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THE
PRINCES OF ACHAIA
AND
THE CHRONICLES OF MOREA
A
STUDY OF GREECE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

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PREFACE

"I shall not pursue the obscure and various dynasties that rose and fell on the continent or in the isles."

—GIBBON, *Decline and Fall*

MANY years ago, while residing for upwards of two years at our legation in Greece, having had occasion to visit nearly the whole of that delightful land in which the majority of travellers devote their time to archaeological studies, I was impressed by the evidence of a phase of secondary interest, afforded by the large number of well-preserved medieval strongholds, which dominate sites once famous and now forlorn, and crown at every point of vantage the spurs of historic mountains. Always since school and college days somewhat of a frondeur from the prescribed curriculum, I was there deeply concerned to know what manner of men devised these frowning keeps, lived, loved, and died through some forgotten age in castles nested among folds of the Messenian hills, on the great Laconian ridge or in the wild Arcadian highlands, more appropriately associated with the pastoral gods than with the symbols of feudal government. Who were these Franks, whose watch-towers linked valley to valley, and whose name recurs so unexpectedly, attached to the spring from which the wayfarer drinks, or the little stone bridge arching the stream which he crosses?

That Greece, the Morea not less than northern and central Greece, had at a certain epoch fallen under the rule of western invaders classified in the large generalisation of the east as Franks, and that Venice had extended her outposts round these coasts and set the lion of St. Mark as her seal over the gates of many Levantine havens, I did indeed know, but little more than this, and nothing at all as to the origin or kindred of these Frankish intruders on classic soil. The brief sentence quoted above, in which Gibbon disposes of the fate of Hellas for a period of more than two hundred years, only tantalised my unrewarded curiosity. Finlay, indeed, was more satisfying, and in the light of his brief exposition of the brilliant story of the Dukes of Athens and the Princes of Achaia, I was enabled to some extent to repeople my mountain castles with their proper tenants and to realise a new world of dramatic personages on a stage over which the curtain seemed hitherto to have descended with the Roman conquest of Greece. But there was more to know. The petty barons whose feuds and ambitions Finlay deliberately passes by had become objects of particular interest, not the less because their cavalcades had clattered. down the very path by which Pheidippides had run, or made their highway between the east and west across the sacred precincts of the forgotten Olympia. The men who had established little dynasties in all the isles through which I sailed had the fascination of the intangible, which they shared with that warden of the northern marches whose sentries at Bodonitza overlooked the pass of Thermopylae.

The chronicle of the Morea, of which the French text—*Buchon's Livre de la conquête*

de la Morée—first came into my hands, was a memorable discovery and a delightful companion of my travels. As the secrets of medieval Greece began to reveal themselves, I collected, not without considerable difficulty, nearly all the available sources of information on the subject, and, as nothing adequate appeared to have been written in English on this epoch, I conceived the large ambition of weaving the story of the lesser dynasts of Athens, Achaia, Epirus, and Thessaly, as well as of the many lords who under the aegis of Venice ruled in the islands and held the sea gates of the east. But the occupations of an active profession left year by year less time to devote to research, and in the wandering life of a diplomatist my lot was cast often for long periods in places where the resources of great public libraries were far out of reach. The work begun had moreover often to be laid aside, sometimes for a year or two together, when public duties absorbed all my time. My ambition began inevitably to contract, and I realised that only a small portion of the task which I had undertaken could be completed as the parergon of an active life, even if nearly all my leisure were devoted to it. Not long after I began to study the authorities with a view to writing, appeared the *Stadt Athen im Mittelalter* of Gregorovius, anticipating a portion of my subject. I accordingly determined to confine myself to the history of Achaia as a central theme, only dealing with the other border states in so far as, being vassals to that principality, their fortunes were indissolubly connected with those of the sovereign state. The only existing history of Achaia of which I have knowledge—*L'Achaie Féodale, Etude sur le Moyen Age en Grèce par la Baronne Diane de Guldencrone, née de Gobineau*—which covers practically the same epoch, although published in 1886, only came into my hands after most of the following chapters had been completed. I cannot however admit that the existence of this book, which being in French is accessible to most English readers, renders a further study superfluous, inasmuch as the talented authoress, who has compiled a most picturesque account of the story of the Villehardouins, has followed too closely the narrative of the chronicle for historical accuracy, and does not appear to have availed herself of Sanudo's invaluable *History of Romania,* discovered by Hopf at Venice, nor of the results of that indefatigable worker's researches in the Angevine Register at Naples, which have thrown so much new light on the subject. And here I desire to acknowledge in full my indebtedness to that great explorer in these tangled paths of forgotten history. The pioneer work which he has done thoroughly and exhaustively, does not need to be done again, and for all students of Greece in the middle ages his history, or rather his compilation of historical material—for the only text he lived to complete is not eminently readable—must remain the standard authority. A personal consultation of many of the unpublished documents to which he briefly refers is nevertheless indispensable to the student, and herein has lain one of the great difficulties which have confronted me in working up my materials. Unable to go everywhere myself, I have been obliged to have copies made locally, and have realised that the correct transcription of medieval manuscripts, difficult for the expert, is almost impossible for the simple copyist. Many of the Angevine documents, as transcribed in the register, moreover reveal obvious clerical errors. It has only been by long correspondence and repeated collation of documents that it has been possible to obtain assurance on certain points which seemed obscure. Whenever any doubt existed, I have endeavoured to obtain documentary confirmation of the evidence collected by Hopf. But in general I have followed him as a well-nigh infallible guide. To the points in which I have dissented from his conclusions attention will be drawn in the text.

Another student to whom I desire to express my respectful acknowledgments is Professor John Schmitt of Cincinnati, of whose invaluable monograph on the Chronicle of

Morea an account is given in the introduction. His masterly edition of the Greek texts, unfortunately for myself, only appeared after my labours were practically over, but happily in time for me to be able to alter references so as to correspond to his arrangement, and not to the various less accessible editions of Buchon. As regards Neapolitan history, I have derived considerable assistance from the studies of my friend Mr. St. Clair Baddeley. I have also to acknowledge certain suggestions derived from papers by Prof. Bury and Mr. Tozer in *the Journal of Hellenic Studies*. Other authorities used and consulted will be dealt with in the introduction.

It must be gratifying to the rare students of this period to know that the British school in Athens which has done so much for classical archaeology has of late turned its attention to the Byzantine and Frankish remains in the Morea, and that the work carried out during last spring and summer by Mr. Ramsay Traquair, will shortly be recorded in one of the invaluable publications of that institution. I am indebted to him for the plans which appear in the present volume.

There are one or two points which call for personal explanation. In dealing with a subject where the characters who pass across the stage are Greeks, Frenchmen, Flemings, Italians, and Spaniards, to enumerate only the more obvious nationalities, I had no little hesitation in arriving at a decision as to the form in which to render their proper names. Consistency recommended the policy of presenting them all reduced to the common denominator of English equivalents. But consistency would then have led me into many anomalies. Transformations of Greek names into English are not acceptable, and the retention of the original Greek form in Latin letters savours of pedantry. I have as a general rule adopted a compromise, using English equivalents in the case of ordinary everyday Christian names, but otherwise preferring the Latinised form of Greek proper names, and, in respect of other nationalities, the form of the name familiar in the language of the country to which the individual indicated belonged. Where a Christian name preceding a local or family name is linked to it by the prepositions *de, di, da*, or *dalle*, it seems to me it should retain the character of the language to which the surname following it belongs. Thus therefore Henry of Flanders, but Gautier de Brienne; Ferdinand of Aragon, but Pietro dalle Carceri. Even to this principle absolute consistency is difficult. A generous latitude, moreover, may enable the writer to distinguish between personalities with identical names. Boniface is familiar to English readers as signifying a pontiff or an innkeeper, but Bonifazio seems to me at least more appropriate to the fighting marquis of Montferrat.

As regards the names of places again, I had set out with the general principle of retaining the Greek spelling as far as possible when the name used in the middle ages was of purely Hellenic origin—the *k*, that is, for hard *c* sounds, and the *b* for *υ* sounds—thus distinguishing, for instance, Kephalonia and Kalamata from Clairmont and Carytena, names which grew up during the Frankish occupation. But this principle also led to difficulties if consistently followed. I could not offer an English reader Korinthos, and still less Korinth; nor would Vervena have been recognisable to him if written Berbena. Anxious to avoid any possible suspicion of pedantry, I have rejected consistency in favour of a rational *norma loquendi*, and have employed the common forms in daily household use for such names as Athens, Thebes, and Corinth, and in less familiar names have retained their Greek form. Occasionally a departure from this general rule will be deliberately adopted to differentiate two places having the same name.

It is impossible in a work of this kind to dispense with footnotes, but in order not to overburden the page, I have included some of the longest, the presence of which in close proximity to the text is not necessary for its elucidation, in a separate appendix, to which references are given in the footnotes.

I wish also here to explain why I have entered at considerable length into the history of the fourth crusade, which Gibbon has described in a manner with which no later author would willingly challenge comparison. It is because a proper appreciation of the forces which contributed to the dismemberment of the Byzantine dominions, of the manner in which the partition was carried out, and in which again the principles originally laid down were partially abandoned, throws so much light on subsequent developments and motives of action, that it is necessary, for the proper understanding of what is to follow, to place all the details once more before the reader. Such a prologue to the history of the Morea is moreover justified by the existence of a prologue to the chronicle, which covers a similar field.

Since the period of my first sojourn in Greece I have made more than one journey to the land whose people and history have occupied so large a portion of my thoughts, and have studied several of the principal sites famous in its medieval history. The Greeks themselves are little enamoured of the period of Frankish occupation, and show no disposition to value the monuments of that epoch. As one who has endeavoured to show his appreciation of their beautiful country and many admirable characteristics on other occasions, I would appeal to my friends among that kindly and hospitable nation which is showing the world how admirably it can safeguard the sacred trust of its heritage of antiquity, not altogether to despise or neglect the relics of a time which, if not glorious for Greece, is still one of deep interest to the student of history. It is moreover a time to which they may look back with some measure of gratitude, since it infused new vigour into a population enervated by long years of neglect and lassitude, and with pride, since it testifies to the failure of a foreign social and religious system to prevail in the long run over those vital national characteristics which have ensured the continuity of the Hellenic race.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

THE PROLOGUE

THE SACK OF CONSTANTINOPLE

IN the closing years of the twelfth century, while St. Francis was still a child, Foulque of Neuilly, a French parish priest whose early life offers some points of resemblance to that of the mendicant apostle, was already denouncing the universal corruption of his age. Contemporary superstition readily credited the ascetic with miraculous powers and his influence spread through the whole north of France. In 1198 Cardinal Lothar, of the family of the Counts of Segni, ascended the papal throne at the age of thirty seven and assumed the name of Innocent III, which he was destined to make memorable. Supreme over the Roman municipality and freed from the fetters of imperial control, he at once allied himself with the popular tendencies manifested by the burghers of the Italian communes. The champion of their independence, he at the same time vindicated the independence of the Church, and soon became arbiter of the destinies of Europe. A true successor of Hildebrand, he contemplated the subjection of the eastern Patriarchates to Rome, and fired with the ambition of founding an universal church, he recognised in the dissensions which prevailed among the successors of Saladin a golden opportunity for the realisation of the crusaders' dream. But the great of the earth had experienced many disillusions on the path of eastern adventure, and the crusading veterans of France and England were at this time absorbed in the feud between their rival monarchs. True to his democratic instincts, Innocent looked rather to the masses and the clergy in issuing to mankind a new appeal for the liberation of the holy cities. In the revivalist of Neuilly he discerned a fitting instrument to stir the popular enthusiasm, and appointed him officially to preach the crusade. Meanwhile papal Legates were endeavouring to secure the preponderating sea-power of Venice for the cause, and to reconcile the longstanding feud between Philip and Coeur de Lion which only terminated with Richard's death.

Thibaut, the young Count of Champagne and Brie, whose elder brother had died in the Holy Land as titular king of Jerusalem, was as closely related to the French as to the English king, but had embraced the party of the latter. After Richard's death he made his peace with Philip, and celebrated the event by proclaiming a great tournament at his castle of Écri-sur-Aisne. Not only the local barons and feudatories but a great gathering of nobles and knights from all parts of France assembled there. The galleries were crowded with onlookers, and the horsemen were ranging themselves for the jousts, when suddenly, as the trumpets sounded and the heralds advanced to proclaim the names and titles of the combatants, there strode into the lists with an arresting gesture the haggard form of the priest of Neuilly, who, in a voice which struck awe into the hearers, called on that great gathering in the outraged name of Christ to forsake such worldly vanities and rally to a nobler battle-cry.

Thus it came about that Count Thibaut, with the sudden enthusiasm of his twenty-two years, took the vow of the cross before the eyes of all men at the tournament of Écri-

sur-Aisne, and with him his cousin, Count Louis of Blois and Chartres. Their example was followed by two of the most influential barons of France, whose military reputation was sure to enlist many adherents to the cause, Renaud de Montmirail and Simon de Montfort, afterwards the savage persecutor of the Albigenses. The feudal chivalry of Champagne rallied round their overlord, and among the many that here assumed the cross were Nevelon, bishop of Soissons, the bishop of Troyes, Count Gautier de Brienne, Manasses de Lille, Macaire de St. Menehould—great names in the wars of Romania—and Geoffrey Villehardouin, marshal of the county and historian of the crusade, together with his nephew, Geoffrey the younger.

The marshal does not relate whether Marie of Champagne, the sister of Thibaut, was among the ladies who sat in the gallery at the famous tournament, but a few months later her husband, Count Baldwin of Flanders and Hainault, together with his brother Henry and his nephew Thierri, took the cross and were joined by the foremost chivalry of Flanders in Renier de Tritt, Jacques d'Avesnes, Conon de Bethune, and Jean de Nesle, the castellan of Bruges. Count Hugues de St. Paul followed suit, and the movement began to spread southwards and eastwards. The bishop of Halberstadt was won to the cause, the Cistercian Abbot Martin Litz preached the crusade at Basle, and a number of German knights gathered round Berthold of Katzenellenbogen, the friend of minstrel and minnesinger, whose ruined tower still fronts St. Goar upon the Rhine.

A parliament of barons assembled at Soissons under the presidency of Bishop Nevelon, and again, after a short interval, at Compiègne. Count Thibaut was selected for the leadership of the projected enterprise, while Louis and Baldwin were associated with him in the command. Each of the three chiefs appointed two envoys with full powers, who were despatched forthwith to Venice and the maritime states of Italy to negotiate for the transport of the crusaders. Villehardouin the marshal was one of those chosen to represent the Count of Champagne. They arrived in Venice in January 1201, and, after a brief negotiation, the Doge Enrico Dandolo, whose years had not damped his adventurous spirit, submitted to them a convention, in accordance with which the republic of Venice was to provide transport to Babylon (Egypt) for 4500 knights, 9000 sergeants, and 20,000 foot soldiers, provisioning them for nine months, for a sum of 85,000 silver marks, to be paid in four instalments within a year. The ships were to remain at the disposal of the crusaders for a year and a day from the date on which the expedition left Venice. Furthermore, the republic was bound to equip on her own account fifty armed galleys to take part in the enterprise "for the love of God," and on condition that she received a half share of all lands and loot which fell to the conquerors. The Doge earned these propositions, which were accepted by the Frankish envoys, successfully through the greater and the lesser council, and the convention was accordingly signed and sealed with due formalities of oath on the holy relics, and sent to Rome for confirmation. The Pope, traditionally mistrustful of Venetian loyalty, made his ratification conditional on an engagement that the sword should not be drawn against Christians, unless some unjustifiable attack should necessitate self-defence, and even then only if the Apostolic Legate accompanying the host sanctioned reprisals. From the lagoons four of the envoys proceeded to Genoa and Pisa, where, however, they met with no encouragement. Farting company with these at Piacenza, Geoffrey Villehardouin, who has recorded the story of the embassy, and Alard Maquereau, one of the representatives of Baldwin of Flanders, returned direct to France to report the result of their negotiations.

From Piacenza their road lay along the right bank of the Po, through the territories of the marquisate of Montferrat, where they were entertained by the Marquis Bonifazio, who in 1192 had succeeded his elder brother Conrad, the murdered lord of Tyre. The little court of Montferrat was famous throughout Italy for its hospitality to artists and poets; and the troubadour, Rambaud de Vaqueiras, has painted in glowing pictures the brilliant life and high achievements of a patron who was regarded as the most complete type of contemporary knighthood.

In the passes of the Mont Cenis they fell in with Gautier de Brienne riding south with a large following of knights from Champagne. Since he had taken the vow of the cross at the tournament of Écri, Gautier had married Alberia, eldest daughter of the Norman Tancred, who, with her mother the widowed Sibylla, was driven from Sicily by the Emperor Henry VI, and had taken refuge in France. Her brother William, Tancred's only son, was dead, and Gautier, having obtained from Rome recognition of his title to the fiefs of Taranto and Lecce on behalf of his wife, as claimant to the throne of Sicily, now entered the service of the Pope. He promised to join the crusade with all his company by the time the transports were ready at Venice. But it fell out otherwise. His next few restless years were spent in constant warfare, and in 1205 he fell mortally wounded fighting the German feudatories established in Apulia by Henry VI, so that all these knights were lost to the crusade. Others of his name and lineage, however, were destined hereafter to play a great part in the Greece of chivalry.

When the envoys returned they found Count Thibaut lying dangerously ill at Troyes. Conscious that his end was approaching, he divided the half of his personal property among the members of his household, from whom he exacted an oath that they would be faithful to their crusading vow. With the other half he constituted a fund to be devoted to the expenses of the expedition in such manner as the barons should appoint. Having thus disposed of his earthly goods in a way which should ensure his soul's health, he died young and regretted on 24th May 1201.

The leadership was then offered to Eudes of Burgundy, and after he had refused it to Count Thibaut of Bar-le-Duc, who was also unwilling to accept the office. Somewhat disheartened, the chiefs of the crusade, who were being pressed by the Venetian representatives for payment of the first instalment due, held a parliament at Soissons. Here Villehardouin, fresh from the impression produced by his visit to the court of Montferrat, proposed that Bonifazio should be invited to take the place of Count Thibaut. His connection with the family of the Comneni, his knowledge of the east and of eastern methods of battle gained in the last crusade, together with his experience in the wars of Lombardy and Apulia, were urged in his favour, while the great reputation which he enjoyed in his own country seemed likely to secure the adherence of a large contingent of followers from Piedmont and Lombardy. The Marquis accepted the invitation which was addressed to him, and in due course met the Frankish barons once more assembled at Soissons. The legacy of Count Thibaut was made over to him, and the Count's retainers placed themselves under his orders, after the bishop of Soissons and Foulque de Neuilly had affixed the cross to his shoulder in the cathedral of Notre Dame. Before returning home he accompanied the bishop to the Benedictine monastery of Citeaux, where a chapter of the order was held in September 1201, and Foulque preached the crusade to a great assemblage of churchmen and noblemen of Burgundy assembled there. Among those who took the cross at Citeaux were Eudes de Champlitte of the family of the Counts of

Champagne, and William his brother, the conqueror of Morea.

In the spring of the following year, 1202, the crusaders set out on their journey south, but the ardour of their first enthusiasm had cooled with the long lapse of time, and Foulque de Neuilly, the mouthpiece and spiritual guide of the enterprise, died almost before the march began. A great fleet, carrying many of the Flemish knights with a large body of sergeants and abundance of war material, put to sea under the command of Jean de Nesle. They were to meet the chiefs of the expedition in the Mediterranean, but many of these knights, ignoring the terms of the convention or mistrusting the designs of the republic, sailed directly to the Holy Land, where they accomplished the year of their vow as pilgrims, and took no further part in the crusade. A considerable body of French knights also embarked at Marseilles and thence set their course independently for Palestine, and when at last Count Baldwin, who had crossed the Mont Cenis with his following, passing through Montferrat and Piacenza, arrived in Venice, he learned that many more, disregarding their instructions, were making their way to the southern ports of Italy. He hastily despatched messengers to Lombardy to intercept them, but in spite of all his efforts a considerable number rode on into Apulia.

It soon became apparent to the Doge that the attenuated army which was encamped on the Lido would be unable to meet the engagements stipulated by the convention. Baldwin, Louis, and the Marquis of Montferrat had contributed all their available private resources, and flung even their plate and jewels into the common stock, but there still remained a deficit of 34,000 marks. The fleet had long been ready, the Venetians had loyally carried out their share of the bargain, but provisions began to fall short in the camp, now swelled by the arrival of the Oerman contingent, who brought nothing with them but their personal valour. There was no money left with which to purchase food, and the supplies collected by the republic to victual the army were withheld until the debt had been discharged. Hunger now caused continual desertions, predatory bands of starving soldiers began to infest the coasts, giving legitimate cause for protest, and a pestilence decimated the camp, so that many spoke openly of abandoning the expedition.

The need of the crusaders was the opportunity of Venice. The astute Doge had doubtless foreseen the inevitable condition of dependence on the resources of the republic into which this heterogeneous army was doomed to fall, and had craftily matured a plan to secure for his own ambitious purposes a powerful army of tried warriors such as the sea-state had never yet been able to command. Not long after the signature of the contract with the Frankish barons, he had despatched envoys to Cairo to negotiate with Sultan Melik el Adil the terms of a treaty of friendship and commerce which was eventually signed in May 1202. Under this treaty the Sultan assigned to the Venetians a large area in the port of Alexandria for a commercial station, together with other privileges, and guaranteed immunity to all pilgrims conveyed by Venice to the Holy Sepulchre. Just at the moment when the distress among the crusaders on the Lido had reached a climax, Dandolo received news from Egypt that this convention had been signed with the Sultan, against whom ostensibly he had equipped the most powerful fleet ever marshalled in the Lagoons.

In vain the papal legate Peter of Capua demanded the immediate despatch of the army to Egypt. In Venice, never submissive to the decrees of Rome, he was but coldly received, and the crusaders saw frustrated the hopes they had rested on the intervention of Innocent. The moment was propitious for the terms which Dandolo now submitted to

the chiefs of the army. Venice would agree to postpone her claim for the payment of the 34,000 marks still due, until the debt could be liquidated out of the half share of the plunder accruing to the Frankish army in their joint undertakings, on condition that the crusaders would lend their arms to the republic to reduce the pirate city of Zara on the Dalmatian coast, which had grown rich in preying on Venetian commerce. The season was now too far advanced to risk the long voyage to Egypt, while Zara would provide good winter quarters and abundance of supplies. In spite of the opposition of the genuine crusaders and of all the partisans of Rome in the army these proposals were accepted by the leaders, who were indeed no longer in a position to resist whatever conditions the Doge might impose, and Dandolo, entrusting his son with the duties of his office during his prospective absence, himself publicly took the cross in St. Mark's and joined the expedition of 72 galleys and 140 transports which sailed from the Lido amid general rejoicings in the beginning of October. The indignant legate hurried to Rome to report that crusaders were about to attack a city whose feudal overlord, King Andreas of Hungary, had himself taken the vow. Innocent excommunicated the republic and the army, but Zara was stormed and taken in spite of the indignant protest of Simon de Montfort and the abbot of Vaux, before the majority of the crusaders had heard of the papal interdict.

The conquered city was divided into two zones, the Venetians taking possession of the quarters nearest the port, where the ships were laid up, while the Franks were lodged on the landward side. Then the allies fell to quarrelling among themselves and bloody encounters ensued. The efforts of the Doge and the barons, with the timely arrival of Bonifazio, who had been delayed up to the present time in Venice, were successful in restoring order and the army then settled down to winter quarters, holding the city in defiance of the Hungarian king. To the envoys sent to Rome to supplicate the repeal of the interdict, which lay lightly on the less orthodox Venetians, but profoundly disturbed the ruder warriors from the north, Innocent returned a paternal answer. He understood that the rank and file of the army had been misled by their leaders, and he therefore gave the bishop of Soissons powers to bind and unbind until the legate's return. The warning, which he now repeated, that the arms of crusaders were on no account to be used against Christians—however great, he added, might be the crimes of an usurping emperor, however deplorable the moral turpitude of an empire which refused to recognise the papal supremacy—made it clear that he was fully cognisant of the further designs of Dandolo, which were destined to divert the crusade from the objects for which it was undertaken and lead on to events of epoch-making importance.

The Emperor Isaac II (Angelus Comnenus) had been deposed and blinded by his brother in 1195. After the lapse of some years Alexius III, secure in undisturbed possession of the throne he had usurped, relaxed the rigorous prison discipline to which the dispossessed emperor had at first been subjected, and even affected to disregard the intrigues carried on by Isaac with his son-in-law Philip of Suabia through the medium of the Pisan colonists, who, having failed to obtain from the Emperor ratification of their commercial privileges, were actively plotting his downfall. His nephew, the younger Alexius, he eventually released altogether from confinement, conditionally on his renouncing his rights to the throne, and offered him a place at court. There can be little doubt that Isaac and his son also early conceived the idea of turning the religious impulse of the crusade to account for their own purposes, and sought to ally themselves with the leaders. During the Emperor's temporary absence from Constantinople the young Alexius succeeded, by connivance of the Pisans, in escaping on one of their ships disguised as a

sailor, and reached Ancona safely in 1201. Unsuccessful in pleading his cause with Innocent he went on to Germany, where he was received with open arms by his brother-in-law the Emperor Philip and the Empress Irene. But the energies of the Hohenstaufen were at this period monopolised by his struggle with the son of Henry the Lion for the imperial crown of the west, and anxious though he was to thwart the plans of Innocent, who was supporting his rival, he could offer no material assistance. Alexius therefore returned to Italy and made definite propositions to Venice and to Bonifazio, offering the co-operation of the eastern empire in the crusade, if the army would first assist him to recover his father's throne, while the union of the eastern church to Rome was put forward as a condition likely to disarm the opposition of Innocent. Against these intrigues the reigning Emperor appealed to the Pope, but beyond the issue of the warning to which allusion has already been made, his representations met with no response.

In Bonifazio, whom he had met at Warzburg at the court of Philip of Suabia, the young prince found a ready coadjutor. His connection with the family of the Comneni involved the Marquis in their quarrel, and he looked to territorial concessions as his reward for assisting in the punishment of the usurper.

In Venice such proposals were sure of a favourable reception. The relations of the Doges with the Emperor Alexius had not been good and disputes with the empire had constantly recurred throughout the previous century. The recollection of the massacre of the Latins in Constantinople in 11213 under the tyrant Andronicus, when their quarter was burned to the ground and upwards of 4000 Christians were sold in slavery to the Turks, was still almost in living memory. The privileges acquired by Venice at Constantinople constituted an *imperium in imperio* hardly consistent with the dignity of the state. Genoese and Pisans, jealous of her commercial supremacy, were continually endeavouring to secure similar privileges, and at their instigation the emperors had repeatedly denounced her commercial treaties, only to confirm them anew whenever the need of friendly sea-power threw them back on the resources of the great naval republic. Here was a prospect open for securing a preponderating position to which the rival cities could never aspire.

The struggle for the control of the trade-routes to the marts of the distant east has been the determining factor in international rivalries from the beginning of time. The nations of the ancient world contested the monopoly of the Asiatic commerce which reached Europe by the southern road through Syria and the Persian Gulf. Phoenicians, Hebrews, Greeks, Romans in turn secured the preponderance at the cost of great sacrifices. The rise of the Arab power and the wars of the cross had long blocked the Syrian outlet and the alternative channel through Egypt, and although for a time the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem and the influence of the feudal baronies established in the eastern parts of the Mediterranean promised to reopen the threshold to the gates of Asia, the Turkish invasion of Persia, followed by their advance towards the west, reinforced an impenetrable barrier to trade. The northern trade-route, however, from the Indus valley to the Oxus, where the fabrics of Chinese industry met the rich manufactures of India, and thence made their slow way, skirting the Caspian by Erzeroum to the Black Sea emporium of Trebizond, was open without interruption, and constituted an unfailing source of wealth to the capital of the empire, whence these wares were distributed over the Mediterranean. The Genoese, the Pisans, and the Venetians struggled in irreconcilable rivalry for the commerce of Byzantium. The prospect of establishing a Venetian monopoly of the far

eastern trade was undoubtedly the directing impulse of the fourth crusade.

The moving spirit of the enterprise is said moreover to have had a personal injury to avenge. Twenty years before his election Dandolo had been sent as an ambassador to Constantinople to protest against a decree of confiscation issued by the Emperor Manuel, which was followed by a wholesale imprisonment of Venetian colonists. It is stated by Venetian historians, and accepted by his biographer and descendant, Andrea Dandolo, that he was treacherously blinded on this occasion. But Villehardouin, his contemporary and personal friend, who would scarcely have omitted to impute to the Byzantines such a grave charge of having ill-treated an envoy, merely states that his eyes were intact, but that he had lost his sight through a wound or blow which he had received on his head.[1] Other authorities, moreover, have recorded that this wound was received at Zara, apparently during a former siege.

It was while the host lay in winter quarters at Zara that envoys arrived from Philip the Suabian, bringing the definite proposals of his brother-in-law Alexius to the crusaders. The army was pledged, they speciously argued, to fight God's battle in the cause of right and justice. It was therefore clearly their duty to intervene on behalf of the disinherited, while by so doing they would gain for the enterprise of the cross a support so powerful that its success must be assured. The terms which they offered on behalf of Alexius were the following: He undertook, upon his restoration, to place the whole empire under obedience to the Church of Rome; he would pay the crusaders a sum of 200,000 silver marks, in addition to supporting them for a year and furnishing 10,000 men himself, while he would maintain for the rest of his life a body of 500 knights in the Holy Land.

When these propositions were submitted to the parliament of barons, great opposition was raised by the Catholic party, but even the churchmen were, according to Villehardouin, divided among themselves. Many who mistrusted the Venetian alliance, and were anxious to return to their own countries, were delighted to be able to plead the papal interdict. The formidable strength of the Byzantine empire, which even in those degenerate days imposed on the imagination by the authority of long tradition and a reputation for inexhaustible resources, was still sufficient to awe the rude feudatories of the west, and the vows which they had taken offered a ready pretext under which to cloak their reluctance to persevere in what must have seemed to them a desperate enterprise. But the advocacy of the Doge and the Marquis of Montferrat prevailed upon the Counts of Flanders and of Blois, who, with St. Paul and the more adventurous spirits, to the number of only twelve in all of the greater barons, signed the convention with Alexius. Simon de Montfort then withdrew from Zara and went over to the King of Hungary, taking with him a considerable number of the church party. Many more knights found other pretexts for departure, engaging themselves to return by oaths which they never meant to keep, while the common soldiers deserted in hundreds. Others remaining behind intrigued to bring about the failure of the campaign. A further blow to the hopes of the crusaders was the defection of the Flemings under Jean de Nesle, who had led the whole of his convoy from Marseilles direct to Syria.

After the Easter festival in April 1203, the ships of war and the transports were got to sea, and the expedition started for Corfu after dismantling the walls of Zara. Before the last ships had put out, the young Alexius joined the fleet in person, and was proclaimed as Alexius IV at Durazzo. While the army mustered in Corfu, a new plot, in which many of

the leading barons were involved, was detected. They hoped to obtain ships from Gautier de Brienne, who was now holding Brindisi, and to desert the expedition there. The numbers of the crusaders were already quite inadequate to the magnitude of the undertaking on which they had embarked, and the defection of the followers of these knights and barons would have finally ruined the prospects of the campaign. The intercession of the three Frankish leaders was, however, on this occasion successful, and the force was kept together, engagements being given that ships should be available to transport all who desired it to Syria whenever they should renew their application. And so at last, on Whitsun-eve, they broke up the camp at Corfu and set their course for the island sea.

It was an eventful moment in the story of the world, and it is not strange perhaps to find the chronicler for a moment conscious of the influence of clime and scene. "The day", he writes, "was fine and clear; the wind soft and fair as they loosed their sails to the wind; and Geoffrey, marshal of Champagne, who dictated this book, and never set word in it that was not true according to the best of his knowledge—and he took part in all the councils—bears you witness that so gallant a sight was never seen. Right surely it seemed that this fleet was destined to conquer the world, for so far as the eye might reach was nought to see but the sails of galleys and of ships, in such sort that the hearts of men rejoiced thereat". Indeed, so magnificent a fleet had seldom put to sea. The van was led by the vermilion galley of the Doge, bearing the standard of St. Mark, a lion of gold upon a ground of crimson, and the banners of the nobles, brilliant with heraldic device, streamed from the mastheads of some three hundred stately ships.

