably in the hope of extracting money from him, he was met by a Norman kinsman of his, named Gerard, who appears to have been the first to appreci-

ate qualities that were surprising, if not good, for he first, and on that occasion, addressed Robert as ‘Guiscard,’ ‘the astute.’ ‘O Guiscard,’ said he, ‘why do you thus wander hither and thither? Behold, now, marry my aunt, the sister of my father, and I will be your knight, and will go with you to conquer Calabria, and I will bring two hundred riders.’

In spite of Drogo’s strong objections, Robert took Gerard’s advice and espoused the aunt, of whom we have, unfortunately, no portrait; her name is variously written Adverarda and Alberada, and he afterwards repudiated her. Gerard kept his word, and with his help Robert won castles and towns and devoured the land.

At this time a certain Richard of the Norman house of Aversa appeared upon the scene, having been exiled by the young Rainulf Trincanocte, who feared him on account of his great popularity. Coming to Apulia, he found a friend in Humphrey, but soon quarrelled with Drogo. He must have possessed very great charm, together with the gift of inspiring confidence, for an old Norman noble, the childless Lord of Genzano in Apulia, took him to his heart and home and made him master of all his castles. About this time, also, old Pandolph the Wolf closed his chequered career, dying at the last in possession of his principality, and leaving it to his son; and at no great interval the young Rainulf of Aversa also died, leaving an only son, who was a mere

child. Richard of Genzano would very naturally have seized Aversa, where he was beloved by the people, but in his quarrel with Drogo the latter had succeeded in imprisoning him, and it was not until the people of Aversa formally requested Guaimar to make him their count that Drogo consented to set him at liberty, and he was invested with the county by Guaimar himself. The south of Italy was now divided between this Norman Richard of Aversa, the sons of Tancred, the two Lombard princes of Salerno and Capua, and the Greeks who held Bari for the emperor. There was, moreover, the city and country of Benevento, which Henry the Third had given over to the Normans, but which before long appealed to the Pope for protection.

We must now briefly return to the troubles in which the Papacy was involved. Henry the Black had returned to Germany, and he had left his German Pope, Clement the Second, in Rome. The latter was alone and without friends, and within seven months the anti-Pope, Benedict the Ninth, succeeded in poisoning him and in taking possession of the Holy See. In the following year the emperor sent a second German Pope to Rome, under the name of Damasus the Second; after a reign of twenty-three days he shared the fate of his predecessor, and was buried also. Henry now held a great assembly at Worms, the result of which was that Bruno, Bishop of Toul, in Lorraine, consented to go

to Rome and to be made Pope, on condition that the Roman clergy and people should elect him of their own free will. He arrived, bringing with him as a friend and counsellor that famous Hildebrand who long afterwards brought Henry the Fourth barefooted in the snow to Canossa. Bruno was elected at once and took the name of Leo the Ninth.

At the outset of his pontificate this Pope found himself face to face with something like starvation. The Holy See possessed absolutely no source of income; the Pope had soon expended the little ready money he and his friends had with them, and before long they actually made arrangements to sell their vestments and superfluous clothes in order to raise a little sum with which they might secretly return to Lorraine. At this critical juncture a deputation of nobles arrived from Benevento, bearing rich gifts, and entreating the Pope to revoke the excommunication which the emperor had caused to be pronounced upon their city. It must be remembered that the Papacy had long laid claim to Benevento, rightly or wrongly, and it seems that the people themselves, in spite of their conduct at the time of Henry's visit, preferred to submit to the authority of the Papacy rather than to be left a prey to the Normans. Leo the Ninth at once undertook the journey to the south, where he was well received by the Lombard princes, and a year later he renewed his visit, remaining some time in Benevento. On these occa-

sions he conceived a strong dislike for the Normans, but on meeting the Norman chiefs at Monte Gargano he was completely deceived by their promises. He did not understand that in taking possession of Benevento he had set a limit to the Norman conquest in a northward direction; and when, after a third visit to Benevento, during which he received the most friendly assurances from Guaimar and Drogo, the Normans in the neighbourhood rose and attacked the city, his irritation and disappointment knew no bounds. But the messenger whom he sent to the Count of Apulia to protest against the outrage was met by the news that Drogo had been assassinated.

The Italians of the south had formed a great conspiracy to rid themselves of the Norman domination by a wholesale massacre. From Benevento Drogo had gone to the castle of Montolio in Apulia, and there, on the tenth of August, being the feast of Saint Lawrence, he went to mass in the castle church. As he entered, the murderer sprang upon him from behind the door and stabbed him, and at the same moment the Italians in the castle fell upon the unsuspecting Normans, and killed many of them before they could defend themselves. In many parts of Apulia the conspiracy broke out at the same time, and many Normans perished, but Humphrey and Robert Guiscard escaped, and swore a great oath to avenge the treachery. So Humphrey became Count of Apulia, and Robert stood by him, and

they bound the limbs of him who had slain Drogo, and sawed them off one by one, and because the man still breathed they buried him alive. The rest of the prisoners they hanged, and these executions, says the chronicler, somewhat allayed the grief of Humphrey. And Leo the Ninth, who had believed that Drogo was his friend, sang a mass for his soul that all his sins might be forgiven him.

Drogo had undoubtedly been the man who might have made peace between the Papacy and the Normans, and his death drove Leo the Ninth to make a vain appeal to the emperor for help. He was ready to offer anything in his gift, temporal or spiritual, to Henry the Third, the King of France, and the Duke of Marseilles, if they would only help to deliver the land from the malice of the Normans. But they were not to be moved, and in his great need the Pope turned to the Greeks, who still had a foothold in Bari under the Lombard Argyros. The latter had returned from Constantinople in 1051, bringing immense sums of money, with which the emperor hoped that the Normans might be bribed to leave Italy and serve the Eastern Empire; but the Normans refused all such advances with scorn, and Argyros was obliged to continue the war he had so long waged at a disadvantage. Desiring the expulsion of the Normans quite as much as Pope Leo himself, he turned to him spontaneously and met his advances halfway.

In 1052, the Pope made his first attempt at an attack, and gathered some troops in the neighbourhood of Naples, attempting at the same time to gain the alliance of Guaimar; but the latter remembered that the Normans had helped him in many a difficulty, and sternly refused to have anything to do with such a war; the Pope's troops could no longer be kept together, and the Pope took refuge in Naples. A few weeks afterwards a frightful tragedy changed the course of events in the south.

Guaimar's wife was a daughter of one of the Lombard counts of Teano, and, unknown to Guaimar, her four brothers had long been conspiring to seize his throne. They drew into their conspiracy the people of Amalfi, who had not lost the tradition of their recent independence, and whom Guaimar had been obliged to treat with severity. They, indeed, began something like a regular war by attacking Salernitan vessels on the high seas, and at last they actually appeared with warships before Salerno, and effected a landing. Guaimar seized his arms and rushed down to the shore to repel the attack, but his Salernitan soldiers fled before the determined Amalfitans, and in a moment Guaimar found himself surrounded by his four brothers-in-law and a host of conspirators, who were in reality in league with the men of Amalfi. One of the four pierced the prince with his lance, and the others stabbed him at once. He fell with thirty-six wounds,

and his murderers dragged his body along the beach with every indignity.

He was avenged within the week by the Normans, who not only remembered that he had recently refused to join the Greeks and the Pope against them, but were extremely anxious to maintain his dynasty in the principality. In answer to the appeal of his brother Guy, who found some of the Norman chiefs in the neighbourhood of Benevento, they hastily gathered their forces and appeared before Salerno five days after the murder. The city opened its gates to them, but the conspirators took refuge in the strong fortress above. The Normans held the wives and children of the four as hostages and consented to exchange them and liberate them on condition that they would set free Guaimar's son Gisulf, and solemn promises were given that the sons of the Count of Teano and their accomplices should be allowed to depart unhurt. Guy probably meant to keep his word, but his Norman soldiers protested that they had not given theirs, and falling upon the fugitives slaughtered six and thirty of them, one for every wound that had been found in the murdered Guaimar's body. The Duke of Sorrento alone was spared. With splendid good faith, considering the times, Guy set his nephew Gisulf upon the throne of Salerno, and stood by him as a loyal counsellor.

The Pope now took advantage of circumstances which made him a successful mediator between the

King of Hungary and Henry the Third, to make a fresh appeal to the latter, but could obtain nothing except the confirmation of the papal Duchy of Benevento; for although the emperor saw the necessity of lending the Pope an army wherewith to hold it against the Normans, he could not make up his mind to do so. Leo the Ninth, with undaunted energy, collected a little force of adventurous Suabians and other Germans, whom he led southwards with considerable strategic skill until he had effected a junction with Argyros of Bari. The hatred of the Normans throughout Italy was only exceeded at that time by the fear they inspired, and during the Pope's progress a motley company of irregular fighters flocked to his standard from all parts of Italy. With the exception of the few Germans who had crossed the Alps with him, his army was chiefly Italian, for the Lombards, who had joined him, had long lost their distinctive nationality. Argyros met them in the low land not far from Monte Gargano and probably within sight of that famous place of Norman pilgrimage. The Normans, on their side, had collected together a little army. Robert Guiscard had brought up his wild marauders from the furthest limits of Calabria, Richard of Aversa was there with his trained men-at-arms, and Humphrey had called out every Norman fighting man in Apulia. Yet the whole army was so small that before giving battle the Nor-

mans attempted, with their usual prudence, to effect a compromise, and sent messengers to the Pope suing for peace and declaring that every Norman in Italy was willing to acknowledge his authority.

Leo the Ninth was in the midst of the allied forces, surrounded by his little band of Suabians and Germans; and they, in scorn of men who fought on horseback with pointed sticks, laughed at the Norman messengers and constrained the pontiff to give an overbearing answer. The Normans were to lay down their arms and leave Italy at once; if they refused to do so they should taste of the long German sword. They might choose between instant destruction or immediate departure.

Seeing that they could obtain no terms, the messengers retired, and after a short reconnaissance of the enemy's position, the Normans gave battle on the eighteenth of June, 1053. Count Humphrey held the centre, Richard, with his splendid cavalry, took the right, while Robert Guiscard had the left wing. Richard of Aversa, as commanding the most thoroughly trained troops, made the attack, falling upon the united force of the Italians, says the chronicler, like a vulture upon a flock of doves, and scattering them far and wide in instant panic. The Suabians, on the contrary, stood firm against Humphrey's repeated charges, for the struggle was between Teutons and Northmen. Hand to hand they fought with their swords, and

the Germans learned that their own were not the better. Then Robert Guiscard made one of those wild charges that have often turned the fortunes of war and directed the course of history, leading men who, like himself, had little to lose and all to gain. The faithful Gerard was beside him, and together they broke the stout German ranks. Robert's great sword paused not in slaughter, beheading men at a blow to right and left, and inflicting frightful wounds. Three times his horse was killed under him and three times he caught another and mounted again. The huge Germans stood up to him and his followers, and died where they stood, while the less sturdy Lombards fled from the fight, and when the victory seemed won, the wounded and mutilated still fought on. Meanwhile Richard had returned from pursuing his scattered Italians, and came back to strike the final blow, and when the battle was over there was not a Suabian nor a German alive on the field.

The Pope, overcome at the sight of the bloodshed he had caused, rather than disappointed in his hopes, had retired into the neighbouring town of Civitate and watched the last destruction of his army from the ramparts; but the inhabitants of the little town, seeing which way the fight had gone, thrust out the venerable pontiff just as the infuriated Normans had set fire to the houses and sheds that stood outside the gate. With sublime indifference to danger, the Pope and his

few attendant clerks marched straight towards the enemy, bearing a cross in their midst. It is said that as they went towards the rising flames, a sudden breeze sprang up and drove the fire back upon the Normans. How this may be we know not, but it is certain that either on that evening or on the next day at dawn, Leo met the Norman chiefs face to face, and he spoke to them with such eloquence, so tenderly and yet so strongly, that they were touched, and kneeled down before him and asked his blessing, and, perhaps in one of their rare moments of sincerity, they promised that they would be faithful to him, and would take the place of his soldiers whom they had slain.

Then he caused the dead to be buried hard by Civitate, and many centuries afterwards men saw the great mound that was raised above their bones; and when he had said a mass for the repose of their souls, he departed towards Benevento. Humphrey of Apulia was himself the first to lead the Pope's escort, and many hundred Normans accompanied him to the end of his journey; and though they might well be glad that they were rid of his army, there was something not unchivalrous, after all, in the reverent courtesy they showed to their vanquished and venerable foe. But at Benevento all the people came out to meet him, and when they saw the sad faces of the bishops and clerks that were with him, and that he was surrounded, not by his own army, but by Norman knights, they all broke out into cries

and lamentations, which ceased not while they led him in mournful procession to the church.

During about a year, Leo the Ninth remained in Benevento, still believing that he might accomplish the expulsion of the Normans before his death, for he was only about fifty years of age, and we learn that he at this time began the study of the Greek language. But he had not long to live, and his last months were embittered and disturbed by theological controversies with the East, which ended soon after his death in the final separation of the Eastern and Western Churches. The Eastern emperor and the Pope were both equally anxious to free Southern Italy from the Normans, but the Patriarch of Constantinople, whose influence with the people of that city was paramount, and with whom the emperor was obliged to reckon at every turn, was jealous of Rome and aimed at the absolute independence of his patriarchate. At that time a correspondence which took place between an Eastern and a Western bishop concerning the use of leaven in the consecrated bread, the celibacy of the clergy, and the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son, was placed in the hands of Leo the Ninth. He took up the matter and wrote a vigorous letter to the Patriarch Michael, whom the emperor obliged to return a meek answer for the sake of his own political relations with the Pope. The latter then sent three legates to Constantinople bearing an epistle to Michael which condemned

the Eastern view of the three mooted points in the strongest possible language. In spite of the letter he had been obliged to write, however, the patriarch successfully avoided a meeting with the ambassadors, stirred up a popular riot against the emperor, and persevered in his errors. An exchange of excommunications and other amenities at once followed, the three legates excommunicated the Patriarch Michael, and the Patriarch Michael excommunicated the three legates, who departed, shaking the dust from their feet. During their absence, Leo the Ninth was taken ill and died in the month of April; in July his bull was burned in Constantinople, and the permanent division of the Eastern and Western Churches, which had begun with the dissension of Photius two centuries earlier, became an accomplished fact.

The Pope died in April. He left Benevento in a dying condition in March, and was accompanied to Capua by Count Humphrey and the Normans. He spent his last days in Rome in visiting the Church of Saint Peter's, and in pious exhortations to his people and the Roman clergy concerning the vanity of human things, and he departed from this world, as he had lived in it, a very upright and just man.

Unsuccessful though he had been at Civitate, his moral influence throughout Italy had been a check on the Norman expansion. When he was gone, the people of Benevento saw that the Roman Church was wholly unable to protect them against the Nor-

mans, who set at naught the emperor's donation of their city to the popes. They were able to resist a siege, but restored the Lombard dynasty, and Count Humphrey departed southwards in sullen wrath to wreak vengeance upon the conspirators who had slain Drogo. There being now neither papal nor Greek troops to oppose him, he subjected the south to a reign of terror, and wholesale executions of Italians, by hanging and beheading, avenged the murder of Tancred's son.

Now also came two more of those sons, Geoffrey and a second William; and Humphrey, to establish these two in possessions not unworthy to be compared to his own, took Salerno from the young Gisulf, who indeed had kept little faith with any one, and least of all with his Uncle Guy, to whom he owed his life and estate; and at the same time, Richard of Aversa quarrelled with him and helped Tancred's sons. Gisulf himself was led into an ambush, and only escaped by throwing himself into the sea and swimming for his life.

Meanwhile Argyros of Bari, who was in bad odour in Constantinople since the battle of Civitate, was unable to obtain help from any one, and Humphrey, Geoffrey, and Robert Guiscard inflicted another overwhelming defeat upon him near Brindisi. The Greek cause was now lost beyond all hope.

The Normans quarrelled, indeed, among themselves,

and there is an account of a violent scene which took place between Humphrey and Robert at dinner, but of which the cause is not known. In sudden anger at something said by Guiscard, Humphrey commanded him to be thrown into prison, whereupon Robert snatched up a sword and made at his brother to kill him, but was held fast by the bystanders, and was actually kept a prisoner for a short time. But the brothers were soon reconciled, and Humphrey presented his brother with more lands in Calabria, and gave him, moreover, a number of knights. From his grim stronghold of San Marco, whence he ravaged the country continually, Robert was soon after this called to his brother's death-bed, and the dying Humphrey, who foresaw that the terrible young Guiscard would be his successor in Apulia, whether he would or not, wisely made him guardian of his son, a lad. Humphrey was buried with his brothers in the monastery of Venosa, and the Guiscard ruled in his stead.

His first move was upon Reggio in the Straits of Messina; but it was in vain that he attempted to induce the inhabitants to acknowledge his sovereignty without a struggle, and he soon returned to Apulia. At this time the youngest of Tancred's sons joined him. This was Roger, afterwards the Great Count and the father of King Roger of Sicily. He seems to have possessed an abundance of those gifts which

distinguished all the brothers. Handsome, strong, and active, his courage was as remarkable as his astuteness, and he was as generous as any of his elders, giving freely to his friends all that he could take from his enemies. By way of trying him, Robert gave him sixty men and sent him to fight the Calabrians in the southern mountains above Monteleone and Mileto. In a short time he had made himself the terror of the surrounding country, and was able to send the Guiscard a large sum of money as the first fruits of his industry. He visited him soon afterwards, traversing the dangerous road with only six companions, and the two now planned a systematic attack upon Reggio; but the place was too strong for them, and they were obliged to give up the siege.

Roger had displayed so much courage and talent, however, that the suspicious Guiscard began to fear in him a dangerous rival, and refused to send him money with which to pay his troops. Without hesitation, Roger now turned to his brother William of Salerno, who received him with open arms, for he also had some cause of disagreement with the Guiscard; and he gave Roger the town and castle of Scalea for himself, that he might thence make incursions into Robert's territory. The latter lost no time in besieging his brother, but the place proved impregnable. It stands on the cape that bears its name,

protected by the precipitous ascent from the dangerous river, by the sea, and by the high cliffs, so that the only approach to it can be easily defended. Robert destroyed the olives and vineyards in the rich valley, but was so harassed by the troops of his brother William that he was obliged to retire.

A reconciliation now followed, by which Robert granted Roger forty men-at-arms, with permission to commit unlimited depredations, and for some time the younger brother consented to follow the life of a marauder, from which Guiscard had risen to such power.

During this time, however, the latter needed his services in some expedition, and when he was rewarded for two months of hard fighting with the present of a single horse, he turned upon his brother indignantly, went back to Scalea, and lost no time in pillaging Robert's lands.

The year 1058 was a memorable one in the south ; the Normans harried the land without ceasing, and gave no quarter when their demands were not satisfied ; the crops had failed, and the country suffered from severe famine, so that the people were reduced to making bread of chestnuts and acorns, and even out of reeds and aquatic plants, and they ate raw roots, seasoning them with a little salt. Then an abundant harvest followed the lean year, and men died of surfeit as they had lately died of hunger. Meanwhile the quarrel between Roger and Robert continued, and the Cala-

brians, seeing their opportunity, attempted to shake off the Norman yoke. The oppressors were treacherously murdered, and in one castle sixty Normans were massacred in a single day. Robert saw that he was on the point of losing Calabria altogether, while Apulia was already on the point of revolution, and making a virtue of necessity, he sent ambassadors to the young Roger and made peace, presenting him with a large part of southern Calabria, from Mount Intefoli and Squillace to Reggio.

In the meantime Richard of Aversa had followed the example of Humphrey and Robert, and had done his best to extend his dominions. The old Lombard dynasty had been restored in Capua, and as the opportunity seemed favourable for seizing the principality, Richard marched against the city, but being unable to take it, he systematically destroyed the crops and fruit trees, until the people paid him six thousand gold bezants to quit their territory. He did so at the time, but on the death of the prince, he returned with a greater force than before, and drove out the prince's youthful successor. He now took the title of Prince of Capua, without consulting Pope or emperor, and immediately picked a quarrel with the Count of Aquino, to whose son he had affianced his daughter. The ingenuity of the claim he made was worthy of a Norman and of the times. The young man died before the marriage took place, and thereupon Richard

claimed the wedding gift which, according to the Lombard law, the bridegroom was bound to present to his bride on the morning after the marriage. He had the insolence to demand on these grounds a quarter of all the count's possessions, and on the latter's refusal to pay such a preposterous indemnity, he marched against Aquino with his army. It was during the siege that Richard paid a friendly visit to the monks of Monte Cassino; and they, remembering the days of Pandolph the Wolf, received him with honours, committing to him the care and defence of the abbey. He was received in procession as a king, and the church was decked as for Easter Day, the lamps were all lighted, and the cloister resounded with chanting and with praises of the prince. Then he was led into the chapter house, and much against his will was set in the abbot's throne, and the abbot knelt down and washed his feet.

Having obtained the protection of the powerful prince, the monks began to intercede with him to reduce the demands he was making upon the Count of Aquino, and he consented to do so; but the count would not agree to pay even the smaller sum required until Richard had forced him to make payment by bringing ruin upon his possessions. It was about this time that William of Hauteville was engaged in the conquest of Salerno, and the unfortunate Gisulf turned to Richard in his need. Richard helped him at least

to hold the city, in consideration of great promises, and for a short time the Lombard seems to have recovered something more than a semblance of power; but he worked his own destruction by his refusal to keep his word to his ally.

We now reach that important period at which the Papacy, from having been determinately opposed to the Normans of the south, was driven to seek their alliance. The death of Leo the Ninth was followed by an interregnum that lasted about a year, at the end of which time Henry the Black created a Pope in the person of the Chancellor of the Empire, who was also a bishop, and who reigned under the name of Victor the Second. This wise pontiff began his career by making a sort of truce with the Normans. A little before this time the Duke of Lorraine, who had been despoiled of his possessions by Henry the Third, married Beatrice, the mother of the afterwards celebrated Countess Matilda, and the widow of the Marquis of Tuscany, the greatest prince in the north of Italy. Fearing lest the duke should ally himself with the Normans, the emperor descended into Italy, in the hope of falling upon him unawares; but he fled, and the emperor only succeeded in capturing his wife and step-daughter, whom he carried away prisoners to Germany. Pope Victor now found himself in a most difficult situation. His political judgment would have led him to seek the Norman alliance, and at the same

time he received the most bitter complaints from the Italians whom the Normans oppressed in the south. In this dilemma Victor appealed to his friend the emperor, judging that for the good of the people, and in spite of his own judgment, it would be better to make a final effort to get rid of the Normans altogether, and it was not impossible that the emperor might have been persuaded to undertake a war of extermination against them had he lived. But he died in 1056, after a very short illness, leaving for his successor Henry the Fourth, then a child only five years old. Victor, who had for many years been the great chancellor of the Empire, and was familiar with all the matters of state, now took the reins of government, and the world beheld with surprise a condition of affairs in which the Pope of Rome ruled the Holy Roman Empire as the infant emperor's guardian. A churchman of such experience and of such gifts might have succeeded in inaugurating an era of peace in Europe; but he too was overtaken by an early death soon after his return to Italy. He was immediately succeeded by Frederick of Lorraine, who took the name of Stephen the Ninth, who was the brother of that Duke of Lorraine who had now returned to his great possessions in Italy through the intervention of the late Pope, and who, as a friend of Leo the Ninth, had been one of those who most strongly urged that pontiff to make war upon the Normans.

If the pontifical treasury had not been in its almost chronic state of depletion, the Normans might now have found themselves opposed to a really dangerous adversary, whose brother was the reigning sovereign over a great part of Northern Italy. But Pope Stephen was without funds, and being obliged to seek assistance, he meditated a truly gigantic scheme. His plan was undoubtedly to ally himself with the Empire of the East as well as with his brother, in order to drive the Normans from Italy; then to set his own brother upon the throne of the Holy Roman Empire, in place of the infant Henry the Fourth, and, finally, to crush the Eastern Empire out of existence, and to reëstablish the universal dominion of Rome. His ambassadors were already on their way to Constantinople, and in conference with Argyros at Bari, when death overtook the scheming pontiff, and the ambassadors returned to Rome.

A handful of turbulent Roman nobles, in the midst of a frightful tumult, and in spite of the protestations of many cardinals, elected a certain John of Velletri Pope, or rather, antipope. He ascended the papal throne under the strong protection of the Roman barons themselves and of a party throughout the country which demanded an Italian pontiff. Hildebrand, that extraordinary man of strength and genius who had been the tried and trusted friend of many successive popes, now appeared upon the scene and

directed affairs. Without hesitation he went directly to Rome, reassured the trembling cardinals, declared the election of Benedict the Tenth null and void, and immediately sent an embassy to Germany, perhaps accompanying it in person. After a short consultation, Gerard, the Bishop of Florence, was chosen to be Pope, and the powerful Duke of Lorraine and Tuscany conducted him to Rome, where he was duly elected and crowned under the name of Nicholas the Second. In a short time Hildebrand had driven out the antipope, Benedict, and had established Nicholas in comparative security; but he now recognized the great fact that the Normans were the invincible rulers of the south, and that without them no authority could long hold its own in Rome. Accordingly, and by the intervention of Desiderius, Abbot of Monte Cassino, he obtained the help of Richard of Capua, who appeared in the neighbourhood of Rome with a Norman army, and drove the antipope and his friends to take refuge in the castle of Galera, while, as usual, he looted the surrounding country.

This Desiderius, Abbot of Monte Cassino, whom the Pope soon afterwards created a cardinal, was a Lombard prince by birth, whose father had been killed by the Normans, but he, nevertheless, became the intermediary between them and the Holy See, and his first friendly relations with them began when, being at Bari, Robert Guiscard lent him three horses in

order that he might get back safely to his abbey. Soon after the raid which drove out Benedict the Tenth, Pope Nicholas held a synod or council in the Lateran, during which it was determined that in future all popes should be elected by the cardinals only, without consulting the nobles and the people, by agree-



DOORWAY OF THE ABBEY AT MILETO

ment with the Emperor Henry the Fourth, who was at that time a child, and of whose successors no mention was made in the decree. The independence of the Holy See was thus greatly strengthened, and although the dignity of the living emperor was respected, it was made clear that the cardinals did not intend to subject their choice to the approval of the

emperors thereafter succeeding him; it became, therefore, more and more necessary to strengthen the papal alliance with the Normans. Two months after the date of this decree, the Pope visited the Norman capital of Apulia, and there held a council, at which a hundred bishops from all parts of Italy were present, and at which a number of Norman nobles assisted; and in order to be present the Guiscard was obliged to leave to his lieutenants the conduct of the siege of Cariati. When certain ecclesiastical questions had been settled, the Pope received, in the presence of the council of Melfi, the homage and oath of fealty of Duke Robert. In taking this oath, the Norman styled himself 'Robert, by the grace of God and of Saint Peter, Duke of Apulia and of Calabria, and future Duke of Sicily by their aid'; and he promised to pay yearly to Saint Peter, and to Pope Nicholas his lord, and to his successors, to his nuncios, and to the nuncios of his successors, the yearly tribute of twelve deniers of Pavia for each yoke of oxen in his possession. Furthermore, he swore to be faithful to the Roman Church, and to Pope Nicholas his lord; never to take part in any conspiracy 'which could endanger the Pope's life, limbs, or liberty'; never to divulge any secret the Pope might confide to him; and to be everywhere and against all comers the ally of the Holy Roman Church.

It appears probable that Richard of Aversa took

the same oath with the same obligations, and by this treaty of Melfi those men whom the predecessors of Nicholas had attempted to treat as a handful of excommunicated adventurers became the authorized allies and representatives of the Roman Church in the south of Italy. This was the work of Hildebrand, and was a formidable move against the arrogance of the Roman barons. It inaugurated a new era of the Papacy, and when the Pope returned to Rome, he appeared at the head of a Norman army. Peaceably, and in good order, the force marched up through Campania ; but when they reached the Roman territory the storm broke with disastrous fury. In a few days the country about Rome was reduced to a total desolation, the Roman counts were forced to surrender and make submission to the Church, the host crossed the Tiber and fell upon the castle of Galera, in which Benedict the Tenth had taken refuge. The remains of those war-worn walls are standing still, in the midst of a fever-haunted wilderness, and it was from their ramparts that Benedict the Tenth, looking out towards the city and solemnly raising his hands to heaven, cursed the Roman people aloud because they had made him Pope against his will ; and he promised to renounce his claim to the pontificate if his own safety were assured ; and so he did, for he laid down the pontifical insignia and came back and lived in the house of his mother in Rome. Then Nicholas departed

with his army, and though the Campagna was laid waste, the power of the robber barons, who had lived by plundering every little train of merchants that attempted to reach the city, was broken forever.

Thenceforward the Guiscard's conquest of the south proceeded almost unresisted, but his career was momentarily checked by an insurrection in Melfi itself, which had the courage, or insolence, to close its gates against him. Robert at once began the systematic destruction of crops by which he had reduced so many strong places, Melfi opened its gates again, and the leader of the revolt was hunted from place to place, a lonely and disappointed fugitive.

At this time Robert repudiated his wife, by whom he was the father of an only son, who afterwards became the famous crusader, Bohemund of Antioch. The popes had recently forbidden all marriages within the seventh degree of consanguinity, and Robert suddenly discovered that his friend Gerard's aunt was too near a kinswoman of his own to remain his wife. He presented her with rich gifts, therefore, and put her away; and almost on the morrow he asked the hand of Sigelgaita, elder sister of Gisulf of Salerno. That prince still retained a semblance of sovereignty, in spite of William of Hauteville's conquest, and Robert easily persuaded him to consent to his sister's marriage in return for help against his spoliator. Robert kept his word, and reinstated Gisulf in most of his

possessions, and though the latter of course did his best to break his promises, he was obliged to submit, and Robert's position was strengthened by an alliance with the most illustrious Lombard family in Italy.

In 1060, Robert took the strong town of Taranto, and in concert with Roger besieged Reggio, where the Greek catapan, upon whom Constantinople bestowed the proud title of Duke of Italy, had taken up his residence. Here Robert slew in single combat a huge knight who defied all the Normans together, and when the people of the city saw the great engines which the Guiscard was preparing for their destruction, they made terms of peace and capitulated. The Greek troops took refuge in a castle perched upon the tremendous rock of Scylla, but soon lost courage, abandoned the place by night, and sailed away to Constantinople.

Roger occupied the fortress without delay, and gazed from its ramparts upon the great jewel of the south. It lay there like a new world, divided from him by the narrow strait in which the ancients had seen unearthly terrors, but which to the fearless Norman seemed as easy to cross as any river. There were men with him and with his brother who had doubtless fought before Syracuse and at Troina with Bras-de-Fer and Ardoin twenty-one years earlier, and they had told what they had seen, and doubtless, too, their descriptions of the island's wealth had gathered



richness in the repetition of long years. And those lordly mountains, ranging hand in hand southward to the dome of snow-capped Etna, were not only the guardians of rich valleys and fertile plains within, but they were also the ramparts of a prison house in which hundreds of thousands of Christian men laboured in captivity under the Moslem rule. There was enough there to stir the adventurous spirits of men who were half Christian knights and still half barbarous marauders.

In the month of August of the year 1060, three Christian merchants of Messina left their city, pretending that they were bound to Trapani, but they put about at nightfall, and came to Roger at Mileto and entreated him to come over and free their city from the Moslems. Roger believed that they were the representatives of the whole Christian population, and he answered that he would come quickly; but the three Christians sailed back to Messina, and when they entered the harbour, the headless bodies of twelve of their friends were hanging from the walls, for the Saracens had suspected their conspiracy.