So they coasted round the Peloponnese, and held a council of war at Negripont, while Alexius, with a portion of the force, landed in Andros and received the submission of the islanders. At length, on the 23rd June 1203, they came in sight of the capital. Lying off the monastery of St. Stephen, the rude chivalry of the north and west beheld with awe and wonder the sovereign city of the world lying vast and mysterious in its girdle of battlements, palace rising over palace, crowned with innumerable domes and towers, and indeed it seemed to them that never knights adventurous had taken in hand so perilous a quest. In the church of St. Stephen another council of war was held, and the plan of Dandolo to seize the Princes Islands and make them a base for an attack upon the city from the sea was adopted. This scheme, however, was frustrated by the weather, which drove them on to Chalcedon, whence two days later they advanced to Scutari, while the cavalry, which had already been disembarked, covered this short distance by land. The Emperor Alexius III had made but scanty preparations for resistance. A few old hulks in the harbour represented the Byzantine fleet, whose admiral took flight upon the first approach of the crusaders. But the walls had been repaired, and troops called in from the provinces. It is probable that the Emperor hoped to come to terms with the Franks, but the envoy despatched to their camp, with powers to compound, was curtly informed that his master must surrender in person to his nephew's mercy. On the other hand, the proclamation issued by the younger Alexius, and a progress which he made round the walls to show himself to the people, produced no effect. Therefore on the 4th of July a parliament of knights and barons assembled on horseback, and a plan of attack was concerted. The army was divided into seven battles, the van being arrayed under the Count of Flanders, and the rearguard under the Marquis of Montferrat. Their first objective was the suburb of Pera. A sufficient force was left behind to defend the camp, and the besiegers were towed by the galleys in transport barges to the scene of action. The terrible northerners, "tall as their

own spears in stature", leapt waist-high into the sea to dash up the foreshore, and the imperial troops, drawn up to meet them with all the pomp and parade of the east, forthwith turned and fled. The Golden Horn, which lay before them, was defended after the fashion of the time with a ponderous iron chain, extending from the city to the tower or fort of Galata, which was strongly held by perhaps the only reliable force in the Byzantine army, the English and Scandinavian mercenaries of the Varangian guard. The crusaders barricaded themselves for the night in the Ghetto quarter of Pera. Early the following morning they were attacked by the Varangians of Galata and a large force brought up from the city in boats. The knights, however, ran to their arms, and after a fierce encounter possessed themselves of Galata, while Dandolo broke the chain and convoyed his ships into the Golden Horn.

It was now decided that the Venetians should assault the city from the sea, while the Franks stormed the walls on the land side. Hastily reconstructing the bridge over the Barbyssos which the Byzantines had destroyed, Baldwin and Bonifazio advanced in the direction of Vlachernae and entrenched their camp in full view of the palace. Here they were from time to time harried by ineffectual sorties from the city, and in one of these encounters Guillaume de Champlitte had his arm broken. Meanwhile the vessels of the fleet prepared their artillery of mangonels and perrières, their scaling-ladders and falling-bridges. The general assault was fixed for the 17th July.

Of the seven battles into which the Franks had divided their forces, three were left to guard the camp under Bonifazio, while the other four under Baldwin and his brother, Count Louis of Blois and the Count of St. Paul, took part in the assault. The first attack from the land side was not successful; the ladders were duly planted and as many as fifteen of the besiegers succeeded in obtaining foothold on the walls, only to fall under the terrible swing of the Varangian battle-axe or before the swords of the Pisans who had thrown in their lot with the Greeks. Two were made prisoners and dragged before the usurper Alexius.

Meanwhile the ships were advancing into a deadly hail of stones, bolts, arrows, and red-hot iron bars propelled by the engines of war on the battlements, and for a moment the line faltered. "Now", wrote the chronicler, "listen to a strange deed of prowess; for the Doge of Venice, who was aged and sightless, stood all armed at the prow of his galley; the banner of St. Mark was flying over him, and he cried to his men to put him ashore or they should render him account with their bodies. And so did they, for the galley touches ground and they leap forth and bear the banner of St. Mark on shore before him. And when the Venetians saw the banner of St. Mark ashore, and the galley of their lord the first to touch ground, they held themselves as put to shame and made for the shore also."

Before long twenty-five towers were in possession of the Venetians. They fired the buildings adjoining the walls, and the smoke, blowing back on the Greek reinforcements, prevented their coming into action. Then at last the miserable Emperor led out his great host against the Frankish chivalry, and Dandolo generously ordered his men to move to their assistance, abandoning the captured towers. The Greeks wavered face to face with the Frankish lines, and when at the approach of evening their retirement was ordered, the mailed crusaders issuing from their stockaded camp converted the retirement into a panic rout.

That night Alexius fled, carrying away his treasure and abandoning the city to confusion and anarchy. The aged Isaac, dragged from his prison, was dressed once more in the imperial purple and reseated on the throne at Vlachernae, while messengers were despatched to the camp to inform the younger Alexius and the barons of the usurper's flight. At daybreak the following morning Geoffrey Villehardouin and Matthieu de Montmorency entered the gates as ambassadors and, riding to the palace between the long lines of English and Scandinavian axemen, submitted to the blind Emperor the terms of the convention upon which the crusaders had agreed with his son. Not without a warning note of misgiving as to his ability to carry out so liberal an engagement, the Emperor confirmed the articles of the treaty, and the barons then entered the city in state escorting their young ally, who was crowned as joint regent with his father on the 1st of August. The crusaders established their camp at Galata, the fleet lay at anchor off Pera, and a small number of knights under Pierre de Bracheuil remained as a bodyguard to Alexius, who still felt his position far from secure and could scarcely claim a mile of territory beyond the city gates. For this reason he prevailed upon the army to postpone their departure until the following spring, by which time he also hoped to meet his financial engagements. This proposal found ready acceptance with the Venetians. They had asked for absolution from Rome for their share in the campaign and had received an ungracious pardon from Innocent, whose displeasure they did not scruple to incur again by further delaying the avowed objects of the crusade. Meanwhile Dandolo, having future eventualities in view, caused a portion of the walls to be razed to the ground. The imperial treasury, depleted by the fugitive usurper, was nearly empty, but vigorous efforts and timely confiscations enabled the Emperors to hand over 100,000 marks on account to the army.

The Marquis of Montferrat, Henry of Flanders, and the Count of St. Paul, with a portion of the host, tempted by liberal promises of bounty, now accompanied Alexius IV on a progress through the empire, which he sought to pacify and reduce to allegiance, while Dandolo and Baldwin remained behind to secure the payment of the balance due to the army. The oppressive measures adopted to raise this money rendered these rapacious soldiers of fortune odious to the populace. The aged Isaac surrounded himself with astrologers and fanatical priests, and religious differences embittered the relations between the army and the Greeks. Alexius had forwarded to Innocent his profession of adherence to the Catholic Church, but the tenacious eastern hierarchy showed no sign of bending to the will of Rome. Familiarity only served to widen the breach between Greek and Latin. The earlier crusades and the passage of the western armies through the dominions of the eastern empire, so far from tending to diminish national antipathies, which dated from the schism between the churches, had constantly accentuated religious animosities and reciprocal attributions of heresy which the ecclesiastics of either party were studious to envenom. The Greek Emperors had been detected in secret conspiracy with the Moslem leaders, whom the Franks honestly looked upon as the enemies of God, and were thus fit objects for retribution in their eyes. Now once more the churchmen on either side inflamed the popular passion, and the Latins within the city, the commercial colonies of Pisa and Amalfi, found their position intolerable, and were treated as spies by the Greek inhabitants smarting from the exactions of lawless Franks and Flemings. An occasion for open hostilities presented itself in an attempt made by a party of marauding soldiers to bum a mosque and loot the Moslem settlement. The Greeks took sides with the Saracens against the crusaders, and in the conflict which ensued the city was once more set on fire. The conflagration lasted two days and nights, ravaging the richest quarters over a front of half a league, and destroyed masterpieces of Hellenic art and priceless treasures

of literature. The Latin inhabitants, now remembering the massacres of 1183, went over in a mass to the Frankish camp, and the citizens, stunned by this appalling catastrophe, saw with indignant resentment the camp of their enemies strengthened by the accession of some fifteen thousand souls.

In November Alexius returned to Constantinople. He had not been altogether unsuccessful owing to the prestige of his Frankish allies, but he had failed to secure the person of the fugitive usurper or to gain the allegiance of the formidable king of Bulgaria and Wallachia, Johannes Asan or Johannisa. He now affected to regard his father as a mere nominal sovereign. His intercourse with the Franks lost him the sympathy of the Greeks, while his religious apostasy had increased his unpopularity. He was wholly unable to satisfy the pressing demands of the crusaders and, growing alarmed at his critical position, he sought to regain the esteem of his subjects by repudiating his contract with the army. This brought matters to an open rupture. Conon de Bethune, accompanied by Villehardouin, was despatched to the palace to address a haughty ultimatum to the astonished Emperors, unaccustomed to such peremptory arguments, and the knights, riding back through the midst of murmuring guards and a menacing population, were glad to escape with their lives. The military party in the city found a daring leader in another Alexius, a prince of the house of Dukas, nicknamed Murzuphlus, who for a while posed as the protector of the Angelus dynasty in a city seething with revolution. The appeal of the Emperor Alexius to the Franks to assist him in restoring order, prompted in all probability by the designing Murzuphlus himself, afforded this ambitious soldier the necessary pretext for declaring the younger Emperor a traitor to his country and flinging him into prison. The aged Isaac lay dying. The church party and the Varangian guard declared themselves for Murzuphlus, who assumed the enamelled buskins and was crowned as Alexius V in St. Sophia in January 1204, while the deposed Emperor was strangled in his -dungeon after poison had failed to do its work. It was publicly proclaimed that he had died a natural death, and he was buried with solemn pomp together with his father Isaac, whose end was accelerated by the fate of his son.

The treachery of Morzuphlus gave the necessary pretext for hostilities to the ambitious chiefs of the crusade, whose indignation was further aroused by a summary order to evacuate the country in a week. The clergy declared the war just and righteous, and proclaimed indulgence for all who should die in the struggle to bring the empire under obedience to Rome. A raiding expedition to Philea on the Black Sea coast, whence Henry of Flanders despatched large stores of provisions to the camp, was unsuccessfully attacked on its return in a sortie by Murzuphlus, whose influence was shaken when he came back wounded, having lost his imperial standard and a miracle-working image of the Madonna, in which the Byzantines reposed great confidence.

The crusaders now prepared to storm the city, while the Greeks displayed an unwonted activity in repairing the shattered walls and towers. As a preliminary measure a parliament was held in the camp to decide the course of action which should be followed when the city fell into the besiegers' hands, and a convention for the partition of the empire was drawn up between the Doge on the one hand and Baldwin of Flanders, the Marquis of Montferrat, Louis of Blois, and the Count of St. Paul on behalf of the crusaders. The apportionment of the spoils, which were to be collected in a common stock, was laid down, and provision was made for extinction of the debt due to Venice out of the share allotted to the Franks. The citizens of the republic were to constitute in the empire a community

governed by their own laws, and retain all the privileges they had hitherto enjoyed. The election of a new Emperor of Romania was to take place forthwith, six electors being chosen from the Franks and six from the Venetians. The Emperor was to take possession of a quarter of the whole empire, together with the palaces of Vlachernae and Vukoleon, the remainder of the territories being divided equally between the allies. The clergy of the party which had not carried the imperial election were to receive the church of St. Sophia and elect a patriarch; adequate ecclesiastical endowment was to be provided from the actual church property in the empire, the balance being placed in the common stock. The two parties bound themselves to remain in the country and assist in reducing the empire to submission for a complete twelvemonth after the last day of March of the current year. Twelve commissioners were to divide the conquered territory into fiefs and to assign the various servitudes due to the Emperor as overlord. It was, however, especially laid down that the Doge was personally exempted from the oath of fealty, a clause which appears to imply some preliminary understanding that Dandolo was not himself to be a candidate for the throne. No subject of nations at war with the conquerors was to be tolerated in the empire so long as the war continued. Both parties undertook to endeavour to obtain the sanction of Rome to these arrangements and the issue of the interdict against any signatory who should violate the treaty. Finally provision was made for subsequent modifications of the compact should they be found necessary. A provisional act of partition was also drawn up, in negotiating for which the knowledge gained by Venice in her eastern trade enabled her to secure preponderating advantages.

The first assault upon the walls by sea was repulsed with considerable loss, and Murzuphlus, issuing from the city in state, set up his scarlet tents in a commanding position to witness the anticipated annihilation of the crusaders, when, nothing daunted by their first failure, they resumed the attack three days later, the 12th April 1204. A favourable breeze brought the fleet right up under the walls on the sea-front of the city. The warships had been lashed together in couples, in order that they might simultaneously discharge a greater weight of warriors from the mast-head bridges. The honours of the day fell to the *Pellegrina* and the *Paradiso,* from whose grappling-ladder Andre d'Urboise was the first to gain a footing on the walls, winning the prize proclaimed by Dandolo and planting on the conquered tower the banner of Bishop Nevelon. All along the sea-front the storming-ladders and dropbridges were successfully maintained, and tower after tower was secured by the besiegers. The horses were disembarked from the transports, and the cavalry threatened the imperial camp. Pierre d'Amiens forced one of the city barriers, and the crusaders pouring in through the breach opened gate after gate to the horsemen. The Greeks fled panic-stricken into churches and public buildings, which they barricaded, while the Emperor withdrew into the palace enclosure of Vukoleon. Night fell upon a scene of confusion and slaughter, but prudence dictated a temporary pause in the advance of the invaders, for the intricate streets, the churches, and towers were still held by masses of troops, and Murzuphlus was endeavouring to rally his scattered mercenaries. In order to interpose an effective barrier between his bivouac within the walls and the enemy's positions, Berthold of Katzenellenbogen gave the signal for another conflagration, and again for four-and-twenty hours the imperial capital blazed until there were consumed, the chronicler records, more houses than stood in the three largest cities of France. All efforts of Murzuphlus to restore the spirit of his troops were vain and, accompanied by a small band of followers, he fled under cover of darkness through the Golden Gate, carrying with him the Princess Eudoxia and her mother the Empress Euphrosyne, wife of the third Alexius. His tents, baggage, and jewellery fell into the hands of Pierre de Bracheuil. The

distracted archons assembled by night in the church of St. Sophia to elect a successor to the fugitive usurper in the person of Theodoras Lascaris. Their choice was a worthy one, but Lascaris hesitated to assume the purple in the doomed city, and realising that in the general disorganisation even the Varangians could no longer be trusted, he embarked on his galley and carried with him to Asia, where he was to found a new dynasty, the last tradition of spirit and vigour which survived in the degenerate empire.

Day broke and the crusaders closed their ranks to contest the still unconquered quarters of the city. But all resistance had collapsed. Bonifazio took possession unopposed of the palace Vukoleon, where many of the great ladies of the court had taken refuge, including the ex-Empresses Agnes of France and Margaret of Hungary, the young widow of Isaac Angelus, who was shortly to become the bride of the Marquis and share the new throne which his victorious sword had won for him. Vlachernae was surrendered to Henry of Flanders. Then began an orgie of pillage and massacre which neither the piety of Baldwin, the policy of Dandolo, nor the philhellenism of Bonifazio were able to control. These soldiers of the cross violated the most ancient shrines of Christendom in their search for marketable relics, and desecrated the altars with scenes of bloodshed and ribaldry. The former Latin inhabitants who had taken refuge with the conquerors were free to indulge their private vengeance, and negotiate their debts in the blood of their creditors. Through four days of terror the city drank the dregs of the cup of trembling. Even the dead were placed under contribution, and the graves of the Emperors in the Church of the Apostles were torn open. The rode Germans, intoxicated with a passion for destruction, in their unreasoning repugnance to the idols of paganism, threw down the monuments of antiquity, and in this four days' carnival of hell destroyed forever the priceless treasures of art, gathered from the whole of the civilised world, with which through centuries of wealth and prosperity her princes had dowered imperial Constantinople. If Villehardouin is discreetly silent here, if the testimony of Nicetas, whose own house had perished in the conflagration, as he fled with wife and children destitute from the ruins, be looked upon as partial evidence, the letters of Pope Innocent are eloquent in denunciation. The wild passions of the conquerors, he protests, spared neither age nor sex, nor did they fear to lay hands even upon those whose lives are dedicated to God. "It was not enough" he cried, "to strip the imperial treasures bare, to plunder high and low, but ye have tom the very ornaments from the altars and violated the shrines and relics of the Saints."

It was with the utmost difficulty that the chiefs of the army effected a collection of the booty for apportionment and distribution, although the death penalty had been proclaimed for the detention of loot. Numerous executions took place, and the Count of St. Paul was forced to hang one of his own knights in public as an example to the rest. There is some uncertainty, owing to the various figures given, as to the total value of the booty thus accumulated, but it was calculated by Count Baldwin as equal to the whole accumulated wealth of Western Europe. The debt to Venice was extinguished by an assignation from the portion of the Franks, and the remainder was divided according to the feudal scale, a foot soldier receiving one unit, a mounted sergeant two, and a knight four units as his share.

Thus fell the imperial city. The magic of the old Roman name, institutions which still imposed on mankind, though the pillars upon which they rested, patriotism and public spirit, were rotten with decay, a marvellous organisation inherited from antiquity,—these had maintained the empire in ever contracting bounds long after all that was vital and

sound had perished behind the hollow mask of magnificence. Blindly self-complacent and enervated with luxury, absorbed in ecclesiastical subtleties and impotent in the toils of a corrupt and effete officialism which rendered the Byzantine system as stationary as a Mongol despotism, her galvanised life had been unduly prolonged. She had survived the annihilating waves of barbarian migration and held her gates secure by superior armament or opportune purchase. But the century of Norman invasion began the work of dissolution. The ignoble reign of Isaac Angelus II had seen the inherent vices of Byzantine methods reach a climax of demoralisation. The army was neglected, the fleet had vanished from the seas, while the provinces, sucked dry to gratify the mania for building of a priest-ridden sovereign, or to supply the unbridled appetites of an effeminate court, rose in rebellion and separated themselves limb by limb from the parent trunk. And thus at last a band, numerically inconsiderable, of Franks and Flemings from the rude uncultured west, supported by the galleys of a mercantile republic, were enabled to breach the walls which for 900 years had guarded the throne of Constantine. But if her humiliation was in a measure deserved and inevitable, the grim story of human annals has recorded no more unpardonable outrage than the sack of the venerable city by a western army equipped with the emblem of the cross. The civilisation which they destroyed was far higher than that in which the majority of the crusaders had been nurtured, and such culture as Europe still could boast, a culture still evidenced by the capacity of the Byzantine historians, was concentrated round the imperial throne. The bitter cry of Nicetas, an eyewitness of this unparalleled calamity, voices not inadequately the incalculable loss to mankind, entailed by the vandalism of the crusaders. There were doubtless many among them, and not least those that coveted the reversion of the treasures long accumulated there, who bitterly regretted this carnival of destruction, the responsibility for which must, however, rest on those who, for their own selfish purposes, diverted to such disastrous ends an impulse which had its origin in a chivalrous and disinterested enthusiasm.

CHAPTER II

THE PROLOGUE—(continued)

THE PARTITION OF THE EMPIRE

THE selection of an Emperor from among the rival leaders of the crusade presented a difficult problem for immediate solution. The result must be ascribed to the skilful diplomacy of Dandolo, for there can be little doubt that Nicetas is right in assigning a preponderating influence in the final settlement to the far-sighted Doge, who had succeeded in making the whole enterprise subservient to the interests of Venice. It was essential that no time should be lost in coming to a decision. The vast territories of the empire were still to be conquered, and there was manifest danger of papal intervention in the settlement of the east, and of the imposition of a clerical candidate who would not be acceptable to the republic. Three individuals stood out prominent in the eyes of the host—the veteran Dandolo himself, the master-mind of the undertaking and avowedly the hero of the campaign; Bonifazio of Montferrat, who as commander of the land forces had undeniable claims, and bore a name which commanded respect among the eastern populations, who still remembered how his brother Conrad had dealt with the rebel Vranas during the reign of Isaac; finally, Baldwin of Flanders, one of the original promoters of the crusade, justly esteemed for his character and virtues as the first among the Franks, a powerful prince in his own right and a descendant of Charlemagne. Venetian historians have asserted that the primary choice of the electors fell upon the Doge, who magnanimously renounced the burden of empire. Such a legend was doubtless flattering to Venetian pride, but the position of a feudal sovereign could manifestly not be held by the chief magistrate of a commercial republic, nor is it probable that the great barons would have accepted a merchant prince as their overlord. Villehardouin, who should have known, is silent on the question, and the stipulation of the preliminary convention, which freed the Doge from any obligation of fealty to the elected Emperor, seems to imply that his candidature was excluded. It is at any rate clear that when the election took place all other candidates had withdrawn in favour of Baldwin and Bonifazio.

After much negotiation and discussion the twelve electors met, six chosen from the Franks and six from the Venetians. A plea put forward by Bonifazio for six additional Lombard electors had been rejected, but it was agreed by way of compromise, inasmuch as the church party was rather supposed to favour the claims of the marquis, that all the electors should be ecclesiastics. It was further laid down that the unsuccessful candidate should receive as compensation all the territories of the empire on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus as well as the "Ille de Griesse." In this compromise the hand of Dandolo is clear. Baldwin of Flanders was for obvious reasons the accepted candidate of Venice. Not only would the exaltation of the powerful Ghibelline marquis to the throne of the east have been calculated to disturb the balance of power in Italy, but in the new empire itself the selection of Bonifazio, connected as he was with the historic dynasty of the Comneni and about to

marry the ex-Empress, Margaret of Hungary would have been welcomed by the Greeks, whose support might have enabled him to weld together the conquered provinces into a homogeneous dominion, far from subservient to the republic, which preferred a dependent ally and a guaranteed monopoly of the eastern markets. At the same time so influential a factor could not be alienated without prejudice to the cause, while his strong hand and powerful adherents were sorely needed for the work of conquest still to be completed. Dandolo could control a majority of the electors. It behoved him, therefore, to provide such compensation for the unsuccessful competitor as would insure his loyalty to the settlement.

The twelve electors were locked into a chapel in the palace of the Doge until such time as they should be all agreed. The minority appear to have given way to the majority, and the bishop of Soissons was enabled to proclaim to the assembled knights and barons an unanimous decision in favour of Baldwin, Count of Flanders and Hainault. However resentfully he may have assisted at the proclamation of his rival, Bonifazio dissembled his jealousy and himself carried the imperial crown at the coronation which took place in St. Sophia on the 16th May 1204.

Letters notifying the new Emperor's accession were at once despatched to all the reigning houses of Europe and to the Pope, who was invited to proceed to Constantinople and preside over a council for cementing the union of the churches. But long before the messengers to the Vatican could have reached their destination, the Venetians, interpreting a clause in the preliminary convention to their own advantage, had taken possession of St. Sophia in spite of the protests of the Frankish clergy, and appointed thirteen canons from among their own priests, who elected a Catholic Patriarch in the person of Tommaso Morosini. The politic Innocent annulled these uncanonical proceedings, and then of his own authority invested Morosini, who within the space of a few days became deacon, priest, and bishop, with the vacant Patriarchate. He conferred exceptional powers upon him, but made it clear that these powers were delegated by the papal authority. The Venetians were dissatisfied with the deference paid to the Pope by the new Patriarch; the Franks were dissatisfied with an appointment which they ascribed to the diplomacy of their rivals; while the Greeks, according to Nicetas, were shocked at the selection of the obese and clean-shaven Italian, whose dress and appearance were abhorrent to the prejudices of eastern tradition. Nevertheless a new cardinal legate, sent to replace Peter of Capua, succeeded in reconciling the Franks to Morosini, who proved himself more zealous as a churchman than as a Venetian. The second highest ecclesiastical office in the imperial city was assigned as their reward to the Pisans, who were confirmed by Baldwin in their ancient commercial privileges.

If the election of an Emperor had jeopardised the union of the conquerors, the partition of the rich territories acquired by the fall of the empire still further alienated the rival leaders. By the preliminary compact the Emperor was to receive a quarter of the whole area as his domain, the remainder being divided between the Franks and the Venetians, while by subsequent negotiation all the provinces in Asia were assigned to the Marquis of Montferrat as the unsuccessful candidate for the throne. Bonifazio, who in virtue of his military command held himself entitled to all that portion which fell to the share of the crusaders, as distinct from the portions of the Emperor and the republic, now requested to be allowed to exchange the regions allotted him in Asia Minor for the kingdom of Thessalonica. The area thus described, which extended roughly from Mount

Haemus to Thermopylae, appeared to offer a more promising sphere of interest after his marriage with Margaret of Hungary, both because it afforded him in King Andreas a prospective ally for a neighbour, and because many of the Greeks reposed their future hopes in his stepson Manuel Comnenus, the child of Isaac's later years. To this proposal the Emperor, anxious not to break with the powerful Marquis, reluctantly consented.

Much of the act of partition is scarcely intelligible today; the names are distorted and in a great measure unrecognisable, and certain districts are omitted from mention altogether. It assigned to the Emperor as his domain, in addition to Constantinople, the Thracian territories immediately surrounding the city, extending to Agathopolis on the Bulgarian frontier to the north, and to Tzurulon and Selymbria on the south. To his share also fell a large number of the more important islands, some of which were subsequently abandoned to Venice, and finally the Greek provinces in Asia Minor, released by the exchange with Bonifazio, extending to the limits of the Seljuk kingdom of Iconium. The imperial domain was distributed in fiefs among the greater barons, French and Flemish, in Baldwin's own direct following. He assigned Adramyttium to his brother Henry, and the Duchy of Nicaea to Count Louis of Blois. The order of St. John also acquired fiefs in the neighbourhood of Pergamon. But the Frankish occupation never really became effective in Asia, where the spirit of the Greeks rallied under the auspices of Theodore Lascaris, and opposed a vigorous resistance to all attempts at invasion. The great offices of the empire were chiefly distributed among his Flemish followers, but Geoffrey Villehardouin, whose influence was justly great with all parties in camp, was appointed marshal of Romania.

The areas comprised in the fourth and the eighth part assigned to Venice dovetailed into the imperial domain and the territory of the crusaders in many places. Her title included the city of Adrianople, with a strip of territory extending to the Propontis and a coast-line from Heraclea to Aegospotami in the Chersonnesus; Aetolia, Acarnania, and Albania, with all the ports on the west; the provinces of Laconia and Calavryta, and the havens of Modon and Patras in the Peloponnese; the islands of Corfu, Zante, and Cephalonia; the Cyclades, Salamis, Aegina; and in Euboea, Oreos and Carystos. Crete was to fall into her sphere of acquisition by private arrangement. The extensive island dominion allotted to Venice was far greater than the republic was at first competent to take up, and the subjugation of Crete was destined to cause her considerable effort. Corfu she acquired after a hard struggle, but again relinquished to the Despot of Epirus, while Euboea, to which she did not at first urge her claim, was before long placed under her temporary overlordship by Ravano dalle Carceri, the conqueror of the island. But many years were to elapse before her supremacy there became effective. The other Aegean islands were placed at the disposal of whatever adventurous Venetians were prepared to conquer and occupy them. Availing himself of this liberty of action, a nephew of the illustrious Dandolo, Marco Sanudo, who had distinguished himself in the crusade, collected adherents and, sailing with eight galleys in 1206, took possession of Naxos and sixteen other islands after a sharp struggle with Genoese buccaneers. Once safely established in Naxos, where he built a palace and a Latin cathedral, he repudiated the tie of feudal subjection to Venice, and even attempted to make himself master of Crete. He was defeated by the Venetians, but suffered to remain in enjoyment of his island sovereignty. Sanudo's followers only did homage to the "Duke of Naxos," who at the parliament of Ravenika acknowledged the Emperor Henry as his overlord, and received full recognition of his title.

The remaining territories of the empire, comprising Macedonia, Thessaly, and central Greece, fell to Bonifazio and his partisans in the army, Lombards, Burgundians, and Germans, who were constantly loyal to the Franconian house of Montferrat. No direct mention is made of the Peloponnese in the act of partition, except as regards the provinces and harbours specially assigned to Venice. It had, however, been laid down that the unsuccessful candidate at the imperial election was to have the "Ille de Griesse," and the feudatories of Bonifazio, when they eventually took possession of the Morea, occupied certain districts there which the republic was entitled to claim. The disunion which had prevailed among the various elements of the old Byzantine empire facilitated the conquest of the European provinces, and Greece was easily reduced to subjection by Bonifazio when once he had established himself in Thessalonica. He did not, however, accomplish this without a violent dispute with the Emperor, which threatened to produce actual hostilities between the rival princes.

In the period of inaction ensuing on the taking of the city, consumed in the division of the spoil and the preliminaries of the imperial election, the Greeks had to some extent recovered from their panic. Alexius III had collected a considerable number of adherents at Messinople, while Murzuphlus, now married to the parliament of Ravenika, and other Venetians established themselves in Cerigo and Cerigotto. Patmos was left as a holy island in possession of its anchorites. The abbot Benedict of Peterborough who, in his life of Richard I., gives an itinerary of Romania, says that many of the islands were in those days uninhabited from fear of pirates.

Princess Eudoxia, dominated the neighbourhood of Constantinople as de facto Emperor. Baldwin and his brother took the field against him, leaving the Doge and Bonifazio to protect the capital. Thereupon Murzuphlus, resigning all claims to the imperial title, withdrew in the direction of Messinople, announcing his abject submission to Alexius, and praying for the ratification of his marriage. Alexius replied with fair words, and affected to recognise him as his son-in-law, but on his arrival he treacherously caused him to be blinded and expelled from the city, while the wretched Eudoxia, cursing her unnatural parent, followed the husband she had been forced to wed into exile. It was not long before he fell into the hands of the Franks, who tried him at Constantinople for the murder of their former ally Alexius IV. He was found guilty and executed with the utmost barbarity, being flung from the top of the column of Arcadius, a monument resembling that of Trajan at Rome, on to the marble pavement of the Forum of Taurus.

On the approach of Baldwin, Alexius fled in the direction of Thessalonica, whither the Emperor pursued him. The suspicions of Bonifazio were now aroused, and the insinuations of the Greeks, who hoped for a possible restoration of the dynasty of the Comneni in the person of his stepson, encouraged him to protest against the supposed menace to the independence of his kingdom. He haughtily summoned the Emperor to leave the conquest of Thessalonica to himself, and withdraw from its dependencies forthwith. Baldwin no less haughtily refused to comply, whereupon the Marquis with his Lombard, German, and Burgundian adherents seized Didymoteichon, and advanced against Adrianople, accepting homage from the Thracian cities. Baldwin meanwhile entered Thessalonica victorious, and having accomplished his object, once more marched northwards. Bonifazio lay encamped before Adrianople, which was held on behalf of the Emperor by his brother Eustace of Saarbrück. The situation was critical, and Villehardouin's diplomacy with difficulty effected a reconciliation. Accompanied by

Manasses de Lille, the Venetian Marco Sanudo, and the Veronese Ravano dalle Carceri, he sought out the Marquis in his camp and persuaded him to refer his grievances to the arbitration of Dandolo, Count Louis of Blois, and Conon de Bethune. At the same time the two Italians, entrusted with a secret negotiation by the Doge, arranged for a convention under which Bonifazio transferred his allegiance to the republic. Asserting an anterior claim to Thessalonica, as having been bestowed on his brother by the Emperor Manuel, and claiming Crete as a personal grant to himself from the Emperor Alexius IV, he now ceded these to Venice in return for the sum of 1000 silver marks, together with so much land on this side of the Bosphorus out of the Venetian sphere (*i.e.* in Epirus) as would bring him in an annual revenue of 10,000 gold hyperpers. The Marquis was eager to relieve himself from the obligation of doing homage to Baldwin, and the renunciation appeared to guarantee him the support of the predominant partner in future developments, as well as a sphere of activity on the Adriatic nearer his Lombard principality. The terms of the convention were, however, partially annulled by subsequent arrangements. Among the names of seven witnesses to this act appear those of Peccoraro and Giberto of Verona, who were shortly afterwards to divide with Ravano the conquered island of Euboea.

It was no easy matter to bring the angry Emperor to reason. Eventually, however, he also agreed to the proposed court of arbitration, which pronounced in favour of Bonifazio, who was confirmed in the title to his kingdom of Thessalonica, and with it to territories embracing practically the whole of the Greek mainland. The fortress of Didymoteichon was entrusted to Villehardouin to hold as a pledge until he had taken possession of these territories. Henceforth the fortunes of Greece are practically severed from those of the empire, and as it is rather with Greece in the more restricted sense that the. subsequent chapters are concerned, it will not be necessary here to follow the vain attempts of the crusaders to reduce the Asiatic provinces to subjection, nor to trace the rise of the neo-Byzantine kingdoms of Nicaea and Trebizond, and the growth of the Seljuk power at Iconium. It remains briefly to outline the story of the short-lived Frankish empire, and of the still shorter-lived Frankish kingdom of Thessalonica.

The reign of Baldwin was brief and disastrous. His Countess, Marie of Champagne, who had left her two infant daughters at home and followed her husband to the east, was waiting at Acre to join him. Immediately after his election Baldwin sent galleys to escort the Empress to her new throne, but after a lingering illness she breathed her last in the Holy Land, and the fleet which sailed with the good news to Acre only brought back to the disconsolate prince the stone sarcophagus, which he followed to the Cathedral of St. Sophia. Little leisure was left him for mourning. The dispute with Bonifazio threatened to involve the new empire in civil war before the conquest of the country was effected. No sooner had this cloud disappeared from the horizon, with the southward march of the Marquis through Macedonia into Greece, than the Greeks in Adrianople and Didymoteichon rose, drove out the Frankish and Venetian garrisons, and offered the imperial crown to Joannisa, Prince of Bulgaria and Wallachia, who, summoning his wild Tartar allies, the Comans of Scythia, hastened to support the Greeks.

The position became rapidly critical. Fortress after fortress fell into the hands of the Bulgarians and their savage mercenaries. All who were capable of bearing arms were summoned to the standards, and the troops which had crossed into Asia with Henry of Flanders were recalled in haste. Without waiting for their return, Baldwin, the most chivalrous of princes and loyal of friends, realising that Renier de Tritt was isolated in

Philippopolis, went out to meet the invaders, and laid siege to Adrianople with such scanty forces as were available. The Parthian tactics of the light Coman horsemen proved fatal to the Frankish chivalry, so formidable as long as their iron ranks remained unbroken. The Scythian mode of warfare was to provoke pursuit by a semblance of flight, and then to return in overwhelming numbers, and fall on broken groups of pursuers with a shower of deadly javelins. Count Louis of Blois, who had, in defiance of orders, followed a flying enemy over a space of two leagues, fell wounded and unhorsed. The Emperor hurried to his assistance, but the onslaught of his knights was broken by the terrible javelin showers, and many turned and fled. Baldwin himself long maintained the doubtful battle, and fought as gallantly as ever did knight hard pressed, but disaster overtook him. Count Louis perished with 300 more, and the Emperor was overpowered, wounded, and taken alive.