To effect the conquest of Sicily, Roger took sixty knights with him, crossed the straits, and landed near the lagoons of Faro. Instead of being received by the whole Christian population in revolt, the Saracens came out horse and foot to destroy the handful of invaders. But Robert pretended fear and flight, and suddenly,

when the enemy was in hot pursuit, he halted his men and turned short round, and fought for his life; and when the Normans had slain a great number of the foe, and the rest had fled in panic, he took the enemy's riderless horses and stripped the rich armour off the fallen dead, and sailed back that day to Reggio; and surely it was as daring a deed as ever Northman did before or since.

At the very time when Roger was making his reckless raid in Sicily, the Greeks were preparing a final expedition to recover the lost south. A general called Abul Kare, probably a converted Moslem, organized a large army on the eastern shores of the Adriatic, and crossed to Bari. The Norman troops were almost all concentrated at the opposite extremity of Calabria, and when Duke Robert faced his new adversary, with a handful of hastily collected troops, he was obliged to fall back to escape destruction, so that in two months Abul Kare succeeded in retaking Taranto, Brindisi, and Otranto. He even advanced as far as Melfi and laid siege to the Norman capital, a fact which proves that even the Guiscard had been taken altogether unawares. As soon, however, as Robert and Roger were able to unite their forces and make an organized resistance, the Greeks were obliged to give way, Abul Kare was driven back as quickly as he had advanced, and before long his temporary presence in Italy had ceased to cause the Normans any apprehension.

Roger now turned his thoughts to Sicily again, and an opportunity for making another expedition presented itself almost immediately. A certain Ibn-at-Timnah, against whom another chief, Ibn-al-Hawwas, had vowed vengeance, came to Roger at Mileto and proposed to him a joint conquest of Sicily. This was the origin of that good understanding which afterwards existed between the Normans and one party of the Sicilian Saracens, for Roger accepted the proposal and soon embarked with a hundred and sixty knights and Ibn-at-Timnah. They landed to the west of Messina, with the intention of passing by the city in order to gain the interior. Riding at night towards Milazzo, Roger suddenly saw before him in the moonlight a Saracen in full armour, and though he was armed only with his sword and shield, he rode at him instantly. The chronicle says that the Saracen fell from his horse, literally cut in two pieces; and when the body was examined, it was found to be that of Ibn-at-Timnah's bitterest enemy, no other than that of the man who had married his much-injured wife.

Roger reached Milazzo without further interruption and collected much valuable booty, which he brought back to Faro in the neighbourhood of the small salt lagoons, and though the Saracens very nearly surrounded him while he was waiting for a favourable wind, he got the advantage by a brilliant movement and put them to flight. Encouraged by this success, he was rash enough

to turn again and attack the city of Messina; but he was driven back to his ships by overwhelming numbers, and was obliged to stand at bay during three whole days and nights until the weather moderated. Amari is of opinion that this desperate stand was made on what is now called the Braccio del Salvatore, which is the extremity of the sickle that forms the natural harbour of Messina; but it appears improbable to me that so small a force should not have been driven bodily into the sea from such a point; it is impossible to lie at anchor with ships outside that point in heavy weather, and lastly, Roger could not have reached it with the booty which he ultimately carried away, unless he had passed through the city which he had failed to take. He must, therefore, have made his stand on the narrow strip of land which separates the lagoons from the sea, which could be easily defended, and within the curve of which small vessels such as he had can lie with tolerable safety during most storms. Here, being in the last extremity, Roger vowed to restore a ruined church dedicated to Saint Anthony, near Reggio, and as the weather then moderated, he embarked and succeeded in reaching the opposite shore in safety, in spite of an attack made upon him by Saracen vessels. He lost, besides one of his small ships, eleven men killed by arrows, and the news of this loss was enough to decide Robert Guiscard to join in the great enterprise. He called together a council of knights and announced his

intention of delivering all Catholic Christians from the Moslem bondage; and the knights answered that they would do battle with him for that cause, and promised by the help of God to subdue the Saracens, and they received grace and gifts of the lord duke.

In the early days of May in the same year 1061, Robert Guiscard encamped opposite the Faro with an army which the chronicle calls numerous, and which seems to have consisted of about a thousand fighting men. But Ibn-al-Hawwas was before him, and sent from Palermo a fleet of twenty-four vessels with eight hundred soldiers to protect Messina. Robert and Roger solemnly invoked the help of heaven, confessed and received communion, and vowed to live more Christian lives, introducing in their prayers the truly Norman stipulation that the Almighty should crown their expedition with success. Roger took two ships, and in spite of the Saracen fleet, reconnoitred the Sicilian coast, easily outsailing his adversaries; and on his return Robert determined to send a part only of his force in advance. Roger landed two hundred and seventy chosen men at the limekilns, six miles south of Messina, and daringly sent his ships back to Reggio, in order that his men might understand that they were to win or die. Riding fearlessly towards Messina, they came upon a Saracen detachment bringing large sums of money, and having slain the soldiers and taken the booty, they joyously pursued

their way. They had not ridden far when they saw their Norman ships sailing back again, and were joined by a hundred and seventy more of their knights. This time the number sufficed; four hundred and forty Normans took Messina almost without striking a blow. Many of the inhabitants followed the Moslem soldiers in their flight, and on the steep hillside that overlooks the straits a tragedy took place which the chronicler thought worth recording. A young Saracen of very noble birth had escaped with his only sister, a girl of the most incomparable beauty. Delicately nurtured, and unused to walking, she was soon exhausted and half fainting with fatigue and terror. Tenderly her brother entreated her to take courage, and he helped her and carried her as far as he could; then, seeing that she could not be saved from rude Christian hands, he drew his sword and killed her, and left her dead upon the hillside. So he went on his way, weeping and vowing vengeance.

Now came the Guiscard himself and landed in Messina with all his force. He held the key of Sicily, but he hesitated to unlock the gate until he had fortified the city itself and got possession of the formidable stronghold of Rametta. He took the latter without striking a blow, for the terror of the Norman name was in the air, and the Saracens either surrendered or fled. Turning inland when he was sure of his retreat, Robert went up the Val-Demone, where there

were many Christians who received him as their saviour and liberator. Wherever he found a strong place to take which would cost him some loss, he passed it by and went on, and the Normans ravaged the country like locusts, and the Saracens fled before them.

At last he came to that great plain whence the twin strongholds of Castrogiovanni and Calascibetta rise side by side like brother Titans; and the Normans were seven hundred men, but within Castrogiovanni there were fifteen thousand Saracen riders. So Robert comforted his companions in arms and, looking up at the fearful height, he told them how Christ had said that if a man have faith like a grain of mustard seed he can remove mountains; and the Normans confessed their sins and raised the gonfalon and began to accomplish the impossible. The Moslems charged down furiously, but neither numbers, nor weight, nor sword, nor lance availed them, and the Northmen forced them bodily up the frightful steep, slaying them and climbing upon their bodies; and the rocks ran blood in rivulets; and of fifteen thousand Moslems who had ridden out, five thousand beaten men got back alive within the impregnable walls.

Sagely Robert left them within, for he would not waste men and steel upon the huge ramparts; but he destroyed the crops and the fruit trees and drove off the cattle and encamped by the shores of that fair lake by which Persephone had strayed in the days

of the gods. But by and by he quietly took possession of Calascibetta, and thither the frightened Saracens came up with presents and prayers for mercy, their heads bowed, and their hands crossed upon their breasts. Thither, too, the Moslem admiral of Palermo sent him rich presents, wearing apparel embroidered in the Spanish fashion and much fine linen, vessels of gold and silver, and mules in royal caparison; and he sent also a purse in which there was gold worth twelve thousand pounds of English money.

Robert now sent an ambassador to Palermo, and he chose for this purpose a certain deacon who spoke Arabic, enjoining upon him to keep his knowledge of the language a secret. So this man spied out the land and brought much precious information, and told Robert that the people of Palermo were but a body without a soul. But Robert, seeing the strength of Castrogiovanni, knew that he could not take it with the few men he had, so he went back to Messina with his vast booty, and three months had passed since Roger had landed with the advanced guard. Messina, Rametta, San Marco, and all the Val-Demone were subject to the Normans now, and Ibn-at-Timnah, their firm ally, was established in Catania.

Robert Guiscard and Sigelgaita returned to Apulia in the autumn of 1061, and Roger, after a short stay at Mileto, crossed into Sicily again with a small force and harried the Moslem lands as far as Girgenti.

Returning towards Messina he came to the strong Greek city of Troina, and the inhabitants, who seem to have been almost entirely Christians, opened their gates and received him with enthusiasm. This place was destined to play an important part in the life of the young conqueror. It stands upon the table-like summit of a steep mountain almost three thousand feet high ; it is often hidden from the surrounding country by clouds, and is excessively cold in winter, when snow and ice sometimes lie on the ground for weeks. The town itself is dominated by a strong citadel, from the towers of which most of the principal cities and fortresses of Sicily are visible in clear weather.

Resting here, Roger learned that the lovely daughter of William of Evreux, with whom he is said to have fallen in love on his way to Italy, had arrived in Calabria and was ready to marry him. Judith of Evreux was the great granddaughter of Richard the First of Normandy, and had just escaped from that country with her sister and half brother, the latter having for some reason incurred the dangerous wrath of William who was soon to be called the Conqueror. Judith is now believed to have been the same person as Eremberga, and to have adopted the latter name when she left the convent in which she was brought up.

Roger lost no time, but returned instantly to Mileto and was married with all the pomp he could afford. A few weeks later he left his young wife behind him and

returned to Messina. The chronicler says that she shed many tears, the memory of which perhaps moved Roger to take her with him on his next expedition. On the present occasion he succeeded in getting pos-



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session of a fortress on the northern coast near Cefalù, while Ibn-at-Timnah pursued the civil war he was waging on his own account, and much to Roger's advantage. It was now that Roger first placed a Norman garrison in Troina, but the treacherous assassination of

Ibn-at-Timnah near Corleone soon rendered the possession of such isolated garrisons very unsafe, and in Roger's absence they hastened back to Messina.

A deadly quarrel now broke out between Roger and the Guiscard, who had refused to hand over to his brother the lands he had promised him in the treaty the two had made at Scalea. Roger was the more exasperated because he was thus prevented from making a suitable marriage gift to his young wife, and he determined to take by force what was indeed his by right. In one of the first encounters a half brother of Judith was thrown from his horse in the charge and killed, and Roger's anger rose to the pitch of fury. Robert now besieged him in Mileto and built two rude castles, one at each extremity of the city. Roger responded by invariably attacking the one when he was informed that Robert was in the other, and as Robert was obliged to ride round the city, while Roger could traverse it in a straight line, the advantage always fell to the latter.

One night Roger took a hundred men and rode down to the city of Gerace, which owed allegiance to Robert, but promptly opened its gates to the younger brother and provided him with means for carrying on the war. Robert therefore left a part of his troops before Mileto and laid siege to Gerace; but being unable to take it at once, he resorted to stratagem, entered the city alone, disguised in a cloak and hood, and went to the house

of one Basil, a man whom he could trust. While he was talking with Basil's wife Miletta, before dinner, a servant betrayed his presence; instantly the city was in an uproar, and an infuriated multitude beat down the doors of the house; Basil got out and tried to take sanctuary in a church, but was cut to pieces before he could reach the door; the unfortunate woman was dragged out and impaled alive on a stake to die in agony, and Duke Robert, with his hood thrown back, faced the multitude alone and unarmed.

His natural intrepid coolness did not forsake him; he saw that he must win the crowd by gentle words or die, and his eloquence saved his life. With the utmost skill he laid his case before those who thirsted for his blood. He had come to them unarmed and of his own accord, he said, to them who had sworn to be his faithful subjects. It would be a shameful thing for thousands to tear a single unarmed man to pieces, but they might do it if they chose, for there he stood in their midst. They would get no glory for such a deed, nor would it free them from the Norman yoke; he had brothers, friends, an army of soldiers at their gates, and did they think the Normans would not avenge the shedding of Norman blood?

He persuaded them to spare his life, but not to give him his liberty, and from the threshold of his dead friend's ruined home the great duke was led away and thrust into prison. Roger soon learned

what had happened, and he came into the city with his men and bade the people give him his brother, who was his enemy, bound hand and foot; for he would slay him with his own sword. But when the brothers were alone, they fell into one another's arms, says the chronicler, and embraced one another like Joseph and Benjamin of old—an affectionate effusion which did not prevent them from renewing their quarrel. It ended only when the danger of a general rising in Calabria brought the brothers to their senses. They met at a bridge in the valley of the Crati, which was long afterwards called Ponte Guiscardo in memory of the day, and there they promised to forget their enmity, and agreed to divide Calabria between them.

Roger now crossed to Sicily again, taking Judith with him, and accompanied by three hundred men he reached Troina, where he established himself, strongly fortifying the citadel. The town, as has been said, was almost wholly Greek, and a quarrel having arisen between the Norman soldiers and the inhabitants, the latter attempted to storm the castle when Roger was absent on a raid. The Normans defended the Countess Judith with their usual desperate courage, and Roger returned in time to avert a catastrophe. But the castle gates had barely closed behind him when more than five thousand Saracens swarmed up from the valleys, attracted by the news of a quarrel between the Normans and the Greeks, and uniting with the

latter, laid formal siege to the castle. During four months Roger and Judith, as well as their men, suffered incredible hardships. The winter was bitterly cold, and they were so ill provided for facing it that the pair had but one mantle between them, and only one could go out upon the ramparts while the other tried to keep warm within. They were so reduced by hunger at last that the beautiful young Judith could find no remedy against her sufferings excepting sleep. Lean and dangerous as half-starved wolves, the Normans made frequent and desperate sallies against the overwhelming numbers of the enemy; and on a certain day, as Roger was attempting to save one of his men who was surrounded, his horse was killed under him, and Greeks and Saracens were upon him in an instant, attempting to drag him away alive, while he resisted 'like a bull that scents the slaughter house.' But his sword was out, and lifting it up with both hands he mowed down the foe till their bodies lay in a wide circle around him, and the rest dared not lay hands upon him; and while they looked on in fear, he coolly took the saddle and bridle from his dead horse and regained the castle gate on foot.

But now the besiegers themselves suffered from the great cold, and, having wine in abundance, they drank so much of it that they were often asleep upon their watch, while the hungry Normans waked; and so

one night, when they were stupefied with drink, the Normans crept out with muffled feet and made an end. Roger hanged the ringleader of the revolt and most of his accomplices, and then, when the slain were buried and he held the city fast, he left his brave young wife in sole command and went over to Calabria to obtain horses; for in their extreme famine he and his men had eaten most of those they had. While he was gone, Judith herself made the rounds of the ramparts by day and night, and she encouraged the sentinels with good words and many promises, so that when her husband came back he found all well and the city at peace.

At this time the Saracens of Africa sent over a fleet and an army to drive out the Normans, and there was a fight near Castrogiovanni. Roger sent his nephew, Serlo, who afterwards died a gallant death, to draw out the Arabs with a handful of men, and the Arabs rode so swiftly that only two of Serlo's squadron escaped un wounded; but the enemy fell into the ambuscade, and Roger rode back to Troina with much spoil. The Saracens were not checked by so small a loss, however, and before long a great battle was fought by Cerami. There the whole Moslem host was drawn up in order of battle, and the Normans had never faced such odds before; but while Roger and his chiefs spoke words of comfort to their men, says the chronicle, one suddenly rode before them on a milk-white charger, and clothed

in steel from head to heel, bearing on his lance a white pennant, whereon there was a blood-red cross, for Saint George himself had come down to fight against the infidels; and all that day the Normans slew and slew, till the bodies of fifteen thousand Saracens were heaped up like great ramparts on the earth, and the Normans slept in their armour on the slippery field, and on the next day they pursued the flying foe far and wide through the valleys and ravines of the mountains.

In gratitude to God and Saint Peter for this great victory over the Africans and Saracens, Roger sent to Pope Alexander the Second four camels, and the Pope thereupon sent his benediction and a general absolution for past sins to Roger and to all those who were fighting, or should fight, to free Sicily from the Moslems; but the Pope added that this pardon could be of no avail unless the Christians felt some real repentance for their sins and made an effort to lead better lives in future.

At this time the merchants of Pisa, whose commerce with Sicily had suffered greatly under the Mohammedan rule, sent out a fleet with a sort of general commission to do as much damage to the Saracens as possible; and finding Roger in Sicily, the admiral sent messengers to him at Troina, proposing a joint attack upon Palermo. But Roger was busy with other matters, and requested a short delay before making the attempt, and the Pisans sailed on without him. The description of their attack is very vague, but it is clear that they made no real

attempt to storm the capital, and contented themselves with filing the chain which the Saracens had drawn across the harbour, and carrying it back to Pisa as a trophy.

After this, as it was summer, and the weather in the plains was too hot for fighting, though it was cool enough in high Troina, Roger projected another visit to his brother the Guiscard in Apulia. Before setting out he made his usual preparations for a journey, which consisted in sacking a few towns, whence he collected enough booty and ready money to stock Troina with provisions and to provide for his own necessities on the way. He left his countess in command and returned as soon as the great heat was over, bringing with him a hundred men lent him by Duke Robert. An expedition that he made against Girgenti about this time very nearly led him to destruction; for on his return his advance guard fell into an ambush, and in something like a panic dashed up the side of a hill, leaving the train of animals that carried the booty at the mercy of the enemy, who killed the driver. It was with the greatest difficulty that Roger prevailed upon his men to come back and fight, and though they ultimately did so, and cut their way through with the plunder, they lost one of their best men in the action. Reflecting upon this skirmish, Roger began to see that it would be impossible to maintain the position of a mere marauder forever. The strength of the Saracens in the centre and

west of Sicily was unshaken, for it seems that the great majority of those slain in the battle of Cerami were Africans, and the Saracens of Palermo had not yet brought their real forces into the field. Roger therefore now made a serious treaty with his brother Robert, and the time was favourable for a joint attempt, as the Greeks had not caused the Normans much anxiety since the defeat of Abul Kare, and the Greek city of Bari had at last made an agreement with Robert by which he was allowed to enter the walls. The so-called Duke of Italy had been obliged to return to Durazzo, whence he was intriguing with a few discontented Normans to produce a rising in Italy, a danger to which the Guiscard seems to have been indifferent. He therefore turned his attention to Sicily, and in 1064 the two brothers crossed the straits with an army of five hundred Normans, traversed Sicily without opposition, and encamped upon a hill before Palermo. Here the chronicler says that they were tormented by tarantula spiders. This statement has caused some controversy among historians, who were possibly unacquainted with the spider in question. From personal knowledge I am able to say that the bite is extremely painful and irritating, but not fatal in any known case, and that tarantulas really are common enough all over the south. No one has been able to say with certainty which elevation it was that the Normans selected for their first encampment. I am inclined to think that it was Monreale,

because that point is the one by which they would naturally have reached Palermo on the march from the interior, and because they afterwards returned to it and built the famous abbey on the site. Be that as it may, they were obliged to give way to the tarantulas and to encamp in lower ground, where they remained during three months, and made futile attacks upon the city, which they were unable to blockade by sea. They retired discomfited, and after a long raid through the country the Guiscard returned to Calabria with the conviction that for the conquest of Sicily a fleet was as necessary as an army. Soon after Guiscard's return a civil war broke out between one of the African chiefs and Ibn-al-Hawwas, who was, however, soon slain, thereby leaving the African Arabs in power. The Sicilian Moslems soon began to revolt against their exactions, and being well informed of the situation, the wily Guiscard resolved to let internal discord do its work.

Meanwhile he proceeded with the final conquest of Calabria, destroyed the city of Policastro in the gulf of that name, reduced the neighbourhood of Cosenza to subjection, failed in the siege of Ajello, but got possession of the place in the end by a treaty with the inhabitants, and then finally turned his attention to Apulia. The conspiracy planned and fostered in Durazzo by Perenos, the Duke of Italy, had reached dangerous proportions. Many Normans were now

jealous of Duke Robert's increasing power, and more than one owed him vengeance for some deed of violence and cruelty. The son of Humphrey, who was supposed to be Robert's ward, but to whom the Guiscard paid no more attention than if he never existed, joined the malcontents, and Perenos exacted hostages from them in order to be sure of their good faith, and in return obtained for them large sums of money from Constantinople. Having learned wisdom from the Guiscard himself, his enemies avoided battle, and declined to lay siege to his cities, but ravaged his lands in all directions; and when he, on his part, attempted to retaliate by attacking Perenos in Durazzo, on the other side of the Adriatic, a strong Greek fleet under the Admiral Mabrica put his vessels to flight. Mabrica now landed, and Bari, forgetful of its promises, opened its gates. The Greeks possessed the valuable aid of the Scandinavian Varanger guard, and gained more than one advantage in hand-to-hand fight, and it looked as if the fruit of a long and laborious conquest were to be snatched from Robert's hands; but gathering his tremendous energy, as he always could in any extremity, he at last got the upper hand, the Greeks fell back before him, the chief of the Norman conspirators fled in panic to Constantinople, and the duke brought the insurrection to an end when he got possession, by treachery, of Monte Peloso, the fortress on the hill

overlooking the often-disputed plains of Cannæ. This was in 1068. Robert immediately set about effacing the impression produced in the south by this revolution, and, rather than endanger his returning popularity by vengeance, however just, he consented to be reconciled with those of the conspirators who had not fled.

It was at this time that the Seljuks became the cause of serious anxiety to Constantinople, for they had advanced as far as Antioch and threatened the capital itself. The Greek emperor was therefore unable to turn his attention to Italy, and at the same time the Greek cause suffered a serious loss by the death of Argyros, the son of the patriotic Meles. After many vicissitudes, after suffering exile and imprisonment, he had returned to spend the last four years of his life in Bari, and though at the end he entertained friendly relations with the Normans, he nevertheless remained the representative of the Greek-Italians until his death. It is surmised that he left his personal possessions to Robert Guiscard, for soon after his death the duke appeared before Bari with a fleet and demanded that all the houses which had belonged to Argyros should be handed over to him at once; and as they were a group of buildings resembling a castle rather than a palace, and dominating the city, it is not surprising that the Greeks should have refused haughtily to give them up. By way

of adding insult to injury, however, they collected together a vast quantity of precious objects of gold and silver, and carried them in procession upon the



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ramparts under the blazing sun, so that Robert might be dazzled by the sight of the wealth which was refused him. But he, from his ship, answered smilingly

that all he saw was his, and that he was much bounden to the people of Bari for taking such good care of his possessions.

Thereupon he began a siege which lasted two years and eight months, and might have lasted longer had not Count Roger lent his assistance at the last. Robert determined to blockade the city by land and sea, in order to starve it to submission, and while his cavalry encamped on the land side, he shut in the harbour by anchoring before it a number of vessels lashed together with chains ; and as the shelving shore would not allow the close approach of ships of such draught, he built out two wooden piers from the beach to the two ends of the line. Meanwhile, the patrician of the city, Bizanzio, went to Constantinople and appealed to the emperor, though Robert made an unsuccessful attempt to intercept him. He returned with a number of ships and a quantity of provisions, and though the Normans sank twelve of the vessels, the remainder succeeded in forcing his blockade, to the great joy of the inhabitants. They made a heroic defence, but within the city there was a strong party in favour of the Normans, under the leadership of Argirizzo, who maintained a correspondence with the duke, and served his end in every way. The siege had lasted two years when Argirizzo caused Bizanzio to be assassinated, and his partisans fired a number of houses belonging to the patriotic party. The latter retorted by an attempt to murder the

Guiscard, which only failed by the merest accident. For a sum of money a certain soldier, who had a private grudge against the duke, and had formerly served under him, agreed to do the deed. Slipping out of the city unobserved, and armed with his sling and pike, he turned, when he was at a little distance from the rampart, and slung a few stones towards the city, as if he belonged to the besieging army. Then, entering the Norman camp without difficulty, for it was already dusk, he soon found the duke's quarters, a mere hut made of branches so loosely fastened together that the murderer could see through them into the interior. The great Norman was seated at a low table alone, with the remains of his simple supper before him. He was overcome with fatigue, and as he sat there resting, he nodded, half asleep. The man watched him some time by the light of the small oil lamp, and then, taking careful aim, he hurled his pike at the duke's head with all his might, and instantly fled through the darkness. But at that instant the tired man had fallen forward upon the table, his face upon his arms, sound asleep, and the dart had passed harmlessly above his bent neck. It was found on the following day, and the Normans at once built their leader a stone house.

During the long siege Robert had made more than one expedition, and had attempted to take Brindisi back, but had lost there a hundred of his men by a piece of

frightful treachery. The Greek governor pretended to treat secretly with him for the betrayal of the city, and at the appointed hour and place the Normans were admitted, one by one, by a ladder. As each one then



TERRACE OF SANTA MARIA DI GESU, PALERMO

passed through a door, he was silently killed by the Greeks, and so a hundred perished before those behind knew what was happening. But before Bari fell, Robert took final possession of Brindisi.

During all this time Roger was in Sicily, gradually strengthening his position, and now determined to advance upon Palermo by slow and sure steps. It was in 1068, in the first year of the siege of Bari, that he won the decisive battle of Misilmeri. The Moslems, exasperated by his unceasing ravages, had resolved to face him at last, and to stop his advance at the castle called in Arabic Manzil-al-Emir, corrupted into Misilmeri. It is the very spot at which, in 1860, Garibaldi joined the Sicilian revolutionaries before seizing Palermo, and is only nine miles from the city. We know not how many Moslems came out to meet the Normans, but it is told that all were slain. Now the Saracens reared carrier pigeons, feeding them on corn and honey, and took them in baskets when they went out to war to carry back news of victory or defeat; and some of these were found among the booty. Then Roger indeed sent the news to Palermo, for he took slips of white parchment and dipped them in Saracen blood and fastened them to the birds' necks, and let the pigeons fly. And when the people of Palermo saw them, they knew the worst, and the air was full of the lamentations of women and children.

But Roger did not attempt to take the city itself, for he now fully understood that both an army and a fleet would be necessary for such an undertaking, and the signal defeat he had inflicted upon the Saracens at the very gates of their capital had inspired a whole-

some terror of the Normans throughout the island, so that he was more free than heretofore to go and come at his pleasure.

Meanwhile, the siege of Bari proceeded. After the murder of Bizanzio, Argirizzo redoubled his efforts in favour of the Normans, and the people cried out for bread before the doors of the Greek general's palace, bidding him capitulate with the duke unless he could feed them. In reply, he made one last desperate appeal to Constantinople; a messenger was found who dared to run the blockade, and who bore to the emperor the tale of suffering. Then the emperor was moved, and commanded that a fleet should be got ready at Durazzo, under the command of a certain Norman who seems to have been one of the conspirators against Robert's life, who had fled to the East after their failure. The messenger got back into the city unhurt, and he bade the citizens light many torches upon the ramparts at night to guide the rescuing fleet.

But at this time, and at his brother's request, Count Roger had sailed up from Sicily with many good ships; and when the Normans understood what was meant by the torches lighted every night on the city walls, Roger set a lookout to watch for the coming enemy. At last, on a certain night, in the mid-watch, many lights hove in sight, like a constellation of stars upon the horizon, and they were the masthead lights which men-of-war carried in those days, and the admiral's ship

carried two. Then Roger sailed out with his fleet, and a great sea-fight was fought in the dark. Roger himself attacked the admiral, recognizing his ship by its lights, and took him prisoner; the ships of the Greek fleet were almost all destroyed or captured, and the torches that were to have guided a rescuing army to Bari lit up the return of a triumphant foe. The last hope of assistance was gone, and Argirizzo now treated almost openly with Robert for the surrender of the city, sending his own daughter as a hostage of his good faith. He immediately seized one of the principal towers of defence, and the negotiations were carried on without further concealment. Yet even now the patriotic inhabitants would have held out; men and women, children, priests, and monks came in throngs to the foot of the tower where Argirizzo was, and lifting up their hands, implored him with many tears not to betray them to the terrible Normans. But Argirizzo turned a deaf ear to their supplications, and would not even look out and see the people; and on the eve of Palm Sunday, in the year 1071, Robert made his triumphal entry into the city.

With the wisdom born of long experience, the great duke disappointed the expectations of a terror-struck people; he neither took from them the rich treasures which they had tauntingly exposed to his gaze, nor exacted satisfaction for an insult that had brought a smile to his lips; he restored to the citizens the lands

occupied by the Normans in the neighbourhood during the siege ; he allowed no bloodshed nor violence, and treated the Greek garrison as prisoners of war ; the only conditions that he imposed upon the city were that Argirizzo should be governor, and that the tribute formerly paid to Constantinople should now be paid to himself. In order that these conditions should be faithfully executed, he established a Norman garrison in the fortifications. To such a degree had a long career of conquest civilized the wild freebooter of San Marco.

The fall of Bari was the end of all Greek claims in Italy, and it had been brought about by the rapid development of the Norman naval power. Up to the year 1060 no mention is found of any Norman navy ; ten years later the Norman fleets were more than a match for those of Constantinople, and from their victory at Bari they sailed almost directly to the final capture of Palermo. Bari was taken on the sixteenth of April, and in the first week of August fifty-eight Norman men-of-war, of which ten were of the largest size, were ready to sail down upon Sicily from the harbour of Otranto, with an army numbering between eight and ten thousand men. Robert had collected not only Normans, but Lombards, Apulians, and Calabrians, and he had taken or forced into his service the soldiers of the Greek garrison taken prisoners. Under his iron hand these men of many nationalities fought

with unbroken discipline throughout a campaign that lasted six months. He was not joined by all the Norman princes. Gisulf of Salerno, his own brother-in-law, Richard of Capua, the Count of Trani, and many smaller lords stood sullenly aloof, expecting to witness his destruction, and one, if not more, took advantage of his absence to invade his dominions; but nothing could turn the sons of Tancred from their purpose, and while Robert marched a part of his forces from Otranto to Reggio, the rest pursued their way to the same port by sea.

Roger was already in Sicily when Robert crossed the straits, and hearing of his brother's advance he seized and fortified Catania, of which the alliance had been uncertain since the assassination of Ibn-at-Timnah. Roger now took command of the land forces and marched to Palermo through the heart of Sicily, only turning aside to visit his wife Judith in Troina, where he was joined by two nephews. Duke Robert, who seems to have feared the heat in the month of August, sailed with fifty ships to Palermo. With the loss of a few men who were killed while collecting forage, and whose death was amply avenged, Roger reached the entrance to the Golden Shell; and as he gazed down upon the groves of oranges and lemons and carob trees, the villas, and the Moorish palaces, and the gardens of roses that filled the fertile valley then, as now, and as he beheld the walls and minarets and domes of

Moslem Palermo beyond, his keen eye may well have descried the white sails of his brother's fleets in the offing, for Duke Robert reached the city almost at the same time. It is certain that the people of Palermo were surprised by the simultaneous appearance of the Normans, both on land and sea, and the invaders took possession of the gardens and orchards and pleasure houses, almost without striking a blow. The few Moslems who fell into their hands were immediately sold as slaves, and what they found they divided among themselves, after choosing for Roger and the princes his nephews 'delectable gardens abounding with fruit and water; and the knights were royally lodged in an earthly paradise.'

The Saracens had built a tower, or castle, at the mouth of the small river Oreto eastwards of the city, by the sea, and as Roger at once saw the necessity of commanding the point, in order that Norman ships might enter the stream, he went up to the walls and defied the Saracens in a loud voice. So they came out and fought, and the Normans killed thirty of them and took fifteen prisoners, and held the tower. Robert Guiscard now landed his army and encamped between the mouth of the Oreto and the quarter still called the Kalsa, which has been already described in the words of Ibn Haukal. Roger took up his position on the south side of the city in the direction of Monreale, and opposite the gate now called Porta Nuova, in the neigh-

bourhood of the papyrus swamp. As the army was not numerous enough to invest Palermo from that point to the sea on the west, the besiegers patrolled the country in order to cut off communication between the inhabitants and the small bay westward of Monte Pellegrino, which the Carthaginians had so successfully utilized in the days of Hamilcar Barca. This fact is to be inferred from our information regarding the famine that soon prevailed in the city. The siege began about the first of September, and was varied by many incidents during the next four months. The people of Palermo invoked the help of the African Arabs, who sent a strong fleet to attack Robert's ships; the Normans protected their own from the stones and darts of their adversaries by means of great pieces of thick red felt, of which they seem to have seized a great quantity in some dyeing establishment in the suburbs; but some writers say that this was an ancient Scandinavian custom. The Arabs ranged their ships in battle order, and came on with a tremendous blare of clarions and trumpets, while the Christians performed their devotions in silence. We do not know how the African ships had succeeded in entering the harbour to join those of their allies, though it is clear enough that fifty small vessels could not blockade such a place as Palermo; but we know that the combined fleets of the Moslems sailed out against the Normans and were driven back in a short and furious battle. Some ships

were captured and some were sunk, and when the Normans reached the great chain which was drawn against the entrance of the harbour, they broke through it and fired the vessels that lay within.

Now also famine came to the help of the besiegers, and the bodies of the starved dead lay unburied, and poisoned the air. Then the Normans laid loaves of bread upon the ground before the walls to tempt the people out; some came out and took the bread and ate it ravenously and ran back. But on the next day the besiegers placed the bread a little farther away, and farther still on the day after that, and then they caught the miserable people and sold them for slaves.

There were also brave deeds done in single combat. A certain Moslem knight in full armour used to sit upon his horse in one of the gates when it was open and well defended; and one of Roger's nephews rode at him amain, and drove him in and killed him; but when the Norman turned the Moslems had shut the gates, and he was alone within the city. With incomparable courage, seeing that his retreat was cut off, he set spurs to his horse and rode at full speed through the heart of Palermo to another gate, where he slew the guards and let himself out unhurt.

During the long siege Robert received bad news from the continent. The Norman nobles who had refused to join the enterprise, Richard of Capua and

many others, after at first making a semblance of neutrality, made incursions into the dukedom, seized the castle of Sant' Angelo in Calabria, and set the whole country in a blaze. A weaker man would have divided his forces and would have sent back a part of them to avenge the outrage and to repel the invaders; but Robert well knew that if he held Palermo and made himself lord of Sicily he could chastise his enemies at his leisure, and he never hesitated in pursuing his purpose. And now the time was come for a general assault, for the Arab fleet had been destroyed, and the garrison was weak from famine and sickness. So Robert prepared fourteen great scaling ladders, seven for Roger's men and seven for his own, and he gave Roger the honour of the first assault.

At dawn on the fifth of January, 1072, Roger made the attempt; the bowmen and slingers went before, bearing the ladders, while the cavalry moved behind them in even order. The Saracens fearlessly opened their gates and rode at Roger's infantry, which gave way under the shock, but the knights soon drove the Moslems back before them in wild confusion, trusting that in the rush they might suddenly enter the city. The defenders within, seeing the great danger, shut the gates and sacrificed their unhappy comrades to save the city. Then the Normans brought up their scaling ladders and set them against the high ramparts,

while Duke Robert stood in their midst calling upon them to take that city which was hateful to God and subject to devils, and bidding them know that, though he was their general, Christ Himself was their leader. Then one man, whose name was Archifred, made a great sign of the cross and set his foot upon the ladder, and two others went up with him; but the deed was so fearful that no others would follow. The three reached the rampart and stood upon it, and fought till their shields and swords were broken in their hands; and then, being defenceless, they turned and leaped for their lives, and slipped and rolled and fell down the escarpment, and by a miracle they reached the ground unhurt. Now others, and many, came forward to do as these had done, but the walls were high and the defenders staunch, and Robert saw that he was sacrificing good men for no good end. He therefore ordered Roger to pretend to carry on the assault, while he himself rode round through the gardens to a point of the Kalsa where the enemy expected no attack, and where he had hidden three hundred chosen men with their ladders among certain trees. He was successful at last. Hardly an enemy was upon the walls, and in a few minutes his men were rushing through the streets to open the nearest gate for him. The day had been spent in the long assault, but as the sun went down the Normans were masters of the Kalsa, while the surviving Saracens retired

within the Kasr, leaving their heaps of dead where they had fallen in the streets. All night long the Norman soldiers marched up from the encampments and filled the Kalsa, and many of them spent that first night in sacking the rich outer town, slaying the Moslems where they found them, but sparing the children for slaves. Within the fortress the half-vanquished Saracens sat all night in debate, and when the morning came most of them were for surrendering, and they sent out ambassadors to treat with Duke Robert and Count Roger for terms of peace.

The conquerors had learned the worth of mercy and the wisdom of forbearance, and they gave the great city very honourable terms. The Saracens were not to be disturbed in the exercise of their religion; not one of them was to be exiled from Palermo; they were not to be oppressed by new and unjust laws; and finally, they were to enjoy the right of being judged at law by tribunals of their own.

These points being settled, Roger took a large force, entered the Kasr, and occupied the fortifications, but it was not until the tenth of January that he made his solemn entry. A thousand knights lined the streets through which the army was to pass; Robert Guiscard and his wife Sigelgaita headed the triumphal march, with Count Roger and the others of the house of Tancred, and Guy of Salerno, who had quarrelled with his nephew Gisulf, was also

there. So the duke and all the princes and the clergy rode up to Saint Gregory's Church of Our Lady, of which the Saracens had made a mosque, and a solemn mass was said by the Christian Archbishop of Palermo, who had suffered much at the hand of the Saracens. 'Then,' says the devout chronicler, 'a great marvel appeared in this church, for certain good Christians heard in that church the voices of the angels, and very sweet song, which praised God on high, and at divers times this church was lit up with heavenly light, more bright than any light of this world.'

The fall of Palermo did not mean the immediate conquest of all Sicily; lofty Castrogiovanni still held its own, and Marsala, 'the harbour of Allah,' and many strong and good places in the west; but it meant that the Saracen domination was at an end, and then and there the Guiscard and his brother divided Sicily between them. The duke, generous to himself, kept the suzerainty of the whole island with Palermo, the Val-Demone, and Messina, and Roger received the rest of Sicily, conquered already, or still to be subdued, keeping his vast possessions in Calabria as recognized by his brother. From this time he is known in history as Roger the Great Count.

One of the two principal vassals who were to hold the new country under the brothers was their nephew, Serlo, the other was a certain Arisgot of Pozzuoli, a

relative of the house of Tancred; but the former's days were numbered, and not long after the taking of Palermo he came to an untimely end by treachery. He was at that time keeping the peace in Cerami against the incursions of the Arabs of Castrogiovanni. But there was a certain Arab with whom he had sworn brotherhood, by touching ear to ear after the manner of the Saracens; and this man betrayed him and told him treacherously that on a certain day he should not ride to a place named, because a small party of seven Arabs had determined then to make a raid in that direction. But Serlo laughed loud, and rode out with a few companions; and his enemy indeed sent the seven Saracens to the place, but he hid seven hundred in an ambuscade hard by. So Serlo and his comrades were suddenly surrounded and they sprang upon a boulder and fought for their lives. When they had slain many, and their weapons were all broken, they still hurled down stones and earth upon their assailants; but at the last they were all killed, save two, who lay wounded and half dead under the piles of slain. The Saracens cut off Serlo's head and sent it as a present to the emir in Africa; but with their knives they cut out the brave man's heart and apportioned it among them and devoured it, trusting that thereby his courage might enter into their own bodies.

Even then, Robert and Roger did not march

against Castrogiovanni, for the place was very strong; but they took hostages of the Saracens, lest such evils should befall again, and slowly strengthened themselves in their possessions. In Palermo they built two fortresses, the one on the site of the modern royal palace at Porta Nuova, and comprising the Saracen fortress that already stood there; and still a lordly vaulted room is pointed out, and the traveller is told that after the siege Count Roger chose it for his own. Also the duke saw that the poor little Church of Saint Mary ‘was like a baker’s oven’ amid the splendid Saracen palaces, and he caused it to be torn down, and gave great sums of money to build a better church on the spot; and still in the porch of the later cathedral one may see the pillars of the mosque, with verses from the Koran graven in the cufic character. In the last months of the year 1072 Robert Guiscard, Duke of Apulia, of Calabria, and of Sicily, returned to the mainland laden with spoil.

While Robert and Roger were conquering Sicily, the Normans of the mainland were engaged in ceaseless dissensions and involved in the complicated history of the Papacy. A large part of their story concerns the doings of Richard of Capua and of a certain William of Montreuil, to whom he gave his daughter in marriage, who quarrelled with his father-in-law, repudiated his wife, attempted to marry the widowed Duchess of Gaeta, and failing in this plan was reconciled with Richard and

took his wife back; who allied himself with Pope Alexander the Second in his struggle against the antipope Honorius, at one time commanding a force of several thousand men, and who would have continued to cause trouble during many years had he not been providentially removed from history by the malarious fever of the Roman Campagna. In the inextricable confusion of small events two principal figures stand out; that of Richard, determined to extend his principality of Capua, and even marching upon Rome itself, from the gates of which he was driven back by the appearance of the Duke of Tuscany with a large army, and, on the other hand, the gigantic personality of Hildebrand, soon to be Pope Gregory the Seventh, fighting, as only he knew how to fight, for the independence of the Papacy and of the Church itself. It would be fruitless for the purposes of the present work to follow the many entangled threads; the story is one of raids and counter-raids, of ruined crops and blazing towns, and of castles won by assault or betrayed by treachery. It ended in a solemn and peaceful ceremony at Monte Cassino at the very time when the Normans of the south were fighting under the walls of Palermo. The devout and indefatigable Abbot Desiderius had built the great church of the abbey, and at its consecration by Pope Alexander himself there were present with Richard of Capua all the great Norman and Lombard nobles who had refused to take part in the conquest of Sicily,

besides a vast multitude of nobles and tenants and countrymen, clerks, laymen, monks and soldiers, Campanians, Apulians and Calabrians who, during more than a week, thronged up the steep mountain side to pray at the tomb of the holy Benedict and to receive the Pope's absolution and blessing. The splendid basilica, with its lofty nave and aisles, its double ranks of columns, and its grand choir, in the midst of which rose the tomb of the saint, eight steps above the floor, was totally destroyed by a great earthquake in the year 1349. Desiderius had spared neither pains nor treasure in the work, and had brought columns from Rome and rich marbles from other parts of Italy, and had called artists together, Latins, Greeks, and even Saracens, from Constantinople and from Alexandria. Moreover, a great noble of Amalfi had ordered the bronze doors to be cast and chiselled in Constantinople, and what remains of these is all that is left of Desiderius' abbey church.

The consecration was, however, a favourable occasion for an interview between Richard and all those who were jealous of the house of Tancred, and it is certain that Richard of Capua profited by it to plan his attack upon Apulia, while Gisulf agreed at the same time to make a raid upon the western coast, from Policastro to Sant' Eufemia. The surprise and disappointment of the malcontents at the news that Palermo was taken may be more easily imagined than described,

and when Duke Robert came back in triumph to Melfi and convoked his great vassals, more than one of them must have wished that he had been with the Guiscard and Roger at Palermo. He seems to have satisfied himself by visiting his wrath upon the Count of Trani, who had flatly refused to send any help for the Sicilian expedition, and who at first declined to meet the suzerain at Melfi. Being forced to do so, however, he gave haughty answers to all Robert's questions and commands, and the duke was obliged to make war upon him. It was during this short struggle that, having taken the count prisoner, he made use of him in besieging the castles that remained loyal, for when the defenders began to shoot arrows and hurl stones from the ramparts, Robert set the count himself, loaded with chains, in front of his besieging force, and the prisoner, in terror for his life, besought his own people to abstain from defending themselves, lest they should kill him.

As for Richard of Capua, who had advanced as far as Cannæ in Apulia, it is merely recorded that when he perceived himself opposed by Divine Providence, he quietly returned to Capua. Robert pardoned him at the time, promising himself to be avenged at a more convenient season; and when, after entirely reducing the south to submission, he forgave the Count of Trani and gave him back most of his possessions, he prepared to make war against the Capuan prince. But at this

juncture he fell dangerously ill, and lay long between life and death in Bari; his wife Sigelgaita herself believed that he was at his last gasp, and hastily calling together the Norman knights, she caused them to choose for her husband's successor her own son, the young Roger, to the exclusion of Bohemund, the duke's eldest born by his first marriage. After this election the news went abroad that Robert was dead, and Gregory the Seventh, who had just ascended the pontifical throne, wrote a characteristic letter of condolence to Sigelgaita. The pontiff spoke of the death of Duke Robert, the most beloved son of Holy Church, as a source of grief irremediable to himself, to the cardinals, and to the Senate of Rome; he expressed his good will to the widowed duchess, and requested her to bring her son to Rome, in order that he might receive from the hands of the Church's head those possessions which his father had held from former popes.

At this point, when every one who was with the duke believed that he was about to expire, and when even the Pope himself believed him to be already dead, the Guiscard's iron constitution prevailed against the sickness; he suddenly was better, in a few days he was out of danger, and in an incredibly short time he was completely restored to health, to the great joy of his friends, and to the bitter disappointment of his enemies. As the Abbé Delarc says in the closing lines of his valuable work, the Guiscard was still to live twelve

years, astonishing and upheaving Italy and Europe from east to west by his daring deeds and by the surprising energy of his restless life.

It was in the year 1073 that Duke Robert fell ill and unexpectedly recovered, and in order to carry on the story of the Normans it is necessary to return to Sicilian ground, following for a while Amari's great history of the Moslems in Sicily. In the beginning of the year 1072, immediately after the fall of Palermo, Sicily was divided into three parallel zones from east to west. The most northerly of the three extended from Messina to Palermo, following the north side of the Sicilian range, and in the partition of the island had been taken by Robert himself; the second division followed the south side of the mountains, and was subject to Count Roger; the third and southernmost portion was still entirely in the hands of the Saracens, excepting the cities of Catania and Mazzara, which Roger held, and this domain of the Saracens was equal in extent to the other two. Moreover, Roger's position was weakened by the fact that the Moslems held the fortresses of Taormina and Trapani, situated respectively at the eastern and western extremities of his territory, by the necessity of supporting garrisons in many different castles at the same time, by the unproductiveness of his lands as compared with the rest of the island, and by his obligation to fight on the mainland when required to do so by his brother Robert.

These circumstances made it clear from the first that the Moslems might resist a long time, and if they had been firmly united, the issue might have been doubtful ; but they were divided among themselves, they made the mistake of opposing themselves separately to the conqueror, and he took their strong places, one by one. It has often been said that the history of the Arabs in Sicily is yet to be written, and their chief historian, the learned Amari, admits that in the whirlpool of their national and civil wars the distinctions between the successively dominating parties is extremely uncertain. The same writer points out that, if they had been unified, the fall of Palermo would have meant the conquest of the whole island, whereas it produced little or no impression upon the Saracens of the south. Furthermore, the fact that the Moslems of Noto, which comprises all the southeast region, had been in a sort of alliance with Roger, had contributed to increase their strength ; and when at last a revolutionary leader arose in the person of the Arab Ben Arwet, he found such materials ready as made him at once a most dangerous adversary. The man was the last Moslem patriot in Sicily, and his efforts to restore Mohammedan independence have justly been called heroic. Under his leadership the Saracens were soon in arms throughout the south ; from the ramparts of numerous castles they defied the Norman cavalry, and when they sallied from their strongholds they skilfully led Roger's troops into ambush. Almost wholly

unprovided with siege engines, or with troops accustomed to such operations, the Normans were forced to fight when it pleased the Moslems to face them. Roger, indeed, strongly fortified the heights of Calascibetta over against Castrogiovanni, and he took one or two other strong places; but in the meantime the African Arabs made a wild raid upon the Italian coast at Nicotera, and returning landed at Mazzara and besieged the castle in that place until Roger arrived in person and drove them off. In those years Ben Arwet commanded the whole province, from Syracuse as a base, and his forces were continually increasing. Being obliged to return to Mileto, Roger appointed Hugh of Jersey his viceregent in Sicily, and placed his son Jourdain in command of the troops in the field, enjoining upon both to avoid a pitched battle with the Moslems. But neither had the coolness to resist the temptation to an open fight, and when Ben Arwet sent a decoy party to forage under the very walls of Catania, the young Normans rode out and were drawn into an ambush where Hugh of Jersey was killed, and whence Jourdain barely escaped with his life.

At the news of this disaster Roger's anger knew no bounds, and he arrived in Sicily soon afterwards with such an army as Ben Arwet dared not face. He now advanced directly into Noto, and as it was harvest time he so completely destroyed the crops as to produce a famine in the following year. He next assailed

Trapani in the West, and the place was taken at a bold stroke by his son Jourdain.

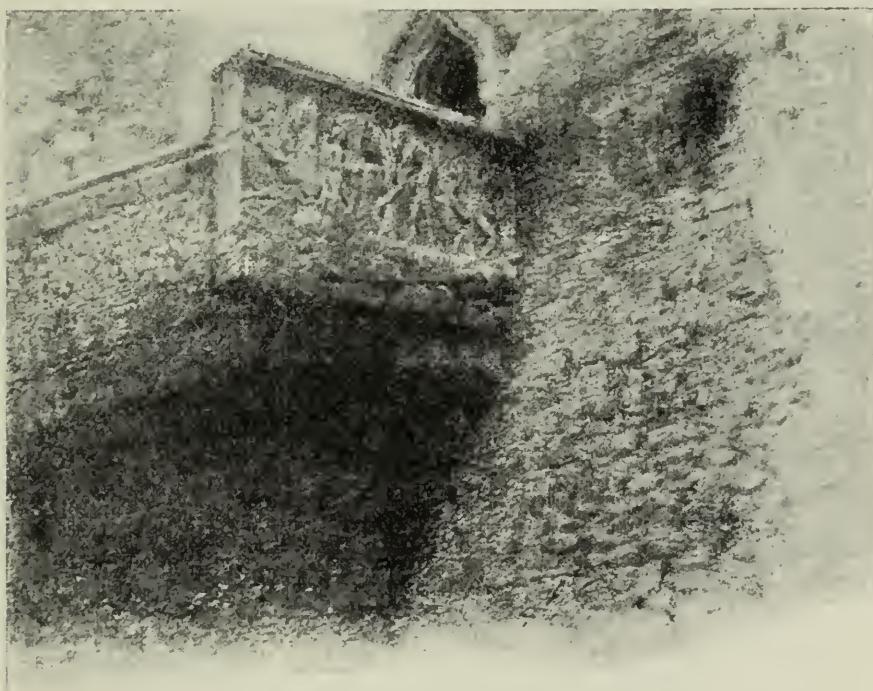
The city of Trapani was, and still is, built upon the landward end of the low sickle-shaped promontory, whence it first took its name; and during the siege the people used to drive out a herd of cattle to pasture on the outer extremity, for, as Roger had no ships with him, the point was completely protected by the sea, and the gate of the city that looked towards it was only closed at night. Saying nothing to his father, Jourdain took a hundred men with him, and under cover of darkness reached the point by means of small boats, and hid his party among the rocks near the city. At dawn the gate was opened for the herd to pass out as usual, and the Normans sprang from their hiding-place and rushed towards it. In a moment the Moslems were in arms, and the odds against the assailants were ten to one; yet in the short and furious struggle the Normans had the better, and without attempting to enter the city they returned by water, taking with them the captured cattle. The assault had shown the inhabitants what might happen if Roger landed a larger force on that side, and rather than risk the consequences of further resistance, they made terms and submitted. Of the two strong places at the opposite ends of his dominions, Roger now held the one, but Taormina still remained to be taken. Roger soon afterwards began the siege and completely surrounded the strong place

with works in order to reduce it by starvation. Here he almost lost his life, for in going the rounds with a handful of men he was suddenly caught in a narrow way by a party of the enemy. It was clear that he must retrace his steps or be killed ; the path was narrow and could be held for a few moments by one man, and a devoted follower, named Evisand, sacrificed his life to save the count. He fell pierced with innumerable wounds at the very moment when the Normans came up to the rescue, and Roger buried the friend who had saved him with royal honours, and founded a church, or a convent, in memory of his preservation, and for the soul of his preserver.

After a siege of five months, Taormina yielded to starvation and surrendered. But the war was far from ended yet, and nine years after the fall of Palermo, Ben Arwet regained possession of Catania, apparently having bribed the governor of the place to admit him, and it was not till after a battle and a short siege that Ben Arwet fled to Syracuse by night, and the Normans took back the city. And now that same Jourdain, trusting in his own strength and courage, rebelled against his father, and began to occupy certain castles on his own account ; and Roger, affecting to attribute his doings to the heat and folly of youth, bade him come with his friends and be reconciled before he had done worse. But when he held them fast he made a strict inquiry, and he put out the eyes of twelve of his

son's chief associates, and sent Jourdain away free, but disgraced.

The war, says Amari, proceeded slowly, because at that time a great part of the Norman forces were with Duke Robert in Greece. For during those years the duke had grown great. Raymond, the Count of Pro-



STAIRWAY IN COURTYARD AT TAORMINA

rence, had taken his daughter in marriage, and on the strength of such a great alliance, Robert extended his dominions more and more, and invading Romagna and afterwards Durazzo beyond the Adriatic, of which doings there are elaborate accounts in the monkish chronicles, in the year 1082 he carried war into Bul-

garia and won much glory and some spoil, but little else. In the following year, when Henry the Fourth attempted to set up an antipope against Gregory the Seventh, and came to Rome with an army, Duke Robert went up from the south like a whirlwind and burnt half Rome; and the emperor fled before him. After that he returned into Apulia and began to make great preparations for an expedition to the East; and sailing away with a fair wind, and with a vast number of ships, he reached Durazzo, but there he suddenly fell ill, and died in the month of July, in the year 1084. We know little of the manner of his death, for the chronicle merely says that he died, and that his wife Sigelgaita, and his son Roger Bursa, and all the barons, performed the funeral rites with due honours; that his body was brought back to Italy and laid to rest in Venosa; and finally, that in the dispute that arose between Bohemund and Roger Bursa for the succession, Count Roger of Sicily took his namesake's part, in return for which service he received, or appropriated, the other half of Calabria which he had not previously received from his brother.

It was during the dispute about Duke Robert's succession, that Ben Arwet took advantage of the disturbed state of Southern Italy to make a sudden attack upon Calabria. In August or September of the year 1085, he landed by night at Nicotera, not twenty miles from Roger's favourite city of Mileto,

and carried off most of the population captive. Falling upon Reggio next, he sacked the churches of Saint Nicholas and of Saint George, destroying the statues and images; and breaking into the convent of Our Lady at Rocca d'Asino, near by, he took the nuns with him to Syracuse and distributed them among the harems of the chief Moslems. Roger's wrath rose at the outrage, and while he did not fail to propitiate heaven by lavish charity to the poor of Messina, and by walking barefoot from church to church with monks who chanted the litanies, he gathered his forces for a great effort. On the twenty-fifth of May, 1086, he fought Ben Arwet in the harbour of Syracuse; and there, says the monk, the devil entered into the Moslem's heart to drive him to destruction, for when he went against Roger's ship with his own, he was wounded by a dart, and the Great Count attacked him, sword in hand, and he tried to leap to another vessel, but fell into the sea, and the weight of his armour bore him down, and he was drowned.

From May to October the Moslems bravely defended their city; then the chief men took Ben Arwet's widow and his son, and fled to Noto, and Syracuse surrendered. After this Roger took Girgenti, and not much later impregnable Castrogiovanni fell into his hands by the treachery, or conversion, of the Governor Hamud. He, being hard pressed, secretly agreed to embrace Christianity, led his best forces into a

preconcerted ambush, where they were taken unhurt, and he was received with open arms. He was rewarded with broad lands in Calabria, where he lived out a long and happy life. Butera, on the south coast, was the last city in Sicily that stood a siege, and Noto was the last to capitulate, in the month of February, 1091, the date that marks the final conquest of the island.

After reducing a rebellious baron on the mainland, Roger now set sail for Malta, and in spite of his sixty years, was the first to land, with only thirteen knights. After a skirmish with a few Moslems, he slept upon the beach, awaiting the arrival of his other ships, and on the morrow he attacked the Città Vecchia, which yielded almost at once; and thus, says Amari, he crowned the conquest of Sicily, taking Malta himself, as he had taken Messina in person thirty years earlier.

I cannot but think that the comparative peace in which the Great Count ruled Sicily during the last ten years of his life is to be attributed to the inborn fatalism of the Moslems. It is certain that they never made any serious attempt to regain independence, but that, on the contrary, they served bravely and loyally in Roger's armies. Thousands of Saracens fought under his standard when he helped his nephew, Duke Roger, to reduce Cosenza, and in 1094 when he assisted him in repressing the dangerous rebellion of William of Grantmesnil in Castrovillari. Roger not only protected

them, left them full liberty in their religion, and allowed them tribunals of their own, but, according to the biographers of Anselm of Canterbury, he discour-



CITTÀ VECCHIA, MALTA

aged their conversion, and punished Saracens who embraced Christianity, fearing perhaps that in the great movement of the first Crusade, his Moslem soldiers would imitate the example of the many Christians

who followed his nephew Bohemund to the Holy Land. As is well known, the cautious Norman declined to take part in that great movement, preferring to consolidate his power at home, while princes and kings and people went out to fight in Palestine for an ideal so composite that its pursuit promised gain to the greedy, renown to the fighting man, and a martyr's crown to the ecstatic Christian.

Much confusion exists with regard to Roger's marriages; I have adhered to Delarc's view, and those who prefer to suppose that Roger was thrice married may consult the elaborate and conclusive notes given by the learned French historian, as well as a note of Amari's, which goes to prove that Judith took the name of Eremberga on leaving the convent of Saint Evrault. Be that as it may, this Judith-Eremberga, the faithful companion of so much hardship and of so much glory, died in 1089, and the Great Count soon afterwards married Adelasia or Adelaide, the daughter of one of the great nobles of Northern Italy, and became by her the father of King Roger the First of Sicily, and of another son, who was older, but died in infancy. Judith-Eremberga's only son, Godfrey, is rarely spoken of, is supposed to have been of feeble constitution, and either died young or ended his life in a monastery. Jourdain was illegitimate. Roger had a number of daughters, one of whom he married to the king of Hungary, another,



Constance, to Conrad, king of Rome, the emperor's son, a third to Raymond of Provence, and a fourth to Count Robert of Clermont, though Philip the First of France had asked her in marriage for the sake of her dowry.

We know nothing of the illness that ended the great fighter's life. He died at nearly seventy years of age in his favourite Mileto, and there he was laid in the cathedral he had built; but centuries later an earthquake overthrew the city and the sanctuary, and the Great Count's sarcophagus is preserved in the national museum in Naples.

It is manifestly impossible to continue a detailed account of the Norman domination after the final success of Roger's enterprise. The feudal system had now taken root in Europe, and the enormous development which it gave to individualities in the persons of the semi-independent imperial and royal vassals, so multiplies the threads of history that every reign is enveloped in a web of crossing and recrossing lines. The Empire contained kingdoms, the kingdoms principalities, the principalities comprised counties, and there was not a count who had not half a dozen or more small barons and knights who held land under him by feudal tenure. It is possible to give a brief and clear idea of a reign, and the historian may sometimes succeed in describing the condition of the people under this sover-

eign or that; but a work that should contain a full and accurate account of the doings and dissensions of the great vassals, and of the efforts made by king or



FOUNTAIN AT TAORMINA

emperor to control the latter, would fill many volumes, and could only be produced by the industry of a lifetime. In the minds of most readers of ordinary cul-

ture, the end of the eleventh century is filled with the romance of the first Crusade, and disturbed chiefly by the quarrels of the Emperor Henry the Fourth with the Papacy. So far as the Crusade is concerned, its story, from a Christian point of view, is too well known to need telling here; but it is interesting to find that Arabic writers of early times, such as Ibn-el-Athir, regarded the general attack upon the Holy Land, not in the light of a religious war, but as the culmination of a great race struggle, retracing its causes to the Norman conquest of Sicily, to the Castilian occupation of Toledo, and to the raids made by Italians upon the African coast. Mohammedans could indeed have understood that they themselves might fight a holy war for the recovery of Mecca and of their own places of pilgrimage; but their contempt for 'men who worship crosses' was then, as it is now, profound and ineradicable, and they found it hard to believe that Christians could be really in earnest, or ready to face danger disinterestedly, for an idea which appeared absurdly unreasonable to the mind of a cultivated Moslem. The worst of it is, that bravely as the Christians fought in the East, they gave their enemies plentiful reason for the supposition that the idea of worldly conquest was intimately connected in the minds of most Crusaders with that of future salvation. Centuries had passed since the Moslems had set out from Arabia

to convert the world to Islam, and to keep possession of it when converted, and they did not see the close resemblance that existed between their own religious wars and those which the Christians now began to wage in Asia Minor; but they had not forgotten how they had driven the Western people before them, even to the shores of the Atlantic, and they felt that in the tide of nations the wave of the West was rolling back upon them. In a sense, therefore, it was true that the Crusades resulted more from the opposition of two races than from antagonism of two religions; and, from an historical point of view, the struggle which began when Peter the Hermit roused Europe with his war-cry, resulted in the victory of the East, and came to its inevitable conclusion when Mohammed the Second stormed Constantinople in 1453. It is characteristic of the times that while the war for the holy places created a certain type of chivalry with which the proudest families in Europe now delight to claim alliance, an amalgamation of Christians and Moslems in Sicily and the south of Italy produced a civilization and an art not only noble in themselves, but unlike anything of which there is record before or since. It may, indeed, be compared to the civilization of the Augustan period, when the victorious Roman suffered himself to laugh and be amused by the conquered Greek, when the Greek language became fashionable in Roman society,

and when Greek art, such as it had survived, was the canon of good taste. But that was rather an imitation than an amalgamation; in letters, Horace may stand for the type of those times, and in architecture any temple or monument of the same period represents the condition of art; yet Horace is to the Greek poets as the remains of the temple of Saturn are to the Parthenon or the temples of Pæstum, whereas Monreale, the Palatine Chapel, and the Church of the Martorana, built by Mohammedans for Christian masters, are all beautiful in themselves, and in a manner that did not exist before them, and which rapidly changed, or degenerated, in the following centuries. Saracen-Norman art has a place by



SARACEN-NORMAN WINDOW AT SAN
GIULIANO

itself in the history of architecture; and at a later period, when it blended in turn with the dominating art of the Renascence, the result was something still beautiful and never seen elsewhere. In Trapani, for instance, and in San Giuliano, there are remains of doors and windows that exhibit this mixture of styles in which neither the Arab nor his Norman conqueror is forgotten, but in which the artistic spirit of the early sixteenth century finds expression also. The south received strength from the north, and the north was completed and polished by the profound learning and minute civilization of the south; and neither lost its identity in the other, as Greece lost hers in Rome, and both continued to live for centuries in an indissoluble union. But if any one wishes to see the northern element as it developed in Italy, without amalgamation, let him go down into the deep old court of La Cava, in the wild gorge above Salerno; for though the great Benedictine monastery was founded a hundred years before King Roger's day, by a Lombard, the cloistered court is Norman, and of the roughest sort; and far below, in Gothic vaults where a faint glimmer of daylight makes the glare of the wax torches ghostly, there lie the skulls and the bones of many hundred fighting pilgrims of the early days, arranged in a sort of reverent order by the careful monks. One great skull is pierced through the forehead by a thrust of a blade three

fingers broad, clean and straight, for the pilgrims did not always die a natural death; and the traveller who pauses to gaze upon the cloven head may think of those forty Normans who put an army to flight, and



BURIAL-PLACE OF THE NORMAN PILGRIMS, AT LA CAVA

saved Salerno long ago. The place has not the majesty of Monte Cassino, the mother abbey of the Benedictines; it is wild, rude, and romantic, an abode of warlike ghosts and the war-worn wrecks of dead men, and the peaceful monastery above is the work of a later

age. There is nothing in Sicily like La Cava. The cathedrals of the Norman kings are splendid with gold and alive with sunshine, and the tender traceries of the south soften the bold spring of arch and vault, but the grim and grotesque mummied figures in the miniature catacombs of the Capuchin Convent, near Palermo, could never have been set in their narrow niches by northern hands. There is something in Palermo that reminds one of Constantinople, a similarity of circumstances, with a renewal of the conditions in which they have taken place. In the East the capital of Christian emperors was turned in a day to the use of Moslem sultans, and the victors used the hands and eyes of the vanquished to make mosques of churches, to build a minaret beside every dome, and to adorn the lordly retreats of Asiatic idleness and luxury. And still the Greek is at home in the great city where he has been so long in subjection. In Palermo, it was the African who went down before a Christian conqueror, whose mosques were turned into churches again, whose palaces of delight became the abodes of fighting kings, to whom all idleness was strange, and all luxury new. But still, after eight centuries of change, renewal, and decay, the hawk-eyed, thin-lipped Saracen treads the streets of the royal city with a grace that is not European, and a quiet dignity not bred in the blustering north; while in that beautiful land of con-

tradictions you can visit no village nor hamlet without seeing a score of handsome Norman children, with bright blue eyes and yellow hair, playing little Eastern games under the Sicilian sun, and chattering an Italian dialect that is motley with Norman and Arabic and Spanish words. It is not the language of the often conquered, upon which many successive languages have been imposed, but rather the mixed speech of many conquering races, in a country where each has ruled in turn, and where it is hard to say which has left the deeper mark.