With difficulty Dandolo and Villehardouin, who had taken no part in this attack, rallied the demoralised army, and retreated by night marches, carrying the wounded with them. By good fortune they fell in with Pierre de Bracieux and Payen d'Orléans, hastening with 100 knights and 140 sergeants to join the Emperor before Adrianople. This welcome reinforcement constituted the rearguard until they arrived, closely pursued by Joannisa, at the strong city of Rhedestos, within whose walls they took refuge. Henry of Flanders also, hurrying back from Asia, had learned the fatal tidings, and joined the Doge at Rhedestos, where, with the exception of Bonifazio and his following, the whole of the crusading army now assembled. Henry was proclaimed regent in his brother's absence, and returned to Constantinople, leaving a garrison of Venetians at Rhedestos, and another of Franks at Selymbria. These two strong places, the capital, and Philippopolis, where Renier de Tritt still held out in desperate straits, were all that remained to the Frankish empire on the European side of the Bosphorus, while in Asia Lascaris had followed on the heels of the retreating army, and there also all seemed lost. In such dire case the regent despatched envoys to Rome, to France, to Flanders, and other countries of the west to crave for assistance in maintaining the Frankish empire.

A fresh misfortune followed. The venerable Dandolo, the master-mind and inspiration of this strange adventure, under whose controlling genius feudal Frank and republican Venetian had fought together in a common cause, worn out by the fatigues of this disastrous campaign, fell sick and died, after a brief illness, on the 1st of June 1205. If we must reject as mythical the testimony of certain biographers as to the phenomenal longevity of the glorious veteran, even the most moderate estimate formed of the age at which death overtook him in the field implies in his case a prolongation of physical and intellectual powers beyond the common lot of man. Raised to the supreme authority in Venice in 1196, at what might well have seemed the close of life, he combined the boldness of youth in conception with the wariness of long experience in the accomplishment of his design. What none had dared to contemplate, he not only planned but himself carried into practical execution, in spite of the double disability of years and blindness. His record is unparalleled in history. When time and death were already calling, he buckled on once more the armour of his youth, and dominating by his transcendent personality the councils of his allies, altered the face of Europe, and converted a mercantile republic into a great world-power by annexing more than a third of the empire. The greatest of Doges was appropriately laid to rest in the vestibule of St. Sophia, where his sarcophagus remained until destroyed by the Turks in 1453.

With the approach of summer, Joannisa evacuated the provinces he had overrun,

and threatened the kingdom of Thessalonica. A cloud of uncertainty hangs over the fate of the unhappy Baldwin. The Pope demanded his release from Joannisa, who replied that the Emperor had already died in prison. Whether he succumbed to his wounds, or was barbarously murdered by the savage Bulgarian Attila, as Nicetas asserts, remains a mystery. Many years afterwards an impostor arose in Europe, who, with a plausible tale of long captivity and ultimate escape, succeeded in convincing many that he was indeed the vanished prince. He was, however, eventually identified as one Bertrand de Bayns and ignominiously executed at Lille.

After his reconciliation with the Emperor, Bonifazio had occupied Thessalonica. Then he marched southwards, accompanied by his stepson Manuel, and invested his principal followers, who were to perform homage to him personally for their respective possessions, with the baronial fiefs which had fallen to the share of the army. He entered Thessaly, or Great Viachia as it was then called, through the Vale of Tempe, encountering little opposition. Velestino, the ancient Pherae, the land of King Admetus, was bestowed upon Berthold of Katzenellenbogen, Roland of Pisa became lord of Platamona, and the Thessalian plain was divided between two brothers from Canossa. An abortive effort at resistance, made by the fugitive Alexius III, who had allied himself with Leon Sguros, the powerful archon of Nauplia, was crushed. The crown regalia found in his camp were despatched to the Emperor at Constantinople, while the usurper himself was captured and banished to Sicily. On his way there, however, he managed once more to escape by bribing the captain of the Genoese galley on which he sailed, and made his way to Asia Minor, where his restless spirit for intrigue led him to associate himself with the Turks against his own son-in-law Lascaris, as whose prisoner he miserably ended his days. Bonifazio continued his successful progress southwards from Lamia to Thermopylae, where the archon Leon Sguros had prepared to contest his passage.

The title of archon appears for the first time in the Peloponnese in the ninth century. The archons were the chiefs of certain privileged families forming a kind of hereditary aristocracy, who represented public and local interests, which they upheld against the central government. The peninsula in the latter days of Alexius III had fallen into a state of anarchy, and the archon of Nauplia had risen to importance and semi independence. Profiting by the general confusion, his son and successor, Leon Sguros, had seized Argos, and established a kind of overlordship, which was recognised by the other archons of the Morea. Success widened the scope of his ambition, and he conceived the idea of uniting the Hellenes and breaking free from the empire. Notorious even in that age for cruelty and unscrupulousness, he had possessed himself by treachery of tire impregnable citadel of Corinth, and thence dominated the whole peninsula. The population of Athens, however, led by the heroic bishop, Michael Acominatos, brother of the historian Nicetas, withdrew into the Acropolis, and saw their city burned and their lands wasted with stoic composure, while issuing forth from time to time they successfully raided the invader's camp. Sguros renounced the hopeless attempt to storm the fortress, and marched northwards to Thebes, which surrendered without resistance. Meanwhile the empire had fallen. Advancing into Thessaly, he fell in with the fugitive Alexius III who, making a virtue of necessity, confirmed his former rebellious subject as ruler over the Morea and Continental Greece, the price of an alliance which he cemented by bestowing on him the hand of the often widowed Eudoxia in marriage. After the discomfiture of Alexius, Sguros retired before the advance of Bonifazio, and had taken up a position in the pass of Thermopylae to dispute the gate of Hellas to the Franks. But his ill-disciplined bands did not await the onslaught of the

victorious crusaders. His excesses and exactions in the hour of success had rendered him obnoxious throughout the districts he had overrun, and his retreating forces hurried demoralised through an unfriendly country back to the secure shelter of Corinth.

Bonifazio, on the other hand, was hailed as a deliverer by the long-suffering Hellenic population. Guido Pallavicini fortified himself at Bodonitza in Locris as warden of the marches of Thessaly. The margraves' castle, built within the girdling polygonal wall of an ancient citadel, still looks over the Gulf of Lamia, to Mount Othrys on the further side, commanding the southern entrance to the pass of Thermopylae. The family of St. Omer received fiefs in Doris, and Thomas de Stromoncourt became lord of Salona, the ancient Amphissa under the shadow of Parnassus. Jacques d'Avesnes crossed over to Euboea, constructed a strong castle at Chalcis, and received the submission of the island, which was divided into three baronies bestowed upon Ravano dalle Carceri, Peccoraro di Peccorari, and Giberto of Verona, who were known as Terzieri, or Triarchs. Before many years had passed Ravano dalle Carceri became sole master of the island, which he placed under the protection of Venice. The Triarchies were, however, restored under the auspices of Venice on his death in 1216. Athens surrendered peacefully to the Marquis, and was by him bestowed together with Thebes upon the Burgundian, Othon de la Roche-sur-Ougnon.

Bonifazio now marched to Nauplia, while Jacques d'Avesnes laid siege to Corinth, the population of which retired into the famous rock citadel, supplied with perennial water from the mysterious source of Pirene. Thence they made several successful sorties, in one of which Jacques d'Avesnes was severely wounded. The stout resistance here encountered eventually compelled the Franks to build a castle on the rocky ridge of St. Basilios to the south, cutting the communications by land between Corinth and Nauplia. This fortress, which they named Montesquiou, still stands conspicuous, if somewhat overshadowed by the majestic stronghold of Acrocorinth. It was while the Marquis was besieging Nauplia that Geoffrey Villehardouin the younger came in from his adventurous ride across the Morea, and proposed to his friend and liege Guillaume de Champlitte, with Bonifazio's consent, to carve out a principality with their good swords in the peninsula.

Meanwhile a new and hostile power had arisen in the west. Michael Angelus Comnenus was a natural son of Johannes Comnenus, who, as cousin to the Emperors, retained the government of Epirus and Thessaly throughout the reigns of Isaac II and Alexius III. On the fall of the empire he had attached himself to the Marquis of Montferrat, believing, as did many of the Greeks, that he contemplated the restoration of his stepson Manuel to the Byzantine throne. Bonifazio, hoping perhaps in the scramble for territory to bring under the influence of his kingdom of Thessalonica some of the western provinces which, in the partition, had been assigned to Venice, had sanctioned his marching with a band of adherents into Aetolia and Acarnania, to the assistance of the Governor of the Theme of Nicopolis, against whom, in the general confusion, the Albanians had risen in revolt. On his arrival in Nicopolis, where the governor had just been assassinated, he married his widow, a lady of the rich and influential family of the Melisseni, and collecting supporters as he progressed, constituted himself a sovereign prince under the title of Despot of Epirus. He established his capital at Arta, and dominated a region which extended from Durazzo to Naupactos or Lepanto. The Greeks rallied round the rising star of the bastard Angelus, who rapidly consolidated his dominions and threatened the Thessalian feudatories. But four years later when the Emperor Henry, after Bonifazio's

death, was setting in order the affairs of Thessalonica and reigned for a brief space supreme among the conflicting powers of the east, he deemed it prudent to negotiate. The able advocacy of Conon de Bethune, the imperial envoy, brought about a marriage between the Emperor's brother, Eustace of Saarbruck, and the Despot's daughter, who received a third of his dominions for dowry, while Michael consented to do homage to Henry as his liegeman. His opportunist allegiance was short-lived, for in the following year he entered into negotiations with Venice, in whose portion of the empire the bulk of his dominions lay. All these lands, together with Corfu which he had also annexed, he agreed to hold from the republic, taking an oath of fealty and guaranteeing the privileges and immunities of her citizens.

Bonifazio, threatened by this new power on his flank and unable to reduce Nauplia or the citadel of Corinth, learning, moreover, that the Bulgarians were raiding the kingdom of Thessalonica and that the situation in Thrace had become more critical, abandoned the Peloponnese to his Burgundian adventurers and hastened north once more. Joannisa, deserted for the time by his Scythian allies, who had carried their booty home, had in fact taken possession of Bonifazio's frontier fortress of Serra, which had been surrendered on favourable terms after his valiant lieutenant Hugues de Colemi had fallen in battle. The terms of the capitulation were, however, disregarded by the treacherous Bulgarian, who put the whole of the garrison to the sword, and advanced on Thessalonica. The hasty return of the Marquis and the Lombards forced him to raise the siege, and he next turned his arms against Philippopolis, where the Greek inhabitants embraced his cause, and forced Renier de Tritt, who held the city for the regent, to withdraw to the neighbouring fortress of Stenimachos. Here, surrounded by large masses of the enemy, with a mere handful of knights and sergeants, with no other subsistence than the flesh of their horses and such scanty provisions as they had hastily flung into the tower, he endured a memorable siege for upwards of a year.

Early in 1206 Joannisa, rejoined by his Coman cavalry, once more resumed aggressive tactics and marched against the Thracian cities. The frontier fortresses had been regarrisoned during the brief cessation of hostilities, but such scattered companies of men-at-arms were powerless to resist the hordes which followed the Bulgarian prince. In the neighbourhood of Rhusion a disaster befell the constable, Thierri of Dendermonde, and only ten of his hundred and twenty knights escaped from the battlefield to Rhedestos. Among the slain was André d'Urboise, who had been the first to scale the walls of Constantinople. Once more fortress after fortress was abandoned to the savages who devastated the rich lands of Thrace, and carried off the inhabitants into slavery. In a moment of unpardonable panic the Venetian garrison of Rhedestos suddenly withdrew to the capital, which was crowded with fugitives, and before long Vizya and Selymbria alone held out, defended by Anceau de Toucy and Macaire de Sainte Ménéhould.

Then a reaction began. Driven to desperation by the savagery of the Bulgarians and their allies, the Greeks entered into negotiations with the Frankish leaders for united action against the common foe. With this object they addressed themselves to Theodoras Vranas, who, wedded to Agnes of France, the sister of King Philip, had become more western than, eastern in sentiment, and had from the first thrown in his lot with the crusaders. The fief of Apros which had been allotted to him was in the hands of the enemy, and he himself was now in the capital with the regent. As a result of these negotiations Adrianople and Didymoteichon were made over to Vranas, and the Greeks prepared to

resist Joannisa who had laid siege to the latter fortress. Succour was urgently demanded from the capital, and Henry, with the scanty force still available, marched to the relief of the Greeks, while the papal legate proclaimed the war a holy one, and promised plenary indulgence to all who fell. Joannisa withdrew before the menace of this little band of veterans, which included nearly all who were left in the empire of the old heroes of the crusade. Adrianople received them with open arms, and the flying Joannisa was pursued five days' march beyond its walls. Meanwhile a flying column, advancing rapidly to Stenimachos, relieved the starving garrison of Renier de Tritt, who right joyfully rejoined his comrades in arms after a close siege of thirteen weary months.

From Renier de Tritt they for the first time obtained confirmation of Baldwin's death, and the parliament of barons decided to crown the regent Henry as his brother's successor. Leaving Vranas in command at Adrianople, he returned with the army to Constantinople, where the coronation took place on the 20th August 1206. He was twenty-nine years of age when he ascended the precarious throne which he so honourably held for ten years. No sooner had the army withdrawn than Joannisa reappeared and succeeded in taking Didymoteichon, which he razed to the ground. Once again the Emperor took the field, and once more Joannisa retired before him, the crusaders recovering much of the loot and many captives. It was during this expedition that Othon de la Roche appeared in the camp as ambassador from Bonifazio, to offer the Emperor the hand of Agnes of Montferrat, his daughter by his first wife, and to announce the arrival of the Marquis in Thessalonica. This alliance, which was gladly accepted, promised to unite all the surviving chiefs of the crusade in a common cause, and the date of the marriage was fixed for the ensuing winter, when the campaigning season should be over. In the meantime, while the Marquis retook Serra and re-established order in his kingdom, the energetic Emperor, freed for the moment from the immediate menace of the Bulgarian invasion, resumed the war in Asia, where his captains were confronted by the rising star of Lascaris, between whom and Joannisa a good understanding existed. After his marriage with Agnes of Montferrat, in February 1207, he took the field in person and compelled Lascaris, who was now threatened by the Seljuk Turks on the southern borders of Nicaea, to agree to a suspension of hostilities for two years. He then returned to Europe and, after a short campaign in which he carried his arms into Bulgarian territory, met the Marquis at Kypsela, and made arrangements with him for joint action against the common foe. Bonifazio did homage to the Emperor as his liegeman, and was returning to Thessalonica by way of Messinople, when his rearguard was attacked by a Bulgarian ambush. As he rode back to their assistance a pitiful fate overtook the most chivalrous of the crusaders. Mortally wounded by an arrow and abandoned in panic by most of his retainers, he was taken alive. His head was cut off and sent, a welcome present, to the Bulgarian king. With this disaster to the "best of barons and the most open-handed, the noblest of knights in all the world," the chronicle of his old friend and comrade-in-arms, Villehardouin, concludes, and Henri de Valenciennes takes up the tale.

Joannisa, the irreconcilable enemy of the Franks, did not long survive him. On learning the good news of Bonifazio's death, he marched on Thessalonica and was murdered in his tent, at the instigation of his own wife, by his general Monastras. After his death several Bulgarian princelings claimed their independence, and the kingdom no longer possessed the unity which had made it formidable. His nephew Boris, who succeeded to the larger portion of his dominions, was crushingly defeated by the Emperor Henry in the following year. Esclas or Swatislas, his most influential rival, made peace with

the Emperor, became his liegeman, and married his natural daughter, assuming the title of Despot. The winter of 1208 at length appeared to offer a good prospect of peace with external enemies, and the Emperor was free to turn his attention to the affairs of Thessalonica, where the attitude of the Lombard barons since the death of Bonifazio had given grounds for uneasiness.

The will of the Marquis had designated Demetrius, the infant son of his marriage with Margaret of Hungary, as his successor in Thessalonica under his mother's regency. William of Montferrat, his son by a former marriage, succeeded to the marquisate. The Lombard barons in Macedonia and Greece, however, realised that the tenure by which they held their new possessions was precarious, and that a strong man's government was still necessary to consolidate the kingdom, and secure the independence at which they aimed. The obligation to the Emperor which Bonifazio had finally accepted weighed lightly on these Italian nobles, who were more emancipated from feudal traditions than the Franks of the north and west. In Italy indeed the thirteenth century, which impressed the feudal method on the Byzantine dominions and especially on Greece, was to witness the triumph of the municipal system. They had invited William to come over and act as guardian for his step-brother, and when he showed little alacrity in complying with their request, constituted themselves a governing oligarchy under the direction of the constable Amedeo Buffa and Count Oberto Biandrate, whom they appointed bailie and guardian to the young prince. The spirit of independence thus displayed justified the apprehensions of the Flemings that both the rights of the infant Demetrius and the Emperor's claims to overlordship were endangered. By feudal usage the Marquis of Montferrat should have rendered homage for his step-brother within a prescribed term, and the parliament of barons at Constantinople maintained that in his absence the duty devolved upon the Lombard nobles to do homage in the infant's name, and so safeguard his rights and the Emperor's at once. Henry was therefore advised to proceed forthwith to Thessalonica and receive the homage due. In the meanwhile dissensions had broken out among the barons within the kingdom.

The Lombards rallied round Count Biandrate with the cry for independence; the Germans and the Burgundians, on the other hand, of whom the chief were Berthold of Katzenellenbogen and Othon de la Roche, strove to maintain the feudal bond with the empire. Dissension led on to open rupture, and the Lombards seized the city of Thebes and fortified themselves in the Cadmeia.

It was already late in the year when Henry set out with a small following for Thessalonica. The winter set in with unexampled severity, and instead of meeting with the hospitable entertainment due to him as an overlord visiting his vassals, the Emperor found the gates of castle and fortress closed against him by order of Count Biandrate, who denied him access to Thessalonica, whence all the partisans of the Flemings had been expelled. In vain the brave and eloquent Conon de Bethune, who proceeded on an ungrateful embassy, represented to the Lombards the desperate condition of the Emperor and his followers, lying exposed to the snowstorms in the open country, without provision or fodder for their horses; in vain he accused the Count of treason to his lord. Biandrate's only answer was to boldly proclaim the independence of the kingdom of Thessalonica and, as a preliminary condition before opening the gates, to demand the Emperor's recognition of a preposterous claim to all the lands between Dyrrachion and Megara, together with Corinth and the whole of the Peloponnese, and to overlordship over all the territories of Michael

Angelus.

The improvidence of the Emperor in starting on an enterprise of considerable uncertainty so inadequately equipped, had made it impossible for him either to withdraw with safety or to advance without accepting the humiliating conditions put forward by Biandrate. The clergy indeed were willing to absolve him from the obligations of any oath he might be driven to take under such compulsion, but he rather elected a subterfuge which relieved him from the temptation of perjury, and swore to observe the conditions imposed, provided they should be approved by the Queen-regent Margaret, an approval which Biandrate had full confidence he would be able to secure, and which Henry was equally convinced would not be forthcoming. A convention being duly signed, the Emperor was made welcome in Thessalonica. Four days later a parliament was held at which he was called upon by Biandrate to fulfil the stipulated convention. Henry, addressing himself to all the barons present individually, inquired of each of them whether they approved of the outrageous demands of Biandrate, with the result that only two or three had the courage to answer in the affirmative. Then, faithful to his word, he took counsel of the Queen-regent, who, freed from the terrorism which the bailie had exercised over her court, placed herself unreservedly in his hands, and revealed the plot which the barons had formed to disinherit the youthful son of Bonifazio. Thus the schemes of Biandrate were for the time frustrated, and the Emperor with his own hand knighted the infant Demetrius, and crowned him before the people. The bailie, however, who had taken the oath of fealty, and was allowed to remain in the position of governor to the young king, continued to intrigue in secret, and refused to deliver up to the Queen-regent the border fortresses which were in the hands of his camerilla. Biandrate was consequently held as a prisoner at Thessalonica and Berthold of Katzenellenbogen temporarily appointed regent.

So it came to an open rupture, the Emperor with his Flemings joining the Franks of Thessalonica in defence of the Queen against her rebellious Lombard barons who, under the constable Amedeo Buffa, were ignominiously defeated at the bridge of Larissa in Thessaly. Buffa then begged for a suspension of hostilities, and a parliament was summoned to meet in the interim in the valley of Ravenika, near Lamia, to which the Lombards and all the barons of the south were invited. Thither came Othon de la Roche and Geoffrey Villehardouin the younger, now bailie in Achaia for the absent Champlitte, who in 1208 had succeeded his brother in Burgundy. At this parliament he took the oath of fealty to the Emperor, and was created seneschal of Romania. Amedeo Buffa sought and obtained pardon, but Ravano, who had just offered the overlordship of Euboea to Venice, Albertino of Canossa and others of the Italian party declined the summons and fortified themselves in the citadel of Thebes, to which Henry was compelled to lay siege. After an obstinate resistance, Thebes was surrendered and restored to Qthon de la Roche. The Lombards did homage, and the liberation of Biandrate was made one of the conditions of peace. Not even then, however, did he trust himself in the camp at Thebes, but escaped to Euboea, where he organised a plot for the assassination of the Emperor on his approaching visit to the island. The conspiracy was detected and Ravano protected his imperial guest, who once more pardoned the irreconcilable Lombard and sent him back to Thessalonica, where the loyal Berthold kept him under observation till he withdrew to the court of Montferrat, only to intrigue at a distance against his too generous foe. After his departure the last recalcitrant Lombards took the oath of fealty, and the Emperor's overlordship was finally established throughout the Greek provinces. In order to place these feudal obligations on a permanent basis, to regulate the relations between State and Church, and fix a

bound to ecclesiastical encroachments, Henry assembled a second parliament at Ravenika in the spring of 1210. It was about this time also that Conon de Bethune succeeded in obtaining from the Despot of Epirus recognition of the Emperor's suzerainty. The internal disorders in the Frankish state were thus all composed, and the parliament of Ravenika opened under the most favourable auspices.

The remaining years of Henry's strenuous life were spent in alternate peace and war with Lascaris in Asia, in preserving his frontiers from the raids of the Bulgarians, and in curbing the growing ambition of Theodore Angelus, who, on the assassination of Michael in 1214, succeeded his illegitimate brother as Despot of Epirus. In 1216 Biandrate returned from Italy to Thessalonica, and supported once more by the fickle Lombards, claimed the regency in the name of William of Montferrat. In response to Queen Margaret's appeal the Emperor hurried to her assistance, but arrived on the scene only to die with mysterious suddenness in the flower of his age. His death was not unnaturally ascribed to poison, and the previous attempt upon his life affords strong presumption of the complicity of Biandrate, an adventurer of the type with which the cities of the Romagna have made us familiar.

It was no wonder that the news of Henry's untimely death filled the Franks and their partisans with dismay. In this neglected period of history but scanty justice has been done to the memory of this heroic and magnanimous prince. His firm but just government, his religious toleration, and the sternness with which he rebuked the persecuting spirit of the Roman hierarchy and curbed the extravagance of ecclesiastical pretension had secured for him even the suffrages of the Greeks. His loyalty claimed the devotion of his friends and commanded the respect of his enemies. Worthily upholding the great name of Emperor in the east, he succeeded in retrieving the apparently hopeless disasters which had overwhelmed his unfortunate predecessor and, on the chaos to which he had succeeded, he based the foundations of an organised feudal state. No child had been born of his marriage with Agnes of Montferrat. His only surviving brother, Eustace of Saarbruck, was apparently not legitimate, as, in spite of his presence in Romania, his claims to the imperial throne were never advanced, and the daughters of Baldwin were still young children. Yolande of Flanders, a sister of the Flemish princes, had married a rich and powerful French noble, Pierre de Courtenay, Count of Auxerre. His father was of royal birth, and one of his daughters had already married Andreas of Hungary. The claims of his wife and his own powerful connections, as well as the support of Pope Honorius III, who had succeeded to the tiara of Innocent, secured for him the approval of the electors. In the meantime the experienced Conon de Bethune was called upon by the barons to administer the affairs of the empire, which he governed with wisdom and moderation during the interregnum.

Pierre de Courtenay, however, was not destined to reach his capital. He pledged a portion of his lands in Europe to provide funds for the equipment of his levies, and leaving his young sons behind at Namur, accompanied the Empress Yolande and his daughters Agnes and Marie to Rome, where he was crowned by Honorius. Thence he proceeded to Brindisi, where a fleet of Venetian galleys awaited him. The Empress, already far advanced in her pregnancy, took ship for Constantinople direct, while the Emperor landed at Durazzo, where it was his intention to enact the oath of fealty from the Despot Theodore Angelus. It is not improbable that he had contracted with Venice to regain for her that important harbour, in return for the use of the fleet. His intention was to march overland

through Thessaly into Thrace. But treachery was innate in the blood of the Angeli. Theodore affected to receive him with every honour, and hastened to the imperial camp with professions of peace and friendship. But when the Emperor, with only a small following of knights, paid the Despot a visit of courtesy, the whole party were attacked and overpowered while sitting at meat. The loyal Eustace of Saarbrück here lost his life while defending his kinsman, and the papal legate, John Colonna, was made a prisoner together with the unfortunate Emperor, who ended his days in the Despot's dungeons. Honorius at once called upon Venice to combine with the King of Hungary and the Prince of Achaia in organising a punitive expedition, but the wily Despot hastened to conciliate the Vatican with specious promises, and after the timely release of the legate in the following year this difficult project was suspended. The imperial prisoner was abandoned to his fate by the Pope who had so recently crowned him.

The Empress Yolande received the news of this disaster at the court of the Prince of Achaia, where, pausing on her eastward journey, she had just married her daughter Agnes to his eldest son and heir. She at once hurried to Constantinople to assume the regency, and soon afterwards gave birth to a son, who bore the name of the first Frankish Emperor, and was himself destined to be the last. A worthy member of that strong race which had given so many lives to the cause, the Empress, guided by the sage counsels of Conon de Bethune, governed with vigour and ability, and concluded a treaty with John Lascaris, which was confirmed by his marriage to her daughter Marie. Count Philip of Namur, the eldest son of Pierre de Courtenay, renounced the precarious throne of the east, which the barons thereupon offered to his brother Robert, who, traversing Germany, Hungary, and Bulgaria without mishap, was crowned Emperor by the Patriarch in March 1221. The unfortunate choice of a prince, who, in addition to his youth and inexperience, was vicious in temperament and deficient in personal courage, decided the fate of the Frankish empire, which was also accelerated by the death in the following year of Lascaris, whose union with Marie de Courtenay had seemed to ensure the prospect of a lasting peace. His only son by a former marriage was still an infant, and the reins of government in Nicaea were seized by his son-in-law Johannes Dukas Vatatzes, an ambitious and irreconcilable enemy of the Franks.

The Latin kingdom of Thessalonica was, however, the first of the new feudal states to be recovered by the Greeks. The boy king Demetrius, who could now no longer rely upon the chivalrous arm of the Emperor Henry to defend his inheritance, had gone to Italy to crave for support from home against the encroachments of the Despot Theodore of Epirus, whose ambition now contemplated the extension of his dominions from sea to sea. Advancing during his absence, Theodore entered his capital almost without opposition, and proclaimed himself Emperor of Thessalonica in 1222. Emboldened by this success, he now aimed at the annexation of Philippopolis and Adrianople. But the population of the latter city had once more risen against the Franks, and in answer to their appeal to Vatatzes for assistance, troops from Nicaea had actually crossed the Hellespont without opposition from the impotent Emperor, and entered the fortress. The advance of Theodore's army on Adrianople, therefore, now brought him into conflict with the Asiatic empire, and his career of victory was further checked by the appearance in Epirus of William of Montferrat, who, accompanied by Demetrius, had crossed over from Brindisi with a powerful army to reconquer his brother's inheritance. He actually reached the plains of Thessaly, but there succumbed either to the fever of the country or the poison of the Angeli. With his death the force broke up, and Demetrius, unable to rally the vassals of Montferrat, retired to Italy

where he also died in the following year. No children had been born of the boy King's early marriage with a sister of the Lord of Athens, and by his will the empty title to the kingdom of Thessalonica devolved upon the Emperor Frederick II, who renounced it in favour of the reigning Marquis of Montferrat. Some sixty years later the Marquis William V ceded the title with the hand of his daughter to the Greek Emperor Andronicus II. The Frankish Emperors, however, as overlords upheld their claim to the titular sovereignty, and many aspirants in later years contended for this shadow of a name.

Theodore Angelus maintained himself in his new dignity until in the year 1230 he was defeated, taken prisoner, and blinded by the Bulgarian Johannes Asan. His brother Manuel succeeded, but during his reign Epirus was once more severed from Thessalonica. A son of the first bastard Angelus, named like his father Michael, emerged from concealment in the Peloponnese whither his mother had fled with him on his father's assassination, and made himself master of the old despotate. After the expulsion of Manuel by the partisans of the blind Theodore, who was released in 1240, Thessalonica declined to the position of a dependency of the empire of Nicaea, and the imperial title was dropped in favour of the less pretentious name of Despot. Four years later the short-lived kingdom, which had been acquired by the Marquis of Montferrat, was finally absorbed by Vatatzes.

While on the European side the Greeks were fast recovering ground, the Franks were also deprived of their last foothold in Asia by the energetic and resourceful Vatatzes. Tempted by higher pay from their attachment to a tottering cause, western renegades entered his service, and their military reputation inspired his armies with new confidence. One last attempt made by Robert to recover the remnant of his Asiatic dominions ended in a disastrous defeat, in which Macaire de St. Ménéhould, almost the last of the great fighting stock which had dismembered the eastern empire, found his death. Everywhere the star of the Franks was waning, and the race of giants was extinct. The minting of the coinage, the manifest prerogative of sovereignty, had passed by convention to Venice, whose Podesta had grown almost as powerful in Constantinople as the Emperor himself. It is even asserted by one historian that the republic had seriously considered the question of removing its seat of government from the lagoons to the Bosphorus. The degenerate descendants of the crusaders were occupied with pomps and pageantries, the lust of the eye which appears to be the fatal heritage of rulers in the imperial city. Robert, the unworthy successor of Baldwin and Henry, became involved in scandalous disputes with the knights of his court, and, impotent to maintain his dignity or authority, departed for Rome to lay his griefs before the Pope. He died on his return journey in 1228 at the court of the second Villehardouin in Achaia.

His brother Baldwin II, who succeeded, was a boy of ten years old. Narjaud de Toucy, the last of the crusading heroes who bore the old-world title of Caesar, governed in his name, but the precarious tenure of the Franks, and the prospects of a long minority, made some more permanent and authoritative arrangement desirable. The clergy and the barons were unanimous in inviting Gregory IX to negotiate with the veteran John of Brienne, ex-King of Jerusalem, who at that time commanded the papal armies, and was fighting against the Saracen mercenaries of his son-in-law Frederick II, with a view to his elevation to the rank of Emperor-regent for life. A convention accordingly drawn up between the barons and John of Brienne provided for the marriage of his daughter Marie to Baldwin, who would be regarded as heir to the throne, and provided for suitably by the

Emperor regent until he reached the age of twenty; fiefs were to be assigned to the Emperor-regent's heirs who would do homage for them to Baldwin. Two years passed in preparations, and at length the ex-King of Jerusalem arrived with an army of 500 knights and 5000 sergeants to defend the tottering throne. He was already eighty years of age, but his vigour and his great reputation, together with his heroic stature and the martial aspect which impressed the enervated Byzantines, appeared to justify the choice. Hostilities were soon afterwards renewed with Vatatzes, who had negotiated with Johannes Asan for a simultaneous attack upon the empire from the east and west, and in 1236 a powerful Nicaean fleet threatened the capital, while Asan advanced against the city by land. Venice, however, sent a fleet to assist the Emperor-regent, and Geoffrey II of Achaia also furnished a powerful contingent. The Franks were victorious both by land and sea; the Bulgarians were routed and the fleet of Nicaea was destroyed. But the difficulty of meeting the growing expenditure entailed by the employment of mercenaries with the vanishing revenues of the empire, increased year by year, and Baldwin, accompanied by Conon de Bethune, set out for Europe to endeavour to collect subventions for the Catholic cause, which was further imperilled by the antagonism of Frederick II, who in his desperate struggle with the papacy had embraced the orthodox church, and given his natural daughter in marriage to Vatatzes. In March 1237 John of Brienne died and Baldwin was summoned to return. When, three years later, he re-entered his dominions it was with considerable reinforcements which the charities of Rome and St. Louis had enabled him to collect. For a brief moment the star of the Latins appeared once more in the ascendant with the victories of Venice at sea, and the concentration of a new army in the capital. But the inevitable end was only for a brief interval deferred. The Frankish empire had depended for existence on the prowess and the personal character of the first conquerors. Their sons had grown degenerate. The heroic Conon de Bethune had died in Venice while endeavouring to equip a new fleet for the east, and the Cesar Narjaud de Toucy followed him in 1241.