It cannot have been very different in the days when King Roger was a little child, and his mother watched over him and ruled for him, when he alone was left to her, to be the great survivor of Tancred's race. There is not much to tell of those times, save that a woman held easily what the Greek count had spent a lifetime in getting by the sword. Fate worked for the young king until he could go out and fight for himself. The Guiscard's son, Roger Bursa, lived but a short life and left a feeble son, William of Apulia, as duke in his stead, who died prematurely, and without male issue. He was scarcely in his grave when Roger of Sicily, son of the Great Count, sailed up to Salerno with his galleys, convoked the Norman nobles, obtained an investiture from the Holy See, and took Apulia for himself; and three years afterwards, on Christmas Day, 1130, he was crowned King of Sicily at Palermo, in the chapel of

Santa Maria l'Incoronata, barbarously destroyed by the bombardment of 1860. It was on this spot that the

small church of

Saint Gregory

once stood,

which Count

Roger com-

pared to an oven

amidst the Saracen palaces that

surrounded it, and

which he ordered to

be pulled down and

rebuilt, and here for

two centuries and a

half each king of Sicily

was crowned. The little

that remains of it stands

by the northwest tower of

the cathedral.

Gibbon accuses King Roger of gratifying his ambition by the vulgar means of violence and artifice, and goes on to say that when he wished to be a king, the pride of Anacletus, the Jewish Pierleone's anti-pope, was pleased to confer

SALVATORE PIRICO.
MORTO 1360

MUMMY IN THE VAULTS OF THE
CAPUCHIN CONVENT, PALERMO



a title which the pride of the Norman had stooped to solicit. The judgment of the great historian is severe, and may well be modified by most readers. Roger was the survivor of the house of Tancred in Italy, and he knew that he must keep his dominions free, or lose himself and his subjects. The investiture of the Holy See was necessary, and he was in no position to judge the claims of the ruling pontiff, Pope, or antipope. Innocent the Second was elected, indeed, but was long a fugitive, while Anacletus held the Vatican by the will of the powerful Pierleone; but when the Emperor Lothair and Innocent joined hands with Pisa to excommunicate and destroy the Sicilian king, Roger fought for his life as well as his crown. Driven back at first into Sicily, he returned in wrath, destroyed the emperor's newly invested Duke of Apulia, and terminated a war that lasted nine years by taking Pope Innocent prisoner at San Germano, near Monte Cassino. With the devotion of fervent Catholics he and his captains humbly knelt down at the feet of their captive; but it was with the cold tenacity of Tancred's race that Roger dictated to the pontiff the terms of a peace which invested himself and his successors forever with the kingdom of Sicily, the Duchy of Apulia, and the principality of Capua. The reconciliation of the king and the Pope, says Gibbon, in sarcastic comment, was celebrated by the eloquence of Bernard of Clairvaux, who now revered the title and virtues of the king

of Sicily; but with those who have some acquaintance with Saint Bernard's character, the praise of the saint will outweigh the contempt of the historian, and we can admit without prejudice that King Roger was a brave and honourable man for his times, such as they were. From him, then, dates that kingdom of Sicily which



TOWER OF KING ROGER, AT CASTROGIOVANNI

was divided after the Sicilian Vespers, and became the Two Sicilies of later history.

That he did much, if not all that he might have done, for the lands he ruled, there is ample evidence in history and in monument; but the greatest of his doings was that amalgamation of races which took place in his

reign. His Moslem subjects were faithful to him and fought for him, even against Moslems, and if it was by their help that he overcame the Pope at San Germano, it was by their arms also that he took Tripoli, the strong Mohammedan city of the African coast; and in the fleet of the Sicilian admiral George of Antioch, which received the submission of Corfù and momentarily wrested all Greece from the enfeebled hold of Constantinople, there were as many free Saracens as there were Christians. That there was an element of fear in the Moslem subjection is true, and the eight-sided tower of King Roger still frowns over Castrogiovanni, the last great stronghold of the Mohammedans, to testify to the strength of his hand; but there was much loyalty also in the Saracens' obedience, and we need not confound submission with servility, nor fear with cowardice.

So far as King Roger's conduct during the second Crusade is concerned, we know not whether to ascribe it to a certain consideration for his Mohammedan subjects, or to his apprehension of losing them; be that as it may, he imitated Count Roger in quietly refusing to join the armies of the Cross, and while the most glorious armament of the century was divided by the dissension of its leaders, decimated by disease, and at last reduced to a remnant by the swords of the Seljuks, King Roger was extending his dominions, increasing his wealth, and preparing for a war which he knew could not be long avoided. When Lewis the Seventh of France was re-

turning from Jerusalem, disappointed and humiliated by the failure of the holy enterprise, and distracted by domestic troubles, he was almost captured on the high seas by treacherous Greeks, and was rescued from what might have proved an ignominious captivity by the timely appearance of the Norman fleet, which had lately ravaged the coasts of Greece ; and being brought to Palermo he was royally entertained and sent forward on his journey by King Roger. With something like old Scandinavian daring, the Admiral George sailed up the Hellespont, dropped anchor with his galleys at the entrance to the Golden Horn, and shot a flight of arrows tipped with silver into the imperial gardens ; but the Emperor Manuel's anger soon avenged the taunt, George lost nineteen of his galleys on his homeward voyage, Corfu yielded to the emperor after a brave defence, the Eastern Empire was in arms, and King Roger's last war had begun. While Manuel himself fought the Hungarians and the Turks in the East, he prepared a fleet, an army, and a kingdom's ransom in treasure to win back the Norman's possessions. Before he was ready to invade the West, however, King Roger had breathed his last. He died after a long illness, which some have called consumption, but which others have attributed to excesses : his last years, during which the conduct of his wars was intrusted to lieutenants, were spent in close intercourse with the wise men and learned Arabians he had attracted to his court, chief among whom was the geogra-

pher Edrisi, whose greatest work, composed under the direction of the king himself, was called ‘the book of Roger, the delight of him that journeys through the world,’ and was completed a few months before the



COURT IN THE MONASTERY OF LA CAVA

king's death. It is said that the composition of this great book occupied no less than fifteen years, during which hardly a day passed on which the king did not discuss some subject connected with it, and during which he explored, in the society of his learned Ara-

bians, every department of known science. The book has remained a vast repository of learning, and a chief authority for the times, reflecting no small glory upon the sovereign who presided over its compilation.

The great map of the world which Roger caused to be engraved upon a disk of silver weighing between three and four hundred pounds has been fully described, but it is needless to say that it disappeared in the disturbances of later times; upon it were engraved 'the seven climates with their regions and townships, their coasts and their tablelands, their gulfs, seas, springs, and rivers, their inhabited and uninhabited lands, their highroads measured in miles, and the distances by sea from port to port.' It is even said that the particular description of this plate in the Arabic language may have been the work of King Roger himself; it is at least certain that he deserves much credit for it. He had founded a sort of academy at Palermo, over which he presided, and of which the perpetual secretary was descended from the khalifs of Cordova. Owing to the king's death the book was not translated into Latin at the time, but the seven centuries that elapsed before a translation made it accessible to ordinary scholars rather increased than diminished the fame which it was to bestow upon its royal compiler. It would be strange if the churchmen of that day had not found fault with the sovereign who surrounded himself with Moslems, and whose most intimate associate was an Arabian, and indeed the priests



and monks said loudly that the king was little better than a Moslem himself. But the Moslems praised him as their Mecænas, describing the magnificence of his palaces and gardens, the joyous life men led at his court, and the abundance of golden wine, which seems not to have shocked the pious Mohammedans of Sicily in that day. And true it is that Roger both protected and restored the arts, and that if he filled his coffers by Norman means, he spent his wealth royally in beautifying his favourite cities and in the encouragement of learning.

The fortunes of the house of Tancred really culminated in the reign of King Roger, declined under William the Bad, improved under William the Good, the latter's son, and then vacillated, after the failure of the legitimate succession, until they became involved with the destiny of the Empire under Henry the Sixth and Frederick the Second, of Hohenstaufen. Before going on to give a brief sketch of those changes, I shall endeavour to explain very clearly the connexion between the race of Tancred and King Roger's successors, since it was in virtue of this connexion that they claimed the crown of Sicily for centuries after his death.

Roger the Great Count was the youngest son of Tancred of Hauteville. Roger's eldest son died an infant, and was succeeded by Roger, the first king.

King Roger's eldest son, Roger, grew to manhood,

but died before his father, who was succeeded by his second son, William the First, the Bad.

William the First was succeeded by William the Second, the Good, who left no heir.



TRIANGULAR COURT IN THE MONASTERY OF LA CAVA

King Roger's eldest son, Roger, who died before his father, left a natural son, called Tancred.

William the Second was succeeded by this Tancred.

Tancred was succeeded by his son, the infant William the Third.

King Roger had a daughter, Constance, sister of

William the First. She married the Emperor Henry the Sixth. He claimed the crown for her, and deposed and probably killed the infant William the Third.

William the Third was therefore succeeded by Henry the Sixth of Hohenstaufen.

Henry the Sixth was succeeded by his only son, the Emperor Frederick the Second of Hohenstaufen, who was the grandson of King Roger.

Frederick the Second was succeeded by his second son, Conrad.

Conrad was succeeded by his only son, Conradin, a young boy, whose uncle Manfred, a natural son of Frederick the Second, was regent, and took the crown.

Manfred was killed in battle at Benevento. He left one daughter, Constance, married to Peter the Third of Aragon.

Conradin succeeded his uncle Manfred, but was taken prisoner by Charles of Anjou, and was executed in Naples.

Conradin was succeeded by Charles of Anjou, brother of Lewis the Ninth of France, known as Saint Lewis.

Charles of Anjou lost Sicily in the revolution of the Sicilian Vespers, and the Sicilians elected Peter the Third of Aragon for their king, because he was married to Constance, great-great-granddaughter of King Roger, and also the last heiress of the house of Hohenstaufen.

Peter the Third was succeeded by a long line of

Aragonese kings, the second of whom, after him, was his second son, King Frederick the Second of Sicily, often confounded with the Emperor Frederick the Second, his great-grandfather.

Now, as Ferdinand the 'Catholic,' whose queen was Isabella, was of the united houses of Aragon and Castile, he also inherited the Norman blood, which through him was transmitted to his grandson, Charles the Fifth, of the house of Austria, and so on through all the Spanish dynasties to the present day. About nine hundred years have passed since Tancred of Hauteville dealt his famous thrust at the wild boar, and though his house gave Sicily no long and unbroken line of kings, yet the blood of the Norman gentleman is in the veins of almost every royal race in Europe.

My readers will not have lost patience over this page of genealogy, which makes clear a point too often left in obscurity, namely, that with the exception of Charles of Anjou's episodic reign in Sicily, and of Garibaldi's forcible seizure of the island in order to found a republic, which rather unexpectedly turned into a kingdom, and excepting the seven years' reign granted to a Duke of Savoy by the absurd peace of Utrecht in 1713, the succession to the kingdom really continued on the strength of the Norman blood down to 1860, the descent to the Bourbons being traced through Anne of Austria, wife of Lewis the Thirteenth of France and sister of Philip the Fourth of Spain. By its alliance

with the house of Hapsburg the house of Savoy may really claim as much Norman blood as the deposed king of Naples.

I shall now return to the task of briefly outlining the reigns of Roger's successors.

It is not surprising that his son and successor, William, afterwards surnamed the Bad, should have really been more a Mohammedan than a Christian in belief, in character, and in manners. He had been brought up chiefly by learned Arabians in the customs and luxuries of what was in reality an Eastern court. Amari describes him as indolent, fierce, proud, and avaricious, and suggests that his admiral, Majo of Bari, personified the Sicilian court with all its sins, while even the Moslems themselves attribute to the evil character of the king and of his general the disturbances which marked the beginning of William's reign. That he lived the life of an Arab emir can hardly be denied; his palace was the abode of an Eastern harem, and both were directed, if not controlled, by Moslem eunuchs hateful to the people. It must be admitted that although he repressed sedition in Sicily itself with wisdom and justice, he dealt cruelly with insurgents in Calabria and Apulia. He was full of contradictions, as men often are who have been educated against their natural tastes. He was slothful, but when roused he was desperately brave; he was capricious, but he could be wise; he was kind, but he could be ruthless. In a community of upright and

virtuous men he would have deserved to be called the Bad ; but in his own times he earned the appellation by his unpopularity rather than by his surprising wickedness, and he cannot be held responsible for the long struggle between the Emperor Barbarossa and the Emperor Manuel, which had its origin when he was a youth, and ended after his death. King Roger was still alive when Manuel took Bari and Brindisi. King William forced him to conclude an honourable treaty a year after Roger's death, and Sicily enjoyed the benefits of a thirty years' peace, while Europe was convulsed by the quarrels of the Holy Roman Empire and the Holy See. The Vatican received the ambassadors of the East, who almost returned to the ancient allegiance of Constantinople and to the unity of the Eastern and Western churches, but to the indescribable mortification of Manuel, Pope Alexander the Third reconciled himself with Barbarossa, declared that the separation of the churches was final, and excommunicated the Emperors of the East.

The excommunication may or may not have affected the spiritual welfare of the warlike Greek ; there can be no doubt but that the alliance of the Pope with Barbarossa put a stop to Manuel's reconquest of the West, and that Venice, which had temporarily withdrawn from the strife, took the offensive again as soon as it was evident that in so doing she could find herself on the stronger side. Manuel poured his armies and his gold upon the

eastern coast of Italy, and such was the strength of the one and the persuasion of the other that the hosts of the Emperor Frederick were twice driven back from the walls of Ancona; but no sooner had the Pope taken a decided course of action than Ancona returned to the imperial allegiance. Venice descended with a fleet of one hundred galleys, and the Normans of the south completed the destruction of the Greeks with their swords. The thirty years' peace was signed, and it was long before Manuel renewed his quarrel with the emperor. William had already entered into the Pope's good graces, and a series of victories against the African Arabs increased his credit with the Holy See. That he attempted even by bribery to prevent the coronation of Frederick Barbarossa in Rome is more than probable, for in the riot which was stirred up by that ceremony the imperial soldiers fell upon the Roman people with their drawn swords, crying out that they would give German steel for Arabian gold.

William's successes in Africa were short-lived; the garrisons he placed in the conquered towns sorely oppressed the Arabs, and a Moslem patriot of Sfax roused his fellow-citizens to the destruction of their oppressors. William retorted by the cruel execution of a hostage, and the African towns replied by something like a general rising. William sent twenty galleys to reduce the insurrection, and merciless butchery restored his power for a while; but a general

movement of the Arabians which extended as far as Morocco was prepared, the Arabs, or Bedouins, dug wells along the proposed line of march, and during three whole years stored up grain by plastering the sheafs of wheat with clay, and Spain joined Africa in manning a fleet of seventy galleys. Before such a force Tunis soon fell, and the Christian garrison was bidden to choose between death and Mohammed's creed. In other cities the Christians shut themselves up in the forts and prepared for a long resistance, and months passed before the Sicilian fleet, which was engaged in the Balearic Islands, could come to the rescue. But under the walls of Mehdia it was put to flight by a few Arab vessels; the treacherous Majo brought word to King William that the cities of Africa were amply provisioned; and when the unfortunate garrisons had devoured their horses, they only escaped slaughter by the magnanimity of their foes. Majo lost his life in the first outbreak of a revolution in which every member of the house of Tancred took part; King William was taken prisoner in the council chamber, and the insurgents divided among themselves the women of his harem and the accumulated treasure of King Roger; the infuriated Normans, not satisfied with Majo's death, slew all the Moslem eunuchs of the palace and slaughtered the Moslems in the streets; but discord soon broke out in their own ranks, the bishops appealed to the populace



to free the king, and presently the people of Palermo were in arms to a man. Quick to take advantage of the situation, the king made terms with the multitude, promised them anything and everything, and with their help took bloody vengeance upon the barons, the murderer of Majo was blinded and hamstrung, and a sort of order was restored. A second conspiracy, which broke out ten years later, ended in the immediate death of all the conspirators, but the religious hatred between Moslems and Christians, which King Roger's wisdom had almost entirely allayed, had now broken out with renewed fury; the massacre of Moslems was followed by a furious reaction under a king who was half a Moslem himself, the reign of the eunuchs was restored, every Moslem had a father, a brother, a wife, or a sister to avenge, and a friend in the palace ready to execute his private vengeance; where Mohammedans had been murdered in the public places their Christian murderers now perished wholesale on the scaffold, until the whole country was tired of slaughter, and sank, with its sovereign, into an apathy of weariness. Then William the Bad, giving over the government of his kingdom to his ministers, amused his slothful hours with the building of a magnificent palace, which was called the Zisa, but before that beautiful retreat was ended, he breathed his last at the age of forty-six years; and when he was borne to his grave, the matrons of Palermo, and more especially the

Moslem women, followed in thousands, with dishevelled hair, and robed in sackcloth, striking the funeral cymbal in time with their doleful lamentations. Afterwards it was known by a few that the king had been dead several days before his death was announced, the secret having been kept in order that the chief men



FOUNTAIN IN THE MOORISH PALACE OF LA ZISA, PALERMO

might gather in council to assure the succession and coronation of the boy William the Second, then barely fourteen years of age. This was in 1166.

When the days of mourning were passed, the royal lad rode in state through Palermo, and radiantly handsome as he was, says the chronicler Falcandus,

his beauty was strangely perfected on that day, and there was such imperial grace in his features, that even they who had most bitterly hated his father, and whom no one had expected to be loyal to his heirs, loved the youth forthwith, and cried out that it would be shameful and unmanly to visit the sins of the sire upon the son. The queen, also, his mother, Margaret of Navarre, who was regent till he should be of age, bestowed great gifts, and many pardons, and all manner of gracious treatment upon those who had been discontented.

So the new reign prospered, and in the days of William the Second the cause of law and justice flourished in the land, every man was satisfied with his lot, peace and security prevailed everywhere, the traveller feared not the ambush of highway robbers, nor did the sailor dread the violence of pirates. William was the flower of kings, the crown of princes, the mirror of the citizens, the glory of his nobles, the hope and trust of his friends, and the terror of his enemies. So at least says Richard of San Germano, with much more to the same purpose. Even the discontented Amari, who outdid Gibbon in sarcasm, rivalled him in learning, but was painfully inferior to him in judgment, admits that the young William was crowned amid hopes which he never wilfully disappointed. It is no wonder that he was surnamed the Good, as compared with his father; they lie side by side in stupendous

Monreale, and it may be by an accident that the son, who built that great cathedral, should have been placed in a fair sarcophagus of white marble with traceries of gold, and the father in one of plain dark porphyry, almost black.

William reigned three and twenty years, and so changed the character of the court of Palermo and of the government of Sicily that the Mohammedan element sank into abeyance. According to Richard of San Germano the king's chief counsellors, his 'two most sturdy pillars of support,' were Walter of the Mill, the English Archbishop of Palermo, and the Chancellor Matthew. It was by the advice of the archbishop, says this chronicler, that William the Second gave his aunt Constance in marriage to Henry of Hohenstaufen, afterwards Henry the Sixth, making the counts of the kingdom swear upon the sacraments that if the king died childless they would obey Constance of Hauteville and her husband. Also, this Walter of the Mill first



DRAWN AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH

TOMB OF KING ROGER IN THE CATHEDRAL OF PALERMO

built for William the great cathedral where it stands to-day.

But when William died, and left no heirs, a great dissension arose among the nobles, and they forgot their oaths, many aspiring to the throne; and at last, lest the archbishop should prevail and thrust Constance upon them, they agreed to choose for their king, Tancred, not the great crusader, but the natural son of William the Bad's elder brother, who had died in early manhood. They could not have chosen a braver or a truer man of his race, and he laboured with all his might for the cause of peace; by a liberal expenditure of the royal treasure, which he was the first to touch, and by some brave fighting, he restored the kingdom of the south, and even the Abbot of Monte Cassino swore fealty to him. He was crowned in 1189, the year before Barbarossa died; and Joanna, the widowed queen of the young king, was Joanna of England, own sister of King Richard the Lion-hearted.

It was not to be expected that a man of such temper as Henry the Sixth would tamely relinquish his just claims to the south, but his father was still alive, and the stirring events of the third Crusade intervened; so that it was not until Frederick Barbarossa had perished in the East that Henry came into Italy; and meanwhile Tancred had no small difficulty in prevailing upon Richard the Lion-hearted and Philip Augustus

of France to restrain their men from wrangling in his city of Messina and to proceed on their way.

For Richard was a quarrelsome man, and Roger of Hoveden has left a record of his journey through the south, how he left Salerno when he heard that his fleet had reached Messina, and proceeded to Cosenza by way of Amalfi, which is a geographical impossibility that need startle no one accustomed to the chronicles. He came down by Scalea, and saw the island, where, says Roger, 'there is a fine chamber beneath the ground, in which Lucan used to study'; and he slept at Cetraro and at other places till he came to Mileto, where 'there is a tower of wood close by the abbey, by means of which Robert Guiscard attacked and took the castle and town,' in his quarrel with his brother the Great Count, a hundred years before Roger of Hoveden wrote — but he did not take it, as has been seen. And then, 'the king of England, departing from Mileto with a single knight, passed through a certain small town, and, after he had passed through, turned towards a certain house in which he heard a hawk, and entering the house took hold of it. On his refusing to give it up, numbers of peasants came running from every quarter, and made an attack on him with sticks and stones. One of them then drew his knife against the king, upon which the latter, giving him a blow with the flat of his sword, it snapped asunder, whereupon he pelted the others with stones, and with difficulty

making his escape out of their hands, came to a priory called Bagnara.' Thence he hastily crossed the straits and slept in a tent 'near a stone tower which lies at the entrance of the Faro on the Sicilian side.' It must be admitted that the royal progress lacked dignity, but on the following day Richard made up for it by making 'such a noise of trumpets and clarions, that alarm seized those who were in the city,' that is, in Messina; and by way of making himself at home in a friendly country he seized a monastery, ejected the monks, and fortified himself, and presently, 'a disagreement arose between the army of the king of England and the citizens of Messina,' which soon became an open quarrel between the two kings—'and to such a pitch did the exasperation on both sides increase, that the citizens shut the gates of the city, and, putting on their arms, mounted the walls.'

The end of it was that the kings agreed together, took Messina and forced Tancred to pay over an exorbitant sum of money, supposed to represent the dowry of the childless Joanna. Roger of Hoveden says that before the conclusion of this so-called treaty of peace more than a hundred thousand pagans who were in the kingdom of Sicily indignantly refused to serve under King Tancred, both because Henry of Hohenstaufen had laid claim to the throne of Sicily, and also because Richard of England had taken possession of a great part thereof; and that these Sar-

cens fled to the hills with their families and herds, attacking and plundering Christians. It is interesting to learn that while Richard was making such unjustifiable claims he was profoundly impressed by the prophecies and wise sayings of a certain Abbot of Curazzo, who interpreted the revelation of Saint John the Evangelist in a modern spirit; and that, the 'divine grace inspiring him thereto, Richard, being sensible of the filthiness of his life, after due contrition of heart, having called together all the bishops and archbishops who were with him at Messina, made a general confession of his sins and from that time forwards became a man who feared God, and left what was evil and did what was good.'

So at last the turbulent crusaders departed, and Tancred had leisure to go over into Apulia and insure the fidelity of his vassals by a general exhibition of strength and generosity. And now Henry the Sixth and his wife Constance came to Rome and were crowned emperor and empress in the Church of Saint Peter's, and the Emperor Henry, being pleased with the Romans, made them a present of Tusculum, then the stronghold of the Colonna family, and the Romans promptly destroyed it, as he expected.

Henry immediately entered Tancred's kingdom in spite of the opposition of the Pope who had just crowned him, and the timid monks of Monte Cassino hastened to swear fidelity to him, while many towns,

being taken unawares, placed themselves in his hands; and the emperor received the submission of Salerno and left the empress there, while he himself made a futile attack upon Naples. But as usual desertion and disease did their work in the German army; Henry left Constance in Salerno, and retiring with the remains of his forces returned to Germany. In no long time after this the Count of Acerra received back for Tancred most of the towns the emperor had taken, and he went up to Monte Cassino and entered the abbey, no one opposing him; but when neither prayers nor promises could prevail upon the monks to return to their allegiance to Tancred, he departed without doing them any violence. Henry the Sixth, however, had not given up the struggle; he sent a strong army to the south, while Tancred brought up a considerable force from Sicily, after crowning his eldest son Roger as his successor in case of his own death. He fought desperately for his kingdom, and had he lived he might have held his own. As it was, his son Roger came to an untimely end, and Tancred himself, says Richard of San Germano, died of grief. He left his crown to a child, the infant William the Third and the regency to his queen, a woman of no great spirit. The chancellor Matthew, the wise counsellor of William the Good and the friend of Tancred, was also dead, and Sicily was defenceless before the arms of Henry the Sixth. Tancred's widow fled from Palermo with her infant son to

a safer place, whence she treated with Henry for her life and safety. She surrendered to him at last, and he handed her over with her royal child to one of his faithful captains, 'to do with them according to his will.' Then Henry, having got possession of the capital, received the keys of the treasury from the eunuchs of the palace and was shown coffers full of gold, gems, and precious objects, part of which he distributed to his followers, while he sent a part back to Germany; and to this day in the museum of Vienna may be seen the cloak of King Roger, the tunic and leggings of William the Good, richly embroidered with gold and pearls and Arabic characters, with many objects of like interest and value. The emperor established himself in the magnificent palace called the Cuba, now used as a barrack, though almost quite uninjured, and on Christmas Day, in the year 1194, presiding over the council of Palermo, he summoned before him Tancred's widow and the infant William, a great many bishops and counts of the kingdom, and indicted them for high treason; and he commanded some to be blinded, some to be burnt alive, some to be hanged, and some to be sent captive to Germany. So perished Tancred's house; and on Saint Stephen's Day, being the very day after that general condemnation, Constance of Hauteville, the empress, being no longer young, brought forth her only son, who was to be the Emperor Frederick the Second. It is said also that because of her

years and because Sicily had been so greatly disturbed concerning the succession, she feared lest it should be said thereafter that the child was not her own. Therefore she caused a tent to be pitched before the cathedral, and the curtain was raised that all the women might come and see her at their will; and so the great emperor was born in a public place.

Accusations of frightful cruelty have been brought against the Emperor Henry; the chronicle I have followed gives the mildest account of his vengeance, but the great weight of evidence goes to prove that he commanded innumerable and most atrocious executions, and that after men, women, laymen, and priests had been hacked to pieces, drowned, burned, or boiled in lard, his unsatisfied ferocity required the executioner to nail a kingly crown upon the living head of a descendant of Tancred of Hauteville.

But Henry did not long survive these horrors. Having gone back to Germany, he was recalled to Palermo in 1097 by the news, perhaps not unfounded, that Constance meant to hold Sicily for herself and defy him. He reached Messina, indeed, and thence proceeded to besiege one of the great vassals in Castrogiovanni; but there a deadly disease overtook him, and in a few weeks he breathed his last, and was buried in the cathedral of Palermo, in that stately tomb from which he had cast out the bones of the unhappy King Tancred and his eldest son.

By the death of these princes, a legitimate line was again established on the throne of Sicily, and the daughter of King Roger took up the reins of government in her own right, despite the will of the Emperor Henry, who had named Markwald of Anweiler, the Grand Seneschal of the Empire, to be regent. A few months after Henry's death she had dismissed her husband's German ministers, and crowned her son Frederick king of Sicily, he being then less than four years old. The patriotic Pope Innocent the Third applauded the action of a queen, or empress, whose energies were directed to the expulsion of the Germans from Italy, and approved the coronation of the child Frederick, while asserting for the Holy See certain rights over Apulia and the ecclesiastical revenues in Sicily; but Constance, short-lived, like many of her race, died six months after the coronation, leaving the infant king and future emperor to the guardianship of the Pope himself. Immediately the German vassals of Henry the Sixth, whom Constance had kept down, took courage again and set up a rival to Frederick, in the husband of one of Tancred's daughters, and though the Pope gave him little countenance, he may have debated upon the possibility of bestowing upon him the Sicilian crown. As a matter of fact, the Pope never directly interfered in Sicily during the minority of Frederick.

Meanwhile the Christianizing reign of William the

Second had produced lasting results, and the Moslem population had almost quite deserted Palermo; thousands had returned to Africa, and tens of thousands had gone out into the hill country above Mazzara on the southwest coast, and after the year 1200 there are no deeds referring to Moslems in the capital. Those in the provinces were vassals of the churches and monasteries, or of the great nobles, and when Innocent the Third, in his enthusiasm for the fourth Crusade, seized all the ecclesiastical revenues of Sicily for the year 1199, the monasteries ground the Moslems to raise more money; at the same time the Pope issued a proclamation enjoining the greatest severities against those baptized Saracens who had fallen back to Islamism. The oppressed people rose, found a ready leader in their lawful regent by Henry's will, the German Markwald, who had secured the alliance of Pisa, and they besieged Palermo; but their defeat ruined their cause and exposed them to far greater sufferings. The Pope gave the Christians spiritual arms against the Grand Seneschal, promising the privileges and indulgences of true crusaders to those who fought against Markwald, 'who tempted his Saracens with captive Christian women and draughts of Christian blood'; but he bade them respect the ancient privileges of the Moslems. The regents removed the boy Frederick to Messina, where he was safe, and sent a force of militia to relieve Palermo. The city

had suffered a siege of seventeen days and was already reduced to want of bread when the relieving army arrived, cut the enemy to pieces, and drove Markwald to flight. He was again beaten far to eastward, in the wild country about Randazzo, on the slope of Etna, and his career would have been ended had not the Sicilian regents found it convenient to forgive him and make common cause with him against the pretender, Walter of Brienne, the husband of a daughter of King Tancred; and so the fighting went on, with varying fortune, until both Walter and Markwald perished, and the kingdom was left in comparative peace under the regency of the Pope.