During the suspension of hostilities Vatatzes, who felt that the throne of Constantinople was within his grasp, and could brook no rival to the purple, turned his arms against Thessalonica, which he first reduced to vassalage and finally absorbed. Once more the Emperor, with a treasury exhausted by the exactions of his army, appointed the son of Narjaud de Toucy his vicar and returned to Europe, pawning in his desperate straits the sacred relics of historic churches, which found a ready purchaser in St. Louis. The empire was nearing the climax of demoralisation. The scanty provinces were hopelessly impoverished; the Latin clergy had despoiled their benefices and departed to their own countries with the plunder; whatever could be pledged was pledged, Venice acting as the ready broker; whatever could be removed was sold. But still the coffers were empty and the army clamoured for payment, while the Emperor wandered round the courts of Europe begging alms for the support of his vanishing throne. So hopeless had the situation become that the Venetians, who had anticipated the reversion of the Frankish empire, were endeavouring to negotiate with the lords of the islands and the barons of Morea for the maintenance of a garrison in Constantinople.

Meanwhile Vatatzes, who had finally annexed Thessalonica, was cultivating friendly relations with Genoa, the great maritime rival of Venice, who could now hold her own in eastern waters and was bent on wresting the monopoly of trade from her ancient antagonist. But his ambition to restore the Greeks to Byzantium was cut short by his death in 1254, and Theodore Lascaris II, who had for two-and-thirty years been set aside by his

usurpation, at length succeeded to his father's throne. During the four years' reign of this infirm and inexperienced prince, Michael Palaeologus, a military adventurer of no mean ability, rose to power in Nicaea, and on his death usurped the throne, deposing and blinding his son, the young Emperor John Lascaris. He crossed into Europe to press on the war against Michael II of Epirus, in which, as will be seen in a subsequent chapter, Theodore had become involved, and defeating the *reiters* of Manfred and the chivalry of the Prince of Morea, who were both supporting the cause of their father-in-law, he made Villehardouin his prisoner, and thus deprived the Frankish Emperor of his most powerful vassal. Early in 1261 he definitively signed a treaty of alliance with Genoa which pledged that republic to carry on war with Venice and her allies, a step which sealed the fate of the Frankish empire. In July of the same year his general, the Caesar Alexius Melissenus Strategopoulus, at the head of a new expedition destined for Epirus, seized a favourable opportunity when the Venetian fleet with the best of the garrison had sailed away to Daphnusia, to divert his march, and entered Constantinople almost unopposed. The spiritless Baldwin, who had but lately concluded his last unprofitable mission to the west, attempting no defence, escaped ignominiously with the principal Latins on board the returning Venetian galleys to Euboea and thence to Athens. While a number of his followers established themselves in the Morea, he became a wanderer once more, making his way to Italy and eventually to France, endeavouring to secure assistance for the reconquest of the empire he had lost by alienating its provinces to powerful princes, and conferring a fictitious sanction to the sounding titles which they accordingly assumed. Of better promise for the recovery of his crown was a treaty which in 1267 he concluded with Charles of Anjou, who was then firmly established on the throne of Naples. In return for his promised assistance, Charles was invested with the overlordship of the principality of Achaia as well as of Epirus. He was to receive a third of all the territories recovered, and the reversion of the whole empire in the event of a failure of issue to Baldwin and his son Philip. But by that time Venice, after years of warfare in the archipelago, was ready to compound with the new dynasty in Constantinople, and hesitated to advance the ambition of the King of the Sicilies. Palaeologus was glad to ensure peace by recognising her claims in Euboea and her tributary islands, her possession of Crete, Coron, and Modon, and year by year the hopes of Baldwin melted away as he sank into insignificance as the pensioner of Charles at Naples, where he died in 1273. His son, Philip of Courtenay, to whom King Charles gave his daughter in marriage, succeeded to the empty honours of the imperial name. But he only survived his father ten years, and left no son. His daughter, who married Charles of Valois, son of Philippe le Hardi, inherited his title to the shadowy throne.

The Frankish empire of Romania had lasted fifty-seven years, when the Greeks regained the throne of Constantine. Depending solely on the prowess and prestige of a military caste, composed of heterogeneous and often antagonistic elements, with numbers hopelessly disproportionate to the enterprise in hand, it was from the first foredoomed to failure. Their temporary domination was sustained by no movement of western immigration, and the Franks in the east were always aliens in an alien land. A few years after the Greek restoration, there remained north of the marches of Thessaly but little trace of this ephemerally successful attempt to impose the crude social system of feudal Europe and the domination of Rome on a far older civilisation, and a church of equal if not greater antiquity.

CHAPTER III

THE CONQUEST OF MOREA— GEOFFREY VILLEHARDOUIN I AND GEOFFREY II

WHEN in the spring months of the year 1204 the report of the fall of Constantinople and the sack of the imperial city by an army of Franks, Lombards, and Venetians, whose fleet had peacefully traversed the island sea a twelvemonth earlier, was passed from mouth to mouth round the startled shores of Asia, and the feluccas of Cyprus brought confirmation of the incredible rumour to the Syrian ports, a number of those crusaders who had made their way independently to the Holy Land, or had abandoned the expedition when the counsels of Dandolo prevailed, seized the welcome opportunity of exchanging an unprofitable inactivity for a life of promising adventure, and took ship without delay to reinforce their former comrades. Among them was Geoffrey Villehardouin the younger, who, as soon as the tremendous news reached Syria, started with a small band of followers to join his uncle, the marshal of Romania, while there was still time to secure a share in the spoils of the empire. Boisterous weather drove him out of his course, and he with difficulty brought his disabled ship or ships to harbour at Modon, the south-westerly point of the Peloponnese. Before the necessary repairs could be effected winter was approaching, and he was once more delayed by the stormy seas which made the southern capes so formidable to early navigators. So it fell out that an unexpected opportunity presented itself.

The “Ille de Griesse” had passed through many vicissitudes since the palmy days of the Roman provincial system. It would be beyond the scope of the present work to investigate the obscure history of the barbarian invasions and the successive pestilences which in dark ages decimated the native population. The story is one of rapid decline. The policy of the eastern Emperors discouraged municipal development, and the middle or burgher class disappeared early. Landed estate, notwithstanding the efforts of Byzantium to preserve the tradition of a free yeomanry, accumulated in the hands of the privileged few. Towns dwindled to villages, and with a constantly decreasing population public spirit and local patriotism ceased to exist. Roads, bridges, and aqueducts were neglected and fell into decay. Communications in the mountainous land became difficult, and vast tracts of country fell out of cultivation. The bands of invaders which periodically overran the eastern empire—Huns, Avars, and Bulgarians—themselves often numerically inconsiderable, were accompanied by Slavonic auxiliaries or dependents, and many regions devastated by the passage of the raiders were colonised and repeopled by the Slavs who followed in their train. They appear to have also at various times migrated peacefully into the peninsula, and to have occupied extensive areas which had ceased to be inhabited or utilised for want of available labour. Thus they were alternately the oppressors or the vassals of the original inhabitants, who remained sheltered in the walled cities of the coast, until by the commencement of the eighth century they had occupied a considerable portion of the country without any serious opposition. In the year 747 a great pestilence

depopulated the east. The Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus asserts that at this period the inhabitants of the country districts in Greece and the Peloponnese became entirely Slavonic. The towns, however, probably continued to shelter their former population, and large drafts were made upon them to restore the gaps which the ravages of the plague had occasioned at Constantinople. The statement of the imperial authority is certainly too comprehensive, for in the year 783 the Slavs of Greece, who had assumed independence, were easily reduced by an army despatched by the Empress Irene, herself an Athenian by birth. Attempts on the part of these colonists to regain ascendency were not unfrequent, and in 807 they laid siege to Patras. The Greeks of the fortress were, however, able to defeat them, without waiting for Byzantine assistance, and, though victory was ascribed to the intervention of St. Andrew, it seems obvious that the besiegers were not really so formidable as the pride of patriotic historians represented them to be. A further rebellion was suppressed by the Empress Theodora, during the minority of Michael III. Her army reduced and imposed tribute upon the Ezerites, who lived in the valley of the Eurotas, as well as on the hitherto independent tribes of the Melings, who occupied the whole range of Taygetus, with the exception perhaps of the rocky promontory of Maina. Throughout the ninth century the Greek race revived both numerically and socially, but the coast-lands of Elis were still apparently at this period occupied by a Slav population, whom the epitomist of Strabo describes as Scythians. In the tenth century a further immigration of Slavs took place, and at this time, encouraged by the embarrassments of the central Government, the Melings and the Ezerites demanded and obtained the right of electing their own chiefs. When the crusaders marched in, the Melings were still masters in the mountains of Taygetus, and maintained their semi-independence, but the Slavs of Elis had been pushed back from the coast-lands into the mountain ranges of the interior, where they occupied a region known as Escorta, including the ancient Gortys of Arcadia, of which the name appears to be a corruption, and all the highland country north as far as the sources of the Ladon. The whole land must then have enjoyed a long period of rest, for if large areas were still uncultivated, trade and industry had revived in the coast regions. The invaders found the country rich in natural resources, and were soon able to collect an ample revenue without placing any undue burden on the people. The fact that such a populous city as Andravida had remained unwalled on the plains implies that it had come into existence during a period of prosperity and peace.

For many years before the Frankish conquest the inert Byzantine Government had only exercised a nominal control over such remote provinces as the Peloponnese, where a few wealthy families had established an acknowledged influence, and held letters of authority, constituting in the hands of their chiefs a kind of delegated supremacy. Relations of the imperial house had acquired vast estates as tenants of the crown, and the Melisseni, the Vranas, the Cantacuzeni held extensive districts on conditions not unlike those of feudal tenure. Already in the reign of Alexius III the powerful family of Sguros, whose seat was at Nauplia, was aiming at the foundation of an independent state, and after the fall of the empire the jealous primates, released from their common allegiance, began to quarrel among themselves in ineffectual rivalry for the reversion of the functions of government.

The achievements of the crusaders with a relatively small force made their name redoubtable throughout the east. The partition of the empire had begun to take practical effect, and Bonifazio had already set out on his victorious march through the southern provinces. Villehardouin, with a small following of these formidable Frankish adventurers,

appeared a valuable ally, and one of the most influential primates or archons of Messenia invited his co-operation in a joint enterprise for the conquest of the Peloponnese. A compact was duly signed between them, and the western coastlands, the fertile plains of Elis and Achaia, were rapidly brought under subjection. The few troopers of which Villehardouin could dispose seem ludicrously inadequate for such an enterprise, but the Peloponnesians were at this time not only ignorant of the arts of war, but were also unprovided with defensive armour, and therefore no match for the mailed soldiers of the west. From his small force it was practically impossible to provide detachments for the fortresses which he secured. How few men sufficed to hold a castle in the days when siege trains could only be moved with difficulty, and that where water carriage was available, the subsequent narrative will illustrate. But even such small outposts could ill be spared, and he was obliged to depend largely on native levies for garrison duty. Early in 1205 his Greek confederate, who had kept faith with him, died, and his son denounced the compact. The garrisons of the castles then declared against him, and he found himself virtually isolated in a hostile country. The eastern Peloponnese was in the hands of Leon Sguros, who was now actually at war with the crusaders, and Villehardouin's position appeared to be desperate indeed. He therefore determined on a bold course. Having learned that the armies of the King of Thessalonica were engaged in the siege of Corinth and Nauplia, he gathered his followers together, and rode in great peril for six days through the enemy's land to the Lombard camp, where he arrived in safety, and was received with honour and regard.

At Bonifazio's headquarters he found Guillaume de Champlitte, a personal friend, and one with whom moreover Villehardouin, as a nobleman of Champagne, felt himself connected by ties of feudal obligation. To him he confided his experiences in the Peloponnese, and his conviction that a small body of men could there make themselves masters of a most desirable inheritance. "I am come", he said, "from a right good country which they call *Mourée*. Take such men as you can muster, and leave this army; let us go with God's help and conquer it, and whatsoever portion of the lands that we may acquire you shall deign to give me, I will hold of you and be your liegeman for them". The proposal commended itself to Champlitte, who sought and obtained the sanction of Bonifazio, nothing loth to see the undue share which Venice claimed in the partition of the empire diminished by the effective occupation of his own adherents. So with upwards of a hundred knights in their train, and an imposing body of sergeants, Champlitte and Villehardouin set out for Patras.

In his history of the conquest of Constantinople the marshal of Romania has described the first attempt of his nephew to establish himself in the Morea, his arrival in the camp, and his proposal to Champlitte. The Chronicle of Morea, written certainly a hundred years later, when the early adventures of the conquistadors had passed into a mythical stage, is of little historical value for this portion of the story. It introduces Champlitte himself as arriving in the Peloponnese directly from the west, whereas he had taken part in all the earlier phases of the crusade, and represents Geoffrey Villehardouin, who had been in Syria, as having accompanied the army of Bonifazio, evidently confusing him with his uncle the marshal. For subsequent events, when Champlitte and Villehardouin together undertook the conquest of the Morea, the account of the chronicle must be accepted for want of a better authority. It no doubt placed on record the popular tradition of a hundred years later, and from this evidence, from a few brief indications in the history of the elder Villehardouin and from the correspondence of Innocent III, the

story of the conquest has to be reconstructed.

They set out from Corinth, where a portion of the crusading army under Jacques d'Avesnes was besieging Leon Sguros, and it was perhaps in consequence of the withdrawal of so considerable a force that the latter made a successful sortie, wounding d'Avesnes and killing a number of his followers. Working their way along the southern shore of the gulf and encountering no resistance, they marched beneath the terraced plateau of Sicyon, under the shadow of Cyllene, into the fertile sea plain of Aegion or Vostitza, where the fair anchorage afterwards suggested the establishment of the headquarters of a feudal barony. They looked across the waters to Helicon and great Parnassus lifting their storied crests in vain. For no thrill of old association woke response in these rude soldiers of the west, to whom the Greeks were heretic "griffons," and the Hellenes of old, who had crowned the heights with wall and tower, passed for the giant races of an earlier world. Little recking of the memories that harbour in these immortal hills, they marched on through vineyard, cornfield, and olive grove towards Patras, one of the twelve strong cities of the Morea, which might oppose their advance.

At the head of the troop ride the two leaders, accompanied by a small band of prelates, intent rather on the prospect of benefices than the winning of souls, and scarcely distinguishable by their habit from the lay soldiers. They are in the enemy's country, and march armed to meet any eventuality. Each knight is dressed from head to foot in a close-fitting suit of mail, the coif or hood of steel covering the head, and leaving only the features exposed. His casque, a vizored, flat-topped headpiece, to be worn over the coif, hangs at the saddle-bow, being too weighty for use except in actual fight. Over his mail is a surcoat, embroidered on the chest with the arms of his house, and on the shoulder with the emblem of the cross. A long, straight sword, and a short sword for use at close quarters hang from the waist-belt, and the shield or target, small and triangular in shape, also blazoned with his escutcheon or distinguished with the cross, is carried with his lance by an attendant on foot. The sergeants follow the knights to whom they are attached. Their mail, inherited or acquired as it may be, is generally less complete, and bears the stamp of an earlier time, before the art of the armourer had developed its highest skill in the adaptation of steel. Some are mailed only to the knee, others wear the short-sleeved byrnie of many years ago, but almost all have the coif on the head. Others again are complete in mail to wrist and ankle, but only the outer side is thus sheathed, and on the unexposed side the links are laced together with leathern thongs. Some of the poorer adventurers have no mail at all, and only wear the thick gambeson or pour-point, a padded and quilted garment, which, though generally worn under the mail, was in itself sufficient to turn a sword-cut.

Patras offered no resistance. The castle, the existing remains of which are ascribed by local tradition to Villehardouin, was garrisoned, and the invaders, marching on across the maritime plain of Achaia, with its low-lying marshes and forests of oak, turned south and entered the rich province of Elis, famous in the days of Pausanias for its fruit, hemp, and flax, and for the cultivation of the silkworm. The open town of Andravida, situated in the centre of the plain, was the most populous and thriving in the region which the Franks designated Morea. Like Patras it submitted voluntarily to Champlitte, who, raising native levies, continued his southward march along the seacoast, starting from the port of St. Zaccaria, in the northern angle made by the bold square promontory known to the ancients as Chelonatas, which afterwards became the chief harbour of the principality under the name of Clarenza. A portion of the force at the same time took ship there with the heavy

baggage and engines of war. The castle of Pondicocastro, which commands the bay of Catacolo, north of the mouth of the Alpheius, was next garrisoned, but the strong fortress of Arkadia, the ancient Cyparissia, was left unchallenged for the present, as there was no good anchorage for their ships. Advancing by port Junch or Zonklon, the ancient Pylos and modem Navarino, the whole force at length assembled at Modon, where Villehardouin had disembarked on his first visit to the Morea.

The defences of Modon had been destroyed by the Venetians nearly a century earlier, because the little harbour on their highway to the east had become a refuge for pirate craft. The Franks now restored its fortifications, and storing their supplies and artillery, made it their headquarters. The present picturesque walls of Modon and the hexagonal castle, at the point of a long tongue of land which projects into the sea towards the island of Sapienza, belong to the period of its second occupation by the Venetians.

The ease with which Champlitte possessed himself of the strong places in the west of the peninsula, and reduced to submission the country which Villehardouin had won and lost again, was mainly due to the judicious conditions which were everywhere offered to the local inhabitants, who were invited to sit on joint commissions with the Franks for the apportionment of real estate. Established titles to property were generally respected; the tenantless lands and the old state domain were apportioned among the Franks, while in certain cases the seigniorial revenues of lands cultivated by the peasantry were divided between Greeks and Franks. The poorer classes, moreover, who had long suffered under the tyranny of the primates, were not indisposed to welcome the new lords, to whom they looked for protection from further oppression. But in the meanwhile the Peloponnesians of the central plateau, alarmed at the rapid progress of the crusaders in gaining the allegiance of the Greeks, united to oppose their further progress in obedience to a summons from the Despot Michael of Epirus, who himself contemplated the annexation of the peninsula to his dominions.

The Moreote army was composed of men from Lacedaemonia, Nikli and Veligosti in the plain south of Megalopolis, who were joined by a force of Epirote cavalry from across the gulf. They concentrated five thousand strong, horsemen and footmen, in the lowlands of Messenia. The Franks, who marched from Modon to meet them, could only oppose five hundred men to this formidable array, but the quality of their mailed and disciplined soldiers rendered them more than a match for ten times the number of untrained levies. Their Greek allies reported all the enemy's movements, and guided them with perfect loyalty. The two armies met in the olive groves of Condura, where the Greeks were all but annihilated, their horses and much booty falling into the hands of Champlitte, who returned in triumph to Modon. Michael withdrew with a remnant of his horsemen to Epirus, and resigned all further attempts to annex the Morea. This was the only serious opposition encountered in the first stage of the occupation.

The important coast town of Coron, the ancient Asine, and Calamata on the Messenian gulf next surrendered to Champlitte, who bestowed the latter as a baronial fief on Villehardouin. His Greek advisers then urged the occupation of Nikli and Veligosti as a basis for operations in Laconia. Villehardouin, however, who always appears as the prudent counsellor, perceived the danger of a further advance until the Franks had taken the strong castle of Arkadia in their rear, and had secured the defiles of the Gortynios, a torrent tributary of the Alpheius, the gate of the wild Arcadian highlands, inhabited by

Slav colonists. These Slavs of Gortys, or Escorta, had made terms with the invaders soon after their occupation of Patras, but a fortress called Oreoklovon or Araklovon, north of the pass, was still held by a soldier of reputation, a certain Doxapatres of the Laconian family of Boutzara. The advice of Villehardouin was adopted, and detailing sufficient men to invest Araklovon, Champlitte marched overland to Arkadia, which made some resistance. The castle, raised on the foundation of an old Hellenic citadel, with a great tower built "by the Giants", was too strong to carry by assault. The Franks therefore prepared their mangonels and trebuchets to batter down the walls, whereupon the defenders came to terms as the other Moreotes had done, and surrendered the fortress on condition that their property was secured to them. Arkadia was conferred, like Calamata, on Geoffrey Villehardouin. The chronicle tells us little about the conquest of Escorta and the advance up the valley of the Gortynios, but a reminiscence of the taking of Araklovon is preserved in a local tradition of the district, which records the passion aroused in Champlitte by the "Maid of Carytena", the daughter of Doxapatres, who, attempting to escape disguised as a servant among the fugitives, was recognised by a valuable ring which she had neglected to remove. Immured by the conqueror in the castle he had taken from her father, and refusing to yield to his advances, she was flung from the tower and dashed to death on the rocks below. The castle of Araklovon was renamed Bucelet by the Franks, and after the conquest of Escorta it was included in the barony of Carytena, designed to hold in allegiance the Slavs of these mountains on the southern side, while to the north they were overawed by the great barony of Akova or Matagriffon.

It was probably not until after the final subjugation of the mountains of Arcadia and the establishment of his principal adherents as barons in the conquered regions that Champlitte ventured to adopt the unwalled town of Andravida as his capital. From the scanty evidence at hand it is not possible to determine the extent of territory which he himself annexed or the precise sequence in which the annexations took place. We learn, however, from Venetian records that in the year 1206, the weak garrisons left by the Franks in Modon and Coron on their advance into the interior were driven out by Riniero Dandolo, son of the great Doge, and Ruggiero Premarini, who, after taking possession of Corfu, sailed on to vindicate the claims of the republic in the peninsula. In the following year Champlitte and Villehardouin returned to dispute their occupation, and Venice, now engaged in the conquest of Crete, could ill spare men to maintain a precarious foothold in the Morea. Nor is it possible to ascertain with certainty, owing to the inconsistencies of the only available record, the period at which the Franks became masters of Veligosti and Nikli, the former an important but open town in the central Arcadian plateau, the latter occupying the site of the ancient Tegea. The chronicle mentions these two places as the headquarters of baronies established by Champlitte before his departure from Greece in the spring of 1209, together with a third barony still further to the east, which derived its name from Geronthrae, beyond Sparta. On the other hand, Villehardouin is represented, though only in the Greek text, as the hero of the conquest of Veligosti, Nikli, and Lacedaemonia, after the departure of Champlitte. It would seem, therefore, either that the list of baronies which Champlitte is explicitly stated to have confirmed must in reality belong to a rather later period, or else that the author's partiality led him to attribute to Villehardouin alone successes which were achieved under their joint auspices. Champlitte was upwards of three years in the Morea, and the importance of seizing these strategic points had been urged upon him immediately after the taking of Calamata, up to which time his progress had been practically unchecked. The chronicle, moreover, distinctly states that after the fall of these three places there still remained Corinth, Argos, Nauplia,

and Monemvasia to subdue before the conquest of the peninsula was completed, and from Henry de Valenciennes we learn that Villehardouin was actually laying siege to Corinth when he was summoned by the Emperor Henry to the parliament of Ravenika in May 1209, only a very short time after the departure of Champlitte. There is therefore good reason to assume that the central and south-eastern portions of the Peloponnese had already been at any rate partially annexed, and that outposts had been established there before Villehardouin took over the stewardship for his absent lord.

At the end of 1208 or the beginning of 1209 messengers arrived from France to announce to Guillaume de Champlitte the death of his brother Louis who, upon the decease of Eudes in Constantinople, had succeeded to the family estates. His own sons whom he had left behind in France being minors, it was necessary for him, in accordance with feudal usage, to appear within a prescribed term in person before his liege lord, and make good his claim to the barony of Champlitte. He therefore appointed his nephew Hugh to act as bailie or vicar in his absence, and sailed early in 1209 for Apulia, where he fell a victim to the fever of the country and died soon after landing. His nephew also died within a few weeks of his departure, and the new state, Achaia, was left without a head.

Villehardouin, who had not only been the first to land in the peninsula, but had inspired the enterprise which his sword and counsel had also successfully sustained, was obviously the man of the moment. Lord of Calamata and Arkadia, with territories extending to Coron and Modon, from which Venice had again withdrawn, he was master of nearly the whole of Messenia, and the most powerful of the Moreote nobles. Bonifazio, under whose auspices the conquest had been made, had died in 1207, and Villehardouin now seems to have entered into negotiations with Henry of Flanders, who was actually at open war with the rebellious Lombards of Thessalonica, and to have secured the Emperor's recognition and support by an offer of allegiance, inasmuch as he was summoned to the parliament of Ravenika, where his barony was confirmed to him, together with the appointment of seneschal of Romania. It is also probable that the other nobles in Morea selected him to undertake the duties of bailie after the death of Hugh, and readily countenanced the subsequent usurpation of one whose able government had already secured him the suffrages of the Greeks. In any case, within a year of his appointment to be seneschal, he succeeded in disinheriting the heirs of Champlitte, and was referred to as a prince of Achaia in the letters of Pope Innocent III.

The account given in the chronicle of the first feudal settlement of the country and the manner in which Villehardouin secured the principality is certainly not throughout historical, but it undoubtedly has a foundation of truth, and is well worthy of study on account of its intrinsic interest and of the picture it affords of the feudal practice of the time. In substance it is as follows:—

Before returning to France Champlitte determined to set his principality in good order, and parcel out the conquered territory. He accordingly appointed Villehardouin president of a mixed commission, consisting of two bishops, two Frankish nobles, and four Greek archons, who were to define the domain of the prince, the areas of the great baronies, and the estates assigned to bishoprics, abbeys, and the military orders. In the proposed settlement Villehardouin is represented as having excluded himself from all participation. But Champlitte, addressing him in a panegyric in which he is confounded with his uncle, the marshal of Romania, bestows Calamata and Arkadia upon him and his

heirs, and further appoints him bailie during his absence, with the express condition that if any member of the house of Champlitte shall arrive in the Morea within the term of a year and a day, the principality shall be handed over to him, and Villehardouin shall be his liegeman. Should no relative duly deputed arrive within the limit of time prescribed to claim the government, it should devolve upon Villehardouin absolutely. The various enfeoffments which had been agreed upon were then sealed by Champlitte with his own seal, and this done he took his departure.

Villehardouin thereupon assembled a parliament at Andravida to register the fiefs bestowed, to define the conditions of servitude, and ascertain what claims remained to be satisfied. The following baronies and enfeoffments had been confirmed by Champlitte:—

(1) Matagriffon, with twenty-four knights' fees, to Gautier de Rosières;

(2) Escorta, with twenty-two knights' fees, to Hugues de Bruyères;

(3) Patras, to Guillaume le Alemant. The important city was in lieu of other fees;

(4) Calavryta, with twelve knights' fees, to Othon de Tournay;

(5) Vostitza, with eight knights' fees, to Hugues de Charpigny;

(6) Nikli, with six knights' fees, to "Messire Guillaume";

(7) Veligosti, with four knights' fees, to Mathieu de Mons;

(8) Passava, with four knights' fees, to Jean de Neuilly;

(9) Gheraki in Laconia, with four knights' fees, to Guy de Nivelet;

(10) Gritzena, with four knights' fees, to "Messire Luc";

(11) Chalandritza, with four knights' fees, to Audebert de la Tremouille. Calamata, which with Arkadia had been bestowed upon Villehardouin, must be added to bring up the total to the traditional number of twelve baronies, whose lords were peers of the realm.

The Metropolitan of Patras received eight knights' fees; the bishops of Coron, Modon, Veligosti, Nikli, and Olenos, four respectively. To the orders of the Temple, the Hospitallers of St. John, and the Teutonic knights, a similar number were severally assigned.

All these concessions, together with the single fees granted to individual knights and sergeants, he caused to be entered in a register. The barons holding cities or great baronies were required to furnish a knight and two sergeants, for each fee of which they seised. The lesser barons, holding only four knights' fees, owed body service with a knight and twelve sergeants, and every knight seised of a single fee owed body service for that fee, as did every sergeant for his sergeantry. Military service was theoretically constant. Four months were to be spent in garrison duty, and four in the field, while during the remaining four the feudal vassal, though free to live on his property, was bound to obey any call to arms

which his lord might make. The bishops and military orders were excused garrison duty, but were otherwise under similar obligations as regarded active service. They were also called upon to assist in the internal administration, though not required to sit as judges for murder and crimes of violence.

This business concluded, Villehardouin resumed the offensive, taking possession of Veligosti and, after a stout resistance, of Nikli and Lacedaemonia, the two former of which had, however, according to the register of fiefs, already been distributed as headquarters of baronies by Champlitte. He also despatched troops to Helos, Vatica, and Monemvasia.

By his achievements not less than by his moderation in success he won the hearts of the people, who loved and esteemed him above their real liege lord, and his popularity led him into temptation. Many came and besought him to keep the land for his own, and listening to their persuasive words, he grew deaf to the voice of conscience, and was led to covet the glories of this world rather than the salvation of his soul. He accordingly despatched messengers to his friends in France and in the various ports of embarkation, charging them, if the Count of Champagne should send any member of his family to Romania, to find some pretext for delaying his journey until the term appointed had expired.

Meanwhile his liege lord had been received by the French King in Paris, where he was celebrating the feast of Pentecost with the twelve peers of his realm. Withdrawing to his own country, he took no steps for eight months to safeguard his possessions in Romania, having perfect confidence in the loyalty of his bailie. At length, however, he summoned his cousin Robert, and bestowed the land of Morea upon him, to hold as his liegeman. But November had already come before he despatched him on his journey, furnished with the necessary letter for Villehardouin. The snows had already blocked the Alpine passes, and he was delayed a whole month before he crossed the Mount Cenis, and made his way through Lombardy to Venice, where he was received with great ceremony. But Geoffrey had been in negotiation with the Doge, and two more months were lost before the vessels which were to escort him could be ready. When at length they got to sea, the captain of his galley received secret instructions to call at Corfu, and as soon as his passengers had gone ashore, to weigh anchor and sail for Crete. Accordingly, when that port was reached the master pretended that he had cargo to discharge, and Robert landed to pass the night in the castle. Under the cover of darkness the galley slipped away and made for S. Zaccaria, now renamed Clarenza by the Franks, whence messengers were despatched to warn Villehardouin of his rival's approach. It was only after great difficulty, and still further delay, that Robert secured a passage to S. Zaccaria, in an Apulian ship. By this time Geoffrey, who had provided for all eventualities, had left his capital at Andravida for la Glisière, whence, as soon as Robert had landed, he withdrew to Calamata. On his arrival at Andravida the harassed pretender became aware of the conditions of Villehardouin's stewardship, and realised that only a few days were left him in which to claim his rights before they escheated to the crafty bailie. Demanding horses and an escort from the governor of Andravida, he set out with all possible expedition for Calamata. But the elusive Villehardouin had already left for Veligosti, whither Robert followed him, growing hourly more indignant, only to find that he had just withdrawn to Nikli, whence he had to be once more pursued to Lacedaemonia. No sooner, however, had the period imposed in the letter of appointment expired, than Geoffrey rode out to meet Robert of Champagne with a numerous following of nobles and prelates, omitting none of the

ceremonial courtesies due to the kinsman of the Prince. But when the latter produced a letter, witnessed by the King of France, according to which the bailie was required to hand over to him the reins of government, Geoffrey drew forth his own letter of appointment, showing by its date that his term of stewardship had expired a week before, and that since no claimant had appeared within the prescribed limit of time, the principality was his by the free gift of Champlitte. He declared himself, nevertheless, ready to submit the issue without prejudice to the decision of the nobles there assembled, a proposal to which Robert could not well demur. The court of arbitration, after some discussion, pronounced that the law was the law, and since it had been laid down that any claimant representing Champlitte must appear within a specified term, and that term had been allowed to expire, Count Robert could no longer claim the country, which belonged of right to Messire Geoffrey and his heirs. The decision was final; and he, seeing that it might no better be, prayed for a safe-conduct to return to his own country. He was escorted in great state to Andravida, whence, all things being arranged for his journey, with rich gifts and ample monies to defray his costs, he departed and returned to France.

Such is the story of the chronicle, a medley of truth and fiction. There is, in the first place, the obvious inconsistency to which attention has been drawn that it assigns the conquest of certain areas to Villehardouin after the departure of Champlitte, and at the same time includes them in the list of baronies distributed under the seal of the latter. In the second place, the circumstances attending the departure of Champlitte, and the stewardship conferred upon Villehardouin, as here narrated, must certainly be rejected as not historical. A letter of Innocent III, written in the thirteenth year of his pontificate, states, on the authority of the bishop of Patras, that a certain Hugues de Champlitte, or Champagne, was appointed bailie on the departure of his relative, and in that capacity bequeathed, on his deathbed, certain lands to the church at Patras, a bequest which it appears from the same letter was afterwards confirmed by Villehardouin. The death of this Hugh de Champlitte must have followed very closely after the departure of William, whereupon Geoffrey, either elected by the barons or stepping into his place as the most powerful noble of the Morea, became bailie, and as such was summoned by the Emperor Henry to attend the first parliament held in Ravenika. Geoffrey was, according to Henri de Valenciennes, at this time engaged in besieging Corinth, for since the return of Bonifazio to Thessalonica, the blockade had apparently been left to the Moreote adventurers. Leon Sguros, stubbornly holding out in his impregnable citadel, had died in the course of the previous year, and the Despot, Michael of Epirus, the sole independent champion of the cause of the Greeks in Europe, sent his brother Theodore to stimulate the defence of the Isthmus. The energetic Villehardouin had consequently proceeded thither to conduct operations in person. He however attended the parliament, accompanied by Othon de la Roche and Gautier des Tombes, with a retinue of sixty knights, and there received the honorary title of seneschal of Romania, and became the Emperor's liege-man for his fiefs in the Morea. The presence of the elder Villehardouin, the marshal, in the imperial camp no doubt assisted in furthering his nephew's ambition, and the unyielding attitude displayed on this occasion by the Lombard barons made it essential for the Emperor to secure the allegiance of the powerful bailie.