The latter soon afterwards declared Frederick to be of age, at fourteen years, and in the same year married him to Constance, the sister of Peter the Second of Aragon and the young widow of a king of Hungary. She was older than he, of course, and she came of a race that lacked neither courage nor astuteness. Frederick, educated in the safe seclusion of a palace, while others disputed his kingdom, now issued from its gates to survey the wreck of the Norman dominions. The mainland was lost, apparently beyond recovery, partly to the Pope and partly to the lawless barons of the south; in Sicily, the royal lands had been either seized by the nobles or given away as bribes by the regents, who had also granted the province of Syracuse to a Genoese colony of

traders; and of all King Roger's conquests, Frederick could only count with certainty upon the allegiance of half a dozen Sicilian cities. As for the Empire, it was in dispute between his uncle and his cousin, and the boy, who was to be German emperor, king of Sicily and Apulia, and king of Cyprus and Jerusalem, had difficulty in raising enough money to support five hundred horsemen whom his wife borrowed from her cousin of Provence to defend him. To make matters worse, his cousin of Hohenstaufen, the Emperor Otto the Fourth, occupied Naples and Aversa, by the help of the Pisans, and secretly negotiated with the discontented Moslems of Sicily for the destruction of Frederick, in 1210. The youth seemed lost, but his career was already at its upward turning-point, and from that time he rose rapidly to the height of earthly glory.

Innocent the Third, to whom we may as well give credit for supporting his ward, prepared the way for the latter's elevation to the throne of the Empire. With incredible energy and matchless knowledge of his times, he excommunicated the rival Otto, and formally proclaimed his deposition in Nüremberg, absolved the whole Empire from its oath of allegiance, recalled to the world the election of Henry's infant son, and immediately forced Germany into a civil war, from which the only issue was clearly the coronation of the young Frederick, then eighteen years old.

Frederick, as Amari well puts it, was already weary of reigning where he could not rule, and threw himself heart and soul into this German revolution. He left his queen and an infant son in Sicily in 1212, sailed to Gaeta, visited the Pope in Rome, and promised everything that was asked of him, sailed on again to Genoa, and rode by Pavia, Cremona, and Trent to Basle, barely escaping his enemies as he passed. In vain Otto pursued him, in vain allied himself with England; Philip Augustus of France joined Frederick and the Pope, and Otto was beaten in the decisive battle of Bouvines.

Frederick remained eight years in Germany, during which he repressed all opposition and made himself the undisputed master of the situation. His father had come down from the north to claim the southern kingdom as his wife's dowry, and to hold it as his own possession; the son went northwards almost alone to claim an Empire which was his own by rightful inheritance. Henry, with Europe at his back, wreaked his vengeance upon a small and helpless kingdom; his son took that kingdom with him to the heart of the Empire he had claimed and recovered from the hands of usurpers. Henry's body was borne to its stolen resting-place in Palermo, pursued by the curses and imprecations of mankind; Frederick the Second spent much of his life, indeed, in a contest with the popes, was thrice or four times excommunicated, and lies,

perhaps unshiven, beside his father in the cathedral ; but historians have called him the Philosopher King, and though he attained to no saintly honours, his fame is at least unsullied by such dastardly cruelty as his father practised, and by the vile treachery that soon set Charles of Anjou on the throne of Sicily and Naples.

Having been crowned in Rome in the year 1220, he returned to Sicily to find himself face to face with what may be called the Moslem question. The nobles were more or less divided among themselves, and Frederick now had power to control them, but the Moslems, though united, were in a most unhappy position. Those who during more than twenty years had lived like free barons in the castles of the West were, legally speaking, the vassals of churches and monasteries that clamoured to the emperor for satisfaction against them ; but Frederick, who found himself at odds with the Church and with his barons, needed these very barons as allies. The emperor did not hesitate to satisfy the most pressing demands of the churchmen by nominally bestowing upon them lands and castles held by the Saracens ; but when the former attempted to take possession, they more than once found themselves the prisoners of those they sought to dispossess, and the Mohammedans began to move about the island in strong bands, committing depredations of every description, forming a permanent revolutionary

army that fluctuated in strength, but may sometimes have numbered thirty thousand fighting men. Frederick held a sort of parliament at Messina soon after his arrival, and visited many of the principal cities; but he accomplished little until his next visit, when he was obliged to take the field against the great free-booter, Mirabbet, whose predatory enterprises had assumed dangerous proportions, and who had associated himself with two of the most infamous ruffians who ever adorned a gibbet, Hugo Fer of Marseilles and William the Swine of Genoa. These two, though some historians lay the blame entirely upon the first, had collected together, by promises and persuasion, a vast number of young children who were to be transported to the Holy Land under the name of the Children's Crusade, to be cared for and educated by the kings of Jerusalem, and brought up to be defenders of the holy places. The organizers of the enterprise were well provided with money to carry it out, and offered the children's parents such surety of their good faith that thousands of fathers, in those times of general poverty and numerous families, consented, each believing that his child was taken from him only to enter upon an honourable career of arms, and with the Pope's especial benediction. In this way it is said that Hugo Fer and William the Swine gathered a company of fifty thousand boys with whom they embarked on many vessels for the East. The rest is soon told. The

traitors sailed eastwards indeed, but not to Palestine, for they were in league with the Saracens, and they sold fifty thousand Christian children into slavery in Africa. Therefore when Frederick took those men alive with Mirabbet in the castle of Giato, he hanged them; and perhaps his father would have found for them worse tortures than boiling in lard or tearing to pieces with red-hot pincers.

Though Frederick now had the upper hand, a desultory war continued for some time, and in the meanwhile the Pope, Honorius the Third, did his best to force the emperor to lead another crusade, not without some crafty intention of seizing Apulia in his absence, and Frederick constantly made use of his troubles in Sicily, real and imaginary, as an excuse for putting off his departure to the Holy Land. He had now given up all idea of employing the Saracens against the nobles, and had accomplished the more difficult task of organizing the nobles against the Saracens. In the year 1225 he so completely defeated the latter in the Sicilian mountains, that during eighteen years afterwards there is no mention of a Moslem rebellion. It was on this occasion that he transplanted six thousand Saracens to the mainland. These colonists perished altogether under Charles of Anjou.

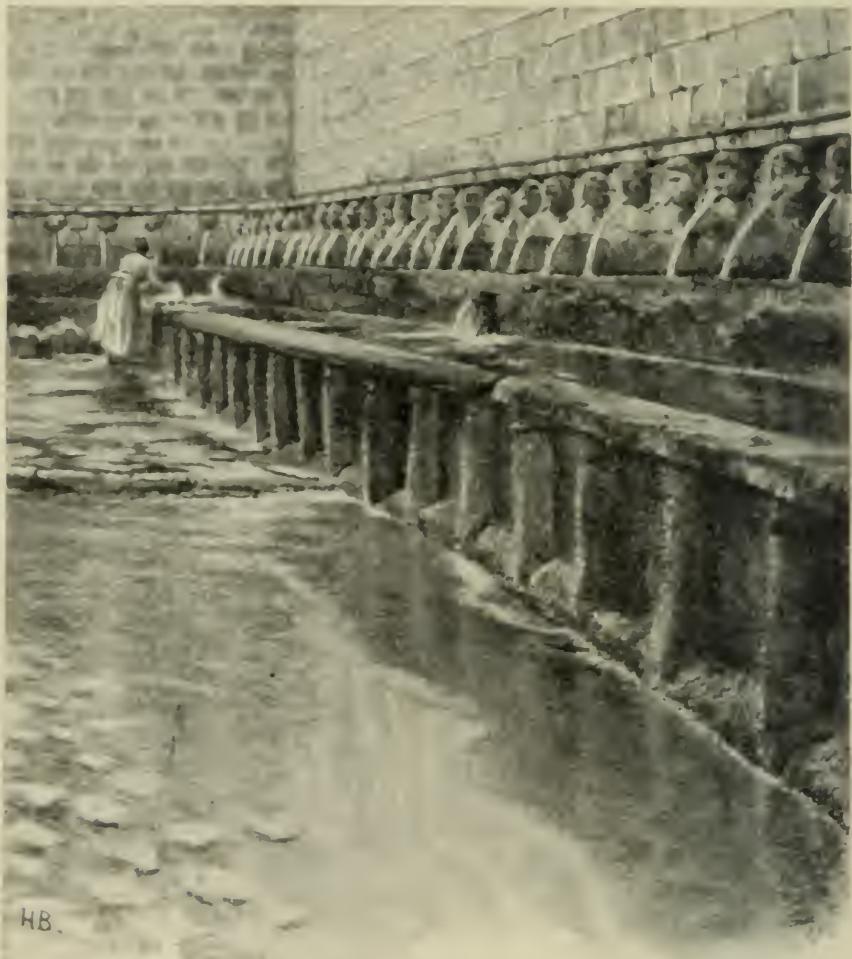
Frederick was driven at last, by the menaces and entreaties of Gregory the Ninth, to sail from Brindisi with an army of crusaders already decimated by the

plague. Falling ill himself, he was obliged to put back, and was excommunicated by the ruthless pontiff before he had recovered. Nevertheless, in the following year he set forth again, founding his claim to the throne of Jerusalem upon his marriage with a princess of Antioch, and he actually succeeded in obtaining possession of the holy city by a treaty with the sultan of Egypt; whereupon the Pope declared the agreement to be sacrilegious, sent an army under Frederick's brother-in-law to take Jerusalem from him, and, perhaps from force of habit, excommunicated the emperor again. But the latter returned to Italy with his new title of King of Jerusalem, drove the papal troops from his dominions, and forced the pontiff to a peace. His Mohammedan colonists fought bravely under him in this war, but as many of them afterwards attempted to return secretly to Sicily, he collected them together and established them in Apulia, in the town called from them Lucera de' Saraceni, and they long continued to play an important part in the wars of the continent. The ingenious pontiff, finding it impossible to get rid of his troublesome master in any other way, now exhorted him to lead another crusade to the Holy Land, but Frederick was little inclined to renew his previous experience, and he must have smiled when he received the usual excommunication in return for his refusal. But Pope Gregory had gone too far, and Frederick retorted by occupying the states of the Church, and even by threatening Rome

itself. In desperate straits the pontiff called a council, but death overtook him suddenly, and after the two years' reign of his successor, the next Pope, refusing to make peace, fled to France, convened a council in Lyons, and declared the Emperor Frederick deposed.

The remainder of the latter's life was consumed in wars in the north of Italy, resulting principally from the attempt made to set up Henry Raspe, Landgrave of Thuringia, as anti-emperor, in which Frederick found himself opposed to his natural son Heinz, or Enzo, king of Sardinia, while his second son, Conrad, afterwards emperor, fought for the imperial cause in Germany. Frederick's eldest son, Henry, had long ago rebelled against him, and died his father's prisoner in a castle of Apulia. Manfred, his natural son, was with him in his latter days, and upon him has fallen the suspicion of having poisoned his father. Conrad defeated Henry Raspe, who died of grief, but the Pope, not relinquishing the bitter quarrel, caused William of Holland to be elected anti-emperor, and he drove Conrad back into Italy. The great defeat of Parma made Frederick's cause almost desperate in the north, and he retired to Apulia, never to return again, and leaving the affairs of the Empire in the most inextricable confusion. His end was mysterious. Some say that he died of an illness, repentant and absolved by the Archbishop of Salerno; others that he went out of the world as he had so long lived

in it, the excommunicated enemy of the Church; and there are many who write that Manfred poisoned him, and that when his strong nature bade fair to survive



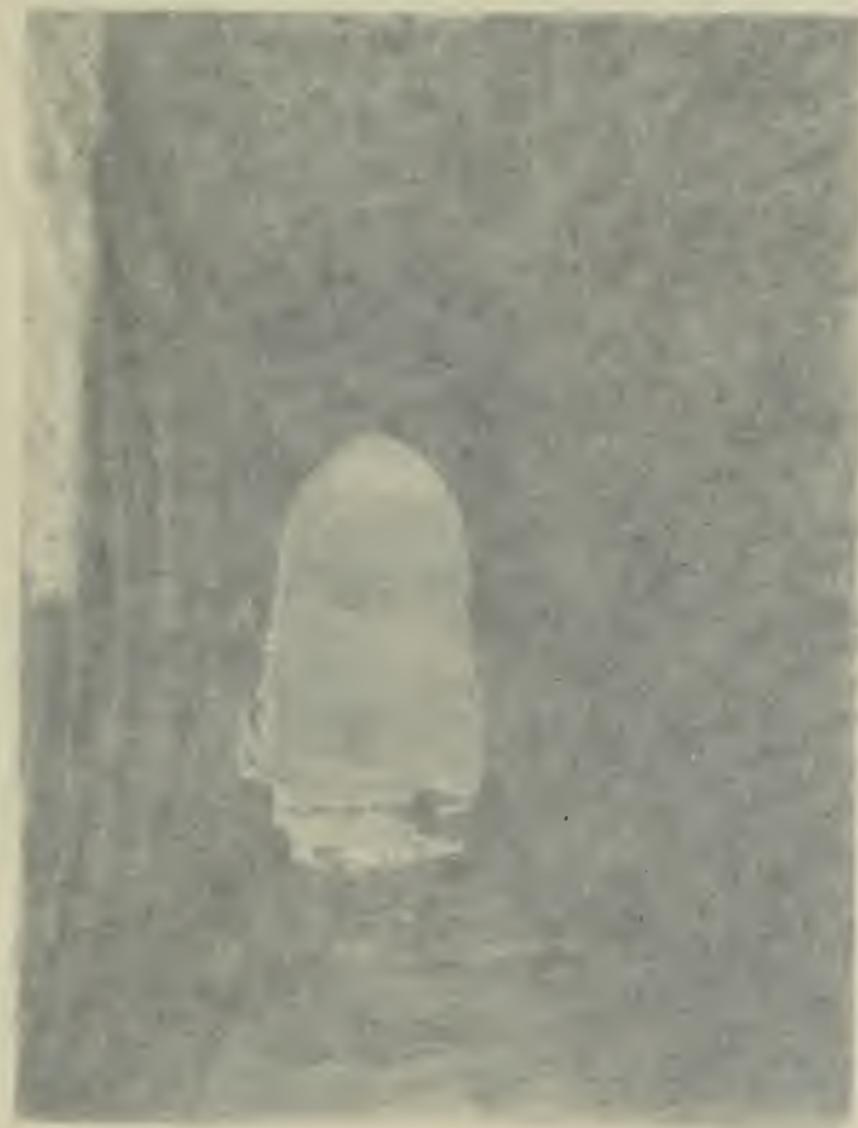
FOUNTAIN OF THE NINETY-NINE WATERSPOUTS, AQUILA

the draught, Manfred smothered him in the night with a feather pillow, in Castel Fiorentino of Apulia, whereby was accomplished a prediction in which he

had believed, that he should die ‘in the Fiorentino’; but he had thought that the word meant the territory of Florence, and had never entered that city. He died six miles from his Saracen city of Lucera, where his great castle still stands, and where Manfred took refuge from the Pope only four years later. The turbulent emperor was a great builder of castles, from the vast and melancholy stronghold that crowns Castrogiovanni to the fortified city of Aquila in the Abruzzi, founded by him, and populated, it is said, by the inhabitants of ninety-nine townships, in memory of which the great fountain has ninety-nine spouts, and it is said that there were once as many churches within the walls. A great builder, a great fighter, a passionate, headstrong man, held accursed by the ecclesiastical writers of his times, he is gravely censured by Muratori for his ambition, his unbridled passions, and his avarice, which was, indeed, but need of money in a desperate conflict; but he is to be praised also for his great heart and large intelligence, his love of justice, his taste for letters, and his learning in many languages. In him the power of the empire founded by Charlemagne culminated and began to wane, and under him the splendour that rose upon Sicily with King Roger spent its noonday radiance, and declined towards its fall. The south had lived its greatest day, and was soon to sink forever to the level of a province owned by kings who claimed a little

Norman blood. It was no longer Greek, it was no longer Saracen, under Frederick the Second it had not even been any longer Norman; he had been born in the public square of Palermo, he had spent his early years in the shadow of Sicilian fortresses, he had used the island as a fulcrum upon which to wield the lever of empire; but Sicily had been to him but an imperial appanage, he had never in any sense been a Sicilian, and he squandered the strength that might have moved the world onwards, in a series of useless quarrels with the Papacy, when he might have better employed his genius, his gifts, and his knowledge of men in civilizing and consolidating the south. The confusion that followed upon his death, the disputes that arose between his sons, and especially between Conrad and Manfred, the quick decay of institutions which should have lasted for centuries, the chaos, in a word, which was the natural result of his reign, could only end as it did, in the disappearance of his heirs, the extinction of his house, and the rise of a new southern monarchy.

There is, perhaps, no greater contrast in history than that between Saint Lewis the Ninth, king of France, the leader of the sixth and seventh Crusades, and his brother Charles, Count of Anjou, the destined destroyer of the house of Hohenstaufen. That extraordinary man, in his struggle with Frederick's heirs, quartered the country as a well-trained dog quarters a field. It



DOORWAY IN THE CASTLE OF FREDERICK II.
AT CASTROGIOVANNI

Sicilian blood. It was no longer Greek, it was no longer Saracen, under Frederick the Second it had not even been any longer Norman, he had been born in the public square of Palermo, he had spent his early years in the shadow of Sicilian fortresses, he had used the island as a following upon which to wield the power of empire; but Sicily had been to him but an imperial appanage, he had never in any sense been a Sicilian, and he squandered the strength that might have moved the world onwards, in a series of useless quarrels with the Papacy, when he might have better employed his genius, his gifts, and his knowledge of men in colonizing and consolidating the south. The confusion that followed upon his death, the disputes that arose between his sons, and especially between Conrad and Manfred, the quick decay of institutions which should have lasted for centuries, the chaos, in a word, which was the natural result of his reign, might only end as it did, in the disappearance of his house, the extinction of his house, and the rise of a new southern monarchy.

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was not until Frederick had been dead three years that Charles was definitely called in by Pope Innocent the Fourth, and, to the iniquitous exclusion of all other claims, was named king of Sicily, Duke of Apulia, and Prince of Capua. His principal opponents were Conrad and his half-brother Manfred, then a youth of one and twenty years, and gifted with much of the wisdom of his father, as well as the astuteness of his Norman ancestors. The premature death of another brother, a younger Henry, born of the Emperor Frederick's marriage with Isabel of England, served the next Pope with an excuse for accusing Conrad of murder. He was cited to appear in Rome, but wisely caused himself to be represented by proxies. It is needless to say that he was found guilty and promptly excommunicated. Forty days later, he also died; and it was commonly believed, says Muratori, that he was poisoned by Manfred, with the help of John the Moor, the captain of the Saracens, Conrad's favourite. He left an infant son two years old, who was destined to be known as the last of the Hohenstaufen. Why Manfred did not destroy this child, if he really had poisoned the father, it does not appear. He may have thought that his illegitimacy was an insuperable barrier between him and the Empire, and that the most he could hope for was that he might be the master of a future emperor. Conrad's treasures were, meanwhile, seized by the regent he had designated, and for

some short time this regent and Manfred actually exerted themselves to bring about an understanding with the Pope. Failing to do so, the German regent resigned his office, but not his ward's treasure, to Man-



CHURCH OF SAN BERNARDINO, AQUILA

fred, who, as sole guardian, met the Pope and kissed his foot at Ceprano, on the confines of the papal states; after which the Pope made a sort of triumphal progress to Monte Cassino, accompanied by Manfred. The latter, however, had refused to take the oath of

fealty to the Church, and the negotiations which doubtless proceeded during the journey were rudely interrupted. Manfred quarrelled with one of the Pope's favourite barons, who was accidentally or intentionally killed by one of Manfred's men; and Manfred himself was soon obliged to take refuge in Lucera. He reached the gates on a dark night early in November, at a moment when John the Moor, who was governor, was absent on a journey. The Saracen sentinels upon the walls, on being told that Manfred was below, were filled with joy, and, fearing that the vice-governor might refuse to give them the keys, which were kept in his house, came down and broke the gates open from within to receive Frederick's son. In a moment the news spread through the Saracen town, the whole population came out into the streets, and, though it was night, insisted upon leading Manfred to the palace, where a great treasure, accumulated by Frederick and Conrad and John the Moor, was unconditionally handed over to him.

The death of Innocent the Fourth and the possession of so much wealth materially improved Manfred's position, and for some time he overran the south, losing no time in regaining what he could for his ward Conradin, and followed everywhere by his faithful Saracens. Before long he inflicted a crushing defeat upon the papal army on the shores of the Adriatic, after which the Pope's cardinal legate and general obtained terms with

which the Pope should have been satisfied, but the Pope refused to acknowledge the treaty, and proclaimed Manfred an excommunicated member of the Church, to be treated like a Turk or an infidel; yet, strange to say, the Pope admitted the infant Conradin's claim to the nugatory kingdom of Jerusalem. From this time Manfred's position continued to improve. He was a mild and generous prince to those who submitted to him, and from Aversa to Sicily the people volunteered to fight under his standard. We hear nothing of any attempt on the part of Charles of Anjou to take possession of the kingdom presented to him by Innocent the Fourth, and Muratori speaks of Manfred as the master of the kingdom on both sides of the straits in the year 1257. With the treachery that lay under his brilliant gifts he now attempted to crown himself king, spreading the report that his nephew Conradin had died in Germany, and some chroniclers say that he sent emissaries to murder the child. His youth, his courteous manner, and his clemency recommended him alike to the people and the nobles, and when Conradin's mother sent ambassadors to him in 1258, protesting that Conradin was alive and was the rightful king, Manfred answered with a show of reason that the kingdom had been lost, and that, as all men knew, he had reconquered it by force of arms and at great pains, and that it was neither his duty nor for the advantage of the kingdom to give it up to a child who could not hold it against the popes, but that

he would defend the kingdom against those implacable enemies of his house during his natural life, after which it should revert to his nephew. By way of impressing the ambassadors with his power, he marched in state from Apulia against the city of Aquila, which had been built by his father but had taken the Pope's side, and having driven out the inhabitants without bloodshed, he burned the town. His power was too great to be humbled by the Church alone, and though Alexander the Fourth did not fail to excommunicate him, the same Pope offered to concede him the formal investiture of the kingdom in 1260, on condition that he would exile all Mohammedans from his dominions. The Pope probably knew that this was impossible, since the strength of Manfred's army now lay chiefly in the Saracen contingent, in whom he could place far more reliance than in his barons of the south. Manfred rejected the proposition, and raised more Saracen troops in Sicily, but made the mistake of accepting the leadership of the Ghibellines in the north, and he sent help to the party, in return for good sums of gold, so that Florence was wrested from the Guelphs, and the famous Guido Novello became Manfred's 'vicar' or viceregent in Tuscany. The Guelphs now made an unsuccessful attempt to bring Conradin down from Germany, in order to oppose him to his uncle; but Conradin's mother refused to consent, and Urban the Fourth threatened to excommunicate all who proposed to make Conradin emperor.

The popes hated not Manfred only, but all his race, and Urban bethought him of Charles of Anjou as the only man likely to be a match for the house of Hohen-



FOUNTAIN IN THE PIAZZA PALAZZO, AQUILA

staufen. It was with difficulty that Urban persuaded the generally docile Saint Lewis to countenance his brother Charles in the enterprise, but his arguments prevailed at last, and he cited Manfred to appear in Rome and

answer for his sins against the Church. Manfred appeared by proxy, not trusting his life to Urban's mercy. His case was argued from one side only, with a view to deposing him without delay and with little hearing, and Charles of Anjou was fully authorized to begin the conquest of the south. This was in the year 1263. By way of impressing their intentions upon Apulia and Sicily, the popes had placed the populations of the south under an interdict in a body, and one of the gravest crimes imputed to Frederick the Second and to Manfred was that they had prevented the interdict from being put into execution; yet so many persons were now excommunicated throughout Italy that the terrible spiritual punishment had lost much of its force, and even the relentless Urban began to moderate his fulminatory zeal. At this time it occurred to the always discontented Roman people to choose themselves a chief, called a senator, who should be also a powerful prince, and the choice of some fell upon Manfred, but others were for Charles of Anjou, and others still for James of Aragon. Though opposed to the idea, the Pope was forced to yield, and chose the Count of Anjou in order to exclude the other two. Charles at once sent a representative to Rome to take possession of the senatorial dignity. Destiny was slowly but surely preparing the downfall of Hohenstaufen. On the news of Charles's election as senator, Manfred at once assumed the offensive, and the armies of the Pope that were sent

against him bore the outward badge and received the spiritual indulgences of real crusaders. There was some desultory fighting, but Charles did not yet appear in Italy, being engaged in raising an army fit for such an expedition; and the death of Urban the Fourth, closely followed by that of Clement the Fourth, produced a sort of lull in the hostilities. In spite of Manfred's attempt to intercept him, Charles arrived at the mouth of the Tiber in a storm, during which he barely escaped drowning. Soon afterwards he made his solemn entry into Rome and took possession of his new office; but though Manfred advanced far into Roman territory, Charles would not go out to meet him until he found himself at the head of a sufficient army. When all was ready Charles and his wife were crowned king and queen of Sicily and Apulia by five cardinals, in the Church of Saint Peter's, and Charles did homage to the Pope for the kingdom of Sicily on both sides of the straits. Lack of money now obliged the new king to take the field before his forces were rested from their long journey; but they took San Germano by storm, and fatigue was forgotten in the sacking of the rich town. One place after another fell into Charles's hands, and Manfred retired upon Benevento, whence he sent ambassadors to treat with the Angevin. Charles's answer has been preserved: 'Tell the Sultan of Lucera,' he said, 'that I will have neither peace nor amnesty with him, but that before long either I will send him to hell,

or he shall send me to heaven.' Thereupon Charles marched against Manfred, hoping to terminate the war at a single stroke, and he reached the battlefield before Manfred had determined upon a plan. The position of the famous city has already been described in these pages; the remains of the bridge about which the battle was fought may be seen in the dark recesses of a mill built beneath the modern construction by which the river is crossed. The land by which Charles made his approach narrows to a point between the converging streams, so that as he came forward his ranks gained solidity by the conformation of the ground. Manfred must have recognized at a glance that his fortunes and those of all his house were to be decided on that day; but from the first he was unable to get any advantage over the French. Not trusting his Apulian barons, he sent forward his Saracens and Germans; but they were not the Normans with whom his great grandfather had won kingdom and glory. They fought well, but the French fought better. Seeing that the ranks wavered, Manfred called upon the barons to follow him in one desperate charge. They saw he was lost, they laughed, and they leisurely rode away. Then King Manfred, seeing that he must die, died like a king, and like one of Tancred's house, for he rode alone at the French host where swords were thickest, and he was pierced with many wounds, and was lost among the slain.

The Pope's champion sacked the old papal city of Benevento, and women and children were mown down with the men in the harvest of the sword. The town ran blood and wine, and Charles's threadbare Frenchmen filled their wallets and saddle-bags with gold, and got fine silk and cloth of gold to their backs. Three days they sought Manfred's body among the festering



CASTLE OF FREDERICK II AT MONTELEONE, CALABRIA

slain; and on the third day a peasant found it, and tied it upon an ass, and hawked it through the French camp, offering to sell it for money; but when it had been recognized by some of the nobles whom Charles had taken prisoners, he commanded that it should be buried in the ditch beside the bridge. Even there the brave man's bones were not allowed to rest in peace,

for, though the ground was not consecrated, it was the property of the Church, and the Bishop of Cosenza therefore caused the body to be dug up again and dragged away beyond the river Verde.

Thus died Manfred; and when he was dead the Saracens of Lucera went over to Charles, and Naples sent her keys, and in the castle of Capua Charles found a great treasure, all in pieces of gold. But when he commanded that scales should be brought with which to divide the wealth exactly, a certain knight of Provence pushed the great heap of gold pieces into three equal divisions upon the marble floor with his foot and spurred heel. ‘One for my lord the king,’ he said, ‘and this for the queen, and this other for your knights.’ And so it was done. Charles entered Naples in triumph, and it is recorded that he first brought thither the love of show and luxury that have distinguished it ever since, and that the common people cried out in an ecstasy of sheer delight at the procession of splendid gilded cars, and at the richly clad maids of honour, and at the great show of triumph that meant death to Conradin.

Now Charles of Anjou, having disposed of his enemy in one great victory, found himself in peaceful possession of the south, and at once he took the Guelph side, and led armies to Tuscany, and joined in the unending quarrel; wherefore the Ghibellines sent urgent letters to young Conradin, now nearly sixteen years of age,

bidding him to come and conquer Sicily, and take possession of his own. He set out with a few thousand men and reached Verona, calling himself King of Sicily, and the Pope lost no time in excommunicating him for this arrogance. Most of his troops deserted him at once, on account of his poverty, but his friends raised his standard in Sicily, and the island rang with his praises; for the French yoke was heavy. But though the patriotic party gained an advantage here and there, the end was not far off. In the beginning of 1268 Conrardin ventured to leave Verona, and riding southwards he found more than one of the restless Tuscan cities ready to throw off Charles's authority. Charles prepared to meet him, but was himself at odds with the Saracens of Lucera, who had discovered the character of the master to whom they had readily submitted, and who was obliged to besiege them in their city. Meanwhile Conrardin reached Rome, and was received with splendour by his friends, in spite of the papal excommunication. The Pisans sent him twenty-four galleys, with which, sailing southwards, he beat back the vessels sent against him by the Angevin; and Ghibellines flocked to his standard from all parts of Italy. Conrardin now marched up by land with a vast host, and there were few who did not predict his complete success. On the twenty-third of August, 1268, the decisive battle was fought in the plain of Tagliacozzo, not many miles from Lake Fucino. Charles, fearing the superior numbers

arrayed against him, fought with all the coolness and skill he could command, and while his main force attacked the enemy, he withdrew to a little eminence, where he watched the battle with the chosen reserve of five hundred knights. A wise old captain more than once prevented him from rushing in at the wrong moment, and Charles sat quietly on his horse, though he saw how the ranks of his army were broken by the Ghibellines' furious charge; but when Conradin's army was broken up into small bodies that pursued the French hither and thither, certain of victory, and when, indeed, that victory seemed almost sure, then the crafty old Alardo touched Charles upon the arm, and said that the time was come, and that he should win the field. Then he led his five hundred knights at furious speed, for their horses were fresh, and fell upon the disordered troops of his enemy, hewing them in pieces, and turning the day in a moment. Conradin and the young Duke of Austria and two other friends escaped when they saw that all was lost, and riding desperately reached Astura, on the Maremma shore; and there they hired a little boat, hoping to escape into Tuscany; but Frangipane, the lord of that castle, guessed who they were, and seized them, and basely sold them to the Angevin king.

The end of the house of Hohenstaufen was at hand. Of the Emperors Frederick's descendants, six were alive at the time of the battle of Benevento, whose claims

might be dangerous to his throne, namely, Conradin and Manfred's five children. Of the latter, Constance, the eldest, was out of danger, being married to Peter of Aragon; of the girl Beatrice we know nothing; the three sons, Henry, Frederick, and Anselm were Charles's prisoners after the decisive battle, and they died in a miserable captivity in Apulia. Ten of Frederick's children and grandchildren died in prison, or by a violent death. One of his granddaughters, a daughter of Enzo of Sardinia, married that famous Ugolino della Gherardesca who was starved to death with his sons and grandsons in Pisa. The shade of King Tancred was perhaps appeased by such an atonement for Henry the Sixth's bloody deeds.

The last act of the great tragedy was played in Naples, on the twenty-sixth or the twenty-ninth of October, for the authorities do not agree, in the year 1268. Determined to destroy every possible claimant, Charles of Anjou ordered Conradin and his fellow-captives to be tried by Robert of Bari, Grand Protonotary of the kingdom, and the infamous judge of an infamous king condemned the imperial boy and his noble companions to death, as 'traitors to the sovereign, contemners of the Pope's commands, and disturbers of the public peace in Italy.' Conradin's claim to the succession was just, and he and his friends were prisoners of war; to put them to death was a solemn and atrocious murder.

On the appointed day the sentence was executed. Charles of Anjou, determined to see the end of his helpless enemy with his own eyes, came in state to the market-place, where the Church of Santa Maria del Carmine now stands, and his throne was placed upon a platform overlooking the scene, and on the stones a great piece of scarlet velvet was spread out, whereon the men were to die. There stood young Conradin, a fair-haired boy of sixteen years, fearless as all his race, and the young Duke of Austria and six others, and the executioner beside them.

Then Robert of Bari, Grand Protonotary, stood up by order of the king and read the sentence in a loud voice; but when he had finished, Robert of Flanders, the king's own son-in-law, gravely drew his sword, and he came and stood before the Grand Protonotary and said, 'It is not lawful that you should condemn to death so great a gentleman.' And when he had said this he pierced the protonotary through and through, so that the sword ran out behind him, and he fell dead, with the written sentence in his hand. Then a great silence fell upon all the multitude, and upon the king, and Robert of Flanders sheathed his sword and went back to his place; for neither then nor afterwards did any one dare to lift a hand against him for what he had done.

So while the judge lay dead before the throne, the execution began; and the young Duke of Austria bent

his neck to the stroke, and when his head fell Conradin took it in his hands and kissed it, for they had been as brothers, and he laid it reverently beside the body. Then he drew off his glove and threw it among the people, and cried out that he left his kingdom to Frederick of Aragon, the son of Constance, and his cousin; and when he had asked pardon of God for his sins he knelt down without fear, and his head was struck off, and after him died all his companions. Their bodies lay long upon the scarlet velvet, and Charles commanded that a common ditch should be dug there, in the market-place, to bury them; and afterwards a porphyry column was set up to mark the spot; and now they lie in the Church of the Carmine.

But some who saw that deed took the boy king's glove, and by and by they brought it to Peter, king of Aragon, young Frederick's father, and he swore to avenge the blood of Conradin; and though the atonement was begun by other hands, he kept his word, and Charles of Anjou cursed the day whereon he had gone out to see an innocent boy die by the executioner's hand.

But he had not yet fulfilled the measure of his cruelties. At the news of Conradin's death, Sicily rebelled against him, and he put down the rebellion with such wholesale massacres of the people and such cruel executions of their leaders as even Sicily had seldom seen; and he left a French army there

with orders to keep the people down by terror; and neither the protestations of Pope Clement the Fourth nor the entreaties of his brother, Saint Lewis of France, could prevail upon him to stay his wrath, for he was afraid. He also destroyed Lucera, and drove out the Saracens who survived the siege.

Two years after Conradin's death, Saint Lewis set out upon the seventh and last Crusade, and took Tunis by storm, and waited there for Charles of Anjou to join him. But Charles would not set out, and the good French king perished of the plague, with many of his army; and when the remains of the crusaders' fleet were driven upon the rocks and wrecked near Trapani, Charles robbed the survivors of all they could save, alleging that a law of King William authorized the kings of Sicily to seize all wrecks with their cargoes. For a time the body of Saint Lewis lay in Palermo, but afterwards it was taken to France by his son, King Philip, and only his heart is buried in the cathedral.

During fourteen years Charles of Anjou ruled his kingdoms of Sicily and Apulia with every species of violence and exaction; tax followed upon tax, impost upon impost, and tithes both ordinary and extraordinary, the slightest delay in payment being followed by ruthless confiscation. The cities were held by French garrisons under general instructions to inspire fear, to extort money, and to impose instant obedience to the

king's decrees. The wives of respectable citizens were nowhere safe from Charles's licentious officers, and the women and maidens of the people were at the mercy of a ribald soldiery. More than once the Sicilians appealed to the popes against Charles, and more than one pontiff exhorted him to a milder conduct; but the Angevin was in a fever of conquest, he dreamed of ruling all Italy, he planned the conquest of the East, and he brought about the election of Pope Martin the Fourth, who was his humble servant and creature.

There lived at that time a certain noble of Salerno, brought up in the school of medicine for which that city remained famous for ages, a man of letters, of singular wisdom, and a very skilled physician. This man was John of Procida; he had been closely attached to the person of the Emperor Frederick the Second, and I find his name among the witnesses to that emperor's will. After the death of Frederick, he had been faithful to Manfred, and after the fall of the house of Hohenstaufen Charles of Anjou confiscated all his goods. He might have lost his life also, had he not retired in good season to the court of Aragon in Barcelona, where he was well received by King Peter and by Queen Constance, Manfred's daughter. He found the king well enough inclined to avenge Conradin and to undertake the conquest of Sicily, but the enterprise was a great one, and he was not provided with means to enter upon it. John of Procida promised to find money.

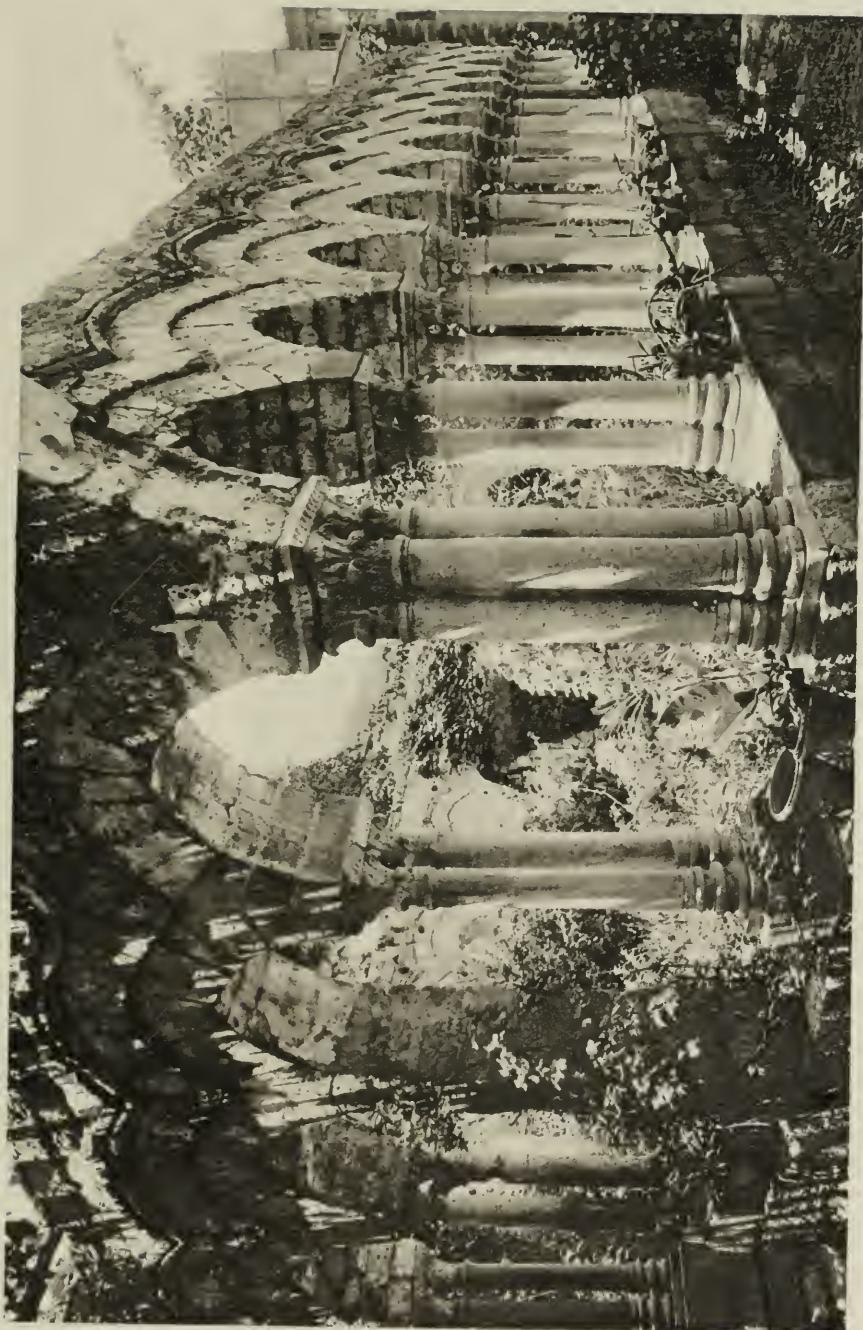
Though he must have been at that time more than sixty years of age, he travelled through all Sicily in disguise, seeking out and ascertaining as nearly as possible what pecuniary help was to be obtained for the impoverished island. It needed no long time to assure him that Sicily was ripe for a revolution, but John was too wise to underestimate Charles's power; from Sicily he went on to Constantinople, and without difficulty persuaded the Emperor Paleologus that, in order to defend himself against the attack which Charles was planning, the best plan was to bring on a civil war in the Angevin's own dominions. The Emperor of the East promised large sums of money to Peter of Aragon for this purpose, and with unwearying energy John made his way at once from Constantinople to Rome; he was received in a secret audience by Pope Nicholas the Third, who was an Orsini, who was believed to be hostile to Charles, and who promised great things, but unfortunately died before the great scheme was ripe for execution.

Peter of Aragon now prepared a fleet and an army on pretence of invading the Saracens in Africa. At the instigation of Charles, the Pope, on receiving news of this armament, sent an embassy to King Peter, inquiring what his intentions might be; but the crafty monarch answered that if one of his hands should reveal his secrets to the other, he would cut it off. On receiving this reply Charles contented himself with reminding the

Pope that he had always looked upon Peter of Aragon as a miscreant, and in Muratori's graphic language he fell asleep, forgetful of that old proverb which says, 'If some one tell thee that thou hast lost thy nose, feel for it with thine hand.'

We do not know whether the final outbreak of the revolution, which had been so long and skilfully prepared, took place precisely as John of Procida had intended ; but when it came it was sudden and terrible, as few revolutions have been, and the Sicilian Vespers will be remembered so long as men love liberty, and history records their deeds.

From the ancient church and cloister of San Giovanni degli Eremiti, not far beyond the royal palace, a long and dusty road leads out to what is now the chief cemetery of Palermo. It passes through a sort of half eastern, half modern suburb, where the poorer people live out of doors all day, plying their trades and doing their household work before their miserable, but not uncleanly, little houses. In older times there was no suburb there, and the broad road led between trees through the open country to a vast meadow broken here and there by clumps of trees, and surrounding the very ancient Church of the Holy Ghost. In spring, when the cool breezes blow up from the sea, when the trees are already in full leaf, and when the grass is aflame with scarlet and yellow and purple wild flowers, the good people of Palermo used to go out there on great festivals with their





COLUMN IN THE CLOISTER OF SAN GIOVANNI DEGLI EREMITI, PALERMO

wives and children in holiday clothes, and taking some provision with them, wherewith to make little feasts on the grass. So it came to pass that on Easter Monday, in the year 1282, the people went out thus in long procession, in the afternoon ; and they sat down in groups, and ate and drank together, and wandered about in little companies, exchanging greetings with their friends. But as they feasted, enjoying the peace and the cool air, and forgetting for a space the tyranny under which they lived, there came out a number of French soldiers of the garrison with their officers ; and first they mixed with the people, though they were not welcome, and drank from cups of wine that no man had offered them, and jested grossly with the women and girls, who turned from them in angry silence. The Sicilian men grew silent too, and their eyes gleamed, but they answered nothing, and led their women away. Then suddenly the French captain, a certain Drouet, having drunk much wine, ordered his men to search the people, and to see whether they had not upon them some concealed weapons ; and still the men submitted silently. But at last the French officer, seeing a very beautiful Sicilian woman walking near him with her husband, cried out to his soldiers to search the women also, and he himself laid hands upon the fairest, and pretending to look for a knife upon her he thrust his hand out to her bosom. She, being thus outraged, shrank half fainting into her husband's arms. Then he could bear no more, and

he cried out, so that his voice rang across the broad meadow, ‘Now let these Frenchmen die at last!’ And as his words pierced the air, the bells of San Giovanni rang to Vespers, and the bells of the Church of the Holy Ghost answered them, and the French officer lay dead at the feet of the woman he had insulted.

Unarmed as they were, with such small knives as some chanced to have, with sticks, with stones, and with their naked hands, the Sicilian men did their work quickly; but the Frenchmen howled for mercy, and were mostly killed upon their knees. When they were all dead, the men took their weapons and went back in haste towards the city with their women, and the cry that meant death was heard afar off and went before them. No Frenchman who met them lived to turn back, and when they were in doubt as to any man’s nation, they held him with the knife at his throat and made him say the one word ‘Ciceri,’ which no Frenchman could or can pronounce. It was dusk when the killing began in Palermo, and when the dawn stole through the blood-stained streets not one of the French was left alive, neither man, nor woman, nor child. The reign of Charles of Anjou was at an end, and from that day to this no man has been king of Sicily who had not some Norman blood.

The Sicilian Vespers took place on the thirtieth of March. The example of Palermo was followed within the month of April by Messina, where the French were

almost all massacred, and the fortresses seized by the population. Charles was at Orvieto, instructing his creature, Pope Martin the Fourth, says Muratori, in the art of governing the world; but Villani tells us that when he heard the news from Palermo, he raised his eyes to heaven and prayed that since his good fortune had begun to wane, 'he might be suffered to fall by small degrees.' He reached Naples before he heard of the rising in Messina, and at once ordered that the fleet he had gathered for invading the Eastern Empire should proceed to Messina, while he himself hastened to the straits by land, at the head of the cavalry. A hundred and thirty-three ships weighed anchor; the land forces numbered five thousand horse, and he crossed to Sicily at the end of July and laid siege to Messina. An apostolic legate entered the city, and his eloquence prevailed upon the inhabitants to propose terms of surrender; but Charles rejected them with scorn and attacked the walls, which were defended with the courage of despair by men who feared and execrated their assailants.

Palermo raised the Pope's standard and sent ambassadors to Martin the Fourth, who dismissed them with energy and with threatening words. The defenders of Messina again offered to surrender upon honourable terms, and the legate in vain did his best to persuade King Charles to mercy. The king's answer was outrageous. He bade Messina deliver up eight hundred

hostages, to be dealt with at his pleasure, and submit to all the fiscal impositions and extortions he had practised hitherto. The Messinians answered that they would die, sword in hand, rather than obey. Beside himself with rage, Charles ordered a general assault, which was repulsed with frightful carnage. And so the siege went on for a whole month.

Meanwhile the nobles of Palermo decided upon the final step. They had revolted from Charles, their advances had been rejected by the Pope, they could not hope to resist the Angevin without help ; they met in the small church now called the Martorana, and they elected Peter the Third of Aragon, the husband of Manfred's daughter, to be king of Sicily, and his descendants after him. On the thirtieth of August, 1282, exactly five months after the Sicilian Vespers, Peter of Aragon landed at Trapani, with fifty galleys, eight hundred cavalry, and ten thousand men-at-arms, all trained soldiers, for he had been fighting the Moors in Barbary. But when he came to Palermo, after five days, the people thought ill of his knights, from their appearance, for their armour was all tarnished and their accoutrements black with campaigning, and their cloaks were threadbare, and the light infantry men were ill clad, and all were sunburnt and thin ; and in their hearts the people did not believe that such men could deliver them from King Charles. Peter held a parliament, however, and promised the nobles that he

would maintain all the laws and customs of William the Good.

The two Catalan chronicles of Bernat Desclot and Ramon Muntaner give the most circumstantial accounts of what followed. They have been published in the original Catalan language, in Barcelona. The Neapolitan historian, Tomacelli, seems to have had access to them in manuscript, but I cannot find that they have been translated.

Peter called out every fighting man in Sicily above fifteen and under sixty years of age to help him against Charles, and sent to him two knights as ambassadors, and they were tolerably well received by a party of skirmishers, who led them to the enemy's camp. They and their squires were roughly lodged, however, in a church, without mattresses or blankets, and they slept on some hay that was there. Charles sent them two bottles of wine, six loaves of very coarse black bread, two roast pigs, and a kettle full of boiled cabbage and fresh pork. In the morning the king sent for them, and they delivered their message. 'My lord Charles,' said the spokesman, 'our king of Aragon sends us to you. That you may believe we are his messengers, behold this credential letter he has given us.' 'It is well,' said Charles. 'Speak what the king of Aragon sends you to say.' The ambassador presented King Peter's letter. Charles was seated on a couch covered with rich silks; he laid the letter beside him unopened.

'My lord Charles,' said the ambassador, 'our lord the king of Aragon sends us, and bids you deliver up to him the land of Sicily which is his, and his son's, and which you have too long most wrongly held. And the people of Sicily, who are grievously oppressed by your rule, have asked help of the king of Aragon. Wherefore the king has determined to help them, they being his people and of his lands.'

The message did not lack distinctness. When King Charles heard it, he was much surprised, and some minutes passed before he answered, and he gnawed with his teeth a little staff he held in his hand. When he had thought a long time he answered : 'Sirs, Sicily belongs neither to the king of Aragon, nor to me, but to the Church of Rome. I desire you to go to Messina, and to bid the men of the city, from the king of Aragon, that they make a truce with me for eight days, until we shall have talked with you, and you with us, of those things concerning which we have to speak.' 'Sir,' said the ambassadors, 'we will do this willingly ; and if they will not, it shall not be of our fault.'

With that they left the king and went before the city of Messina, and called to the men on the wall, and the men inquired what they wished. 'Barons,' said the spokesman, 'we are ambassadors from the king of Aragon, and we would speak with your captain, Sir Alaymo.' When the men heard this, they went and told it to Sir Alaymo, their captain ; and he came at once

and went upon the wall, and asked of the messengers what they required. ‘Are you the captain of Messina?’ they asked. And he answered: ‘Surely, I am indeed the captain of Messina. Why ask you this?’ And they told him, and gave their message. ‘Surely,’ answered the captain, ‘I do not believe that you are messengers from the king of Aragon, and for your false words I will not have peace or truce. See that you depart at once and go your way.’

They came and told this to King Charles, and he bade them rest until the next day, promising to take counsel and give them an answer. But on the next morning they learned that he had secretly crossed the straits to Calabria during the night, and three knights came and bade them return to Palermo, for King Charles would send his answer at his leisure. They knew, however, that Peter of Aragon was already in Randazzo, only two days’ ride from Messina, and they found him there and told him all.

Charles had either fallen into his own trap, or had meant to abandon the siege. When it was known that he had left Sicily a great part of his army became disorganized, many took to the ships and sailed over to Reggio, and the people of Messina sallied out against those that remained and killed many of them, and the rest slew all the horses and burned all the flour and wheat they could not take with them, and escaped. On the very day when the messengers reached Randazzo,

a man came spurring towards evening, bringing news that Charles's army had disappeared, and so King Peter rode down and entered Messina without striking a blow. His fleet also arrived from Palermo, and when forty of Charles's galleys sailed out of Reggio, on the fifth day, fourteen Catalan ships attacked them and took twenty-one, and sank others, and put the rest to flight, and brought back many prisoners and a vast spoil ; for Charles had met his match, and more, and he had been driven from Sicily forever.

King Charles could not have seen the fight in which his galleys were lost, as it took place to the west of Scylla while he was at Reggio ; but his rage knew no bounds when he heard the news, and he immediately conceived a treacherous plan for drawing King Peter into an ambush on pretence of single combat. He began by sending messengers to his adversary with instructions to deliver a formal insult, and that their persons might be safe he disguised his messengers as preaching friars. He sent them across the straits by night in a boat, and coming before the king they boldly told him in Charles's name that he had not entered Sicily like a leal and true man, but that he had entered it treacherously, as he should not. But when the king of Aragon heard these words he broke into a laugh, and pretended to attach no importance to the message. ‘Sirs,’ said he, ‘I will send my messengers together with you to King

Charles, to know from his own lips whether what you say be true.' He chose out certain honourable knights of high birth and bearing, and bade them go with the messengers, and when he had instructed them he commanded them that, if the king confirmed the message, they should deal with him as with any knight who should attack their faith and honour, for he would do battle with Charles, hand to hand. The knights went over to Reggio and delivered their message. Then Charles remained in thought for a while, and said, 'Whether you say that I have said it or not, I say it now, that he has entered Sicily treacherously and unjustly, and as he should not.' Therefore the messengers of the king of Aragon answered and said: 'Sir, we answer you these words by command of the king of Aragon and Sicily, our lord, and we tell you that any man who says that the king has entered Sicily treacherously and unjustly, speaks falsely and disloyally. And he says that he will fight you, hand to hand, and he gives you the choice of arms, which shall be as you please.'

Charles was enraged at this answer, and his barons besought him not to be angry, nor to answer without taking counsel; and thereupon they led him away thence, and took him into a room, and there he held a council with his barons and returned to his senses; and he answered that he would not fight the king of Aragon in single combat, but that he would fight

with a hundred knights against a hundred. And his object in thus answering was that wherever the combat took place he should be allowed to bring with him enough men to get possession of King Peter by some treachery.

Immediately after this, further messages were exchanged, and it was decided that the contest should take place at Bordeaux, which belonged to the king of England, who would insure neutrality and safety for all those who came to fight.

The sequel to this celebrated challenge is better known than the details which led to it, and which I have translated literally from the Catalan chronicle. Charles went to Bordeaux, indeed, but with such a force that the English king's governor would have been powerless to save King Peter. The latter was in



TOWER IN THE CASTLE OF FREDERICK II
AT MONTELEONE

Catalonia, but was far too wise to fall into the snare, and yet too honourable not to appear in the lists. The story of his secret ride through Spain reads like a chapter from the '*Morte d'Arthur*', which, like similar fictions of the age of chivalry, was doubtless imitated from the real chronicles. The story tells how King Peter reached Bordeaux in disguise, with three knights, in the company of a merchant whose servants they all pretended to be, the king himself being fully armed under his disguise. The king passed for the rich merchant's major-domo, and ordered supper at the inns, and the three knights served their supposed master at table. Near Bordeaux they left two of the knights with good horses in case of need. When they reached the gates the king stayed without, and one of the knights went in on foot and sought out King Peter's official representative, who had gone to Bordeaux openly, and bade him tell the seneschal to go out from the city, saying that a messenger from the king of Aragon was there, desiring to speak with him. And the seneschal did so, taking four French knights with him, and the Catalan ambassador, and a notary of the city. Peter did not reveal his identity, but ascertained from the seneschal that Charles had prepared the lists under the walls where a gate led directly into them from the fortress; and also that the king of England had commanded him, the seneschal, to give up the city entirely to King Charles

during his stay, and that if Peter appeared in the lists, he would most certainly be taken prisoner. While they were talking they had ridden to the place, and when they were within, Peter set spurs to his horse and rode up and down the enclosed field. Then, riding back together, the king drew the seneschal aside, and asked him whether he should know the king of Aragon if he saw him; and the seneschal answered that he should know him well, for he had seen him at Toulouse, and that the king had done him great honour, and had made him a present of two horses.

Then King Peter drew back his hood from his face, and said, ‘Look at me well, if you know me, for I am here, the king of Aragon; and if the king of England, and you in his name, can insure my safety, I am ready to do battle, with a hundred knights.’ When the seneschal knew the king, he wished to kiss his hand, but the king would not; and the seneschal implored him to escape at once, lest he should be deceived and taken by his enemies. Then said the king, ‘You shall make me a letter for a testimony that I have been on the appointed day at Bordeaux, in the lists where the battle was to be fought, and that you have told me that you cannot assure my safety, and that whereas the country was to have been neutral, the king of England has delivered it over to King Charles.’ The seneschal answered, ‘Surely, this is true.’ Then the notary who had

been brought out of the city drew up the statement, and the French knights were called to witness it, and when they asked where the king of Aragon was, he showed himself to them, and they were much amazed, and bowed low, taking off their caps, and would have kissed his hand, but he would not suffer it. So he rode away towards Bayonne, and it was near evening; and when the seneschal and the knights had returned into the city, the sun had set, and King Peter was many miles away.

It would be a pleasant task to tell the history of the war that followed the Sicilian Vespers, from the graphic chronicles of Bernat Desclot and Ramon Muntaner. Their simple accounts of men, things, and battles bear the stamp of truth and the sign manual of the eye-witness. Therein may be found in detail the bold deeds of Roger di Lauria, King Peter's famous admiral, and all that brave Queen Constance did with his help to hold Sicily while Peter himself was fighting against the king of France on his own borders, and against his own brother James of Majorca; and how at last the Admiral Roger defeated the king of France and drove him from the walls of Gerona. And at last, after much brave fighting, and having secured the succession of all his dominions, including Sicily, to his sons, King Peter of Aragon passed away peacefully, after a long illness, on the eve of Saint Martin's Day, in the month of November, in the year 1285. His great



enemy, Charles of Anjou, had died in Foggia in January of the same year, while preparing a formidable army with which to invade Sicily, while the French were attacking King Peter in Catalonia. He left his kingdom at war with Sicily and his eldest son Charles a prisoner in the hands of Queen Constance. Nor was the young prince's captivity without danger; Pope Martin the Fourth had sent legates to Messina to negotiate for his liberation, and as they could not obtain it on the terms they demanded, they pronounced the major excommunication against all the Sicilians and the royal house of Aragon. Three years had not passed since the general massacre of the French, and the people of Messina now rose in tumult and attacked the prisons where the French prince and his companions were confined. Crying out for vengeance for the death of Manfred and Conradin, they heaped up wood against the prison doors, and more than sixty French nobles perished miserably in the flames. The young prince, now Charles the Second, was saved, we know not exactly how, but some say that he had been secretly removed from the prison and sent to Catalonia before the attack. Soon after this Pope Martin the Fourth died also, having, as Muratori says, emptied the treasury of his excommunications upon all Ghibellines, and upon whomsoever chanced to be the enemy of his master, Charles of Anjou.

In Later Times

My task is almost ended. I have traced the story of the south from the times of the first Greek settlements to the establishment of the house of Aragon on the Sicilian throne, through a period of about two thousand years, endeavouring to spare the reader all unnecessary names and dates, the accumulation of which has made the history of Italy so difficult a study for persons of ordinary memory. In the few remaining pages I shall briefly explain the succession of events that led directly from the coronation of Peter of Aragon to the sovereignty of Charles the Fifth, requesting the reader to remember that this part of the story of the south is a history in itself, which alone would fill a great space, but that it is also an important part of that history of Italy which exists, indeed, in several hundred volumes written in all languages, but which unfortunately does not exist as a single book in one tongue.

The first result of the war of the Sicilian Vespers was that two sovereigns called themselves kings of Sicily, namely, those of the house of Aragon, who remained in possession, and those of the house of Anjou, who never recovered what Charles had lost. The kingdoms were therefore called the 'Two Sicilies,' the one being the island and the other the mainland, with Naples for its capital, and they continued to be

so called even after they were finally united under Ferdinand the Catholic, who was the Second of Sicily, the Second of Aragon, the First of united Naples and Sicily, and the Third of Naples.

The next matter to be understood is that the kingdom of Sicily under the Aragonese kings was often given or left by them to their sons and brothers as a separate and independent monarchy. King Peter left it to his second son, James, who only became king of Aragon when his elder brother died, and he in turn gave Sicily to his younger brother Frederick, whose direct male descent failed, and whose great-granddaughter Mary married the heir of Aragon, who became Martin the First of Sicily, but died childless, leaving Sicily to his father, Martin the Second of Sicily. But the father had no other children, and at his death both Aragon and Sicily went to the son of Martin's sister, who had married King John of Castile, the Norman blood descending through her alone, as it had descended through Constance, Manfred's daughter, to all the house of Aragon and Castile, and to 'Mad Joan,' the elder sister of Katherine of Aragon, Henry the Eighth's unhappy queen; and by 'Mad Joan' it descended to Charles the Fifth and all the house of Austria.

This fragment of genealogy will serve to show how the kingdoms of the Two Sicilies became involved in the history of Europe, and how the succession to them

became disputable, since the whole imperial house of Austria is descended from the same 'Mad Joan.' It is hard to imagine anything more confusing, for after her all the royal claimants were equally Hapsburgs, since they were all descended from her husband,

Philip of Hapsburg, Archduke of Austria, the sole progenitor of the Austrian emperors and Spanish kings that came after him, and, by the marriage of Anne of Austria with Lewis the Thirteenth of France, the ancestor of all the Spanish and Neapolitan Bourbons, who are of the house of Austria only by the female side, their male progenitor having been Philip, the younger brother of the 'Second Dauphin,' and a grandson of Lewis the Fourteenth of France. After the conquest of Sicily by Peter of Aragon, and the establishment of the Angevin dynasty in Naples, the principal causes of disturbance lay in questions of succession, so far as

Sicily was concerned, and, for Naples, in the relations of that kingdom with the Holy See, which were not by any means always friendly. The great Roman houses of Colonna and Orsini, whose history is so closely connected with that of the popes in the middle ages, fought across the borders of the kingdom of



STATUE OF SAINT
URBAN AT LA
CAVA

Naples, and more than once the Colonna took refuge in the south, while the Orsini lorded it in Rome; but sometimes also the Orsini got possession of great lands in the southern country, and their ancient arms are carved over the doors of more than one old castle in the wild mountains of the Basilicata. To name one only, Muro was theirs,—the vast stronghold in which Joan the First at last paid for her many crimes with her life, a place which few have visited, but which gives a better idea of the existence led by the barons of the fourteenth century than any castle I have examined.

Joan the First of Naples came to the throne in the year 1343, being at that time a beautiful girl sixteen years of age. She was the granddaughter of good King Robert, surnamed the Wise, who was himself the grandson of Charles of Anjou, and whose only son, Joan's father, died before him. She was already married to the young Andrew, brother of the king of Hungary, and it had been understood that when she succeeded to the throne her husband was to take the title of King of Naples; but when the coronation took place, the cardinal legate who performed the ceremony crowned Joan only, to the mortification and disappointment of Andrew and his many Hungarian courtiers. The latter were a cause of dissension between their master and the queen; they brought the manners and bearing of a half barbarous nation to a court that had at first astonished the south by its magnificence, and which

had reached a high degree of civilization and outward refinement since the days of its first king. In strong contrast to these rough Hungarians, who were insolent when they were sober, and dangerous when they were drunk, Joan saw around her her numerous cousins of the Durazzo line, who all enjoyed the dignity of princes of the blood, and the chief of whom, Charles of Durazzo, had married Joan's younger sister Mary. It was natural, perhaps, that the queen's antipathy should increase daily; and it was equally natural, on the other hand, that Andrew should feel himself slighted and injured because he had not received the promised crown; and in the meanwhile the princes secretly plotted, each hoping to obtain it for himself. In those times it was almost inevitable that such a condition of things should end in a tragedy, and it was not long in coming.