From Ravenika Geoffrey hurried back to Messenia to meet the Venetian conservator Raffaele Goro, who awaited him in the island of Sapienza, off Modon. A compact was then negotiated, subject to the ratification of the Doge Ziani, by which Villehardouin, in return for a guarantee that his pretensions would be supported by Venice, practically recognised

her overlordship over the whole of the Morea up to Corinth, and agreed to do homage to the Doge. By the terms of this curious document he undertook to become a Venetian citizen, to own a house in the city, and send every year two silken robes to the church of St. Mark and another to the Doge, to have the same friends and foes as the republic, whose citizens were accorded immunity from taxation and a residential quarter with church and curia in any city in which it might be claimed. He further undertook to conquer at his own expense the whole of Laconia, which the partition treaty had assigned to the share of Venice, and of which only a small portion had as yet been annexed. A quarter of the province was to be transferred to the republic, as were also the Messenian ports of Modon and Coron, with the territories appertaining to them, exclusive of church lands already assigned. The surrender of Modon and Coron actually took place. But the other stipulations of the convention, if it was ever ratified, do not seem to have been made effective. For the moment, however, it was of undoubted value to the ambitious bailie. The pretensions of Champlitte had never been recognised by the Doge, who claimed the Peloponnese under the act of partition. In accepting the investiture of Venice, Villehardouin legalised his position there, and could dismiss from his mind any further obligation towards the heirs of Champlitte. So much historical basis at any rate exists for the story elaborated in the chronicle.

There can be little doubt moreover that, when the news of the death of Champlitte and of the bailie appointed by him reached France, steps were taken by the family to vindicate the claims of his children. Villehardouin, however, counting on the support of the Emperor Henry, and at the same time guaranteed by his treaty with Venice, was able to set these claims at defiance. The author of the chronicle offers a formal justification for an usurpation which he cannot morally defend, and it is possible that some such quibble of feudal usage was actually pleaded as a pretext. In view of the precarious tenure of the Franks in the east, the plea of expediency might with better reason have been urged in extenuation of Geoffrey's disloyalty to Champlitte, and the dotation of Venice might have been effectually put forward as legalising a transaction which the code of chivalry seems to have condemned.

The name of Geoffrey of Achaia is not among those of the signatories of the general act of the second parliament held at Ravenika which is still preserved to us. Its provisions, regulating the status of church property north of the Isthmus of Corinth, were only extended to the Morea in 1223, in the reign of his son and successor. It is probable that at this period he was occupied in dealing with the heirs or representatives of Champlitte, and in consolidating his position within the peninsula, for the submission of tile Despot of Epirus to the Emperor Henry, in 1210, entailed a suspension of hostilities round Corinth.

Documentary evidence of the change in Villehardouin's position which took place at this time is found in the letters of Innocent III, which serve as a touchstone to test the inaccuracies of the chronicle. In a letter dated the 4th of March 1210 he is described as seneschal of Romania only, while in another, written only a few days later, on the 22nd, and in several subsequent letters, he is given the title of Prince of Achaia. Similarly in a charter of September 1209, making a grant of lands to the church, he styles himself seneschal of Romania only, while in another deed of the same character, drawn up in 1210, he has become "Prince of Achaia and seneschal of all Romania."

The peace with Michael of Epirus was not of long duration. Operations in the

Isthmus were accordingly resumed, and between the years 1210 and 1212, Corinth, Navplia, and finally Argos capitulated to Villehardouin and Othon de la Roche, lord of Athens. Only Monemvasia on a rocky islet, connected by a causeway with the Laconian coast, forming what had in former days been the haven of Epidaurus Limera, still held out. It was not absorbed until after the succession of William Villehardouin, to whose reign, nearly forty years later, the chronicle erroneously assigns the annexation of the other fortresses also, attributing the success at Navplia to the assistance of Venetian galleys from Coron. That Venice co-operated with Geoffrey after the successful negotiations at Sapienza is very probable, and other details recorded in the chronicle may well be in themselves historical, but we are enabled to transfer the actual events to their proper date by once more applying the corrective evidence of the letters of Innocent, who in 1212 ordered Villehardouin and de la Roche to make restitution of church property confiscated after the capture of these strongholds, and placed the church of Corinth under the protection of St. Peter. The Pope, however, did not maintain the interdict which the archbishops of Patras and Thebes on this occasion pronounced against the victors. In return for his support and services Othon de la Roche received Argos and Navplia, with a portion of the revenues of Corinth, and became for these fiefs the liegeman of the Prince of Achaia. The chronicle is very barren in historical matter as regards the latter portion of the ten years' reign of Geoffrey I, who appears to have governed with prudence and conciliation, adapting the customs of Champagne to his principality without violently disturbing local usages and prejudices. The one episode of interest, the marriage of his elder son Geoffrey, is transferred to the reign of the latter, and is wholly fantastic as there recorded.

According to the romance accepted by the author, the Emperor Robert had promised his daughter in marriage to the King of Aragon, and despatched the bride with a becoming retinue in two galleys to Catalonia. The vessels touched at the port of Catacolo in the Morea, whither Geoffrey came from La Glisière to offer the company hospitality. But after a two days' sojourn he invited the Princess to abandon the long journey to Spain and to remain as his bride in the Morea, a proposal to which the bishop of Olenos persuaded the reluctant girl to consent. The galleys returned to Constantinople and brought the news to the Emperor, whose indignation knew no bounds. But Geoffrey disarmed his anger by a letter in which he offered to become his liegeman, to hold all his lands of the Emperor, and fight on his side against the Greeks, their common enemy. After taking counsel with his barons, Robert perceived the hand of God in this matter, and it was eventually arranged that a meeting should take place at Larissa in Thessaly, whither Geoffrey went in company with de la Roche, and was received with great regard. Then it was agreed that the Emperor should bestow on Geoffrey the overlordship of the Cyclades as his daughter's dowry, with the title of Prince of Achaia and grand seneschal of the empire, and the right of minting coinage. The Prince then became the Emperor's liegeman, and received from him a copy of the usages of Romania which "his brother" Baldwin had obtained from Jerusalem. So they took leave of one another, and Geoffrey returned joyfully to the land of Morea.

At the time of the marriage of Geoffrey II the King of Aragon was a boy of nine yean old, and Robert, who indeed never had a daughter, had not yet ascended the imperial throne. The reference to Baldwin as his brother, instead of his uncle, suggests a confusion with Henry of Flanders, who did indeed bestow the title of seneschal on the first Villehardouin. Robert had a younger brother Baldwin who succeeded him, but was only ten years old when he became Emperor. The overlordship of the Duchy of Naxos was actually granted to Geoffrey II, but not until a much later period.

It was Agnes de Courtenay, the sister and not the daughter of Robert, whom Geoffrey II married, and the marriage took place during the reign of his father. When in 1217 Pierre de Courtenay disembarked at Dyrrachion for his disastrous march into Epirus, and the Empress Yolande, accompanied by her daughters Agnes and Marie, sailed on towards Constantinople, the imperial galleys, sailing within the islands along the Aetolian shore, crossed the mouth of the Gulf of Corinth and put in at Clarenza, the Frankish town which had grown up on the site of the old landing-place of S. Zaccaria. It was but a few hours' ride thence to Andravida, and on her visit to the capital the Empress received a most favourable impression of the prospects of the new Frankish state, and she left her daughter Agnes behind as the bride of the heir of Achaia, when the rumours of disaster in Epirus compelled her to hurry on to Constantinople and assume the regency.

A projected expedition to Epirus, in which Achaia was invited by the Pope to co-operate, for the rescue of the unfortunate Emperor and the papal legate, was abandoned upon the release of the latter, and towards the end of the year 1218 Geoffrey I died. He left two sons: Geoffrey, born before the crusade, who succeeded, and William, born, it would seem, in Greece, who inherited Calamata and eventually succeeded his brother; as well as a daughter, who married Hugues de Bruyères and became the mother of the most chivalrous and romantic figure in the annals of Morea. His widow, Elizabeth de Chappes, survived him and found a second husband in Jacques de St. Omer. The conqueror of Morea was buried at Andravida, and all people, says the chronicler, rich as well as poor, mourned for him because of his great goodness, in such wise as a man mourns for his own father.

Geoffrey II, who like his father was appointed seneschal of Romania, had not long succeeded when a fresh dispute with the ecclesiastical hierarchy entailed upon him the extreme penalty of the interdict. The real spirit of the quarrel is once more faithfully represented in the account given in the chronicle, but the motive there assigned to the second Villehardouin for his attack on church property, namely, the refusal of the ecclesiastical feudatories to assist in the reduction of Corinth, Argos, Nauplia, and Monemvasia, is obviously incorrect, inasmuch as the three former had already capitulated some years earlier, and the last was only besieged in the subsequent reign of his brother William.

The Prince, so the story runs, after taking counsel of his barons, who had represented to him that the Church held almost one-third of all the land in Morea, required the clergy to take their share in the burden of defending the principality, and to co-operate in the campaign he was about to undertake. They refused to obey the call, on the pretext that they held their lands of the Pope, and not of the Prince. Geoffrey thereupon sequestrated all the fiefs of the Church until such time as they should come to reason and employed the revenues in building Clairmont. Excommunicated forthwith, he nevertheless maintained the sequestration until the great castle was completed, and only then despatched a mission to Rome to explain the grounds of his action. A state of war, he urged, still existed in the country. The archbishops, bishops, and the military orders had rejected his appeal for support. He had therefore seized their lands, not for his own personal advantage, but in order to construct a redoubtable fortress, strong enough to protect the western coastlands and harbours of the Morea, and to serve as a base if ever the Franks were driven back from the interior. It was in the essential interest of Rome that he had so acted, for if once the Greeks regained the upper hand, what hope was there for the maintenance of the Latin Church? In conclusion he prayed for absolution and craved the favour of the papal benediction. His arguments were favourably received by Honorius III, who gave orders

that the interdict should be removed, after which the ecclesiastical dignitaries lived at peace with Geoffrey, and gave him their loyal support.

If the accuracy of this account of the manner in which Clairmont was built cannot be absolutely established, it is nevertheless certain that sentence of excommunication was actually pronounced by the cardinal legate at Constantinople against Geoffrey in 1220, and was at the same time renewed against Othon de la Roche, both of them having undoubtedly laid violent hands on church property. De la Roche was the first to reconcile himself with the spiritual authority, but it was not until three years had passed that Villehardouin sent Pierre le Alemant as an envoy to Rome to submit the questions at issue to a board of three cardinals. Beside the special issue which had led to the excommunication, it is clear from the letters of the Popes that there were a number of other matters calling for urgent settlement. Ecclesiastical affairs in the Morea had been in a state of chaos ever since the conquest. Champlitte, adopting the Greek tradition, had constituted the Latin primacy in Patras, assigning the church of St. Andrew to the see, and appointing canons in a somewhat uncanonical fashion. Innocent had nevertheless confirmed Anselm of Cluny as primate in 1207. The Greek bishops were made suffragans to the See of Patras, and Rome counselled moderation and tact in dealing with the pre-existing order of things. But the anarchy ensuing after the conquest was too great for the ecclesiastical arm to control alone. The clerical adventurers of the crusade were only concerned with the spoils and eager to depart with their plunder, while a number of impostors, who had no title to orders, passed themselves off as priests, and obtained possession of benefices. While the religious orders showed little disposition to submit to his authority, the Metropolitan himself was engaged in a struggle to secure independence of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. In the prevailing confusion the intervention of the secular arm was inevitable, and the first Villehardouin vigorously curtailed the power of the clergy, and restricted the abuses of mortmain. He assigned definite fiefs for the support of the archiepiscopal see, superintended the distribution of benefices, and removed the Greek priests from the archbishop's control. Such scanty information as can be extracted from contemporary records throws but little light upon the relative positions of the Greek and Latin clergy at this period. The Greeks appear to have acquiesced, however reluctantly, in the Latin supremacy, while the Latins tolerated the ministrations of an heretical clergy. The separation of the two churches had not yet been stereotyped by the long lapse of time, and it became still possible for Michael Palaeologus, after the Greeks had retaken-Constantinople, to proclaim their reunion. In accordance with the settlement negotiated during the mission of Pierre le Alemant to Rome, the Church remained in possession of all property held since the days of Alexius I, and Geoffrey signified his tardy adherence to the general Act of the parliament of Ravenika. He was not called upon to make restitution of sequestrated revenues, but was required to furnish a tax reckoned at 1000 hyperpers for the maintenance of bishoprics. Under orders from Honorius, the legate then withdrew the interdict.

The great castle of Clairmont, Chloumoutzi or Castel Tornese, as it was called from the mint established there, was certainly built at this time, and there is no good reason for doubting that Church revenues were appropriated for the purpose. It crowns the rectangular peninsula or promontory of Chelonatas, which, ascending on the landward side in gentle slopes of sandstone from the level plain of Elis, breaks the western coastline of the Morea with a high foreland thrust seaward towards the island of Zante, On the northern side is the harbour known in Frankish times as Clarenza, or Glarenza, a name

still attached to the cape forming the western arm of the bay. With the modem fashion for classical revivalism, the port has now been renamed Cyllene, and vestiges of the old Hellenic city can still be traced there among the more considerable remains of buildings of the Frankish epoch. Out of the soft sandstone hills, now covered with a low but dense vegetation of lentisk, arbutus, and heather, which form the promontory, rises a steep limestone bluff, from the crest of which the whole of Elis is visible, spread out like a map to the spurs of Erymanthus inland. It commands the seaway through the Zante channel, and looks north over a wide reach of blue water to low-lying Missolonghi, the mountains of Acarnania, and the clustered islands which the crags of Cephalonia dominate. Such is the site of the great fortress, built to be the key of the western, as Acrocorinth was of the eastern Morea.

In the great enclosure entered by a triple gate, the various buildings which once surrounded the whole circumference are all unrecognisable ruins, save the keep itself, an elongated hexagon, the outer wall of which is also the eastern wall of the fortress. Round the hexagonal court are pilastered chambers, faced with carefully squared stone, not locally quarried, and roofed with pointed barrel vaults. Each of the longer sides forms a great vaulted hall, from which doors open on to terraces or balconies, built over arches, one on either side of the inner court. The floors have been broken through in places by the debris of the vaulted ceiling which has partially fallen in, filling up the underground chambers, and the cisterns hollowed in the rock. Four towers originally flanked the comers of the fortress, but only their solid foundations now remain, and a few machicolations are left to mark the height of the walls.

In the old shore-hugging days of navigation no vessels bound for the south or east, no galleys returning thence to the parts of Apulia or to Venice could pass without attracting the vigilance of the watchman at Clairmont. And we may conjecture with some degree of certainty that our own Richard, Earl of Cornwall, brother of Henry III, must have touched there when he started for Syria in 1240 and “tooke shipping at Brindize in Apulia” along with William Longespée, Earl of Salisbury, and many other noblemen. The first castle was certainly completed and occupied by the year 1224, for the archives of the monastery of S. Remi, near Rheims, record a deed of gift dated from Clairmont in September of that year, by which Geoffrey bestowed upon the abbey a reliquary from the imperial treasury at Constantinople, containing drops of blood gathered on the Cross, which he sent to France by the hands of his kinsman Arnoulf de Cotty, monk of S. Remi. The actual castle buildings were mined and blown up by Ibrahim Pasha in 1825.

Here or in his palaces at Andravida, Gastouni, and la Glisière, Geoffrey maintained a princely state which testifies to the prosperity and rapid development of Achaia. Eighty knights with golden spurs were maintained at his charges, and shared his palace and board. Indeed he founded a school of chivalry in Greece to which cadets of Burgundy and Champagne eagerly flocked, in days when knights adventurous still heard mystic voices calling them beyond the sea, and lured by the glamour of the morning land, went out into the unknown, dreaming of crowns terrestrial or celestial. He kept a vigilant eye on the lesser courts maintained by his barons, sending persons of confidence to report to him on their mode of life and the manner in which they treated their subjects.’ The security of the realm and the piety of Villehardouin, who in spite of many difficulties with, his clergy was a true son of the Church, also encouraged the Latin monastic orders to settle in the Morea, where Cistercians, Dominicans, and Franciscans founded numerous colonies. Daphne, on

the road from Athens to Eleusis, and the ruins of the Arcadian abbey of Isova still testify to the wealth and scale of their establishments in Romania.

It was at the court of Geoffrey II that the Emperor Robert ended his brief inglorious reign, on his journey back from Rome, whither he had gone to appeal to Gregory IX against the barons of the empire, who had been roused to mutinous protest by the vices and incapacity of their dissolute sovereign. The prosperity of Achaia must have presented to the remorse of the dying Emperor a suggestive contrast with the destitution and anarchy which had become chronic in his Thracian provinces since the death of the energetic Henry. Indeed so wealthy had the country grown under the firm and equitable government of the Villehardouins that, when the Pope called upon the princes to contribute towards the maintenance of the impoverished Patriarchate, and collect a tithe from cleric and layman for the support of the tottering empire, Geoffrey is said to have offered his brother-in-law, Baldwin II, and the Emperor-regent Jean de Brienne, an annual subsidy of 20,000 hyperpers. Moreover he equipped a fleet, carrying a hundred knights and three hundred crossbowmen, to co-operate with Brienne and a Venetian squadron, when in 1236 Constantinople was menaced from both sea and land by the combined attacks of Vatatzes and Johannes Asan. Leaving his brother William as regent in Achaia, he took command in person, broke through the blockading Nicaean fleet, sank fifteen of their ships, and entered the Golden Horn in triumph. It was apparently in recognition of these brilliant services, and not as the chronicle pretends on the occasion of his marriage, that the Prince of Achaia received the overlordship of the Dodecannesos or Cyclades, under a special Bull, which made Angelo Sanudo his vassal. At the same time that of Euboea was confirmed to him, with the right to claim from its three Lombard barons the service of eight knights or of an armed galley.

The extremities of poverty to which the imperial treasury had been reduced in the struggle for existence had driven the young Emperor Baldwin to make a personal appeal for assistance to the sovereigns of Europe, and during his absence from Constantinople Jean de Brienne died. The liberality of the Pope and of Louis IX of France, and the sums he was enabled to raise by the pawning of relics and the mortgage of his estates at Namur, enabled him to collect a considerable force, but a portion of the army destined for the east, which was assembling at Venice, dispersed upon the death of Conon de Bethune, and not a few of these soldiers made their way to Achaia, and offered their services to the Prince. The success of Baldwin's mission, nevertheless, appeared to promise the empire a few years of security, but its internal resources had long been exhausted, the provinces whose taxation maintained the metropolis had ceased to exist, and the new mercenaries only proved ruinous to maintain. The Emperor therefore appealed once more to his wealthy and powerful vassal in the Morea, who despatched a second fleet to protect Constantinople from the attacks of Vatatzes. The Villehardouins were hard bargainers, and as the price of his support Geoffrey obtained the transfer to himself of Courtenay, Baldwin's hereditary countship in France. But Louis intervened on the ground that a cession made in such dire necessity was inequitable, and declined to ratify the transaction. The cession was annulled and Courtenay was settled on Marie de Brienne, as a portion for her widowhood. It seems probable, however, that Geoffrey received some promise of compensation in return for the renunciation of Courtenay, on the strength of which the Princes of Achaia subsequently advanced claims to other suzerainties such as, for instance, that over Athens. It is possible that on this occasion the overlordship over Bodonitza may also have been conferred upon him. Meanwhile his predominant position had gained for him another important vassal in

the Count of Cephalonia and Zante, who, although brother-in-law to the Despot of Epirus, could hardly hope to hold his own in the immediate vicinity of Achaia without the countenance of so powerful a prince, and who therefore made voluntary submission. Geoffrey II. had thus gained almost as great an extension of territory by sagacious policy as his father had acquired by conquest.

In 1243 a rumour of the death of Baldwin II gained credence, and Geoffrey collected a large force intending to take over the regency as next-of-kin, but the rumour proved unfounded. In the following year the Pope, now Innocent IV, empowered him to devote a portion of the ecclesiastical revenues to the object of raising troops for the defence of Constantinople. This is the last historical fact recorded in his reign. His death took place about 1245, and by 1247 Agnes of Courtenay had returned as a widow to France. In spite of the special intercession of the grateful Cistercian order on behalf of a benefactress, their marriage had remained childless, and his brother William succeeded. The Chronicle of Morea records the closing scene of his life in the following terms: —

Upon his deathbed Geoffrey besought his brother William, who was to be his successor, to carry out a project which death prevented him from accomplishing, and to build a church over the grave of his famous father. Furthermore, he desired to be laid there also, and prayed that endowment should be made for priests and choristers to chant masses for his soul. This pious wish was duly executed by William, who built a minster church at Andravida dedicated to St. James, and entrusted to the care of the Templars. He assigned benefices to four chaplains, who were to say mass perpetually for the souls of his father, his brother, and himself. There they all lie together in one grave, the father in the middle, Prince Geoffrey, the elder son, upon the right, and Prince William on the left.

Half-way between the port of Clarenza and the castle of Clairmont, there is perhaps another historic grave. In a green fold of the pleasant hills which form the promontory of Chelonatas, bowered in olive and cypress, stands a little monastery which bears the name of Vlachernae. The pointed arches of the upper portion of the church indicate a construction of the Frankish epoch. Its one or two ruinous monuments also date from that period, and a marble slab on the outer wall bears the floreate cross of the Frankish Emperors. The place was left an empty shell by the troops of Ibrahim Pasha, when they destroyed Chloumoutzi, and laid this region waste. There is no record of its origin, but the mixture of Frankish and Byzantine styles in its construction seem to point to a time before the more ambitious western architects of Isova and St. Sophie had settled in the Morea. The name of the imperial palace at Constantinople, given to a little monastery in this situation, warrants the conjecture that it was founded to contain the grave of the Emperor Robert, who died at the court of Geoffrey II in 1228. It is even possible that a tomb within the church, once covered by a pretentious canopy, which bears no trace of inscription, is that of the unfortunate Emperor, whose resting-place was then consecrated by the piety of his brother-in-law.

CHAPTER IV

THE SETTLEMENT OF ATHENS AND EUBOEA— THE BARONIES OF ACHAIA

THE accession of William Villehardouin marks the zenith of the Frankish power in the classic land, on which so large a measure of the interest and sentiment of humanity have justly been concentrated, but where at this particular epoch all associations with the past had faded out of memory. Before recording the vicissitudes of his eventful reign, it is necessary to make an excursion beyond the isthmus, and briefly to examine the conditions prevailing in Attica, Boeotia, Euboea, and the rest of the limited area to which the tenure of the Franks was restricted after the recovery of the kingdom of Thessalonica by the Greeks. Some investigation also of the topography and characteristics of the Frankish baronies in the Morea itself, where the traditional tendency of the country to divide itself up into small states was no doubt propitious to its feudal settlement, is indispensable to a proper appreciation of the story which will be told in the following chapters.

There are unfortunately but few trustworthy data regarding the state of Attica at the time of the Frankish invasion. Practically all we know is derived from the writings of the last Greek archbishop before the conquest, Michael Acominatus,[1] brother of the historian Nicetas, who, born himself in Asia Minor, nevertheless looked upon Athens as the mother city of the remnant which still clung to the traditions of classic culture. There is indeed a somewhat earlier reference to the medieval city in the treatise of the Arab geographer Edrisi, who wrote a description of Greece and the islands for King Roger in 1153, and who speaks of Athens as rich in population, surrounded with gardens and arable land; a very different picture from that given by the patriotic archbishop who took up his residence on the Acropolis some twenty years later, when all the springs were sealed in their sources, and drought and sun had made the parched land barren. His letters testify to the pitiful condition of the scanty inhabitants, exposed to the merciless exactions of imperial tax-collectors, and the depredations of the pirate craft of every nation. The citizens, whom in his inaugural allocution he addressed as the sons of the ancient Athenians, had even lost the use of their own glorious language, and his classic idiom fell upon unappreciative ears, corrupted by a barbarous dialect. He addressed a memorial to the Emperor Alexius III, giving a graphic account of the fiscal abuses prevailing in his diocese, the extortions of the Byzantine strategus at Thebes, the destitution of the unpaid garrisons, the levying of ship money, the impoverishment of Athens, and the reduction of the population by emigration. There is reason to believe that his highly coloured picture is in many respects exaggerated; but after due allowance has been made for the bias of a Greek archbishop, who was fighting the battle of his flock as their political spokesman, it is clear that Athens must have greatly declined since the days when the Emperor Basil II bore witness to the glories of nature and art which the venerable city could still boast in the early years of the eleventh century.[2] In 1185, on the accession of the Emperor Isaac, the country was so impoverished that the customary coronation offering was not forthcoming. The semi-feudal conditions introduced in the reign of Alexius III, which gave extended powers to the archons, and

ended by creating a number of petty tyrannies, did not improve the condition of the inhabitants, who only suffered from one extortioner the more, and there was no court in which to appeal against the enactions of Sguros of Navplia.

In spite of the learned bishop's lamentation over the intellectual degeneracy of the Athenians, the tradition of culture does not seem to have altogether died out in the twelfth century. A German traveller has recovered traces of a mission of young students sent from Georgia by the Bagratid ruler David II, who had married a Greek princess, to study in Athens, if indeed the reference in this case be not to a monastery founded in their own country, and proudly referred to as a new Athens, superior to the old one. An Armenian historian of the thirteenth century has also mentioned that translators from Georgia wore sent to Greece to make copies and translations of manuscripts. The librarian of the famous Queen Thamar, the Georgian poet, Schota Rustawel, is said to have pursued his studies in Athens in 1192. It must, however, be frankly admitted that the Georgian legends of contact with Athenian culture rest upon a slender foundation. More interesting to Englishmen is the evidence of John of Basingstoke, whose experiences are recorded by Matthew Paris. He is said to have introduced the Greek numerals into England, and to have brought many books home with him from Greece. His patron, the bishop of Lincoln, who had himself translated the Ethics of Aristotle, sent to Greece for manuscripts which John had seen there. Matthew Paris had from his own lips the account of his studies in Athens in the pupil-room of a learned lady, Constantia, the daughter of the archbishop who, though not yet in her twentieth year, professed and lectured on literature and astronomy. He died in 1252 as archdeacon of Leicester. That some faint afterglow of reverence for classic sites still lingered in the west may also be gathered from a curious letter which Innocent III addressed to Berard, the first Latin archbishop of Athens, commending to his special care the land of venerable tradition. The city, he wrote, divided into three parts, worshipping severally three false gods, had figuratively foreshadowed the worship of the three persons of the Trinity. The rock of Pallas had now become the seat of the Glorious Mother, and the city, which had erected an altar to the unknown god, had now come to the ample knowledge of the God of Truth. It was therefore his pleasure to take under apostolic protection a city which had lavished its treasures of wisdom on well-nigh all the world.

Thebes had apparently suffered less severely than Athens from the general anarchy of the latter years of Byzantine rule. More than half a century before the arrival of the Franks, Norman invaders from Sicily had landed at Salona and marched into a defenceless Boeotia. They had found in Thebes a prosperous community of weavers and spinners, who supplied Constantinople with the costly silken tissues of eastern pomp and ceremony, and had carried off the master workers to Italy, with the object of transplanting this profitable industry to the new kingdom they had acquired in the south. The Normans, however, did not succeed in extinguishing the local trade, and Thebes, recovering rapidly from this crushing blow, remained the mart of the east for tissues and brocades, giving employment to a thriving Jewish colony, which was estimated at not less than two thousand souls by Benjamin of Tudela in the second half of the twelfth century.

The city received Bonifazio of Montferrat with open arms on his southward march in 1205, and was bestowed as the reward of faithful service on Othon de la Roche-sur-Ougnon, lord of Ray, who placed a garrison of Burgundian knights in the Cadmeia, and rejoined the Marquis on his march to Athens. Here the archbishop, who had rallied the scanty population and stoutly defended the Acropolis against the aggression of Sguros,

surrendered without a struggle to the western invaders. Lamenting the plunder of his episcopal library, and the wanton violation of the noble shrine, which by re-dedication to the Virgin Mother had survived the worship of Athena Parthenos, he withdrew to literary and philosophic retirement in the island home of Simonides, whence he could still see across a belt of waters the familiar outline of Hymettus rising over his beloved city.

The unfortunate Othon de la Roche was further invested with the lordship of Athens, but it was only after the death of Bonifazio that he found leisure to occupy the new domain from which he took the title of Seigneur or Sire. To the Greeks he was known as Megaskyr. His territories, which included, besides Attica and Megaris, the whole of Boeotia with the Opuntian Locris and the port of Atalanta, marched with the barony of Bodonitza on the north and Salona on the west. He temporarily lost control of Thebes during the rebellion of the Lombard barons, but it was recovered and restored to him by the Emperor Henry. The Franks established themselves with great ease in these regions, thanks, no doubt, to the general oppression and misery which they found prevailing there. There is reason to believe that here also the rule of the conquerors was mild and equitable, seeing that the local populations prospered, and that many of the native clergy, who in Greece have always been identified with the popular sentiment, readily submitted to the jurisdiction of Rome. The rapid revival of commerce is attested by the re-establishment of a Genoese community in Athens, and in 1240 Guy de la Roche confirmed to the citizens of that republic freedom of residence in Thebes also, with trading facilities and immunities as well as the privilege of civil jurisdiction by their own consular officers.

When Navplia and Argos surrendered to the joint arms of de la Roche and Geoffrey Villehardouin, the former, as has been seen in the previous chapter, received the investiture of these important fiefs, and became for them the liegeman of the Prince of Achaia, whose title to the whole of the Morea had then been generally recognised. Some uncertainty prevails as to his feudal relations with his neighbours in two of the great baronies created by Bonifazio, at Salona and Bodonitza. One half of Thebes, an area which the existing records do not more accurately define, was early conferred by Otho on his nephew Guy de la Roche, son of his younger brother Ponce de Flagey. The other half was given somewhat later to his niece Bonne, who married or was formally betrothed to Demetrius, the ill-starred son of Bonifazio and Margaret of Hungary, but whether as her bridal portion or in compensation for the loss of Thessalonica is not clear. When Demetrius died in 1223 this daughter of Ponce de Flagey married Bela, son of Nicholas de St. Omer, a companion in arms of de la Roche.

Practically nothing is known respecting the feudal subdivisions and the internal economy of the state of Athens. The titles of seneschal, marshal, and constable, introduced into Achaia, are not found there, nor do we know at what period the Assises of Romania, which regulated feudal usages, were adopted. Otho was a signatory of the Act of Ravenika, but in spite of the pledges to which he there subscribed, he was repeatedly at issue with the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and incurred the penalties of the interdict. Archbishop Berard, whom he selected for the see of Athens, was in 1206 confirmed by Innocent III, and the Parthenon, which became his metropolitan cathedral, with chapter and priory, and a constitution based on the model of the church at Paris, was placed under the special protection of St. Peter. Suffragan sees of Athens were established at Negripont, Bodonitza, Daulia, Avalona, Zorkon, Carystos, Coronea, Andros, Scyros, Ceos or Zea, and Megara. A second archbishopric had its seat at Thebes, with Castoria and Zaratora as suffragan sees.

The fact that the episcopal areas extended beyond the limits of the Athenian state, as did the Achaian sees to Coron and Modon even after these places were occupied by Venice, is consistent with the theory strictly maintained by the Latin bishops, that they held directly from Rome, and were independent of the lay powers. Nor were Attica and Boeotia behind Achaia in giving a home to the monastic orders of the west. Under Benedict of Arezzo the newly instituted Franciscan friars established themselves at Thebes and in Negripont, and before long they had a house in Athens itself. The Basilian monastery of Daphne, at the entrance of the pass separating the plains of Attica from the plain of Eleusis, was bestowed by Otho on the Cistercians of Bellevaux.

The first lord of Athens had married the daughter and heiress of the Count of Ray in Burgundy, who bore him two sons. After ruling for some twenty years over the territories which his sword had won, he abandoned his Greek principality and returned to his countship in France. It may be that he foresaw that the states founded by the Franks were destined to be ephemeral and perceived that western methods and an alien church would never gain a permanent hold upon the populations of the east. It may be that after many years of war and adventure the broad lands of Ray were nearer to his heart than the mountain crown of Parnes, Hymettus, and Pentelicon. At any rate so little did he value the historic lands he had so laboriously acquired, that he did not even abdicate in favour of his sons who were fast growing up to man's estate, but taking them back with him to Burgundy he handed over the whole of his possessions to his nephew Guy. Nor were any claims put forward on behalf of his direct heirs, after his death in 1234, to the kingdom of romance which he had resigned.

Besides Guy and Bonne de la Roche, other children of the younger branch had followed the fortunes of the family to Greece. William, the second son of Ponce de Flagey, obtained the barony of Veligosti in the Morea by cession from Matthieu de Mons, as well as Damala in Argolis, and founded the branch of the de la Roches de Veligourt. Another brother, Otho, acted as bailie of Athens during the absence of Guy in France in 1259, and altogether three brothers of Guy are mentioned in the chronicle as having been present at the battle of Carydi. Sibylle de la Roche, a half-sister of the first lord of Athens, the wife of Jacques de Cicon, came to Greece in 1206 with her son Otho, who, marrying into the family of dalle Carceri, became lord of Carystos in Euboea.

Closely associated with the fortunes of the de la Roches in central Greece were the Fauquenbergues, of the family of the castellans of St. Omer, by which name they are known in contemporary records. The Fauquenbergues had already distinguished themselves in the crusade of Godfrey de Bouillon, and one of them was created Prince of Galilee. In the second half of the twelfth century, a descendant of this St. Omer married a lady who in the old chronicles is styled "la dame de Tabarie", by whom he had four sons. Two of these, Hugues and Raoul de Tabarie, are mentioned among the Syrian knights who joined Baldwin at Constantinople after the capture of the city. Another son, William, returned to Flanders where he married the sister of Jacques d'Avesnes. Two of their five sons, Jacques and Nicholas de St. Omer, accompanied their uncle to the crusade, and were granted fiefs by Bonifazio in Doris. Of these the elder, who became the second husband of Elizabeth des Chappes, the widow of Geoffrey Villehardouin, appears to have left no children; but Nicholas, who married Margaret of Hungary, the widow of Bonifazio, founded a family whose fortunes are closely identified with the history of Athens and Achaia. His son Bela, or Abel, by his marriage with Bonne de la Roche, became lord of the important half-barony

of Thebes.

Outside the actual borders of the signory of Athens, two only of the greater baronies created by Bonifazio, namely Bodonitza and Salona, survived for any considerable time the short-lived kingdom of Thessalonica. As Margrave of Bodonitza, the Lombard Guido Fallavicini held the southern marches of Thessaly, and was warden of the pass of Thermopylae. The border marquisate remained for upwards of a century in the hands of the Pallavicini, and eventually passed with the last heiress of the house, Guglielma, to the Venetian family of Georgi. Thomas de Stromoncourt, who had at the same time been invested with extensive territories in Locris and Phocis, established himself at Sole or Salona, on the site of the ancient Amphissa, in a beautiful and fertile valley between Parnassus and Kiona. His barony constituted the western outpost of the Franks in central Greece against the Despots of Epirus, in battle with whom the first Stromoncourt fell. It is probable that after the death of Bonifazio these two barons considered themselves independent of any feudal obligation, except to the Emperor. But Geoffrey Villehardouin II seems to have acquired the overlordship of Bodonitza in return for his services to the empire, and some nexus of feudal service evidently bound the Stromoncourts to Athens. They are several times found fighting with the armies of the dukes, and in a rescript of Charles II of Naples of the year 1294 Thomas of Salona is referred to as a vassal of Duke Guy II.

The island of Euboea, conquered by Jacques d'Avesnes for the Marquis of Montferrat, was divided into three baronies assigned to Ravano dalle Carceri, Peccoraro de' Peccorari, and Giberto, another member of the family of dalle Carceri, all of them nobles of Verona. Jacques d'Avesnes himself does not appear to have exercised any feudal rights in the island, and returned soon after the death of Bonifazio to Flanders. Of the three original Terzieri of Euboea, as they were commonly called, Peccoraro returned almost immediately to Italy and Giberto died in or about 1209, so that Ravano was able without opposition to unite the whole island for a time under his single rule. He threw in his lot with the Lombards of Thessalonica in their rebellion against the Emperor Henry, and to make his position more secure entered into negotiations with the Venetians, to whom Oreos and Carystos had been assigned in the treaty of partition. Through his brothers, the bishop of Mantua and Riondello, podesta of Verona, who acted as negotiators, Ravano declared himself ready to become the liegeman of the republic for the whole island, to remit to Venice an annual sum of 2100 gold hyperpers, together with a robe of honour for the Doge, and to guarantee Venetian citizens special privileges in the harbour towns. In the meantime the Lombard barons made their submission to the Emperor and attended the second parliament of Ravenika, where Ravano also subscribed to the general act under the title of "Dominus insulae Negripontis". The agreement with Venice was nevertheless ratified in 1211, and four years later Pietro Barbo appeared in the island as Venetian bailie. Ravano died in 1216, leaving a daughter, who was perhaps not legitimate, by his union with a certain donna Isabella. His nephews Marino and Rizzardo, sons of Riondello dalle Carcere, the former of whom had married the daughter of Peccoraro, now put forward claims to his inheritance, as did also Alberto and Guglielmo da Verona, the sons of Giberto. The Venetian commissioner took in hand the settlement of their respective titles, and re-established the old tripartite division of the island, which had fallen into abeyance during Ravano's rule. To satisfy so many pretenders, each of the three areas was temporarily split into two parts; the southern barony being divided between Isabella and her daughter Berta. The northern barony of Oreos was assigned to Marino and Rizzardo, and the central

to Guglielmo and Alberto da Verona. It was, however, provided that when any one of the enfeoffed partners should die, his or her half barony should revert to the survivors. Chalcis or the capital of the island, was in theory to be common to the three baronies, but it was not long before the Venetian bailies became all-powerful there. In 1236 the Emperor Baldwin II transferred the overlordship over Euboea to Geoffrey Villehardouin II, and in spite of the practical control which Venice eventually established over the affairs of the island, the Princes of Achaia remained the suzerains, though latterly only in name, as long as the Frankish state continued to exist.

No documents throwing any light on the history of Euboea during the period between 1216 and 1255 are known to exist. The conflicting claims to supremacy of Venice and Achaia, and the constant intermarriages which took place in the families of the Triarchs make the feudal history of Euboea extremely perplexing, and it is not least obscure at that point in the reign of William Villehardouin, when a disputed succession to the barony of Oreos brought on a disastrous war which crippled the resources of the Franks, just at a moment when the reviving power of the Greeks menaced the very existence of the new principalities.

One other petty state, which became a feudatory of Achaia, calls for a brief introductory notice. From the letters of Innocent III we learn that at the time of the Frankish conquest a certain Maio, described as Count of Cephalonia and Zante, engaged himself to the Pope to renounce the illegitimate traffic of piracy. The last letter in which he is referred to belongs to the year 1207. In 1236 we are informed by Albericus that the Count of Cephalonia and Zante, who had married Anna Comnena, sister of the Despot of Epirus, became the liegeman of Geoffrey Villehardouin II. Maio is probably Matteo, and there is reason to believe that he belonged to the family of Orsini, and was a grandson of the well-known Margaritone of Brindisi, who was made Count of Malta and grand Admiral of Sicily. There is no reference to the Counts of Cephalonia in the chronicle until the year 1258, when Richard, who played an important part in the history of Achaia, is first introduced.

It has been assumed that the story of the creation of the twelve baronies of Morea, as recorded in the chronicle, is nothing but a local adaptation of the romances which celebrated the twelve peers of Charlemagne, whose state afforded the traditional model of a feudal court. The Assises of Romania, however, bear witness that, when the Neapolitan house of Anjou succeeded to the reversion of Achaia, twelve peers actually existed in the principality, with power of life and death, and the exclusive right to construct fortresses. The old records must have been accessible to the chronicler, writing not much more than a century after the conquest, when the history of the earliest distribution of fiefs can scarcely have been forgotten, and when the families of some of the original incumbents still survived. The list of baronies there enumerated cannot well have been borrowed from a subsequent period, or it would have included other centres in territories subsequently acquired. Moreover the geographical position of the baronies corresponds with the early history and progress of the conquest as we know it. There appears, therefore, to be reasonable ground for believing that the author derived his information from some register of a date approximately near to that to which he assigns it, and that this distribution of the conquered territories was made by the first Villehardouin, if not by Champlitte himself.

The details which follow with regard to the topography of the baronies will inevitably appear somewhat tedious to the general reader. To the traveller in Greece they may, however, serve to stimulate a new secondary interest in sites which are often passed over in the exclusive pursuit of Hellenic antiquity, and to the student of the Frankish domination a brief review of the system of feudal partition is indispensable.

There were at the time of the Frankish conquest twelve imperial fortresses in the Peloponnese: Patras and Corinth at either end of the gulf; Pondicocastro, Arkadia, and Modon on the western coast; Navplia, Argos, and Monemvasia on or near the eastern coast; Coron and Calamata in the south on the Messenian gulf; and Nikli and Lacedemonia in the interior. Of these the first to fall into the hands of Champlitte were Patras, Pondico, Arkadia, Modon, Coron, and Calamata, the possession of which secured the occupation of the western Morea. Arkadia and Calamata, (united to become the premier barony, were appropriately conferred upon Villehardouin. The fortress of Calamata protected the rich valley of the Pamisus from the raids of the mountaineers of Taygetus, while Arkadia watched over the long stretch of coast which forms the Gulf of Cyparissia, extending northward to the harbour of Catacolo, itself protected by the castle of Pondico, which was now strengthened and renamed Beauvoir. The third Villehardouin eventually bestowed Arkadia as a separate barony upon Vilain d'Aunoy, who settled in the Morea after the expulsion of the Franks from Constantinople, but Calamata remained the appanage of the Villehardouin family until its final extinction.

Pondicocastro was included in the domain of the Prince, while Modon and Coron were claimed by, and finally transferred to Venice. Patras, on the other hand, was constituted one of the greater baronies, and was bestowed on Guillaume le Alemant, a name well known in the annals of this period in Cyprus, and later in Corfu and Naples. His special duties were to guard the entrance to the Gulf of Corinth against the disembarkation of an enemy from Epirus, Acarnania, and Aetolia, and also to secure the plains of western Achaia against raiders descending from the mountains of the interior. Behind Patras successive ridges rise in tiers to the lofty summit of Voidhia, the ancient Panachaichon, and beyond Voidhia again towers the still loftier range of Erymanthus, shutting in the wild Arcadian highlands whence the lawless Slavs had terrorised over the feeble folk of the coastland. To Patras no supplementary fiefs were attached, I as the barony was sufficiently well endowed with the revenues of the rich commercial city. It was at the same time made the seat of the Latin archbishop, and the temporal and spiritual authorities at once fell out over their respective rights, inasmuch as the site, which le Alemant, on the plea of military exigency, appropriated for his castle was occupied by the episcopal church. The bishop's vicar who formulated a protest was grossly ill-treated by the rude soldiers of the cross, who cut off his nose. Before long, however, the archbishop obtained the reversion of the barony itself, and his successors achieved what the first incumbent, Antelm, strove for in vain, independence of the Patriarchate at Constantinople.

Eastward of Patras, to command the best harbour on the southern shore of the gulf, was established the barony of Vostitza, the medieval name of Aegion, where in ancient days the Achaean league held its deliberations. In addition to the port, eight knights' fees were assigned to Hugues de Charpigny, but only half of his domain appears to have been situated on the gulf, while the remaining fiefs were in Laconia. His duties were to watch the road between Patras and Corinth, which was still in the hands of the Greeks at the time of his investiture. The barony remained in the hands of the Charpigny family until after

the middle of the fourteenth century, when the last surviving member, Guglielma, the wife of Philippe de Joinville, sold Vostitza to Princess Marie of Bourbon, from whom it passed into the hands of the Florentine Acciajuoli.

Inland from Vostitza, resting on the slopes of Mount Chelmos, lay Calavryta, with its headquarters at or near the site of the ancient Cynsetha, on the banks of the beautiful Buraicus. With this barony, established to protect the rich coastland from the mountaineers of the interior, twelve knights' fees were assigned to Othon de Tournay. Three generations at least of Tournays figure in the chronicle, but the barony itself was one of the first to fall back into the hands of the Greeks, who recovered it in 1262. The neighbouring country abounds in springs, and it is from one of these that the name of Calavryta is derived. It has been from early times the seat of flourishing Greek monasteries, the greatest of which, Megaspelion, is said to date from the fourth century. Unfortunately no records exist there of the epoch of Frankish occupation. On a hill opposite to the height which is crowned by the castle of Calavryta are the ruins of a smaller fortress, which still bears the name of Tremoula, evidently derived from the family of La Trémouille, who held the adjoining barony of Chalandritza. The appellation might seem to suggest that it was at this point that their frontiers met, but Chalandritza was a small barony the limits of which can hardly have extended so far to the west, and it is more probable that this small outpost was built after the Greeks had recovered Calavryta, as a point of observation, to prevent them from raiding Achaian territory.

Chalandritza, with its four knights' fees, occupied the valley of the Peirus, the ancient vale of Pharae, between Voidhia on the north and Olenos and Mavrovouni on the south, holding the mountain road from Patras into Elis. The name survives today in a considerable village on the slopes above the right bank of the Peirus. Some ten miles to the north is a fortress occupying a strong position, known to the country folk as Sainocastro, or "The Tottering Castle", which was probably the residence of the lords of Chalandritza. At Avia, ten miles or so to the southwest, is another stronghold, commanding the pass through the Black Mountains, the western outpost of the barony. Towards the end of the thirteenth century Chalandritza passed by the marriage of a daughter, the last representative here of the Trémouilles, to Giorgio Ghisi, and after his death was divided, perhaps by the marriage of his daughters, between the families of dalle Carceri and Zaccaria.

The institution of the two great baronies of Matagriffon or Akova and Carytena has already been briefly described. In so mountainous a country as the Peloponnese the main lines of communication follow the more important rivers, winding through deep gorges which again open out into broader valleys, where cultivation is easy and remunerative without the laborious process of terracing the steep hillsides. It was of the first importance to have control of these highways through the passes, together with the good lands which for the most part border their courses. The river Alpheius, which traverses the rich country first occupied by the Franks, to enter the Gulf of Cyparissia a little south of Catacolo, is formed by the union of two main branches. The southern branch, which is the Alpheius proper, rises in the spurs of Taygetus, and running in a north-westerly direction through the plain of Megalopolis, pierces the mountains on its way to the sea at Carytena. The northern branch, the Ladon, issuing from Lake Pheneos, through the subterraneous passages known as Katavothra, the mythical work of Heracles, descends in a wide sweep from the highland plateau of upper Arcadia to join the main stream near the border of Elis.

These Arcadian ranges were the stronghold of the Slav immigrants, who, acknowledging no fixed government, subsisted largely on the plunder of the cultivated valleys. After the Frankish invasion, however, they had, especially in the region of Escorta which followed the gorges of the river Gortynius up to the mountain gate at Carytena, made common cause with the Greeks against the new comers.

To keep these tribes in subjection, to hold the valley of the Ladon and ensure peace in the fertile lands which border the Alpheius was the province of the Baron of Akova, whose domain included neither town nor city, and who therefore received twenty-four knights' fees for the maintenance of so important a strategical position. A region on the left bank of the Ladon, adjacent to the ancient Thelpusa, still bears the name of Akoves, and here, on a steep hill now known by the name of Galata, not far from the village of Vyzikiou, stand the ruins of a medieval castle called by the country folk the Castro of Monovysa. There is little doubt that these are the ruins of the stronghold which bore the significant name of Matagriffon, built, according to the chronicle, after the fall of Monemvasia in the reign of William Villehardouin by Gautier de Rosibres, the son apparently of the first Baron. This particular region is full of Frankish remains and reminiscences. At Vlongos, a few miles to the south, there is another castle dating from the same period; at Glanitza a bridge known as the "Lady's bridge" is of Frankish construction, and a hill in the district of Akoves has some ruins known as Vretembouga, which were once no doubt a stronghold of the brethren of the Temple. The place itself is legend-haunted, and the country people speak of a mysterious Amazon who occupied the towers of Monovysa and issued forth at night surrounded by her warriors through a subterraneous passage; a dim tradition perhaps of the clandestine meetings of the unfortunate Margaret Villehardouin, the Lady of Akova, with the chivalrous Nicholas III, de St. Omer.

But little is recorded in the chronicle of the Barons of Akova. A second Rosières succeeded the companion in arms of Champlitte about the middle of the thirteenth century, and built the castle of Matagriffon. He left no heir, and his niece, Marguerite de Neuilly, the only daughter of his sister, who had married the hereditary marshal, became the heiress of Akova. How she was defrauded of her inheritance, which was bestowed by William Villehardouin on his daughter Margaret, but eventually obtained the retrocession of eight knights' fees in deference to the force of public opinion, and the influence of her husband, Jean de St. Omer, the subsequent history will show. Matagriffon was taken by the Greeks in 1320.

The barony of Escorta or Carytena' included all the mountain region of Arkadia south of Akova, the defile of the Gortynius, the coldest of rivers, according to Pausanias, and the narrow gateway through which the Alpheius enters the mountains from the plateau of Megalopolis. Here lay one of the chief thoroughfares from the eastern to the western Peloponnese, a winding gorge through which the river eventually enters the broader valleys which lean down past Olympia towards the coastlands of Elis. The barony constituted for its defence and control was only a little smaller than that of Akova, and twenty-two knights' fees were assigned to Hugues de Bruybres, a knight of Champagne, who married the daughter of his sovereign prince the first Villehardouin, after whom his son Geoffrey of Carytena was named. Geoffrey, who is, next to William Villehardouin, the most conspicuous figure in the romantic story of the chronicle, and the favourite hero of Frankish tradition, married the daughter of the first Duke of Athens, Guy de la Roche, but left no heir to his barony, which, after his death, was absorbed in the domain of the Prince,

who granted one half of it to his widow on her second marriage to Hugues de Brienne.

It is probable that Araklovon, restored and renamed Bucelet, was the first baronial seat, for the castle of Carytena was not built until nearly fifty years after the conquest. The Alpheius enters the mountains between the slopes of Mount Lycteus, the Arcadian Olympus, and a high ridge known as Mount St. Elias. A lofty crag, joined to the latter by a concave saddle of rock, shuts in the valley, dropping sheer to the dark ravine through which the green river tumbles into foam among the boulders. At the base of the crag is an ancient bridge of the Frankish period, with a chapel built into one of its piers. Clambering up its steep side, and filling the hollow of the hill which joins the crag to St. Elias, is a village with a few buildings, which may even date from the same epoch. The site is that of the ancient Benthe, of which the castle heights were the Acropolis. The upper portion of the rock is precipitous on every side, but a bridle path cut in its eastern face ascends past the ruins of a church to a gate in the battlements. A second gate follows. Within, the precincts enclosed in the rampart are not very extensive. The walls of the baronial hall are still standing, and the huge cisterns, vaulted in the rock, remain half choked with fallen rubble. The towers are broken, the machicolations of the curtain have all disappeared, but from the sentry's walk one may still look down a sheer descent that turns the head. East and south-east this crag-built eyrie surveys the mountain-girdled plain of Megalopolis, westward it watches the gorges of the Alpheius. It is not yet a century since Kolokotrones, the insurgent leader, defied the armies of Ibrahim Pasha from the walls, where now the lentisk bushes top the stone heaps above the yellow irises in grass-grown courts, and still, as few other ruins can, this castle on the rugged height epitomises the suggestive spirit of the feudal age and the romance of the conquistador.

An outpost or subfief of the barony of Carytena was no doubt the fortress of St. Helena, on a spur of Mount Lycaeus, occupying the site of the Cynourian Theisoa, the modern Lavda, and St. George in the village of Kramvovo, near Karyaes, as well as perhaps Crèvecoeur.

South-east of Carytena, in the plain of Megalopolis, but near its southern limits, was the barony of Veligosti, including only four knights' fees. The town of Veligosti, which was a place of some importance when the crusaders annexed it, was about one day's march from Sparta in the direction of Carytena. This would place it in the neighbourhood of Leondari, which has the ruins of a medieval fortress, but is not mentioned by name in any record of so early a date. It was near the long spinal ridge of Makryplagi, through which a pass opens into the road to Calamata, on which Leondari is situated, but it is recorded that Veligosti itself was situated on the plains on a low hill. Buchon has identified its site with some ruins near the village of Samara, about a mile distant from Leondari on the Xerillopotamo, one of the streams which unite to form the Carytena branch of the Alpheius. The town was no doubt subsequently transferred to the stronger natural position at Leondari. This barony was assigned to Matthieu de Mons, of the family of Valaincourt, and was ceded by his son to William de la Roche, his brother-in-law. After the Greeks retook Veligosti, the seat of the barony was transferred to Damala in Argolis, but the name was retained by this branch of the de la Roches, until the last male representative perished at the battle of the Cephissus in 1311, and with his daughter the title passed to her husband's family, the Zaccarias of Chios.

South of Leoudari, on a detached rock which springs from the roots of Mount

Hellenitza in the Makryplagi, is the castle of Gardiki, now known as the Palaeocastro of Kokala, a name in itself grimly suggestive of battles long ago. The view from the ramparts embraces the Gulf of Calamata to the south, and to the west the waters of the Gulf of Cyparissia, seen across successive ridges of mountain beyond the northern Messenian plain. It guarded the pass to Calamata, as the fortress on Chelmos watched over the road to Sparta, and possibly both of them were outposts of the lord of Veligosti. Here it was that two centuries later the population of Leondari took refuge before the advancing Turks; in vain, for Mohammed II marched into Makryplagi, took Gardiki, and massacred the fugitives. Hence its ill-omened name.

From a passage in the chronicle referring to the events of the year 1265, it appears that the castle of Gardiki was then not yet built. It might otherwise not unreasonably have been contended that Gardiki was the headquarters of another barony which presents a difficult problem to the topographer, namely Gritzena, which is mentioned once only, as situated in a region known as Lakkoi, and as being bestowed on “Messire Luc.”

Westward, at the apex of a triangle, of which the base is drawn from Carytena to Leondari, at the entrance to the passes leading from the plain of Tripolitza into Laconia, stood the town of Nikli, which was one of the twelve fortified posts in the Peloponnese under the Byzantine administration. Its situation at the edge of the plain corresponds to the site of the ancient Tegea. It appears to have been a town of some importance, with high walls and towers, which offered a stout resistance to the crusaders. With the addition, therefore, of six knights’ fees it constituted a barony of some importance, and from its position it controlled the important thoroughfare from Argos to Sparta. Nothing, however, is known with certainty of the Messire Guillaume who received the investiture of Nikli, nor of his descendants.

The most easterly outpost of the principality during this first period was the barony of Gheraki. South-east of Sparta, on the heights which rise from the left bank of the Eurotas, the ruined castle of the Nivelets is still conspicuous, occupying the site of the ancient Geronthrae. To the north are the mountains of Cynouria, inhabited by the Tzaconians, a race whose curious language has long puzzled the etymologist. On the other side of the Eurotas valley rises the splendid chain of Taygetus, peopled at this period by the Slavonic Melings. To protect the fertile plains from the mountain dwellers upon either side was the task of the high feudatory invested with the four fiefs composing the barony of Gheraki. Lacedaemonia itself like Nikli one of the Byzantine fortresses, opposed the invading Franks, who brought siege trains to batter down the walls, and the city only surrendered on the express condition that the property and privileges of its inhabitants should be respected. The medieval city, the circuit of whose walls can still be traced, extended over four hills on the banks of the Eurotas at some distance from the recognised site of ancient Sparta. Mistra, which in the middle of the thirteenth century replaced the older Lacedaemonia, lies three or four miles to the west, on a spur of the Taygetus range, whence its commanding position dominates the garden lands which border the Eurotas. It was the creation and for a short time the favourite residence of William Villehardouin, to whose reign the story of its foundation more properly belongs. Gheraki passed back to the Greeks, with the rest of the Frankish acquisitions in Laconia, as the price of the Prince of Achaia’s release from imprisonment, after his defeat and surrender at Pelagonia, and other domains were found for the descendants of the original feudatory in the neighbourhood of Vostitza.

In the Teenarian promontory which terminates in Cape Matapan was established the most southerly outpost of the principality, the barony of Passava or Passavant. The long chain of Taygetus, broken further to the north by the pass which leads through the Langadha from Sparta to Calamata and the Messenian plain, is pierced by a second defile from east to west, connecting southern Laconia and the harbour of Oythion with the little port of Itylo or Areopolis, under the stony plateau or terrace which lies west of the mountain wall and is known as Inner Mani. It is probable that the Ezerites and Melings, who occupied the range at the time of the Frankish conquest, had not altogether absorbed the stony wilderness of Inner Mani, whose inhabitants proudly boast that they are descended from the ancient Spartans, and that the successive invaders of Greece have never penetrated into their rocky fastnesses. Into the heart of the mountains, between the Slavs and the Maniotes, and dominating the roads from Laconia to the west, was thrust the barony which was bestowed with four knights' fees as the post of honour and danger on Jean de Neuilly, the marshal, whose battle-cry its name significantly perpetuates. The castle itself was built, according to the chronicle, early in the reign of William Villehardouin. It stands on the site of an ancient citadel,[1] the old foundations of which, of the order of construction known as Pelasgian, are plainly visible on the eastern face, and the base of the rock is skirted on two sides by a mountain stream, which finds its way to the Laconian Gulf. All trace of a path up the hill, which is crowned by its machicolated walls, has been lost in the tangle of brushwood and scrub which grows at will around and among the ruins, but the circuit of the curtain, flanked by round towers, is still complete. The greater side of its irregular oblong is not much less than two hundred yards in length. The entrance is very narrow, a tunnel high enough to admit a rider on horseback, but only one at a time. Within the ample space enclosed are the remains of many buildings, one of which has a spiral red-sandstone stair, and extensive cisterns still collect and hold the drainage of the rains. Vallonea oak, arbutus, and lentisk have invaded broken hall and crumbling bastion, and choke the empty courts. The site was admirably chosen. The ramparts command a view of the whole Laconian Gulf from Malea to Matapan, and watch the northern passages through the Black Mountains, while beneath the steep hillside runs the only road which leads into Mani from the east. Prince William himself added other fortresses to overawe the mountaineers. The Lord of Passava, by virtue of his office as marshal, which was made hereditary in his family, commanded the armies of Achaia. But the second Jean de Neuilly, who married the heiress of the second Baron of Akova, left only a daughter to succeed him, and by her third marriage the title and office passed to the family of St. Omer.

Besides the twelve baronies thus mapped out, ample estates had been reserved for the Prince. The conquerors, who were numerically weak, endeavoured, as has already been pointed out, to secure the adherence of the local populations by respecting and guaranteeing established titles to property. But the great tracts of territory long fallen out of cultivation were practically no man's land, and confiscations no doubt took place of the estates belonging to the archons or primates who had opposed the progress of the crusaders. All the imperial domain in the Morea was also at their disposal, and from such was constituted the new domain of the Prince, who had established his royal residence at Andravida in the rich plain of Elis, which was first brought under subjection.

Andravida was a place of importance before the arrival of the Franks, and the chief town of the most extensive and most fertile lowland region in the mountainous peninsula. It is a few miles inland from the port of Clarenza, the S. Zaccaria of pre-Frankish times.

The river Peneus, which gathers its waters from the folds of Erymanthus, flows a few miles to the south, and many smaller streams intersect the alluvial fields, where today a rich currant harvest is gathered. The modem town or village, surrounded by luxuriant olive groves, has preserved its medieval name, but nothing is left of its historic buildings save the choir and apse, with two side chapels, of the Gothic church of St. Sophia, built by the Princes of Achaia to be the episcopal church of the bishop of Olena or Olenos, the headquarters of whose see was transferred hither from the neighbourhood of Pyrgos. The base of the outer wall can still be traced throughout its entire circuit, and the fine vaulting of the ruin, the high pointed arches, so distinct from all Greek or Byzantine construction, still convey some impression of its former importance. Six of the grey granite columns which supported the arches of the nave were until recently lying on the site, but four of them have now been utilised to form the portico of a church in the neighbouring village of Lekhaina. It was in this edifice I that the princes assembled their parliaments. Of the memorial church dedicated to St. James, which became the mausoleum of the Villehardouins, hardly any trace remains, although the site can still be identified.

Andravida itself was not fortified, but the neighbouring harbour of Clarenza was strengthened by artificial defences, and its ruined towers still crumble on the shore among remains of the yet older Hellenic substructions of Cyllene. Lying more directly on the highway from the Adriatic to the east than Patras, which was, moreover, at certain seasons of the year difficult of access on account of the violence of the north-east winds from the Gulf of Corinth, it became under the Princes of Achaia the chief commercial harbour of the western Peloponnese, and the weights and measures of Clarenza were recognised as a standard throughout Romania. Here the Franciscans early established themselves, building an important monastery and a church, which also served as a meeting-place for feudal parliaments, and here was established the high court of justice of the principality. The great castle of Clairmont or Chlemoutzi, distant about an hour's ride, became its citadel, and indeed the area of Clarenza seems to have included the castle which was at times the Prince's residence. Diplomas are dated from Clarenza, and the coins minted in the castle, which thus acquired its Italian name of Castel Tomese, are all inscribed "De Clarencia". Thus Andravida, Clarenza, and Clairmont, mutually interdependent, may be looked upon as forming the capital establishment of the Morea. Other domains of the Princes of Achaia referred to in the chronicle are, in Elis, Vlisiri or La Glisière, Roviata, and Gastouni, a name suggesting a Frankish origin, and surviving in that of a village a little south of Andravida. They had also estates in Messenia at Nisi, or the Island, near the mouth of the river Pamisus, and again at Druges, the modem Androusa, near the foot of Mount Ithome, where also a second high court of justice had its seat. Later on Mistra became a favourite residence of William Villehardouin, until he was forced to surrender it to the Emperor Palaeologus. The castles at Elis and Pondico, Beau-Regard and Beauvoir, appear to have remained in the domain or under the immediate control of the Prince, and Calamata was a personal appanage which could be assigned by testamentary disposition.

Such, as far as can be gathered from the scanty records available, were the early dispositions taken by the Franks to establish their hold on the country. By a strange irony of fate a Lombard marquis was warden of the pass of Thermopylae, a knight of Flanders was lord in seven-gated Thebes, and a Venetian adventurer ruled over the Cyclades. The Barons of Escorta, as they hastened to the parliaments at Andravida, rode unwittingly over the sacred precinct of Olympia, lying deep below the sands which Cladeus and Alpheius had deposited over its fallen glory. But the great temple on the Acropolis at Athens, re-

dedicated to the virgin worship of another faith, was still untouched by the hand of time, and many a shrine of ancient mystery still stood in places long desolate, the witness of an age when there were giants in the earth, to whom a dim tradition assigned the name of Hellenes. Even these rude warriors of the west must have been conscious of some touch of awe or wonder, when they first explored the great walled citadels of ancient days, which still crowned the classic hills and served as foundations or quarries for the grim feudal fortresses, which rose up through the thirteenth century among the ranges of Arcadia and Messenia, round bleak Lycaeus, the legendary cradle of Zeus, or in the mountain uplands once the particular haunt of Pan.

CHAPTER V

WILLIAM VILLEHARDOUIN

AT the time when he inherited the principality William Villehardouin was a widower, having lost his first wife, the daughter of Narjaud de Toucy, soon after his marriage. In the last words which the chronicler puts into the mouth of the dying Geoffrey he enjoins upon his brother the duty of marrying again and ensuring the succession in Achaia. William was not slow to follow this wise counsel, and his second marriage with Carintana dalle Carceri was one of ambition. Carintana was the only child of Rizzardo, lord of Oreos and one-sixth of Euboea, who died about the year 1220, while she was still an infant. The conventions signed by Venice with the Terzieri had probably never been recognised by the Princes of Achaia, who resented the growing influence of the republic in an island over which they claimed to be lords paramount, and as the daughter of the elder nephew of Ravano, Carintana could put forward pretensions which a powerful champion might successfully vindicate. For the moment, however, the necessity of completing the conquest of the peninsula made it politic for William to dissemble his ambitious schemes, and to maintain friendly relations with the feudatories beyond the isthmus.

Only a few miles north, and still in sight of Cape Malea on the eastern coast of Laconia, a rocky promontory juts out into the Aegean. The sea has here encroached upon the land and practically isolated the solitary mountain which is connected with the mainland by a long stone bridge or causeway. A castle crowns its peak. A little village lies below, enclosed in walls which converge towards the crest. The position must have been well-nigh impregnable before the days of gunpowder. In ancient times this sea fortress protected the haven of Epidaurus Limera, situated itself three miles inland. In the middle ages it was known as Monemvasia or Malvoisie. This strong post had hitherto remained in the undisputed possession of the Greeks, serving as a rallying-point for the fleets of Nicaea and keeping open communications with the Slavonic tribes in the mountains of Laconia, who had not yet accepted the rule of the Franks.

The Prince accordingly summoned his feudatories, the lord of Athens, the barons of Negripont, the Count of Cephalonia, the Duke of Naxos, and the lords of the islands to accompany him to the siege of Monemvasia, whither also came four Venetian galleys from Coron, to blockade the harbour from the sea. The Chronicle of Morea is the only authority for this episode, which, as was pointed out in an earlier chapter, is represented as following immediately after operations against Corinth, Argos, and Navplia. While the transfer of the latter operations, which took place some forty years earlier, from the reign of Geoffrey I to that of William, proves how little reliance can be placed on the chronicle for any but contemporary facts, there is no doubt that the annexation of Monemvasia, which was eventually restored to the Emperor Michael Palaeologus in 1262 as a portion of the [territories which William Villehardouin had himself acquired after the original conquest, properly belongs to this period and, in the absence of any other authority, the

circumstantial account given in the Greek metrical version must be accepted.