In the year after Joan's coronation, Andrew's friends at Avignon succeeded in persuading Pope Clement the Sixth to consent to his coronation, and to give his consent a practical shape by ordering the ceremony to take place at once, and by sending a cardinal legate to Naples to perform it. The princes understood well enough that if Andrew were once crowned their own chances would be gone; Joan detested her husband, and let it be understood by Charles of Durazzo that she would be glad to be rid of him. Whether she actually suggested the murder or not, it is not easy to say; it is generally believed that she did, and she

suffered for it in the end. It was clear to those who wished Andrew's death that it must take place quickly, and it is quite certain that Joan was well aware of the plot.

The chronicle of Este gives a full list of the conspirators, and describes the murder as follows, saying that in order to plan it they met together beforehand in a certain castle by the sea. They then came and told the queen that the deed could not be done in Naples, where Andrew was too well guarded, and the queen, whom the Latin chronicle rarely mentions without an epithet which I shall leave to the imagination of the reader, persuaded the king to go with her and spend the month of September in Aversa, inviting all the conspirators to accompany them. The conspirators there agreed with the two chamberlains that the latter should open the door to the king's chamber when they desired it; and the queen consented to these things, and on the appointed night they entered. Then Beltram, the son of a natural son of King Robert, and the principal conspirator, seized the king by the hair; but the king dragged himself back and said, 'This is a base jest.' Then Beltram tried to throw the king, but the king seized his hand between his teeth, and did not let it go until he had bitten the whole piece out. But Beltram's companion slipped a noose round the king's throat, and the two together drew it and twisted it so that he died. Having done this, they thought of bury-

ing him in a stable; but as they were carrying his body down the stairs, they fancied that they heard some of the knights coming, and being afraid, they brought the body back to the hall above and took counsel how they should hide it. At last they threw it out of the window into the pleasure garden, and then each went to his own room. Now the nurse of the dead king, who had come with him from Hungary, and who always suspected that some harm would befall him through the princes who lived at the court, went into the king's room, and there she saw the queen sitting beside the bed, but she did not see the king. She inquired of the queen saying, 'Where is my master?' The queen answered, 'I know not where he is; thy master is far too young!' Then the nurse, perceiving that she was ill-disposed, left the room, taking a light to search for her master, and looking towards the pleasure garden, it seemed to her that she saw a miraculous light there, which was intended to reveal the crime. She saw the king himself lying upon the grass, and thinking him asleep she went back to the queen. 'My lady,' said she, 'the king sleeps in the garden.' The queen answered, 'Let him sleep.' But she knew that he was dead. The nurse, who loved him not a little, went into the garden and saw him dead on the grass, strangled by the noose, and with his boots on, of which one was white and the other red, and one of his leathern hose was embroidered with gold, but the other

was black. In the king's mouth she found the piece of Beltram's hand which he had bitten out. Then the nurse began to weep most bitterly, and by the sound of her weeping the crime was known. So the queen and her friends mounted their horses and returned to Naples, and caused the king's body to be brought thither and buried by night.

The chronicle of Este distinctly states that Charles,



CASTEL NUOVO, NAPLES

Duke of Durazzo, and the princes of Taranto, one of whom Joan afterwards married, were not among the conspirators, and that in the riot which took place on the next day, they led the people to the grave, and exhumed the body in order to be sure of the king's death, and then painted an image of him on a banner, with the noose round his neck, and besieged the queen and the murderers, probably in the Castel Nuovo, which still overlooks the arsenal. Although they

burned the doors and almost forced an entrance, they were driven back, and at last sent an embassy requesting the queen to give up the traitors. This she flatly refused to do, and the ambassadors remained shut up in the castle. But she, being young and badly frightened by the storm she had raised, at last consented to give up the conspirators with the exception of Beltram and his father; and the sea-gate of the castle was opened, and the conspirators were taken out and put on board of two galleys to be removed to the Castel dell' Uovo; but as the governor of the castle had no orders from the queen he refused to admit them, and they were shut up in Duke Charles's own prisons. Beltram and his father escaped to the castle of Sant' Agata, near the summit of the pass between Garigliano and Sparanisi, but the duke besieged them, took them alive, and brought them back to Naples, where they had the privilege of dying by poison, as being the son and grandson of King Robert. The other conspirators were tortured and hanged, and one of the ladies who had taken part was burned alive. The queen alone escaped, remaining in her castle all the time. The chronicle of Este speaks of Charles of Durazzo as if he had been quite innocent of Andrew's death, but Muratori says that he was believed to be the 'manipulator of this great iniquity.'

It is not to be supposed that any kingdom could hold together under such a sovereign as Joan the

First, and her long life was spent in frantic efforts to keep her throne, and in attempting to counteract each crime she committed by one still more enormous. She could not save herself by allowing Charles of Durazzo to execute her husband's murderers, nor by marrying her cousin Luigi of Taranto, nor by obtaining a formal acquittal for herself in Rome. She was obliged to escape by night in a galley before the advance of the Hungarians, who were led to vengeance by their king, the murdered Andrew's brother, and she took refuge in her own Provence, where she was, nevertheless, confined like a captive, because the Pope distrusted her. The king took Aversa, and treated with the princes, and they dined at his table; but after dinner, says the chronicle, the king made his men take their arms, as if he meant to ride over to Naples, and then he suddenly asked to see the passage whence his brother's body had been thrown. Standing there, he turned to Charles of Durazzo and accused him of the deed, and the Hungarian soldiers killed the duke where he stood, and threw his body into the garden: and the king sent the other princes to Hungary, where they were imprisoned. During nearly forty years Joan fought, intrigued, murdered, and fought again, adopted Lewis of Anjou for her successor, and perished miserably at last in Muro, by the order of another Charles of Durazzo, who at last got her kingdom and held it, and left it to his chil-

dren. They died childless, the last being another Joan, called the Second, who adopted first one successor, Alfonso of Aragon, and then another, René of Anjou; and Alfonso took all, whereby the house of Aragon united the Two Sicilies under one crown.

Not long after the first Joan's death at Muro, the throne of Sicily was shaken by the mad attempt of Bernardo Cabrera, the old Count of Modica, to marry the widowed queen by force, and seize the kingship. Martin the First had died childless, and was succeeded by his father, while his widow, the young and beautiful Blanche of Navarre, became vicar and lieutenant of Sicily. Then the elder Martin died also, and for more than two years the throne remained vacant, until Ferdinand the First, the son of Martin's sister, was crowned as the only legitimate successor. Meanwhile, six other claimants aspired to the crown, and the confusion was indescribable. Cabrera was not one of them, for he could boast of no royal blood; he was Count of Modica, Grand Justiciary of the Kingdom, and one of the greatest nobles in Sicily; but he had conceived a mad passion for Blanche, and he believed that by marrying her he could grasp the crown.

A parliament was held in Taormina, and certain propositions were formulated by the wisest men there; old Bernardo Cabrera opposed them all, claimed the right to rule Sicily in virtue of his high office, and at once formed a party among the barons, ever anxious for

change. He swore loudly that he did not mean to persecute the queen, who would not resign her lieutenantship of the kingdom, and that he meant to hold the country for the crown of Aragon ; but he won over the captain of the queen's troops, and before long he besieged her in her castle at Catania. He sought an interview with her under a truce, and she, says the old Jesuit historian, Francesco Aprile, agreed to speak with him from the high poop of the galley, he standing below her on a bridge. In this ridiculous situation the count, ‘intoxicated by his insane love and boundless ambition, implored the queen to marry him.’ Then with a scornful smile, at once in surprise and contempt, she answered only, ‘Oh, you rotten old man!’ Thereupon she turned away at once to Torres, to whom the galley belonged, and bade him put to sea ; and she sailed away to Syracuse for greater safety. But Cabrera, furious at the insult, and more madly in love than ever, pursued her thither, and besieged her again in the old castle of the Marsetto on Ortygia, between the great and the small harbours. He battered the walls with siege engines, and in vain attempted to get in, and at last, in impotent rage, he pelted the stone walls with mud and garbage. She was at last rescued by John Moncada and Torres, who arrived in the latter’s galley at night, and fell upon Cabrera so suddenly that the old man fought for his life in his white nightcap. Queen Blanche was conveyed on board

the vessel during the fighting, and the galley set sail for Palermo.

Even there she was not safe. She lodged in the great Chiaramonte palace, now the Palazzo dei Tribunali, and once the seat of the Inquisition. Cabrera landed at Trapani, and advanced stealthily through his own possessions by way of Alcamo, enjoining the utmost secrecy upon his vassals, and guarding all the passes and roads, lest any one should warn the queen of his approach. He rode out of Alcamo at midday, and reached Palermo at dead of night, when the whole city was sleeping. But, cautious though he was, the clanking of his men's armour in the street waked the queen. In her nightdress, her hair in wild confusion, she was covered rather by darkness than by any garments, says Aprile. Letting themselves out of the palace by a postern, she and her damsels fled at full speed along the shore, till they reached the old harbour, where Torres's galley was moored. Though it was January, the terrified women waded out as far as they could towards the vessel, and called out with tears, in desperate anxiety, till Torres himself was wakened by their cries, and sent a boat off to bring them on board. He instantly weighed anchor and sailed to the strong castle of Solunto, a few miles to the eastward of Palermo. He had saved the queen a third time with the same galley.

Cabrera entered the Chiaramonte palace a few min-

utes after the queen had escaped. Her bed was still warm when he entered her room. ‘I have lost the partridge, but I have her nest!’ he cried, as he threw himself upon the couch and furiously kissed the pillow where the queen’s head had lately lain.

A fourth time he besieged her in Solunto, but she was not without friends, and they sent word to Cabrera that he must cease to persecute her, and they appeared in arms to enforce their message. One day, when the count was examining the trenches with which he had surrounded the castle, he was suddenly surrounded and taken by the queen’s friends, and before long he found himself a close prisoner in the strong castle of Motta Santa Anastasia, which had been built by Count Roger in old times. He was locked up in a disused rain-water cistern, and he was no sooner installed than the rain, which fell heavily at that season, was turned in upon him. The guards pretended not to hear his cries, the water rose from his ankles to his knees, and from his knees to his waist, till his prison pallet was floating beside him in the dark; then at last the water was turned off, and the wretched Cabrera was dragged out and transferred to a noisome den of vermin in a high part of the castle. There he was constantly attended by a soldier, whom he attempted to win over, and to whom a thousand pieces of gold were actually paid by the count’s friends. But the soldier had kept his master well informed, and when the count was allowed to

escape, as he thought, by climbing down a strong rope hung from his window, he dropped into a net which had been previously arranged to catch him, and in which he remained exposed to the view and contemptuous jests of the whole garrison. He must have been glad that the beautiful Blanche of Navarre could not see him in such an undignified situation. When his enemies were weary of mocking him, he was taken back to his prison, and kept there until the election of Ferdinand the Just.

This event took place in the year 1412, and put an end at once to the dissensions that distracted Sicily and to the claims of the other six aspirants to the throne. It put an end also to the independence of the Sicilian kingdom, and henceforth the latter was ruled by viceroys until modern times, excepting during the short reign of Victor Amadeus of Savoy.

It was soon to be united with that of Naples, for Ferdinand's son, Alfonso the Magnanimous, claimed and held the inheritance left him by adoption by Queen Joan the Second, the last of the Angevins; and though at his death the kingdoms were divided between his son and his brother, they were before long to be permanently united under Ferdinand the Catholic, Alfonso's nephew.

Old Aprile says that when Sicily was united with Castile she was one of the fairest jewels set in the crown of Spain, and that the union was the special

work of Divine Providence. With Ferdinand's conquest of the Moors and of Granada we have nothing to do, but the date of his final victory is that of a serious outbreak against the Jews in Sicily. As usual, the Hebrews were accused of having caught and crucified a Christian child on Good Friday; and the chronicle, to which those who please may lend credence, asserts that the deed was discovered because the body was thrown into a well of which the water was stained with blood, and that, by a miracle, the water rose suddenly and deluged the streets with a red stream. The natural consequence was a massacre of the Jews, and their synagogue was converted into a church. This was neither the first nor the last time that such persecutions took place in Sicily.

It was at this time that Charles the Eighth conceived the idea of seizing the kingdom of Naples, and his incessant wars in Italy, in which Gonzalvo de Cordova, who led the Spanish armies, earned the surname of the Great Captain, led directly to the treaty of Granada made in 1500 between King Ferdinand and Lewis the Twelfth of France, Charles's successor. By that agreement the two sovereigns allied themselves in order to take the kingdom of Naples from Frederick the Fourth, who was King Ferdinand's first cousin once removed. Ferdinand's chief ground for this act of spoliation was that the unfortunate King Frederick of Naples had invoked the help of the Turks against his enemies. It

was agreed, therefore, that Ferdinand, who was already king of Sicily, should have Apulia and Calabria, and that Lewis the Twelfth of France should take Naples with its royal title, the latter being readily confirmed by Pope Alexander the Sixth, the too famous Borgia Pope. Gonzalvo de Cordova was at that time the vassal of King Frederick, and in order to escape the charge of treason he immediately renounced the territory of Monte Sant' Angelo in the kingdom of Naples. The success of the joint armies of Gonzalvo and the Duke of Nemours was all that either could desire, but it was impossible that their respective sovereigns should long remain in accord, and the captains soon quarrelled about the boundaries of the conquered provinces. The French having occupied Melfi, Gonzalvo de Cordova retorted by seizing places already taken for King Lewis, and he established himself in Barletta, and soon inflicted a defeat upon his enemies, taking prisoner the Duke of Nemours' colleague. It was at this time, in the year 1503, that the famous encounter took place known in history as the *Sfida di Barletta*, in which, on the thirteenth of February, thirteen Italian knights fought as many Frenchmen in tournament in the sight of both armies, and beat them.

The celebrated fight was brought about in the following manner. The account I give is taken from Zurita's '*Annals of Aragon*,' and seems to be as accurate as any. It chanced that in a skirmish near

Barletta a number of the French were taken prisoners, and among them was a certain knight, called de la Motte; and while he was captive, he began to boast that the French were better men than the Italians, whereupon a great discussion arose, and the Italian knights went to Gonzalvo de Cordova, begging him that they might have a chance of defending their national honour, which they considered that de la Motte had assailed. The result was that thirteen Italian knights, chief of whom was Ettore Fieramosca of Capua, met an equal number of French champions, on the understanding that each vanquished knight should pay one hundred ducats for his liberty, and lose his horse and arms. The Duke of Nemours could not or would not give surety that the lists should be undisturbed, but Gonzalvo replied that he would protect them, and marched out all his army, horse and foot, to a place five miles from Barletta and encamped there, between Andria and Corato. A monument marks the spot to-day. For the Italians, Prospero Colonna appeared as second; the French chose for theirs the most honourable knight of any age, the famous Bayard; the judges marked out the ground, and the tournament began. It was a windy day and the gale was in the Italians' favour, as the parties rode at each other, first at a foot pace and then at a trot. Zurita says that they hardly broke into a canter as they met; nevertheless, all the lances were broken on both

sides, but most of the French knights dropped the stumps of theirs. Not a horse was killed, not a knight was thrown, and they at once attacked each other with short arms, some using their axes, and some their swords, as they pleased. The French defended themselves stoutly, but the Italians fought so valiantly and with such perfect agreement among themselves, that in the space of one hour—not six, as some have said,—the French were driven across the line and therefore forced to surrender. One of their knights lay dead on the field, and one was severely wounded, but only one of the Italians was slightly hurt. The French champions were led back to Barletta by their victors with huge rejoicings, and the thirteen Italians supped at Gonzalvo de Cordova's own table.

The moral effect of such a victory was great, and the success was followed shortly by a more substantial one in the great battle of Cerignola, where the Duke of Nemours died of his wounds; and in the following year the last of the French were driven to take shelter in Gaeta, which more than once, and even in 1860, was the last refuge of those who had held Naples. The unfortunate King Frederick died of grief, and Ferdinand the Catholic was master of all southern Italy.

The early death of his only son had been regarded as a calamity by almost all civilized nations; but, if the young prince had lived, the greatest of all Spanish monarchs, Charles the Fifth, would never have reigned.

He was Ferdinand's grandson by Joan the Mad, whose handsome husband, the heir of the Empire, died at the age of twenty-eight from drinking too much iced water after a game at ball, an excess to which Aprile gives the name of intemperance. The infant Charles, therefore, became the heir of the Empire as well as of Spain, the Low Countries, Southern Italy, and Sicily, besides all that had been discovered of America, and he was by far the greatest sovereign in the world. I may appropriately close this brief sketch of the southern successions by giving some account of the monarch whose strong hand has left its indelible impress upon Sicily and the mainland.

Charles was six years old when his father died, and his mother, it is said, was so distracted by her grief that she never recovered, but buried herself in the convent of Tordesillas, entirely shutting herself off from all human intercourse; and there she lived to old age, and died when the great emperor was in his fifty-sixth year. He was sixteen at the death of his grandfather Ferdinand, and his vast dominions were practically governed and held for him by the inexorable regent, Cardinal Ximenes, during the few months the latter still had to live; before long the young king stood alone and fought his own battles.

Some idea of the unsafe condition of Italy during that time may be formed from the fact that, in 1516, Pope Leo the Tenth was very nearly carried off a prisoner by

Barbary pirates while spending a few days at Civita Lavinia, near Albano. The famous pirate Barbarossa, whom the Italian peasants still confound with the Emperor Frederick the First, was master of the seas and made raids upon the southern coast at his pleasure. Deserted villages, still standing in a maze of thorns and creepers, bear witness to his deeds, while the strong beacon towers built all round the coast, each in sight of the next, show what Charles the Fifth did to ward off such attacks. When he came to the throne, Italy was distracted by wars within and threatened by whole fleets of corsairs; the young Francis the First of France, mad with ambition and self-esteem, had inwardly resolved to take the south for himself, and Henry the Eighth of England was ready for any quarrel, with the Holy See, with France, or with the Empire, while his minister Wolsey laboured to keep the peace. There was room for a great king in such times, and Charles the Fifth won the battle of Mühlberg and reached the climax of his career after a reign of thirty-one years, in the very year in which Francis the First and Henry the Eighth breathed their last. He began life with a conception of his duties as emperor and his rights as king which belonged to the middle ages rather than to the Renaissance; he considered that, while the seat of the Empire was in Germany, the reason for its existence lay in Italy, and that, as the arbiter and defender of the Christian faith, he must hold the position and wield

the sceptre which had been Charlemagne's. The vastness of his possessions was a foundation upon which he had some right to build great hopes of such a universal monarchy. He was but twenty years of age when he was crowned emperor at Aix, and he chose for his motto the words 'Plus oultre,' which may be interpreted to mean that he began life with the intention of extending his dominions, his power, and his influence until the end. The principal adversary whom he found in his way was Francis the First, whose personal courage led him to believe that he could accomplish anything, while his unsuspecting vanity made him fancy that all men were his friends who were not his open enemies. Francis was sure of the support of Pope Leo the Tenth and of Henry the Eighth; the former, says the modern French historian, M. H. Gaillard, joined forces with the imperial army, united Parma and Piacenza with the States of the Church, and died of his joy over the achievement. Henry the Eighth lent Francis nothing but the offer of an arbitration, and in the following year allied himself with the emperor in an attack upon Picardy and Guyenne. To make matters worse, Charles, the Constable of Bourbon, betrayed Francis and treated with Henry the Eighth to divide France with the latter. The plot was betrayed to the king, but his position was already almost desperate, and, though he repulsed the English in Picardy, and their vanguard only eleven leagues from Paris, and although he repelled

the attack of the Spaniards in Navarre, he was obliged to retreat on the Italian side of his dominions with the loss of the incomparable Chevalier Bayard, and was unable to check the constable's career. The latter renewed and strengthened his relations with Henry the Eighth, and besieged Marseilles, whence he was driven with difficulty by the emperor's general, the Marquis of Pescara, the husband of the celebrated Vittoria Colonna ; but it was impossible to keep the imperial army together in the face of the hostile population, and Francis again penetrated into Italy to renew his efforts at conquest. Charles the Fifth, however, was not so easily beaten ; the remnants of his army took possession of Pavia and other strong places, while his captains reorganized their men. In the decisive and famous battle of Pavia the reckless young king was completely defeated and taken prisoner, and was carried away to a memorable captivity in Madrid, where Charles at first refused to see him, and shut him up in a dismal prison, in which there was but one window. The position hitherto occupied by France in European politics was gone, but the emperor had not yet won Italy. The French, in alliance with the Venetians under the command of Andrea Doria, commanded the Mediterranean, and the new pope, Clement the Seventh, taking the side of France, let loose upon Italy the 'Black Bands' of Giovanni de' Medici. But the emperor was always slow in his movements, and after his liberation from Madrid Francis was less ardent for fight. The situation,

which might have lasted a long time, was unexpectedly changed by the temerity of the constable. With no hope of a reconciliation with Francis, and well knowing that he could not expect a crown from Charles the Fifth, he resolved to carve out a kingdom for himself, allied himself with the Lutheran captain, Froudsberg, and after seizing Milan marched southwards upon Rome. He was killed in the assault upon the city, but his troops avenged his death in the fearful sack of Rome, of which the whole blame was afterwards laid upon Charles the Fifth. Roused at last, the emperor put forth all his strength. Before long the French were completely driven out of Italy, Charles the Fifth was crowned at Bologna by the Pope who had lately been his enemy, and the latter was rewarded by the reëstablishment of his kindred, the Medici, in Florence. The emperor now turned against the Turks in a war which was dignified by the name of a crusade, a Spanish army landed at Goletta, and Tunis opened its gates after a month's siege. Francis naturally took advantage of this war to renew his attack upon Italy, and easily took possession of Piedmont; furthermore, he announced his intention of conquering Flanders. By the treaty of Cambrai he had lost the suzerainty of the latter province, but he now had the assurance to summon 'Charles of Austria, his vassal,' to appear before him in Parliament, and on the emperor's non-appearance solemnly confiscated his territories for treason.

The conquest of Tunis had produced few results: Barbarossa and his pirate squadrons were still the terror of the Mediterranean, and Francis did not hesitate to ally himself with an infidel corsair in the hope of at last gaining some permanent advantage against the emperor. At the same time Francis had some success in Italy. Henry the Eighth, however, and the Protestant princes of Europe allied themselves with Charles against a fellow-sovereign who had called Moslems to his aid. Henry the Eighth besieged Boulogne and Montreuil, the emperor himself marched across France, and the end was a treaty which the French king might look upon as a reconciliation, but which finally established the supremacy of Charles. Henry had taken Boulogne, for which he demanded a large ransom; Francis was forced to sign a treaty, or reconciliation, with him also, and died soon afterwards, worn out by the fatigues, emotions, and disappointments of his unhappy career.

This, in a few words and so far as the possession of Italy is concerned, is the history of the memorable struggle between Charles the Fifth and Francis the First which contributed so large an element to the general disturbance of Europe at that time. Throughout it all, we see the great emperor, always calm and self-reliant, delaying rather than hesitating, and always examining his own policy beforehand with cool judgment, never surprised, never at a loss, never swerving



from his original conception of the Holy Roman Empire, moderate in victory, patient under defeat, and in almost every way the model that a strong sovereign should imitate. He found the south distracted by parties, riddled by conspiracies, and disturbed by popular revolutions. When he came to the throne Naples and Sicily were looked upon by more than one sovereign of Europe as a possible prey, to be fought for on the mere chance of a conquest. When he died they were the possessions of the house of Austria, and they remained so even when the succession to the crown of Spain became an object of contention on the failure of the direct line in 1700, and when thirty years later the Bourbons of Spain drove out their Austrian cousins. It is as impossible to imagine Sicily without Charles^{*} the Fifth, as it is to think of it without King Roger, and in the present condition of the country the monuments of the Austrian far outnumber those left by the Norman. From thousands of churches, castles, and palaces all over the country the huge stone shield that bears the quartered arms of Spain and Austria, with the imperial eagle, proclaims the lordship of Charles's successors; and there is perhaps not in all Sicily one church that is not the last resting-place of some great Spanish noble. From Charles's time the architecture of the south lost all its independence and originality, and the art of the Renaissance, after overspreading the nobler works of the

Norman and the Saracen, brought in its train the barbaric horrors of the late 'Barocco.' The exquisite church in which Peter of Aragon was elected by the Sicilian barons was lined with gaudy panels of coloured marbles, plastered with hideous scrolls, and adorned with obese cherubs that are not indecent only because they are impossible. The noble cathedral was degraded by the superimposition of an Italian dome, as inappropriate to its architecture as a Chinese pagoda upon Mount Sinai, and few other buildings of beauty escaped the triumphant and destroying march of corrupted taste. It is only in very recent times that some individuals have tried to reconstruct on a smaller scale the dwellings of the Saracen-Norman times, and the result is so pleasing as to make one wish that the Italians of the mainland would follow the example set by Sicilians, instead of constantly inventing new shapes of terror.

This same debasement of style in the south is witness, however, to the aggrandizement of Spain under Charles's successors. The Renascence was spontaneous in Florence and natural in Rome, but in the south it was imposed by force. Venice, Lombardy, Tuscany, and Rome never submitted so long to entirely foreign domination as Naples and Sicily did, and have therefore retained something distinctly individual in their art. It is unjust to say that the south submitted because it was weaker, morally and physically, than the

north ; the south was better worth winning and holding, and greater armies came against it, led by greater men, from Augustus to Roger the Great Count, and from Henry the Sixth to Gonzalvo de Cordova. While the north was divided into many small states, the south was held together in a single kingdom by the strong hands of Spanish kings, and the vastness of the Spanish domination made revolt seem impossible. Even when the south was separated from Spain, the Spanish Bourbons were its kings, and the people still felt that in some way they belonged to the greater kingdom of the West, while their rulers ruled them in the same old way, and while the court still derived its elaborate manners, its corrupt customs, and its execrable taste from the mouldering remnants of what Charles the Fifth had made.

It is all changed now, and the new influence is almost wholly commercial; but in Sicily the seed of a civilization has remained which may not be blasted by progress. There are men who are filled with a tender and discerning love for the beautiful that lies so near the surface, and their counsels are often followed; the frightful incrustations of Barocco ornament are being carefully removed from the Martorana, the noble Norman altar rail and fragments of mosaic have been unearthed from the cellars where they lay for centuries and have been carefully restored, and the original church once more appears in its true beauty. In the

Palazzo dei Tribunali, whence Blanche of Navarre escaped from Cabrera on that winter's night long ago, windows of matchless grace have been found and once more opened, the light of day again falls through long-hidden traceries of stone, and the grand carved ceilings, rich with all the heraldry of knightly times, have been again uncovered. No modern hand has rudely changed the outline of the Zisa palace, and the worst of the Spanish ornaments have been effaced in the great hall of the bath, where the water still fills the little tanks in the marble floor. Everywhere throughout Sicily the artistic feeling is conservative and good, while on the mainland things go from bad to worse; and it is only here and there, as at Ravello, the lovely Moorish castle above Amalfi, that an alien hand has arrested decay and warded off improvement. In the later development of things, the mainland has not yet lost its Spanish character; but Sicily's native strength is beginning to show itself again, and if there is a resurrection in store for Italian architecture and Italian art, I venture to say that it will begin in Palermo or some Sicilian city, and not in Florence, which has become a manufactory of pretty facsimiles, nor in Rome, where art is given over to foreigners and architecture to contractors; and if any such renewal of life is to come, I think it will proceed from Saracen or Norman beginnings, and not from anything left by Charles the Fifth and the Spanish kings.



Conclusion: The Mafia

THE world at large knows little of modern Sicily, but that little generally includes a word of recent origin which is closely associated with the island in the public mind, but to which no meaning is attached that is even approximately true. The word is 'Mafia.' There is another which belongs to Naples, 'Camorra,' and which is better understood because it is more easily explained, and because the thing it means is more direct in its results. Both words are of doubtful origin. Camorra means an association of persons, having for its object an illicit control of any lawful or unlawful trade, obtained by forcibly excluding other people from taking part in it. In the broad sense it means the vast organization of thieves, high and low, by which daily life in Naples is controlled, by which the city is swayed in political matters, and with the existence of which the Italian government is obliged to reckon. The social effects of the Camorra do not extend much beyond the limits of the city; politically, the whole province is affected by it. In private life, it means that all who have acted in such a way as to be considered members of the Camorra are quite safe from depredation, so that if anything is stolen from them by mistake it is at once returned; it means also that whoever is willing to help the Camorra in its ends will be helped by it. It has no regular organization, no place of meeting, no

elected officers; it is everywhere and it is nowhere; its members recognize each other by their conduct rather than by signs or words, and the commands of its chiefs are given verbally and transmitted in like manner. It might be described as a society for preserving a monopoly in stealing and illicit trades, were it not that many apparently respectable officials, men of business, and tradespeople protect it, or are under its protection. So far as it can be said to be organized at all, it manages itself by a sort of natural hierarchy and affiliation; the officers of each grade are self-created, and depend on force of character for the power they exercise. It might be called a system of bullying, in which every ringleader who can impose himself upon his companions is in turn forcibly controlled by one of higher standing than himself, who again is subject to others, and so on, from the street boy who gets a living by selling the stumps of cigars, to the high official and perhaps to the member of Parliament. The real end and object of the Camorra is, I think, always profit, gained by any means, good or bad. It constrains all pickpockets, thieves, and burglars in the city to render an account of their robberies to their superiors, on pain of being at once handed over to justice; and there is no city in the world in which it is so easy to recover stolen goods, provided that application be made in the right quarter. A part of its regular practice consists of robbing all for-

eigners, both directly, when possible, and indirectly by extortion.

The Mafia differs from the Camorra in almost every respect, and whereas the latter is based on criminal practices, the former has its foundation in lawless principles. In attempting to give some account of the power which dominates a great part of Sicily at the present time, I shall follow the interesting work of Signor Antonio Cutrera, chief of police in Palermo, published in the present year 1900, and which may be taken as a thoroughly truthful account of the present state of things by one who has spent years in a hand-to-hand fight with the evil.

Setting aside the possible ancient origin of the Mafia, its present development seems due to the great corruption which existed under the Bourbons, and especially in the police of that time, the consequence of which was a general tendency on the part of Sicilians to do justice for themselves. One of the principal functions of the Mafia is, indeed, to decide differences and dispense justice without appealing or submitting to the decision of a tribunal; and this is clearly the result of a condition of things in which such an appeal was either useless or too expensive for persons of ordinary means.

Another principal element is the Sicilian character itself, which is bold, but extremely reticent, and is deeply imbued with a peculiar sense of honour for which the

Sicilian language has a term of its own in the word 'Omertà.' According to this code, a man who appeals

to the law against his fellow-man is not only a fool but a coward, and he who cannot take care of himself without the protection of the police is both. Evidently a profound contempt for the law is at the root of this principle, and the law is of course represented in the eyes of the people by the police and the tribunals. It is, therefore, logical that every Sicilian should do his utmost to hamper and impede the actions of both, and it is reckoned as cowardly to betray an offender to justice, even though the offence be against oneself, as it would be



CLOISTER OF THE MOORISH CASTLE
AT RAVELLO, NEAR AMALFI

not to avenge an injury by violence. It is regarded as dastardly and contemptible in a wounded man to betray the name of his assailant, because if he recovers he must naturally expect to take vengeance himself. A rhymed Sicilian proverb sums up this principle, the supposed speaker being one who has been stabbed. ‘If I live, I will kill thee,’ it says; ‘if I die, I forgive thee.’