The fortress, we are told, had been well provisioned in anticipation of the siege, and made a stout resistance. As it would not yield to blockade, the Prince constructed engines and poured showers of projectiles day and night into the town, but the rock itself they could not reach. For three years the defenders held out, but at last, being reduced to extremities by hunger, they offered to accept honourable terms of capitulation. The Prince agreed to the conditions submitted, namely, that the inhabitants should remain free men, that their property should not be confiscated, and that they should be excused from all military obligations save that of service with their own ships, for which they should receive adequate indemnity. When these stipulations had been signed, sealed, and ratified with oaths, the three archons, Mamonas, Daimonojannis, and Sophianus presented the keys of the fortress to Villehardouin, who received the notables of Monemvasia with great courtesy and ceremony. He presented them with horses and robes of scarlet and gold, and granted them estates in the district of Vatica. All the inhabitants of Tzaconia and Vatica then made their submission, and the Prince dismissed the feudal levies, retiring with his personal following into winter quarters at Lacedaemonia. From there he visited many points in the neighbouring country, and in the course of these expeditions was greatly impressed with the strategic value of a certain position on a spur of Taygetus, where he constructed a castle, which he called Mizithra or Mistra from the local name of the hill. This castle commanded the entrance to the defiles occupied by the Melings, whose villages extended southward of the pass along the range of Taygetus. He built a second castle at the extremity of the promontory of Mani or Maina near “a grim cavern high up above a headland,” to which he gave the name of Grant-Maigne, and a third on the western shore near Cisterna which the Franks called Beaufort and the Greeks Leftro. The Slavonic tribes of the mountains, overawed by this Trilateral, made their submission and were guaranteed the exemption from tribute and the other privileges which their ancestors had enjoyed under the Byzantine emperors.

These operations completed the subjugation of the Peloponnese, which Villehardouin ruled over from sea to sea for the space of some twelve years. It is probable that the three years’ period assigned for the duration of the siege of Monemvasia is an exaggeration, but in other respects there are no grounds for doubting the general accuracy of the narrative. Not only were Mistra, Maigne, and Beaufort built at this time, but, according to the chronicle, many of the principal castles of Morea, such as Carytena, Matagriffon, Passavant and Gheraki date from the period of peace and prosperity which ensued on the surrender of the last Greek post in the peninsula, and the submission of the Slavonic tribes in Laconia. The Franks had learned many lessons in the art of constructing defences from the great Byzantine fortresses in the east, with which the crusades had made them familiar. The massive square keep, or the shell keep with the simple curtain-wall of the primitive western stronghold, which had succeeded to the earlier mound forts with their wooden towers, was now modified by the study of the eastern castles. A second and a third line of outer defences was added, and the curtain of the walls was strengthened by towers set at intervals in its circuit. The wall itself in fact became the main line of defence, the donjon serving merely as a last resort in extremity, or as a strong bulwark set in the most exposed situation to bear the brunt of an attack. The wooden galleries thrown out to command the ground at the foot of the towers were also replaced by stone machicolations supported on corbels, after the method employed in Syria, where timber was scarcer than stone. At the end of the twelfth century the round tower had begun to take the place of the

square shape and, experience having shown that this form was better calculated to withstand the mine and ram, it was generally adopted in the thirteenth. The Greek castles, which display great ingenuity in the adaptation of constructive skill to the natural features of the sites they occupy, are interesting and instructive in the historical development of fortification at a period when the advantages of war were all on the side of the defenders.

The new Lacedaemon created by Villehardouin at Mizithra or Mistra, which, so long as it remained in the hands of the Franks, almost eclipsed the title of Andravida to be the capital of the Peloponnese, was built on a steep hill rising to a height of some two thousand feet, three or four miles to the west of the modern town of Sparta. The front of this hill is very steep, the back a sheer precipice. Behind it rise the lower spurs of Taygetus, ascending in a succession of ridges to the summits of that splendid mountain-range which runs in a line of incomparable beauty through the promontory of Mani to distant Matapan. Beneath lies the broad valley of the Eurotas, intersected with many running streams, with avenues of mulberry, groves of olive, and lemon orchards round the clustered cypresses, the greenest and most fertile region in the peninsula. There are few more striking anomalies of contrast than that which is suggested by this idyllic land of hollow Lacedaemon, and the grim forbidding type of character developed in the Sparta of Lycurgus. It was no wonder that the Prince made this his favourite residence.

The Mistra of today is little more than a village. Only a portion of the lower town and a few monasteries are still occupied. The other ruinous tenements were finally abandoned after an earthquake some sixty or seventy years ago, and a new Sparta was then built on the site of the classic city. Mistra comprises tile Katokhori, or lower town; the Mesokhori, or middle town; and the Kastro, or fortress, which crowns the summit of the hill with a mass of broken walls below the ivy-covered towers of the keep. Its many churches are Byzantine and not Frankish in character, and the most extensive of its ruins is by local tradition pointed out as the palace of the Greek despots or governors, whose seat of government was established here when the province was restored to the empire as the ransom of Villehardouin in 1262. From the palace a steep path winds up through concentric walls by watch-tower flanking watch-tower to the fortress on the crest, which is of Frankish origin, though modified by subsequent occupants, with vast cisterns for water storage, with square and circular bastions ingeniously fitted to the folds and hollows of the rock. Westward from Mistra is the entrance to the cleft of Langhada, the only pass through Taygetus into Messenia for many miles, whether to the north or the south. Calamata may be reached by this mountain path in some twelve hours, and Veligosti to the north is just within a long day's ride.

Here the Prince established his brilliant court, which vied in magnificence with those of many great kingdoms, maintaining a thousand horsemen as his permanent bodyguard, and entertaining young nobles from the east and west who sought to learn the arts of chivalry in so renowned a school, or found in his service a refuge from their creditors at home. Sanudo, who is the best authority for the early years of his reign, states that with the epoch of peace and prosperity inaugurated by the Franks trade had developed extensively, and credit stood so high that merchants no longer needed to carry money in their saddle-bags, but readily cashed their bills in the castles of the barons. The same authority states that William at this time strengthened his ties with the powerful nobles of central Greece by bringing over ladies of his family from Champagne whom he married to his feudatories. Among the princely guests he entertained at this period was Hugh IV of

Burgundy, who spent the winter of 1248-1249 at Lacedaemonia on his way to join Louis IX in his ill-omened crusade. The Prince himself fitted out a contingent of twenty-four ships for the expedition to Damietta, and escorted his visitor to Limasol in Cyprus, where they met the French King, who now conferred upon him the privilege of coining Tourneys of the standard of the French crown, apparently with a similar authorised circulation. During this expedition to Cyprus Villehardouin touched at Rhodes, where he left a hundred Moreote knights to support the Genoese, who at this time were contesting the island with the Emperor of Nicaea.

So while the harrassed Emperor of the east travelled soliciting alms from court to court in the west, the Franks of Achaia enjoyed wealth and security, and "tout li prelat, baron, chevalier et autre gentil home si faisoient cescun sa fortresse selon son pooir, et monoit la meillor vie que nul pueust mener." This happy state of things continued till 1255, when Carintana dalle Carceri died, and Villehardouin considered the moment propitious for the development of the ambitious schemes which he had long cherished in Euboea.

It has been pointed out in the preceding chapter that, by an arrangement negotiated in the year 1216 by the Venetian bailie, Pietro Barbo, after the death of Ravano dalle Carceri, the tripartite division of the island had been re-established, while each of the three great baronies was temporarily subdivided into two equal portions to satisfy the many claimants to his inheritance. There were thus in 1216 six half-baronies in Euboea, of which the two southern fell to Isabella the widow, and Berta the daughter of Ravano; the two central, comprising what was thereafter known as the Triarchy of Verona, to Alberto and Guglielmo, sons of Giberto da Verona; while the two northern baronies became the portion of Ravano's nephews, Marino and Rizzardo, the sons of his brother Riondello dalle Carceri. The claims of the only daughter of Peccoraro were compromised by her marriage to Rizzardo. It was specifically laid down that on the death of any one partner in this subdivision, the half-barony should revert to the survivor.

From this time until the year 1256, when the Terzieri of Euboea signed agreements with Venice, pledging themselves to co-operate in active hostilities against the Prince, there is a dearth of any documentary evidence bearing on the history of Euboea, and we are forced to fall back upon conjecture to explain the complications which ensued. But it is to be observed that in the roll of Venetian bailies in Euboea, as it has come down to us, there is an interval between the years 1224 and 1252, commencing therefore about the time when the Emperor Robert is said to have placed the island under the feudal supremacy of Achaia. Moreover in the conventions of 1256, in which the triarchs Guglielmo I and Narzotto agree to make common cause with Venice against Villehardouin, the conditions of 1209 and 1216 are renewed, and their obligations to the republic are once more rehearsed with certain additions; whence it may be inferred that the former arrangements had partially fallen into abeyance. Venice, fully occupied with the establishment of her dominion in Crete and the aggressive rivalry of Genoa, had perhaps allowed the affairs of Euboea to slip to some extent from her immediate control, when the marriage of Villehardouin with Carintana reminded her of the necessity for closer vigilance.

In accordance with the terms of the compromise of 1216, upon the death of Alberto da Verona, the sixth part of the island allotted to him devolved upon his surviving brother Guglielmo, who now became triarch of the whole central barony. Rizzardo dalle Carceri

died in or about 1220, leaving an only daughter, Carintana. His sixth of the island should have reverted to his surviving brother Marino, and it is probable that during his daughter's infancy it did so revert Some arrangement, however, must have been concluded subsequently, whether with or without the consent of Venice, by which the title of Carintana to at any rate one-half of the northern barony of Oreos was eventually recognised. It is possible that when the Villehardouins became overlords they ignored the compromise of 1216. She was undoubtedly in possession at the time of her death. A passage in the treaties of pacification, drawn up between William Villehardouin, Venice and the triarchs, some six years after the outbreak of hostilities in 1256, would seem to indicate the existence of some previous treaty or agreement defining the rights of Carintana and the other parties, for the Prince of Achaia is there recognised on the one hand as entitled to all the rights which he possessed or seemed to possess, and Venice on the other hand is guaranteed all the privileges, immunities, and possessions which the republic enjoyed "in the days of the Lady Carintana." Sanudo moreover speaks of a certain Michael Morosini as holding a sixth part of the island for Carintana. It must therefore be assumed that, perhaps at the time when the Prince of Achaia was confirmed in the overlordship of Euboea in 1236, Carintana was reinstated in her father's half-barony. Compensation was at the same time probably made to Marino, or his son and successor Naizotto, who married a daughter of Guglielmo da Verona, in a portion of the southern triarchy, which became vacant on the death of Ravano's widow, Isabella. It is also possible that on the death of Berta without any direct heir, Carintana claimed the other half of the southern barony, and named Morosini her procurator there. The old tripartite division would thus have been restored, with the difference that two of the Teizieri were seised of a half-barony in the north and the other half in the south of the island. One other point calls for mention. A Felisa dalle Carceri, a younger daughter of Ravano, married to Otho de Cicon, had received the castle of Carystos and fiefs in the neighbourhood. Carystos appears to have constituted an independent barony, but Otho de Cicon in the ensuing quarrel took the part of Villehardouin, whom he thus recognised as his liege lord.

Upon the death of Carintana without children in 1255, William Villehardouin put forward a claim to a third of the island as the legatee of his wife. The triarchs Guglielmo and Narzotto, who, according to Sanudo, had made it a condition among themselves that on the death of any one triarch the other two should succeed—which must be interpreted, should dispose of the succession—took possession of the barony of Oreos, and bestowed it upon Grapella, the son of Alberto da Verona, who had married Margherita, daughter of his uncle Guglielmo.

They relied upon the support of Venice, guaranteed by long-standing treaties. The appeal of Villehardouin to the Doge consequently bore no fruit, and Marco Gradenigo, the representative of Venice in Euboea, drew up a formal compact in duplicate with Guglielmo and Narzotto respectively, renewing the terms of the arrangements made in 1209 and 1211, and engaging the triarchs to active hostilities against the Prince of Achaia in the event of his refusing to recognise the conventions. In these agreements they once more declared themselves vassals of the republic of Venice for Euboea, and undertook, as a formal acknowledgment of her overlordship, to surrender to Gradenigo the castle on the island of the Euripus, which commanded the bridge communicating with the mainland. The customs were to be collected for Venice, but free entry was conceded for their own goods, and the tribute hitherto due from each of them, of seven hundred hyperpers annually, was to be abolished. A considerable area of territory adjoining the town of

Chalcis or Negripont was also granted to the republic. The name of Guillaume de la Roche of Veligosti appears among those of the witnesses to these documents, which were signed in 1256 and subsequently ratified. Venetian diplomacy had in the meanwhile won over all the prominent nobles of Euboea, with the exception of Leone dalle Carceri, brother of Grapella, Othon de Cicon of Carystos, and Michael Morosini, who retired to the Morea so as not to be driven to arms against his mother country. The republic had, moreover, even gained powerful adherents in the Morea. The personal influence with his elder brother of Guillaume de la Roche, whose co-operation Venice had secured by guarantees, together with mistrust of Villehardouin, who was believed to contemplate the union of all the Frankish states under the vassalage of Achaia, at length determined the lord of Athens also to throw in his lot with Venice, and, although he was his liegeman for the territories of Argos and Nauplia in the Peloponnese, Guy de la Roche finally refused to join the banner of the Prince when he summoned the feudal levies to fight for his rights in Negripont. The fact that any of the Euboean nobles took the part of Villehardouin must be admitted as evidence that there was considerable justification for his attitude.

The chronicle attributes the outbreak of intestine war solely to the claims put forward by Villehardouin to overlordship over Athens and the baronies of central Greece, and makes no mention of the disputed title to the barony of Oreos. These claims are stated to have been based on a pretended cession of overlordship over all the baronies of central Greece made by the Marquis of Montferrat to Champlitte. So far as Naxos and Euboea are concerned, Villehardouin could assert direct investiture by the Frankish Emperors of Constantinople. But, according to the chronicle, he now demanded from the lord of Athens the formal act of homage, which Guy de la Roche refused, on the ground that he and his predecessor had won their country by the sword, and that he owned no obligation for his possessions in Attica, save that of comradeship and goodwill. Once more the story here put forward contains a germ of truth. It was no doubt the ambition of Villehardouin to unite all the Frankish baronies under the aegis of Achaia. The situation in Euboea afforded him a pretext for definitely asserting his pretensions.

The action of the Prince precipitated hostilities. He summoned Guglielmo and Narzotto, the recalcitrant triarchs, to meet him at Rupo, and on their appearance he detained them as prisoners, and proceeded to occupy Negripont. The numerous kinsmen of the clan of dalle Carceri, headed by the wives of the imprisoned barons, appealed to the bailie of Venice, Marco Gradenigo, who collected all available forces, and recovered possession of the town. Then Geoffrey of Carytena arrived on the scene at the head of a powerful army of Moreotes, and, carrying everything before him in the island, compelled the Venetians once more to withdraw from the capital.

The barony of Oreos was also occupied by a force from Achaia, and Othon de Cicon at Carystos held the south of the island for the Prince. Gradenigo, however, returning with three galleys, established a blockade of Negripont from the sea. The siege was maintained for thirteen months, and when Guy de la Roche, after long wavering, at length decided to oppose the Prince in arms, the fortress once more capitulated in 1258. Meanwhile Pope Alexander IV, justly apprehensive of the consequences of this internecine strife among the Latins of Romania, spared no efforts to bring about a reconciliation, and ordered Villehardouin to release his prisoners and come to terms with Venice. The war was, nevertheless, eagerly prosecuted with alternating success in Euboea itself, and operations began before long to take a wider extension. A Moreote army blockaded the Venetian

fortress of Coron and cut off the garrison from all communication with the interior. The Genoese, whose desire to embarrass their hereditary rival drew them into the quarrel, supported the Prince with their galleys, which cruised from the safe shelter of Monemvasia in pursuit of Venetian shipping, while, on the other hand, privateers from Nauplia menaced the coasts of the Peloponnese, and intercepted traffic by sea in the name of the megaskyr of Athens. The armies of Achaia, marching by the isthmus into Boeotia, raided in Megaris and Attica, and in return the partisans of Athens invaded the territory of Corinth. Villehardouin therefore determined to deal de la Roche a crushing blow, and render him powerless to intercept communications with Negripont. With this object he called out the full strength of the feudal army of Morea, summoning even the bishops, the military orders, and the burghers of the town to take the field and assemble in the plain of Nikli. The adherents of the lord of Athens mustered at Thebes, where his banner was joined by Thomas of Stromoncourt, lord of Salona; the Margrave of Bodonitza; the three St. Omers, his nephews; Guillaume de la Roche of Veligosti and two other brothers, all of them knights bannerets. And now in the moment of his need, Guy sought, through the influence of his daughter Isabella, to detach her husband, Geoffroi de Bruyères, the foremost soldier of the Morea, from allegiance to the Prince his uncle. Overcome by the pleading of his wife, the lord of Carytena, after long searchings of heart and with much misgiving, broke his oath of allegiance. Villehardouin, aware of his preparations for war, and never doubting that he was making ready to meet him at Nikli, suddenly learned to his great indignation that his favourite nephew and most trusted captain was marching across the isthmus to join the camp of his enemies before Thebes.

Meanwhile the Moreote garrison at Corinth had sent out a small force to seize and hold the passes of Megara, whither he hastened with all the feudal levies. From Thebes Guy de la Roche with the allied barons marched south to meet him. The two armies met beneath the mountain at Akra or Carydi, on the road from Corinth to Thebes, distant some three hours from Megara. Here Villehardouin inflicted a signal defeat on the combined chivalry of the northern barons, who left many dead on the field and withdrew into the Cadmeia which the conqueror prepared to invest, while a portion of his army advanced on Athens. In this battle Guibert de Cors, who had married the daughter of the hereditary marshal Jean de Neuilly, lost his life. Now, however, the prelates and barons of the Morea intervened and urged a reconciliation between old friends and kinsmen, while Guy and his followers on their side offered to swear a solemn oath never again to bear arms against the Prince, and to submit to such a penalty as his justice might exact. William accepted these preliminary conditions of peace and withdrew to the plain of Tegea, where there was good grazing for his large force of cavalry. He once more established his headquarters at Nikli and awaited the I arrival of the barons whom he had summoned to attend his parliament there.

Thither rode Guy de la Roche with an imposing following to appear before the high court of Achaia, attended by the brothers St. Omer and the northern feudatories, and thither also came, contrite and humbled, the unfortunate lord of Carytena. The lord of Athens craved and received pardon and performed the solemn act of homage to Villehardouin, who ordered him to journey to France and lay his case before the head and fount of chivalry, King Louis IX, who would declare the pains and penalties he had incurred by bearing arms against his liege lord. Thus the chronicler, who attributes this light sentence to the prayers of the Moreote prelates and barons and the magnanimity of the Prince. But it is probable that the version given by Sanudo of this episode is more

historical. Villehardouin, he says, exposed to the high court of his peers the causes which had led up to the war and pleaded the heavy expenditure entailed on the principality, while he denounced the violation of the feudal constitutions, in full anticipation that the high court would pronounce the deposition of Guy de la Roche. But the barons declared themselves incompetent to deal with the case, inasmuch as they were not his peers, his rights being sovereign in Attica and Boeotia, while he was only vassal for Navplia and Argos. Under these circumstances they proposed to refer to the arbitration of the French monarch, the natural protector of the Franks in the east, the question at issue between the two parties. Villehardouin, who had at this period perhaps the power as well as the inclination to depose his rival, had also the political sense not to alienate his barons by overriding their decision and accepted the ruling of the court.

And now occurred one of the most dramatic scenes of this romantic story. The lord of Athens, whose case had just been disposed of, the ecclesiastical dignitaries and all the foremost chivalry of Greece, grouping themselves round the lord of Carytena, led him forward stripped of his arms, with a noose about his neck, and kneeling at the Prince's feet they besought him of his clemency to forgive his erring kinsman, and not to have in mind his misdoing and disloyalty, but only his great worth and generous heart. "Thereon the Prince, who was more angered with the lord of Carytena than he was with the lord of Athens, maintained a hard and haughty mien, and answered that on no plea would he pardon him. At last, however, through the prayers of the high barons, he did forgive him and restore him to his lands, but in such wise only that henceforth he should not hold them by right of conquest and to dispose of to any heir of his house, but he bestowed them on his person and the heirs of his body alone, as a new bequest, since through felony he had forfeited his title."

The restoration of peace was celebrated by tournaments in the plain of Nikli, and Guy took leave of the Prince and returned to Thebes to prepare for the journey to France, on which he set out in the following spring, after appointing his brother Otho to act as bailie in his absence. Villehardouin, triumphant over the combination of the northern barons, was now for a brief space the dominant factor in Romania, and the year 1259: marks the climax of his fortunes. Venice gave the new agent appointed to Euboea full powers to treat with the Prince and his partisans, for the precarious condition of Constantinople had convinced the republic that it was necessary for all the Latins to show an united face to the common enemy, and she at the same time despatched envoys to the Morea. Nevertheless the close of the same year witnessed the profound humiliation of the ambitious Prince, and with his discomfiture and imprisonment the last hope of saving the ephemeral empire of the Franks disappeared.

To appreciate the sequence of events which led up to the disaster of Pelagonia and the captivity of Villehardouin, it is necessary to glance once more at the story of the Despotate of Epirus, founded, as has been seen in an earlier chapter, by the bastard Michael Angelus Comnenus. After his assassination in 1214 his brother Theodore Angelus succeeded in extending his dominion to the kingdom of Thessalonica, where he proclaimed himself Emperor in 1222. He continued to widen his borders, advancing in the direction of Philippopolis and Andrianople, until defeated and taken prisoner in 1230 by Johannes Asan, who put out his eyes. A third brother, Manuel Angelus, took his place, but in the meantime a second Michael, a natural son of the first Despot, acquired adherents in Aetolia and Epirus and re-established an independent Despotate, distinct from the new

empire of Thessalonica, which was before long reduced to vassalage by John Vatatzes and finally annexed to Nicaea in 1246. Michael II established his capital at Arta and gradually pushed forward into Thessaly, annexing the old Lombard fiefs up to the frontier of Macedonia, while in the south his borders marched with the Frankish baronies of Salona and Bodonitza. Near the latter outpost he constituted in his Thessalian territories a vassal principality for his natural son Johannes Dukas, a man of far greater energy and ambition than the legitimate heir, his half-brother Nicephorus. Johannes Dukas married the beautiful daughter of the wealthy archon Taronites, the hereditary chieftain of the Vlachs of southern Thessaly, whose riches also ministered to his ambition. He made his capital and built a strong fortress at Neo-Patras, the ancient Hypata in the land of the Aenians, situated on the heights to the south of the valley of the Spercheius, where he cultivated friendly relations with his Frankish neighbours.

The intrigues of his uncle, the blind ex-Emperor Theodore who after his release by Asan in 1240, still maintained a semi-independence at Vodena, involved Michael II in hostilities with Nicaea, but he was compelled to bow to the superior power of John Vatatzes and signed a treaty with him at Larissa, in accordance with which the Despot surrendered Prilapon, Belesas and other fortresses, and accepted, as the Emperor of Nicaea's vassal, confirmation of the title of Despot to himself and his son Nicephorus. The latter, who was pledged to marry the daughter of Theodore Lascaris, became hostage for his father's good behaviour, and Michael also handed over the intriguing ex-Emperor Theodore, perhaps not unwillingly, to the mercy of Vatatzes. In 1254 Vatatzes died, on the eve, as it seemed, of the realisation of his dream, the final restoration of the eastern empire by the conquest of Constantinople. Theodore Lascaris, whom Vatatzes had set aside, now succeeded to the throne of Nicaea and reigned for four years. During his feeble administration the ambitious soldier Michael Palaeologus rose to power, the man of fate in the hour of crisis. In 1256 the aggressions of the Bulgarians in his European provinces brought Lascaris to Europe, and the long-deferred marriage of his daughter Maria to Nicephorus was then celebrated at Thessalonica, but not until his former hostage had given an undertaking to surrender Durazzo and Servia. Lascaris then returned to Nicaea, leaving George Acropolita, the historian, in Europe as his governor. The forced surrender of these fortresses so incensed the Despot Michael that he tore up the treaty of Larissa and resuming hostilities against the Emperor, overran the whole of Albania and eventually forced Acropolita to surrender in Prilapon. The death of Theodore Lascaris in 1258 compelled Michael Palaeologus, who assumed the regency, for a short while to defer action against the Despot of Epirus. But it was not long before he firmly established himself on the throne of Nicaea, deposing and blinding the infant John Lascaris, with whom he had caused himself to be crowned joint-Emperor in June 1259.

The accession of a child to the throne of Nicaea and the prospect of internal divisions under the regency of a military adventurer, had afforded the Despot a favourable opportunity for the reassertion of his claims to Thessalonica, which his uncle had forfeited. Indeed it is probable that, after the death of Vatatzes had removed his most formidable rival, the bastard Michael, who had now assumed the significant title of Despot of Hellas, did not consider the reversion of Constantinople as beyond the scope of his ambition. He therefore sought to strengthen his position by politic alliances of marriage. Manfred, who in 1258 had caused himself to be crowned King of Sicily in Palermo upon a report of the death of Conradin, had claims in Epirus arising from the conquests of the Normans, which the Despot's embarrassments had encouraged him to assert. To him the Despot now

offered the hand of his daughter Helena, the youngest child of that "renowned and blessed lady, Queen Theodora, the worker of many miracles in Arta," who was afterwards canonised by the Greeks. With her he offered as dowry, Corfu, Durazzo, Vallona, and Belagrada, which Manfred had perhaps already occupied.

The gracious bride of Epirus landed at Trani in 1259 and was there united to the heroic son of Frederick II, whose chivalrous character all the hatred of the Guelph and the rancour of the priesthood have not availed to disfigure in the eyes of posterity, since Dante saw the vision of his noble spirit rescued by eternal love from the doom to which their maledictions had condemned him, secure in a loftier sphere of hope and expiation. The devotion of Manfred to his beautiful wife, the story of whose deeply tragic end brings a fresh and human pathos to the bloodstained annals of those dark ages, assured his powerful support to the cause of her father-in-law. Her elder sister Anna Angela became about the same time the third wife of Villehardouin, while her dowry placed under his control a portion of the lost Frankish fiefs in southern Thessaly. Relying on these powerful allies, the Despot turned a deaf ear to the demands and menaces of Palaeologus, whom he affected to consider a mere usurper. The efforts of Palaeologus to bring him to reason by treating with his allies were also vain, and in October 1259 a powerful army under the command of his brother the Sebastocrator, Johannes Comnenus, crossed to Europe to attack the rebellious Despot. King Manfred furnished his father-in-law with a body of 400 German knights, and the Prince of Achaia called out the full muster of his feudal troops, including contingents from central Greece and Euboea, where since the victory of Carydi his paramount authority appears to have been definitely acknowledged. The Despot awaited the arrival of these reinforcements at Castoria, in the district of Pelagonia south of Lake Ochrida, whither his son Johannes Dukas also led a considerable army from his province in the south of Thessaly or Great Viachia, as it was then called.

The story of this campaign, which ended so disastrously for the Prince of Achaia, is told with anecdotal detail in the chronicle, but the circumstances which led up to the war are obscured and distorted. The very practical issue between the Despot of Epirus and the rival Greek state of Nicaea is ignored, and in its place we are presented with an imaginary quarrel between "the Despot" Nicephorus, who had not yet succeeded his father Michael, and his natural brother, the lord of Neopatras, whose name is transformed into "Quir Thodre, the Sebastocrator", and who is represented as having taken the side of Nicaea. Fortunately, however, there are other independent authorities for this period, from whose narratives the real history underlying the romance can be reconstituted. For the actual details of the battle which was the turning-point in the fortunes of Villehardouin the chronicle is probably a more trustworthy guide.

The Sebastocrator, Johannes Comnenus, led a powerful army of allies and mercenaries, which included Alemans, perhaps the successors of the old Varangian guard, Hungarians, Servians, Bulgarians, and Turks, as well as a force of Coman or Scythian mounted archers. After occupying Vodena, he continued his advance on Castoria before the Frankish levies had joined the Despot's army. The Epirotes retired in panic before him, and contingents of the Nieman force overran a considerable portion of Albania. But the arrival of the Prince of Morea and Manfred's German *reiters* inspired Michael Angelus with fresh courage, and he advanced once more to meet Johannes, who was conducting the siege of Berat.

The reputation of the Franks inspired respect in the east, and the Sebastocrator, realising the formidable combination which he had to face, endeavoured to sow mutual distrust among the allies. He accordingly sent an agent into the hostile camp, who gained the ear of the Despot, and represented to him that Villehardouin was secretly negotiating with Nicaea and intended, after betraying him to the enemy, to make himself master of the Despotate. Persuaded by the ready tongue of this envoy, Michael and a certain number of adherents who had his confidence abandoned the camp and fled in the night. Their action was followed by the defection of many more of his troops when the news was bruited abroad in the morning.

The author of the chronicle tells this story somewhat differently. Quir Thodre, the Sebastocrator, who was a wary soldier, devised a crafty plan. He collected peasants from far and near, with all their beasts of burden, and made them march into the mountains, while the army bivouacked below. When night came the counterfeit battalions in the hills as well as the real warriors in the plain lit up innumerable camp-fires, so that the whole country seemed to swarm with the myriads of Nicaea. He then sent a messenger privily to the Despot, and describing the overpowering forces assembled against him, urged him to save his own life and lands by flight. Two days of grace were allowed for reflection, after which the Emperor's forces would have concentrated and he could no longer delay the attack. The Despot, however, took Villehardouin into council, and they then summoned the barons to his tent and swore them on the gospels to secrecy. After long debate they basely resolved to abandon their followers as soon as the camp was asleep. Only Geoffroi de Bruyères raised his voice in a dignified protest, recorded in the Greek metrical version: "Here let us stand our ground," said he, "and await them if they come to fight us. Fear not, though they be more in number than we are. Their host is made up of many races, speaking many tongues, and they will never hold together. We, though we be few in number, are we not all as brothers, all speaking a common language! 'Here will we let them see that we are true soldiers." His appeal, however, could not stay the panic, and every man withdrew to his tent.

But the lord of Carytena was troubled and perplexed, and pondered how he might save his people, to whom he was devotedly attached, without breaking the oath of secrecy to which he had subscribed. A broken lance was lying in his tent, and with the shaft he loudly struck the tent-pole and addressed it in the epic vein, "Oh, pole of my tent, a loyal servant hast thou been to me until this day, and were I to fail thee and desert thee now, recreant should I be and lose thy faithful service. Therefore fain would I excuse myself to thee, and have thee to know that the Prince and the Despot and we, the other high barons of the army, have bound ourselves together by oath to fly this night and abandon our people. This may I not discover to any man, because of my oath, but to thee I tell it, that art not a man, affirming that the truth is even so."

These words were overheard by his followers without, and the rumour of the intended flight of the chiefs spread swiftly through the camp. The Prince, realising that their plan had been betrayed, upbraided Bruyères with the violation of his oath. But he stoutly defended his action. Those that had counselled them to fly and abandon their own people he held to be slaves and sorry cowards. Moved by his words, the Prince repented his ignoble decision and resolved to give battle on the morrow. But the Despot and his son Nicephorus stole away in the night with a portion of the troops.

A third version of the circumstances which led to the break-up of the Despot's camp is given by Pachymeres. The wife of the bastard Johannes Dukas, daughter of the archon Taronites, the chief of the Megalo-Vlachs, had followed her husband to the camp, where her beauty provoked demonstrations of gallantry from the Moreote knights, which incensed the jealous husband. In a violent quarrel which ensued the hot-blooded soldiers flew to arms, and the Prince of Achaia, taking the side of his knights, publicly insulted Johannes and alluded to his base birth. Thereupon the lord of Neopatras entered into secret negotiation with the Nicaean camp, and pledged himself to the Sebastocrator to join him in the coming battle, if he would confine his onset to the Frankish columns and undertake, should they fall into his hands, to restore the Despot and Nicephorus their liberty.

There is perhaps a germ of truth in all these versions of the circumstances which tended to break up the allied force. In any case it appears to be beyond doubt that both Michael and Nicephorus abandoned the camp, while the bastard Johannes went over to the enemy and, by attacking the rear of the Frankish army in the ensuing battle, contributed materially to their discomfiture.

The armies met in the plain of Pelagonia. The Franks, deserted by the Despot and betrayed by Johannes Dukas, were hopelessly outnumbered. Their only hope, according to the chronicle, lay in breaking by an impetuous charge the formation of the German mercenaries, who were considered to be the best troops of Nicaea, and flinging them back in confusion on to the main body. This task and the command of the first battle was entrusted to Geoffrey of Carytena, who led the pick of the Moreote knights and the cavalry of Manfred. After the first shock of lances they drew their swords and hacked their way into the midst of the Germans, who yielded ground. Then Comnenus brought up his Hungarian and Coman archers who shot into the melée, wounding friends and foes alike, killing the horses and bringing the knights in their heavy mail to the ground. Thus Bruyères was himself unhorsed, an arrow having transfixed his charger's brain, and the flower of the Moreote and Apulian chivalry were killed or taken alive. The rank and file fled from the stricken field. The Prince himself, who had been concealed by his attendants under a pile of straw, was discovered and recognised by his projecting teeth. He became the prisoner of Comnenus, together with Geoffrey of Carytena and many of the greater barons of Romania. The conqueror then entered Thessaly, carrying Johannes Dukas with him as a hostage. Portions of his force advanced on Jannina and Arta, while he himself continued his southward march, and menaced the state of Athens. It is scarcely probable that Otho de la Roche, who was acting as bailie there during his brother's absence in France, could have opposed any serious resistance, but at this juncture an opportune diversion was created by the escape of Johannes Dukas, who rejoined his father the Despot, and succeeded in inspiring the demoralised Epirotes with new vigour. Arta and Jannina were relieved, the invaders were driven out of the Despotate and Comnenus, in danger of having his retreat cut off, was forced to retire.

The battle of Pelagonia was fought in October 1259, not in 1260, the date assigned in the chronicle. At the end of the year Johannes Comnenus returned with his important captives to Asia, where he found the Emperor Michael at Lampsacus. As a reward for his great services he received the honorary title of Despot, while Alexius Strategopoulus, afterwards the reconqueror of Constantinople, who had served under him, was at the same time created Caesar.