The obligation to conceal the name of the assassin or other offender extends to all those who chance to be witnesses of the crime, and it is even considered to be their duty to hide the criminal from the police if he is pursued. The code requires an innocent man to go to penal servitude for another rather than betray the culprit, and Signor Cutrera, who should know, if any one does, states that cases are not rare in which Sicilians, though innocent, have undergone long terms of imprisonment and have even died in prison, rather than give information to the police. The Mafia would brand with ‘infamy’ a man who should do otherwise, and this principle makes it almost impossible to bring into court witnesses for the conviction of a Mafioso. With regard to the injured person, the obligation of silence is the same, although the possibility of vengeance may be infinitely removed. As has been said, the derivation of the word Mafia is unknown. The word itself, in the Sicilian dialect, means the ideally perfect, and a beautiful girl, for instance, would be called ‘Mafiusa,’ simply

on account of her looks. The word is even applied by hawkers to their wares. It was first used in its present sense by the author of a famous play, 'I Mafiusi di la Vicaria,' which was produced in 1863 and ran many nights, and which has been translated from Sicilian into Italian and has been given all over Italy. From that time the word was adopted into the Italian language to designate an uncertain combination of brigandage, 'Camorra,' and general criminality. It is not the first time that a book or a play has given a name to something which had none, and which is ill defined by it. In Sicily the word now means a condition produced by two factors only, a long reign of violence on the one hand, and that mistaken sense of honour on the other, which has been already explained.

We next come to the consideration of the results produced by this state of things, and these of course vary according to the class to which the delinquents belong, from the lowest upwards. Signor Cutrera correctly describes the appearance of a low Mafioso of Palermo. He wears his hat upon the left side, his hair smoothed with plentiful pomatum and one lock brushed down upon his forehead, he walks with a swinging motion of the hips, a cigar in his mouth, a heavy knotted stick in his hand, and he is frequently armed with a long knife or a revolver. He stares disdainfully at every man he meets with the air of challenging each comer to speak to him if he dare. To any one who knows

Palermo, this type of the lower class is familiar. He is the common 'Ricottaro,' a word which I will not translate, but which broadly indicates that the young man derives his means of support from some unfortunate woman who is in his power. It is a deplorable fact that the same mode of existence is followed by young men of the middle classes, whose plentiful leisure hours are spent in play, and who have constituted themselves the official 'claque' of the theatres, imposing themselves upon the managers as a compact body. Moreover, during elections, they can be of the utmost assistance to candidates, owing to their perfect solidarity. With the most atrocious vices, they possess the hereditary courage of the Sicilian, and will face steel or bullets with the coolness of trained soldiers; and though they will insult and even beat their women when in the humour, they will draw the knife for the least disparaging word spoken against what they regard as their property. The writer I am following observes that a considerable number of these young men end in the dissecting room or in prison, but that others mend their ways when they are thirty years of age and turn into a higher species of their kind, which may be called the real Mafusi.

The Mafia divides itself everywhere and naturally into two parts, the one existing in Palermo and the large cities, and the other without the walls and through the open country.

The full-blown Mafiuso in the city differs from the common Ricottaro in that he works secretly and by means of moral pressure, whereas the Ricottaro boldly kills his enemy or is killed by him, without the least attempt at concealment. Statistics show that in the city of Palermo, from 1893 to 1899, both inclusive, there have been eighteen murders, twenty-eight attempts at murder, and eighty-nine stabbings, all the work of the Ricottari.

A man's position in the proper Mafia is the result of his personal influence, which derives in the first place from his reputation as a man of so-called honour, and which is afterwards increased to any extent by force of circumstances, until he becomes a 'Capo-mafia,' and one of the acknowledged chiefs. His prestige is then such that his fellow-citizens appeal to him to settle their differences, both in matters of business and interest and in questions of 'honour'; his house becomes the resort of all those who have difficulties to decide or who need the help of the 'friends,' as the Mafiusi commonly call each other. Nor are the Mafiusi the only persons who invoke the help of the Capo-mafia; strangers and even foreigners appeal to him, and as his prestige is increased in proportion to the gratitude he earns, he will take the greatest possible trouble to oblige any one who comes to him for advice or assistance; and while the Mafia, as a whole, blocks the way for the law at every step, it makes itself indispensable to those who

need redress and despair of getting it by legal process. We cannot call the means used by the Mafia lawful nor moral, but the scrupulous exactness with which a Capo-mafia keeps his word, and the general fairness with which he decides the cases that come before him, though he have not the smallest right to decide them, inspires great confidence in his clients and creates the sort of moral despotism on which the Mafia depends for its existence. Furthermore, the Capo-mafia may be a lawyer, and a member of the municipal or even of the provincial council, or a deputy, or a cabinet minister, rising to the moral control of the whole society simply by his prestige and predominant will, but never by any sort of election or machinery, since the Mafia has none. Long before that he has become a rich man, because it would be practically impossible to make a contract for any public work, or to carry it out, without his intervention. Thus the vast system of patronage narrows naturally to a few chief patrons, who are of course intimately associated and who sometimes obey one head. The Mafia disposes of men of all conditions and all professions, and they are bound to it by no promises of secrecy nor oaths of obedience, but by interest and necessity on the one hand, and the strong Sicilian sense of 'honour' on the other; they are protected by it, for it can annihilate its isolated enemies, and even in criminal cases it is almost impossible to convict a Mafioso, in the total absence of witnesses against him, so that a

wise judge will generally adjourn such a case until he can find some excuse for sending it to be tried in a court on the mainland.



OLD HOUSES AT PIZZO, CALABRIA, WHERE MURAT, KING OF NAPLES,
WAS EXECUTED IN 1815

The Mafia acknowledges no allegiance to any political party, but when it nominates a candidate his election is generally a foregone conclusion, and the successful contestant is greeted by a popular ovation.

It is hard to see how a constitutional government could successfully oppose such a system. Thoughtful persons will see what Signor Cutrera has not seen, namely, that it is a complete and highly efficient form of self-government, which exists, and will continue to exist, in defiance of the constitutional monarchy under which it is supposed to live. An ancient tyrant would have destroyed it by the brutal process of massacring half the population and transplanting the rest to the mainland, but no civilized method of producing the same result seems to have occurred to statesmen. The Bourbons employed the Mafia to keep order, the present government tolerates it because it cannot be crushed; when the Mafia joined Garibaldi, the Bourbons fell, and it remains to be seen what will happen in the south when the Mafia turns against the monarchy it has called in. It is to be hoped that such a catastrophe is far removed from present possibility, and it is at least a somewhat reassuring fact that the Mafia is the very reverse of anarchic, or even socialistic; it is, indeed, one of the most highly conservative systems in the world.

Its tyranny is more outwardly visible in the country, and particularly in the rich lands that surround Palermo, than in Palermo itself, or in the other cities most infected by it. One reason of this is the great development in the cultivation of oranges and lemons during this century. The crops are relatively very

valuable, and are especially tempting to thieves because immediately marketable and easily carried off; the lands are cut up into innumerable small holdings, and, without patrolling every orange grove with soldiers, which is impossible, the authorities could not possibly prevent the depredations of the fruit-stealers. The Mafia affords all who appeal to it the most thorough protection, and its despotism over the orange-growing regions is absolute; for, in return for such great advantages, landholders, whether owners or tenants, are only too glad to serve it at need and to abstain from all recourse to law.

In the first place, every landholder is obliged to maintain a 'guardiano' or watchman, in addition to the men he employs upon his land. There are, therefore, several thousands of these watchmen in the orange groves of the Golden Shell alone, and they are without exception Mafiusi, since they have the monopoly of their business and can altogether prevent the employment of strangers in their occupation. The landholder who attempts to oppose the monopoly will lose his whole crop in a night, and, if he persists, his life is not worth a year's purchase. Among the watchmen and their employers, who are often bound to them by the strongest ties of friendship as well as of interest, there are always some whose influence controls the rest, men who have killed their man in a question of 'honour' and who have shown themselves on many

occasions to be thorough Mafiusi. They therefore become the Capi-mafia of the district, and they are always in communication with the Capi-mafia of the city, and thereby affiliated to the great system of patronage. All differences which the Capo-mafia in the country is not competent to decide are thus referred to the patron in the city, from whose decision there is no appeal. Any one, whether a Mafioso or not, who refuses to obey that verdict, is killed without mercy and generally without delay, unless he can escape from the country in time. The shot is fired from behind a wall, or in a shady grove at dusk, and in the total absence of witnesses the most scrupulous inquiry very rarely even leads to an arrest, and never to a conviction. It is not a fight, but an execution, approved by all the thousands of landholders and their watchmen, who manage their affairs and govern themselves in this way. It may be that the Capo-mafia's decision was perfectly fair; in any case the man knew what he risked in disobeying it, and his friends are not surprised at his death, nor do they seek to avenge it.

On the rare occasions when a Mafioso is arrested, his friends and relatives appeal to their Capo-mafia in Palermo, and he at once institutes a most scrupulous inquiry into the man's antecedents. If it is found that the prisoner has throughout his life strictly obeyed the principles and the commands of the society, its vast machinery is instantly set in motion to secure his

release or acquittal, money is spent unsparingly, though the accused be penniless, scores and sometimes hundreds of witnesses are suborned, the most eminent lawyers are secured for the defence, and the strongest arguments appear in the man's favour in the most accredited newspapers. The man is of course proved innocent, and the verdict is received with a chorus of popular approbation. If, on the other hand, the inquiry shows that the man has once failed in his duties as a Mafioso, the Capo-mafia refuses all help, not a witness will dare to appear in his favour, and he is dealt with by the law without opposition. A stranger might think that the law has triumphed in such a case, but it has not; it has executed a verdict already given by the Mafia.

The Mafia in the country is more completely organized than that of the city, which is natural where a large body of men are employed in the same business, as watchmen of the fruit crops. The country Capo-mafia has the privilege of disposing of all the watchmen's places in his district, the landholders or tenants pay him for his patronage, they accept the watchmen he gives them, and the terror of his name is a sufficient surety of the safety of their oranges. If they were robbed, his reputation would be endangered; if some inexperienced thief is foolish enough to attempt it, he is certain to be caught and severely beaten.

It is the business of the country Capo-mafia to make

demands upon rich landholders for sums of money, when funds are needed by the Mafiusi of his district, and here lies the connecting link between the more or less innocuous Mafia and the brigandage which is the curse of Sicily. A Mafioso, great or small, pays at



CASTLE AT PIZZO, WITH THE WINDOW OF MURAT'S PRISON

once what is demanded of him for the common good ; but there are many large landholders in the country who believe themselves strong enough to be independent of the Mafia, protecting their crops from thieves with a small force of armed men, and maintaining constant relations with the government's force of carbineers.

Two hundred and nineteen letters demanding money have fallen into the hands of the police of Palermo within seven years. Signor Cutrera publishes some of these in his valuable work. Several are dated, and most of them begin 'Dear Sir,' or 'Dear Friend,' while they all conclude by threatening the life of the person addressed, and often the lives of all his family. The place to which the money, sometimes as much as ten thousand francs, is to be taken is always indicated with extreme clearness, and in several cases, the name of the person who is to bring it is given, and that person is generally some one in the victim's employment.

These instances, made public with a great quantity of corroboratory evidence by a chief officer of the Sicilian police, should be enough to explain the nature of the despotism exercised by the Mafia. From threatening letters to highway robbery there is but a step. Upon the road that leads from Palermo to Misilmeri there is a hamlet called Portella di Mare, which is famous for the number of attacks made upon travellers. In the whole province of Palermo the statistics show that there were one thousand and ninety-two highway robberies between the years 1893 and 1899 inclusive. When it is considered that no country in the world is so thoroughly patrolled by an efficient and courageous police, such figures show the magnitude of the difficulty with which the authorities have



to contend. A further consideration of the subject would lead too far, but with regard to brigandage in Sicily it should be distinctly understood that it does not form a part of the system called the Mafia, but is often closely connected with it by the bond of common interest. The principal reason why brigandage continues to exist is that the outlaws make themselves useful to certain great landholders, who, in return, protect the malefactors from the police. It may even be known that a whole band — supposing it to be travelling together, which rarely happens — may be concealed in the house of a rich man, and that the police may be cognizant of the fact. In order to search the house, the commander of the detachment must produce a judicial warrant authorizing him to do so. The little squad of carbineers and soldiers of the line have very probably tracked the bandits for several days through a wild and dangerous country, not having the slightest idea where they might next take refuge. It would be manifestly impossible to issue a general warrant authorizing the police to search any house in the country, for this would be regarded as an act of tyranny, and the Mafia would probably retort by bringing on a general revolution throughout the island. If the officer commanding the pursuing party sends back to his chief, therefore, for the necessary authority, the bandits, well informed of their pursuers' movements, have plenty of time to escape to another hiding-

place; and if the officer at last receives the warrant, uses it, and finds no brigands in the house, the proprietor makes complaint to the heads of the Mafia, who have innumerable weapons at their command with which to make the action of the police publicly ridiculous. But if the officer, being quite sure that the brigands are in the house, takes upon himself the responsibility of searching it without a warrant, and if, as will very probably happen, the whole band escapes through a subterranean passage, such as may be found in many Sicilian houses, he is liable to an action at law, in the course of which the Mafia will spend hundreds of thousands of francs and put out its whole strength to destroy him. If by any possibility he escapes being dismissed from the service for having overstepped his authority, his only chance of life is to leave the island secretly and at once. As for a proprietor who refuses to receive the brigands or to offer them the best he has so long as they are pleased to prolong their visit, neither his property nor his life will ever be safe from that day. His crops will be burned, his orange and lemon trees hacked to pieces, his vines torn up by the roots; and if he is the possessor of great herds of cattle or flocks of sheep, the professional cattle lifters who abound in Sicily will mark him for their prey, knowing that neither the Mafia nor any band of outlaws will raise a finger to protect him. By twos and threes his cows

and his oxen will disappear; with a skill that would do honour to Texas the brands on the animals will



THE PLACE WHERE MURAT WAS SHOT IN THE CASTLE AT PIZZO

be converted into new and different ones, and before long the stolen property will be sold at a cattle fair a hundred miles away. If at the end of a year the

unhappy victim is alive, he is wholly ruined, but it is far more probable that a bullet will have ended his troubles long before that time. To bring about such dire results, it is not even necessary that he should have shut his doors against the outlaws; he may receive them, entertain them, and thank them for the honour of their visit, as is customary in such cases, but if he should afterwards give the least clew to their movements, he is a doomed man as surely as if he had refused to receive them. I repeat that bandits are not necessarily Mafiusi, but in the great majority of cases they have been 'friends' before taking to the woods; and though the higher Mafia may disapprove of their proceedings, it is rarely unwilling to make exhibition of its vast power and of its contempt of the law by affording them its protection. The Mafiusi may occasionally quarrel among themselves and blood may be shed in encounters that are regarded as honourable, for it is only a man condemned by the society who is murdered without a chance for his life; the society will never interfere in the settlement of questions of so-called honour, whereas it acts as a tribunal for all disagreements which would be settled by law in a civilized country. But, owing to the strong peculiarities of the Sicilian character, violent disputes between the 'friends' are extremely rare, and the solidarity of the whole society might be an example to associations formed with a

better object. It would be unjust to Italy to leave such a subject without making two important statements. In the first place, it is quite wrong to suppose that foreigners visiting Sicily and having no interests in the island are exposed to any danger from the Mafia or from any organized band of brigands, and with ordinary precautions, if the traveller is willing to avoid a few dangerous localities, he will not be more exposed to the attacks of common thieves than in many other countries. He may go with safety where a Sicilian nobleman or a landholder hostile to the illicit powers would need the protection of a dozen mounted carbineers, and this well-known fact has been proved true in hundreds of cases. Foreigners who have been taken by brigands in Sicily and held for ransom have invariably possessed some vested interest in the country. This may be accepted as positively certain.

Secondly, as I have already said, the Camorra of Naples does not extend beyond the suburbs of the city. The southern mainland from Naples to the straits is one of the safest tracts of country in the world ; it has produced no society even faintly approaching the Mafia, brigandage has been totally stamped out by the Italian government, and the entire absence of travellers who might be robbed is a sufficient reason why the evil should not break out again. The southern mountains are wild and desolate beyond description, the southern plains are lonely and thinly populated, the poverty of

the lower classes everywhere is painful to see ; but the country is safe from end to end, and the student, the artist, or the idler may traverse it in all directions, alone or in company, on foot or on horseback, without incurring the slightest risk. It is due to the honourable and untiring efforts of the present government to state this very clearly, and if the power which has accomplished so much on the mainland is unable to make headway against the Mafia in Sicily, the reason is that the Mafia is not an organized and tangible body which could be called to account for its actions, but is the inevitable result of many combined circumstances, involving national character, national traditions, and certain especial conditions of agriculture and wealth, none of which exist together anywhere else in the world.

* * * * *

My task is ended. If the curiosity of my readers is unsatisfied, let them visit the south and seek out for themselves those things which they desire to know ; if they are disappointed with the story of twenty centuries, as I have told it, let them look into the fathomless archives of southern history and read in half a dozen languages and dialects the thousand tales which I have left untold. In either case, I shall not have laboured in vain. If any, after reading this book, are tempted to wander through some of the most beautiful and memorable places in the world, or if any, desiring more knowledge, are impelled to pursue the study of classic

history or the romantic chronicles of Norman times, I am more than repaid for having attempted what is perhaps impossible.

THE END



CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

VOLUME II

A.D.

- 451 The Synod of Chalcedon confirms the action of the Synod of Constantinople (381), which gave the Bishop of Rome precedence over all others.
- 472 Ricimer the Goth, who had captured Rome, dies.
- 475 Romulus Augustulus created Emperor of the West.
- 476 Romulus Augustulus deposed by Odoacer, the Goth.
- 488 Theodoric the Ostrogoth invades Italy.
- 489 Theodoric overcomes Odoacer in battle at Verona.
- 493 Theodoric murders Odoacer and proclaims himself King of Italy.
- 500 (about) . A basilica dedicated to Saint Michael the Archangel, at Monte Gargano, in Manfredonia.
- 526 Theodoric puts Boethius and Symmachus to death.
- 526 Theodoric succeeded by his daughter Amalasuntha.
- 527 Justinian becomes Emperor of the East.
- 535 Amalasuntha assassinated, and Justinian sends Belisarius to avenge her death.
- 535 Belisarius takes Palermo and Naples. Sicily becomes part of the Eastern Empire.
- 536 Rome besieged by the Goths, who are forced to retire by Belisarius.

A.D.		
540	.	Belisarius leaves Italy.
540 (about)	.	Gregory the Great born.
544	.	Totila the Goth besieges and takes Naples.
546	.	Totila besieges and takes Rome, but evacuates it, and it is reoccupied by Belisarius.
549	.	Totila takes Reggio, crosses the straits, and ravages Sicily.
549	.	Belisarius returns to Constantinople, and Totila again seizes Rome.
552	.	Narses defeats the Goths in battle, and Totila is slain.
553	.	Narses expels the Goths, and Italy is again part of the Eastern Empire.
568	.	Italy first invaded by the Lombards.
570	.	Mohammed born.
590	.	Autharis, the Lombard, dies at Ticinum.
590	.	Gregory the Great becomes Pope.
610 (about)	.	Mohammed begins to propagate his doctrines.
622	.	The Hejira, or flight of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina.
652	.	The Mohammedans raid and despoil Sicily.
668	.	The Emperor Constans murdered in his bath at Syracuse by a slave.
717	.	The Emperor Leo the Isaurian decrees the removal of all images from churches.
766	.	Antiochus, governor of Sicily, martyred at Constantinople for refusing to obey the decree against images.
772	.	Jacob, Bishop of Catania, suffers martyrdom for the same cause.
787	.	The Empress Irene revokes Leo's decree against images.
826	.	The troops in Sicily rise against the Emperor Michael Balbus.

A.D.

- 827 . . . Sicily invaded by a Saracen army.
- 829 . . . Mineo and Mazzara taken by the Saracens.
- 831 . . . Messina taken by the Saracens.
- 832 . . . Palermo taken by the Saracens after a disastrous siege.
- 842 . . . Sicily ravaged by a plague of locusts.
- 842 . . . Italy invaded by the Saracens, who settle at Bari.
- 845 . . . The fortresses of Modica taken by the Saracens.
- 845 . . . A Saracen fleet defeated by the united forces of Amalfi, Gaeta, and Sorrento, led by Duke Sergius of Naples.
- 846 . . . Nine thousand Greeks slain by the Saracens before Castrogiovanni.
- 847 . . . Leontini taken by the Saracens.
- 848 . . . Ragusa taken by the Saracens.
- 848 . . . Sicily suffers from a great famine.
- 849 . . . A Mohammedan army attacks Rome and is defeated by Pope Leo IV.
- 854 . . . Butera besieged by the Saracens.
- 858 . . . Aghlab, first Mohammedan governor of Sicily, dies at Palermo.
- 859 . . . The Emir Abas, second Mohammedan governor of Sicily, overruns the country, and takes Castrogiovanni.
- 863 (about) . A quarrel between the Bishop of Syracuse and the Patriarch of Constantinople leads to the Schism of the East and West, which divides the Greek and Catholic churches.
- 870 . . . Malta taken by the Saracens.
- 872 . . . The Saracens attempt to take Salerno, but are defeated.
- 878 . . . Syracuse taken and laid waste by the Saracens.

Chronological Table

A.D.	
952 (about)	Ibn Haukal, an Arab traveller and writer, visits Palermo.
995 (about)	Forty Norman pilgrims rout a Saracen host outside Salerno, and on their return invite other Norman nobles to occupy Italy.
1019	The Normans, led by Raoul de Toëni, and the Lombards, under Meles, are outnumbered and defeated by the Byzantines, on Hannibal's battlefield of Cannæ.
1030	Rainulf builds and fortifies Aversa, near Naples, the first Norman city in Italy.
1034	Civil war in Italy, and the Saracens ask the Greeks to intervene.
1038	An army of Greek mercenaries, and a small band of Normans, cross the straits, and defeat the Saracens at Messina.
1039	Guaimar, Greek Duke of Salerno, takes possession of Amalfi, and afterwards of Sorrento.
1041	The Normans defeat the Greeks in three pitched battles, in spite of heavy odds.
1042	Maniaces, the Greek General, is unable to make his soldiers face the Normans.
1043	Quarrel about the lands of Monte Cassino, between Pandolph the Wolf, Guaimar of Salerno, and Rainulf of Aversa.
1046	Apulia revolts against Constantinople.
1046	The Emperor Henry III. makes Clement II. Pope.
1047	The Emperor and the Pope attempt to pacify and organize Southern Italy, without success.
1052	Guaimar, Duke of Salerno, murdered by men of Amalfi.
1053	Pope Leo IX. dies, and the division between the Eastern and Western Churches becomes permanent.

A.D.	
1053	The Normans, led by Humphrey of Apulia, Richard of Aversa, and Robert Guiscard, defeat the Germans and Lombards in battle near Monte Gargano.
1057	Robert Guiscard succeeds his brother Humphrey as Count of Apulia.
1058	Pope Nicholas II. visits Apulia, and returns to Rome at the head of a Norman army.
1060	The Norman Count Roger, afterwards known as "the Great Count," with sixty knights, raids Sicily from Reggio.
1061	Count Roger, with four hundred and forty knights, captures Messina.
1061	Count Roger marries Judith, daughter of William of Evreux, at Mileto.
1062	Count Roger and his wife besieged by the Saracens at Troina.
1064	Count Roger and Robert Guiscard make a futile attempt to take Palermo.
1068	Count Roger wins a decisive battle over the Saracens at Misilmeri, near Palermo.
1068	Robert Guiscard puts down an insurrection of the Greeks in Apulia.
1071	Robert Guiscard takes Bari, after a long siege.
1072	Robert Guiscard and Count Roger besiege and take Palermo.
1073	Robert Guiscard is desperately ill, but recovers.
1083	Robert Guiscard takes an army as far as Rome, burns half the city, and routs the Emperor Henry IV.
1084	Robert Guiscard dies at Durazzo.
1085	Calabria invaded by the Arab Ben Arwet.
1086	Count Roger defeats and kills Ben Arwet at Syracuse.

A.D.

- 1089 . . . Judith, wife of Count Roger, dies.
- 1091 . . . Noto capitulates, which completes the Norman conquest of Sicily.
- 1091 . . . Count Roger takes Malta.
- 1094 . . . Count Roger helps his nephew, Roger, to repress the rebellion of Grantmesnil, in Castrovillari.
- 1101 . . . Roger the Great Count dies at Mileto.
- 1127 . . . Roger of Sicily, son of the Great Count, takes possession of Apulia.
- 1130 . . . Roger crowned King of Sicily at Palermo.
- 1139 . . . King Roger takes Pope Innocent II. prisoner at San Germano, and obtains investiture of Sicily, Apulia, and Capua.
- 1149 . . . King Roger rescues and entertains Lewis VII. of France, on his way home from the Second Crusade.
- 1154 . . . King Roger succeeded by his second son, William the Bad.
- 1166 . . . William the Bad succeeded by his son William II., the Good.
- 1189 . . . William the Good succeeded by Tancred, a natural son of William the Bad's elder brother.
- 1194 . . . Tancred dies, leaving his crown to his young son, William III.
- 1194 . . . William III. deposed by the Emperor Henry VI. of Hohenstaufen, who claims the crown through his wife Constance, daughter of King Roger.
- 1194 . . . The Emperor Frederick II., son of Henry and Constance, born at Palermo.
- 1197 . . . Henry VI. dies at Castrogiovanni, and his widow crowns her son Frederick King of Sicily.
- 1197 . . . Queen Constance dies, leaving the Pope guardian of her son.

A.D.

- 1208 Frederick II. declared of age, and married to Constance of Aragon.
- 1212 Frederick goes to Germany to claim his Empire.
- 1220 Frederick is crowned in Rome, and returns to Sicily.
- 1239 Frederick establishes his Mohammedan colonists in Apulia, in the town called from them Lucera de' Saraceni.
- 1250 Frederick dies at Castel Fiorentino, in Apulia, and is succeeded by his second son Conrad.
- 1253 Pope Innocent IV. names Charles of Anjou King of Sicily, Duke of Apulia, and Prince of Capua.
- 1254 Conrad succeeded by his son Conradin, two years old, whose guardian is his half-uncle, Manfred, a natural son of Frederick II.
- 1258 Manfred takes the crown of Sicily, promising to leave it to his nephew at his death.
- 1263 Charles of Anjou authorized by Pope Urban IV. to begin the conquest of the south.
- 1266 Manfred slain at the battle of Benevento, and Charles of Anjou created King of Naples and Sicily by Pope Clement IV.
- 1268 Conradin loses the battle of Tagliacozzo, and is betrayed and sold to Charles.
- 1268 Conradin beheaded at Naples.
- 1282 Massacre of the French by the Italians, known as the Sicilian Vespers, takes place at Palermo on Easter Monday.
- 1282 King Peter of Aragon, husband of Constance the daughter of Manfred, summoned by the nobles, drives out Charles of Anjou, and becomes King of Sicily.
- 1285 Peter III. of Aragon and I. of Sicily leaves the latter kingdom to his second son James the Just.

Chronological Table

A.D.	
1285	Charles of Anjou succeeded in his Kingdom of Naples by his son Charles II.
1291	James I., the Just, succeeds to the throne of Aragon as James II., leaving that of Sicily to his brother Frederick II.
1296	Frederick II. elected king by the Sicilian Parliament after an interregnum of four years.
1309	Charles II. of Naples succeeded in that kingdom by his third son, Robert the Wise.
1337	Frederick II. of Sicily succeeded by his son Peter II., who is crowned during his father's lifetime.
1342	Peter II. dies without male issue, and the crown of Sicily goes to Lewis, son of Peter IV. of Aragon.
1343	Robert the Wise succeeded on the throne of Naples by his granddaughter, Joan I., sixteen years old, married to her cousin Andrew, brother of the King of Hungary.
1345	Andrew, consort of Queen Joan, murdered at Aversa with her connivance.
1349	The great basilica at Monte Cassino destroyed by an earthquake.
1355	Lewis of Sicily succeeded by his younger brother, Frederick III.
1377	Frederick III. of Sicily succeeded by his daughter Mary, and her husband, Martin of Aragon.
1381	Charles III. of Durazzo enters Naples, takes the crown, and imprisons his cousin Joan I. at Muro.
1382	Joan I. murdered at Muro.
1386	Charles III. of Durazzo succeeded on the throne of Naples by his son Ladislaus.
1402	Mary I., Queen of Sicily, succeeded by her husband, Martin I.

A.D.	
1409	Martin I. of Sicily dies without issue, succeeded by his father, Martin II. of Sicily and I. of Aragon, which reunites the two kingdoms.
1409	Martin II. dies, and Blanche of Navarre, widow of Martin I., is vicar and lieutenant of Sicily, there being seven claimants to the throne.
1410	Bernardo Cabrera, Count of Modica, attempts to marry Blanche and seize the crown of Sicily.
1412	Ferdinand the Just crowned King of Sicily and Aragon, succeeding his uncle, Martin II. of Sicily and I. of Aragon.
1414	Ladislaus of Naples succeeded by his sister Joanna II.
1416	Saint Francis of Paola born at Paola, in Calabria.
1416	Alfonso V., the Magnanimous, succeeds his father, Ferdinand the Just, as King of Sicily and Aragon.
1435	Joanna II. of Naples, last of the Durazzo line, appoints as her successor by her will Réné of Anjou, Duke of Lorraine.
1442	Réné of Anjou, "the Good King Réné," expelled from Naples by Alfonso the Magnanimous, who claims the throne through the female line, and unites the kingdoms of Naples, Sicily, and Aragon.
1453	The Sultan Mohammed II. storms Constantinople.
1458	Alfonso I., the Magnanimous, bequeaths Naples to his son Ferdinand, and Sicily to his younger brother John.
1479	John II. of Sicily, Aragon, and Navarre succeeded by his son Ferdinand II. of Sicily and V. of Aragon, "The Catholic."

A.D.		
1493 . . .	Ferdinand I. of Naples succeeded by his eldest son, Alfonso II., Duke of Calabria.	
1495 . . .	Alfonso II. abdicates in favour of his eldest son, Ferdinand II.	
1496 . . .	King Charles VIII. of France takes Naples.	
1496 . . .	Ferdinand II. succeeded by his uncle, Frederick IV.	
1500 . . .	By the Treaty of Granada, Ferdinand the Catholic, of Sicily and Spain, and Lewis XII. of France, agree to divide the kingdom of Naples between them.	
1503 . . .	Tournament between French and Italian knights, known as the "Sfida di Barletta."	
1504 . . .	Frederick IV. dies of grief, and Ferdinand the Catholic becomes King of Naples and Sicily.	
1515 . . .	Joan III., daughter of Ferdinand the Catholic and Isabella his wife, succeeds her father.	
1516 . . .	Pope Leo X. almost captured by Barbary pirates.	
1516 . . .	Joan III. abdicates in favour of her son Charles IV., afterwards the Emperor Charles V.	
1519 . . .	Charles V. elected to the empire of Germany, for which Francis I. is also a candidate.	
1524 . . .	Battle of Sesia, between the French and Italians, at which the Chevalier Bayard is slain.	
1525 . . .	Charles V. defeats and captures Francis I. of France at the battle of Pavia.	
1529 . . .	Treaty of peace at Cambrai, by which Francis I. abandons his claim to Italy.	

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