The surrender of the Morea was the price for which y the Emperor offered Villehardouin his liberty. The Franks, he said, had no right to be there, and they would never be able to hold the land against his armies. But inasmuch as their fathers had expended their substance and hazarded their lives to conquer the country, he would offer adequate compensation, and send them home rich enough to purchase large estates in their own country, and there to live in peace. If they did not agree to these conditions there would be unending war. The Prince, however, answered in a chivalrous spirit. The Morea was a conquered country and had been parcelled out among those noblemen who fought in company with his father for its possession, for themselves and their heirs to have and to hold. Therefore, even were he on his own account to contemplate a surrender, which he would sooner die than propose, the barons who were his peers would never accept such a solution. He begged the Emperor never to revert to the subject, but to fix the amount of ransom to be paid for his release and that of his fellow-prisoners, according to the rules of chivalrous war. The Emperor retorted that the pride and arrogance of Frenchmen clouded their clear understanding, and that for a money ransom he would never let them go. So he dismissed them to the prison, where they were destined to remain for nearly three years.

Meanwhile the more fortunate survivors and fugitives from the field of Pelagonia, acting in concert with the Princess of Achaia, the prelates, and the wives and families of the captive barons, determined to call back Guy de la Roche to assume the functions of bailie during the detention of the Prince. Guy had spent the eventful year in Burgundy, where the misdeeds of the sea-marauders who, issuing from his haven at Navplia, made the voyage through the Archipelago a terror to peaceful merchants, were brought home to him, and claims for compensation were presented by several mercantile firms in Paris. To avoid unnecessary detention and meet such pressing claims, as well as to provide himself with funds for his return journey, he borrowed a considerable sum of money from Hugh, Duke of Burgundy, with whom he enjoyed friendly relations. Before starting, however, he had to appear before the King and await the verdict of the high court of France on the charge of felony which Villehardouin's envoy had brought against him. The high court met at Easter in 1260. Their decision, after long debate and due consideration of the usages of feudal law, was, according to the chronicle, unanimous.

The court held that if the lord of Athens had actually performed personal homage to the Prince of Achaia, and had afterwards rebelled and fought against him in the field, he would have deserved to be dispossessed. But seeing that neither he nor his ancestors had performed homage or rendered feudal service to the Prince, and he had only taken up arms in defence of his honour and his rights as he understood them, the case did not lie. Nevertheless, inasmuch as he knew that the Marquis Bonifazio had bestowed upon the Prince's father or on Champlitte, who was lord of Morea before him, the overlordship of his lands, and, since he was therefore under the obligation to do homage, he ought never to have borne arms, against Villehardouin, and in that respect had erred against his liege lord. For this error they held that the journey which he had been compelled to make in order to appear before the King was ample atonement, and the Prince should accept it as such. King Louis confirmed the decision of the court, and the grateful lord of Athens kissed his feet and begged to have the judgment duly sealed and legalised. Nor was this practical acquittal the only advantage which he reaped from his visit to the court of France, for the magnanimous Louis, who was no little gratified to find himself acknowledged as the fount of chivalry by the lords of Romania, of his own accord offered to grant him such a boon as he might desire. Guy de la Roche asked for and obtained the title of Duke of Athens, on the

plea that his lands had conveyed such a title in ancient times.

The claims of Villehardouin to the homage of the Megaskyr were, it appears, considered well grounded, and when the suzerainty of Achaia was ceded by the Emperor Baldwin II to the Angevine Kings of Naples, it was taken for granted that it carried with it paramount lordship over the Dukes of Athens. Such a claim is implicitly advanced in two rescripts of Charles II, preserved in the archives at Naples, which bear the date of 1294.

Guy de la Roche hastened back to Greece, and disembarked at Clarenza. He assumed the bailieship of Achaia, and at once set free the imprisoned Euboean triarchs, as a first step to the re-establishment of peaceful relations with the Venetian republic, which was now, in view of the new alliance of Genoa and Nicaea, more disposed to compromise on the Euboean question. His next step was to despatch envoys to the Emperor of Nicaea, and offer a liberal ransom for the release of the Prince, but Michael remained obdurate to such advances. It was on the 25th July 1261 that Caesar Alexius Melissenus Strategopoulus, who was leading an expedition into Epirus, where the star of the Despot was once more in the ascendant, seized a favourable opportunity when the fleet was absent from Constantinople, and suddenly diverting his march advanced on the well-nigh defenceless city, which he carried by a bold coup de main with his force of 800 horsemen. A month later Michael Palaeologus made his triumphant entry through the Golden Gate, bringing in his train the Moreote prisoners, whose prospects of release must now have appeared more hopeless than ever.

Baldwin, accompanied in his flight by the Patriarch and the Venetian Podesta, landed at Negripont and went on to Thebes. He was received with due honour by Guy de la Roche, the triarchs of Euboea, and the remnant of the Frankish nobles who had survived the disaster of Pelagonia. The state of the country, and the fact that so many of the ablest leaders were detained as prisoners in the hands of the enemy, made it clear that he could count on little practical aid from his feudatories in central and southern Greece, where a certain number of his followers, who elected to remain, eventually received signories from Villehardouin. He therefore went on to Clarenza, and crossed into Apulia, where he was royally entertained by Manfred. He was, however, shrewd enough to realise that the friendship of the bastard Hohenstaufen would not greatly further a cause to which the active co-operation of the Roman curia was indispensable, and after a short stay he pursued his weary pilgrimage to Venice and thence to France.

The reorganisation of the distracted empire, after the recovery of the capital, absorbed all the energies of Michael Palaeologus. The transfer of the seat of Government to Europe, and the proportional weakening of Nicaea by the ensuing repopulation of Constantinople, opened the door in Asia to the martial Turks, who were not slow to realise their opportunity. The imperial armies had not been successful in the long drawn-out struggle with the Despot of Epirus, who was constantly supported by the King of Sicily, his son-in-law. The Pope moreover was strenuously exhorting the Catholic powers to active intervention on behalf of Baldwin and a cause which appeared by no means hopeless while Venice continued to hold the islands which link the east and west, while central Greece and the Morea remained in the hands of the Franks. His own tenure was thus far from secure. The obstinate pride of Villehardouin and the imprisoned nobles had shown no sign of wavering since their captivity. Michael was therefore now disposed to abate in some measure the rigour of the terms he had at first laid down as the condition of their release.

Villehardouin on his side, after the fall of Constantinople and two years of detention, was also prepared to entertain concessions which had become inevitable. The arguments which he had put forward to the effect that it was beyond his power, even if he had the will, to surrender the lands of his peers, did not apply to those later acquisitions in the Morea which had remained in the domain of the Prince. He therefore reluctantly consented to the final conditions proposed by the Emperor for the release of himself and his fellow-prisoners, subject to the ratification of the barons of his realm. These conditions included the recognition of Michael Palaeologus as lawful Emperor of the Romans, the surrender of the fortresses of Monemvasia, Mistra, Maigne, and Beaufort, implicitly involving the cession of the whole of Laconia, and the provision of hostages to guarantee the execution of the terms agreed upon.

The Aragonese chronicle specifies Corinth as one of the fortresses which the Prince undertook to surrender, but states that when the other Geoffrey of Carytena was then despatched to the Morea to submit the proposals to the bailie and the high court of Achaia. He rode overland to Thessalonica, and thence to Athens, where he found the Duke, his father-in-law, who, in spite of the depressing conditions which he had come to announce, received him as the man he most desired to see in all the world. They proceeded together to Nikli, where the high court of Achaia assembled, attended on this occasion by the Princess and the ladies of the realm, representing their absent husbands, with, a few veterans such as Pierre de Vaux and the Chancellor, Leonardo da Veruli. The proposed cession of Laconia was submitted to the court, and the speeches assigned in the Chronicle of Morea to Guy de la Roche and Geoffrey of Carytena respectively represent the two points of view which divided opinion.

"Princess, lords, prelates, and knights," said the Duke of Athens, "it is fact, as each one of you well knows, that aforetime in the defence of my rights I withstood my lord the Prince. From which adventure let no man conclude that I do not desire the deliverance of my lord the Prince. But truth compels me to avow that I may never approve the surrender of these castles to the Emperor. For if the Emperor obtains possession of these fortresses, he will garrison them in such force that he will be enabled to drive us out of the country. And that no man may doubt my goodwill, if this may be done, I am ready to yield up my own person to take the place of my lord the Prince in prison. Or if money can buy his ransom, I would rather pledge all my lands, than that he should remain a prisoner."

Then the lord of Carytena rose and replied, "My lord Duke, pardon me for saying what I needs must say. Well assured am I that you love the Prince and also have at heart the good estate of the realm. All that you have just said we also said, many a time when we held debate there as we lay in prison. Had we found that there were any other way by which we might achieve the release of my lord the Prince, and of the other gentlefolk that are his companions in prison, we had rather chosen it. But now my lard the Prince hath been three years in prison, and were he to remain there the rest of his life he could hope for no other terms. Moreover ye are aware that it was messire who acquired the castle of Malvesie by conquest, Mistra and Grand Maigne he fortified himself. Now if he be willing to die in prison to advantage others, the loss is all his own. But if he cede that which he himself conquered and acquired, God will aid him to win back his own again after he is set free. Wherefore never will I suffer my lord to die in prison—No, I am for obeying his commands, and surrendering that which is his own, thereby to obtain his deliverance."

"Fair brothers," said the Duke, " declare by my Creator, there lives no man that better loves my lord the Prince or more desires his freedom; and I am well assured that when once the Emperor knows that we will not yield these castles up for his release, he will not salt the Prince and swallow him, but will accept a ransom of money. Howbeit, were it to come to that, and my lord the Prince were rather to choose death in prison than to abandon his country to the Greeks, he would therein prove his noble blood, even as Christ died to redeem His people, for it were better that one man should perish than a multitude. For when once these castles have been surrendered to the Greeks the Emperor will spare no effort to maintain their strength, and the populations will rebel and will put the Prince to so great pains, that he would rather choose to be back in prison than to see his people perish and himself disinherited. Now have I set forth the consequences which I dread, and do ye decide according to your will."

Sanudo, on the other hand, with great probability, maintains that the Duke of Athens urged the acceptance of these hard terms against the sounder reasoning of the barons in order that he might not be suspected of treachery. If Guy de la Roche had opposed them he in any case withdrew his opposition, and the parliament broke up after choosing the sister of Jean Chaudron, grand constable of Achaia, and Marguerite de Neuilly, the daughter of the lord of Passava, now, married to Guglielmo II da Verona, as hostages who were to be sent to Constantinople, in accordance with the harsh feudal custom which compelled the vassal to accept any sacrifice when called on by his liege lord. Upon their arrival at the court of Michael, Palaeologus, Villehardouin performed the act of homage to the Emperor and was confirmed in his title of grand x seneschal, while the bond of union was to all outward appearance drawn closer by his standing godfather to the Emperor's youngest child, a relationship of peculiar sanctity in the eyes of the Greeks. So peace was reestablished, formalities ratified and oaths exchanged, with due reserves of conscience on the part of Villehardouin, who, accompanied by his fellow-prisoners, sailed early in 1262 for Negripont, where Guy de la Roche met him and surrendered his stewardship. The Emperor, who had now also concluded peace with the Despot Michael, lost no time in putting strong garrisons into the surrendered fortresses which he placed under the governorship of his brother Constantine.

The first obligation incumbent on the Prince, after his return to his diminished realm, was to bring to a satisfactory conclusion the protracted quarrel with Venice over Euboea. The Venetians Lorenzo Tiepolo and Filippo Ghisi, who were his vassals for the islands of Scyros and Scopelos, conducted the preliminary negotiations, and plenipotentiaries were despatched by the republic to conclude and sign a convention which should annul all former treaties and ensure a definite settlement. The terms of peace and the future status of the island were amicably arranged, and agreements were signed on the 15th and 16th of May 1262 by Villehardouin on his own account, and the triarchs of Euboea independently, with Andrea Barbadigo bailie of Negripont, representing the Doge. By these instruments Guglielmo da Verona, Narzotto and Grapella dalle Carceri, whose tenure in the island had in the meantime become an accomplished fact, were recognised as the triarchs of Euboea. The conditions which existed in the days of the lady Carintana were re-established, and Villehardouin remained exclusive suzerain over the triarchs. Venice, however, retained the sea customs, granting exemptions to the triarchs, to the Prince for his own estates, and to the clergy. Jurisdiction over her subjects in the commercial quarter was reserved to the bailie. Venetian weights and measures were to continue to be the standard, and the republic was left in possession of the buildings she

held in the capital, with the exception of the palace formerly occupied by Morosini, as Villehardouin's procurator. The castle, however, was to be razed to the ground at the expense of the barons, who were authorised to build on the site, with a privilege of pre-emption in favour of Venice. All property conferred by the bailie since the death of Carintana was to be restored to the triarchs. Villehardouin guaranteed all the privileges and immunities enjoyed by Venetians in the days of Carintana throughout the whole of his principality, and finally all previous treaties with the triarchs, containing stipulations at variance with these prescriptions to the detriment of the Prince of Achaia, were rescinded.

This settlement disposed for the present of the ambition of Venice to wrest from Achaia and transfer to herself the overlordship of Euboea, which had been for years the object of her policy. In the instructions issued to succeeding bailies they were strictly enjoined to abstain from any intervention in questions of feudal tenure and territorial occupation. Villehardouin vindicated his claims to suzerainty, but no longer pressed his title to the actual possession of the baronies which had been the portion of Carintana. The triarchs secured the apportionment of the island for which they had endured imprisonment and war. Venice was the principal loser, especially in the matter of prestige.

But she was no longer in a position to dictate to her partners in Romania. The tenure of the Latins had grown precarious throughout the east, and it was of vital importance to regulate their domestic differences on a basis of mutual tolerance and concession.

CHAPTER VI

WILLIAM VILLEHARDOUIN—(continued)

IF Villehardouin had left Constantinople with the firm resolve to avail himself of the first plausible occasion for denouncing the treaty to which he had only subscribed under the stress of compulsion, and intended to recommence the struggle as soon as a favourable opportunity should present itself, it is probable that Michael Palaeologus on his side was no less anxious to be absolved from his obligation to keep the peace, and that, having now secured a footing in the Peloponnese, he welcomed any pretext for renewing hostilities against the Franks, whose presence in the territories of the empire was a standing reproach to his pride. Such a pretext was readily found.

Soon after the Byzantine forces had taken possession of Mistra and the other fortresses, towards the end perhaps of 1262, Villehardouin made a progress to Lacedaemonia with an imposing retinue. It does not seem to have been clearly laid down what precise extent of territory was to be surrendered with the fortresses, but the spirit of his engagement seemed to imply the cession of the whole of Laconia, although it is possible that some portion of that province had been included in the original area of conquest. Lacedaemonia moreover was only situated some four or five miles from Mistra, so that the prince's visit might well be interpreted as an act of provocation, and it seems probable that he hoped his presence in the neighbourhood would lead to a demonstration in his favour. He maintained, however, that he was entirely within his rights in going to Lacedaemonia, and that he was accompanied by an armed retinue solely for the protection of his person, while traversing the hostile country of the Tzaconians. In any case the garrison of Mistra took alarm and summoned the Melings to their aid, while the governor of Monemvasia, a Cantacuzenus, despatched a galley to Constantinople with the welcome news that the Prince had violated the treaty.

And so once more, with mutual recrimination, war broke out in the beginning of 1263. A large number of Turkish mercenaries from Anatolia, under the leadership of two emirs, were taken into the imperial service, and two armies were simultaneously organised, the one entrusted to Johannes Palaeologus, to invade the territories of the Despot of Epirus, with whom peace had proved equally short-lived; the other under the command of the Sebastocrator Constantine, supported by Cantacuzenus, Alexius Philes, and Macrinus, to invade and recover the Morea. A fleet was at the same time despatched under the Protostrator Alexius Philanthropinus, to raid the coasts of the peninsula and the islands which were held by Franks or Venetians. The Slavs of the mountains and the Tzaconians readily transferred their allegiance to the Greeks, and Laconia was occupied by the imperial troops without a struggle. Villehardouin had summoned his feudatories from central Greece and the islands. He was loyally supported by Guglielmo della Carcere from Euboea, but the death of the Duke of Athens, which took place about this time, deprived him of a powerful ally, and the levies were slow to join his standard. He therefore

evacuated Laconia, leaving only a small garrison to maintain itself in Lacedaemonia, while he marched north to Corinth to superintend the muster of the feudal army. The imperial generals thereupon decided to concentrate in Elis and attack Andravida, the capital. Marching by the ranges of Chelmos on Veligosti, they burned the town, but were unable to wrest the fortress from its handful of defenders. They then entered the plain of Megalopolis and divided their forces. One army made its way through the Arcadian mountains, where the villages were handed over to the Turks to raid, as far as Calavryta, which surrendered, and was now lost for good by the house of Tournay.

The other army continued its advance through the valley of the Alpheius, unchallenged by the lord of Carytena, who was absent with his Prince at Corinth. On their line of march lay the monastery of Isova. Not far from the left bank of the Alpheius, nearly opposite the junction of the Erymanthus or Douana, the Benedictines had founded a stately abbey in one of these peaceful and fertile spots which the monastic orders of old knew so well to choose for the sites of their great establishments. Its ruins, with lofty Gothic windows framing the mountain terraces, still stand in the happy valley, and are known to the country folk as Palati. A battalion of Turks returning from the Arcadian highlands joined the Sebastocrator and set fire to the monastery, burning down the abbey church, dedicated to our Lady of Isova. Thence marching on towards the plains of Elis, they pitched their camp at Prinitza, near the right bank of the Alpheius, at the entrance to the plains.

Villehardouin, when he marched to Corinth, had placed in charge of his lands and capital a vassal of Geoffrey of Carytena, a certain Jean de Catavas, who was so crippled by rheumatism, that he could be of little service in the field, though he was a soldier of experience and reputation. In the moment of crisis, when the Greek armies had overrun a great part of the principality without encountering resistance, when Elis and Andravida lay defenceless before them, this remarkable man by his energy and devoted gallantry saved the desperate situation of the Franks. He collected from the garrison of the castles the few men-at-arms who were available, and with difficulty mustered a little band of three hundred and twelve horsemen, with whom he hastened to meet the invaders. At Crestina, south of the Alpheius, he learned that they were encamped at Prinitza, and crossing the river he came up through a narrow defile in their rear. An hour before the sun rose over the mountains, in the half light of morning, he found himself close up to the Greek camp. Then Messire Jean de Catavas addressed his men.

“My lords and friends, brothers and dear companions, an hour has come of which we should be right glad, and we should thank God that He has deigned to guide us thither, where we may triumph over so numerous an enemy. Hold firm, my friends, and let not your hearts misgive you at the sight of this great multitude. It is far better for us that they should be many in number, than few and of one race. These men are strangers one to the other, coming from different countries, but they have to fight against tried Frankish veterans. Let us show a bold front, and impetuously bear them down with our lances. Let us have in mind the labours which our lords and our fathers endured to conquer these lands which we possess, and prove ourselves worthy of the arms we bear, the fiefs we hold, and the respect of our fellowmen. And if, my lords and comrades, God give us grace to triumph in one fight by virtue of our swords over the brother of the Emperor and his host, then, so long as the ark of God shall rest on the mountain of Ararat, shall live the praise of this day on the lips of men. As for me, as you all see and know, I cannot, bear sword nor

lance in my hand, either for defence or attack. But to give good proof of courage and show myself worthy of you, I desire to carry the banner of the Prince. Bind it fast, therefore, to my arm that I may bear it stoutly. From here I see the tent of the grand-domestic. I swear to you by Christ to march straight for that tent, and if any one of you shall see me flinch or tremble, I declare him the enemy of Christ if he do not then and there cut me down."

And so with the banner, bearing the anchored cross of Villehardouin, lashed to his crippled hand, he placed himself at the head of his little troop as they emerged from the defile into the open plain. Three battles consisting of about a thousand horsemen rode out to meet them. The Franks halted and received their charge with levelled lances. Nearly a third of their number were thrown to the ground by the shock of the encounter, but quickly remounting they used their long swords with terrible effect among the arrested squadrons. Then reforming their ranks and drawing their short swords they galloped through the camp, cutting down the unarmed Greeks as the reaper mows the corn, and followed their heroic leader towards the tent of the Sebastocrator Constantine, which was pitched above the village of Prinitza. The word went through their ranks that in their midst beside their leader rode a mysterious white horseman. It was St. George, who was fighting for the Franks to avenge the sacrilege of Isova! No rally now could check their fiery onslaught. As he waited in the door of his tent for a report of the annihilation of this little band the Sebastocrator was suddenly aware of the banner of Villehardouin close upon him. With difficulty he was got to horse, and escaped from the disastrous field, guided through difficult mountain paths till he reached the safe shelter of Mistra. His flight was the signal for a general rout, and the panic-stricken Greeks concealed themselves as best they might in the dense forest country of Prinitza. The abandoned camp was plundered and a thousand horses fell into the hands of the victorious Franks, who after resting from the fatigues of their glorious day, marched to Vlisiri whence the welcome news was despatched to the Prince.

The force which Villehardouin had collected at Corinth was not sufficiently powerful to enable him to follow up this victory and attempt the recovery of Laconia. The Sebastocrator had therefore ample time to reorganise his demoralised army and prepare for a new campaign. The chronicle relates that a Frankish nobleman in the service of the Emperor advised him to remodel his tactics, pointing out that the western horsemen in their saddles were each of them a match for twenty of his men. At the battle of Pelagonia, when the Germans and the Franks met in the shock of the first encounter, the bowmen had drawn on friend and foe alike, and by killing the horses had reduced the advantage of the enemy, since on foot they were no better than other men. He also urged an immediate advance on Andravida, whither the Prince had now brought in his levies, and proposed a scheme for luring the Frankish horsemen into an ambush of archers by a simulated attack with the lance. Macrinus and Cantacuzenus, however, when called into council, were against further immediate operations; Andravida, they said, had now been provided with defences; the season was far advanced, and a winter campaign was not to be lightly undertaken. Their advice prevailed and the troops were withdrawn into winter quarters. The Pope, Urban IV, took advantage of this pause in hostilities to renew the efforts he had already made to bring about a peaceful settlement, but without success, and on the renewal of hostilities he afforded the Prince of Achaia material assistance for the defence of his realm.

So the winter passed, spent by the Prince in strengthening the defences of

Andravida, and consolidating his army. With the return of spring the Sebastocrator mustered his forces in the plains of Apicus, where he was joined by the Melings and the Tzaconians with contingents from Monemvasia and the mountains of Escorta. Once more they marched across the plain of Megalopolis and encountering no resistance at Carytena entered the gorges of the Alpheius, which the disaffection of the Escortans opened to them, and so reached Prinitza, the scene of their former disaster. Thence their guides conducted them northwards by Sergiana to a hermitage or chapel dedicated to St. Nicholas of Mesikli, where the headquarters spent the night. In the morning they were aware of the Frankish chivalry riding down to meet them, and halting in their serried formation. The little band of horsemen which confronted the hordes of the Sebastocrator drawn up in their three battles, excited the derision of the Greeks, and Cantacuzenus, the military commandant, riding out between the rival ranks and brandishing his mace, addressed them in terms of contumely, hoping, it would seem, to provoke them to charge into the midst of his archers. As if to rebuke his pride and exultation, his charger stumbled and threw him violently to the ground. The Franks, who till now had held firm, then ran in and despatched him where he lay, and a brief skirmish ensued over his dead body, which was eventually recovered by the Byzantines. So dismayed, however, was the Sebastocrator by the death of his captain that he declined battle and withdrew, retreating on Nikli, which he proceeded to invest.

The pay of the Turkish mercenaries was six months in arrear, and their repeated demands for money were characterised as importunate in view of the rich booty they had been suffered to acquire by raiding the Frankish fiefs. Their disaffection was also in a large measure due to the obvious incapacity and cowardice of the Byzantine leaders, in whose service they saw little prospect of gaining the prizes which fall to the successful soldier of fortune. Their leaders therefore denounced the contract they had made with the Emperor, and led off the best troops in the heterogeneous army of the Sebastocrator to Carytena, with the intention of offering their services to Villehardouin. Two archons followed them to parley with the Emirs, but their overtures were rejected and the Turks marched on to Beauregard, whence they sent messengers to Andravida. Villehardouin deputed Ancelin de Toucy to treat with them. Ancelin, one of the nobles who after the fall of the Frankish empire had settled in the Morea, was familiar with the language of the Turks, many of whom had formerly enrolled themselves in the imperial armies. Their offer of service was accepted and Ancelin was entrusted with the management of the Turkish legion.

Strengthened by these reinforcements the Prince took the field again, and learning that the Greeks had surrounded Veligosti, and were holding the pass of Macry-plagi which connects that fortress with Calamata, he marched southward into the plains of Messenia to dislodge them. The Sebastocrator had in the meantime returned to Constantinople, leaving the army in the Peloponnese under the command of Macrinus and the grand-domestic Alexius Philes. The battle promised to be a decisive one, but the Franks, who had crossed the plain and halted at the foot of the long spine of Macry-plagi, had a difficult task to perform in carrying their attack uphill into the jaws of the pass. Ancelin de Toucy claimed and obtained the privilege of leading the first battle. He was doubly interested in the success of the operations, for his brother Philippe de Toucy, afterwards high admiral of Sicily, was a prisoner in Constantinople, where he had been detained since the flight of Baldwin, and he hoped by securing the persons of the Byzantine leaders to be in a position to effect an exchange in his brother's favour. It was decided that the Turkish mercenaries, whose fidelity to the Prince had not yet been put to the test, should form the centre, while the rear was commanded by Villehardouin himself. So with prayers to the "blessed baron

St. George" for victory they advanced to the attack. The pass into Macry-plagi broadening out towards the plain, narrows as it ascends, shut in by precipitous mountains, whose slopes rise under a mantle of verdure which disguises their real steepness, to their highest point in Hellenitza. The Byzantine vanguard which held the top of the pass under the leadership of a certain Caballarius, repulsed the first onslaught of the Frankish chivalry, but Ancelin succeeded in rallying his troop and, charging home once more, carried the crest of the ridge and drove the enemy back on their second and third battles, which as usual fled in panic. The Turks hastening up to the support of Ancelin completed the rout, and pushing on impetuously into the ruck of the fugitives, slaughtered the rank and file, while they made prisoners of the officers, with whom they had an account to settle.

One of his esquires or sergeants now brought word to Ancelin that some of the leaders had taken refuge in a cave at no great distance, cut off by the pursuing Turks. He guided Ancelin to the spot, a cavern or grotto masked by projecting buttresses of rock under the height on which the castle of Gardiki was subsequently built. The spot is easy to identify today in the ravine which leads to the mossy crag, detached from the sheer flank of Hellenitza, on which the ruins of Gardiki stand. There he found Alexius Philes, Macrinus, and Caballarius, who were betrayed by the magnificence of their arms, and conducted them to the presence of the Prince at Veligosti. With them upwards of three hundred and fifty archons and notables were taken prisoners.

The victory was indeed decisive, and on the following day the chiefs of Escorta came in to crave for pardon, which the Prince on the prayer of his barons graciously accorded. He then summoned the Byzantine leaders, and reproached them with their Emperor's breach of faith, in making war upon him in defiance of oath and treaty, which perjury God had punished by their signal defeat at Prinitza and now again at Macry-plagi. The grand-domestic retorted that it was the Prince who had broken his engagements and commenced hostilities, wherefore he did wrong to glory in his victory, and ought rather to have in mind his own discomfiture at Pelagonia and reflect on the unequal chances of war. Nevertheless, he protested, since he was now the Prince's prisoner, he must crave pardon for his freedom of speech, and could only plead his duty to defend his master the Emperor horn all reproach. Villehardouin replied that he had never intended aggression nor infringed the terms of his covenant, but that the Emperor had been misled by the false reports he had received from Mistra and Monemvasia. He had gone to Lacedaemonia, escorted by an armed following solely for the protection of his own person, mistrusting the turbulent Melings and Tzaconians, the truth of which he called God to witness. The grand-domestic was then interned in the fortress of Clairmont, while the other prisoners were distributed among the various castles of the barons. Villehardouin then proceeded to Lacedaemonia, whither Ancelin de Toucy and Jean de Catavas led the Moreote army. They found the city abandoned, and all the Greek inhabitants transferred to Mistra. The Prince accordingly recolonised it with Latins and other Greeks upon whose fidelity he could count, and laid up large stores of forage and provisions, which he collected from the hostile districts of Tzaconia, Helos, and Vatica, lifting cattle and raiding up to the borders of Monemvasia.

The central figure of this campaign is Ancelin de Toucy, who now fills the place which Geoffroi de Bruyères should by right have taken. But the gallant and unstable lord of Carytena was once more in disgrace with his Prince. Although now married for some ten years to Isabella de la Roche, daughter of Guy I, Duke of Athens, whose influence was at one time so great with him that she had persuaded him to take her father's side in his

quarrel with Villehardouin, he had fallen a victim to the charms, of the young wife of his own vassal Jean de Catavas, the crippled hero of Prinitza, and had carried her off to Italy. The story of his second disaffection is thus told in the chronicles:—

"At this time, while the Prince was fighting his battles in his realm, the lord of Carytena, who was accounted one of the best knights in the world, was not in the Morea, for sin and his evil star tempted him to do an unseemly thing, through lust of woman, which misguideth many of the wisest of this world, bringing death and shame in life. They so misled this noble knight, that he came to love a lady who was the wife of one of his knights, messire Jehan de Catavas by name, and she was the fairest lady in all Romania. That he might the more easily accomplish his transgression with this lady, he put abroad that he had made a vow to go upon a pilgrimage to Rome, and to the shrine of St. Nicholas at Bari, and to Mount St. Angelo in Apulia. Then he took the lady and such company as seemed good to him, and passed over into Apulia. And when King Manfred of Allemain, who was at that time King of Sicily and Apulia, knew that the lord of Carytena, who had such high renown as ever a knight might have, was come to his land, he made inquiry concerning him, and sought to learn for what purpose he had come thither. But one of those that were of his company, who knew the whole matter, told the King that for love of a lady was he come thither under pretext of a pilgrimage, which lady was the wife of one of his knights, whom he had carried away from her husband. When the King had assured himself of the truth of this report, he sent for the lord of Carytena, being minded to see him and converse with him. Two knights therefore went to summons him to speak with the King. And the lord of Carytena sought the presence of the King right gladly, and when he stood before him he saluted him and made such obeisance as should be made to a king. And the King received him honourably, and entreated him as a valiant knight and one of high renown. Then he caused him to sit by his side and inquired why and for what adventure he had come to his realm. And the lord of Carytena replied that he had come in the fulfilment of a vow to his land of Apulia, and that he was desirous, God willing, to go to Rome. But King Manfred, who well knew the real occasion of his coming, was sad at heart to see so noble a knight in such a pass, and yet more so when he thought of the Prince, for such ribaldry abandoned in the midst of so great a war. 'Nay,' he replied, 'lord of Carytena, be well assured that I know why you are come hither. Now, because I know that you are of great renown and one of the most valiant knights of Christendom, and because the occasion of your coming is ill to speak of, I will say nothing more in public audience nor have regard to your misprision, for you have deserved to lose your head, since you have deserted Prince William, your liege lord, in the hardest war that ever he was engaged in, and you have broken faith to your vassal, to whom you were bound by the tie of honour, and of whom I have heard tell that he is one of the best knights of Romania, and you have carried off his wife. Now therefore I declare unto you in few words, that, because of your good name and fame, I will not visit you with the punishment which is your due, but I require you within eight days to quit my realm and return to your liege lord, and aid him in the war in which he is engaged. And if after the said term has expired I shall find you in my realms I will exact the penalty of you, as against a man who has abandoned his liege lord at the time of his dire need'."

To this command the lord of Carytena submitted with the best grace he might, finding no excuse which he might honourably advance, and so he made his way back to Clarenza. In the meantime, encouraged by the absence of the powerful baron who held their mountains under control, the populations of Escorta and the highlands of Arcadia

had once more broken out into rebellion and were laying siege to the castles of Bucelet and Carytena. The Prince had therefore been compelled to renounce the hope of retaking Mistra, and thereby reuniting the whole peninsula under his rule. Leaving Lacedaemonia strongly garrisoned and well provisioned, he had withdrawn to Veligosti. From there he despatched Ancelin de Toucy with the Turkish mercenaries to reduce Escorta by fire and sword. The Turks, eager for the rich booty which the prosperity of Arcadia promised, carried out his mandate with such effect that it was not long before the mountaineers sent a deputation to sue for peace, which the barons persuaded the Prince to grant, out of their regard for the erring lord of Carytena, whose country was thus being reduced to ruin. Malik and his Turks were therefore recalled, and soon afterwards they were paid off and marched away northwards into Viachia, whence they hoped to find a passage to their own land. A certain number, however, remained in the service of the Prince, and were baptized into Christianity. They took wives from the women of the country where, in view of the dearth of population, their presence was not unwelcome, and their descendants settled down in the districts of Rhenta and Bunarvi. A few of them even obtained the honour of knighthood and were granted fiefs in the Morea.

Meanwhile the lord of Carytena arrived at Andravida, where Villehardouin then held his court, and sought an asylum with the monks of St. Nicholas of Cannel, while the barons and notables, as ever ready to plead for the popular hero, interceded with the justly indignant Prince. The repentant Geoffrey appeared before his liege lord with a halter round his neck in the church of St. Sophia, where the parliaments were held, while the barons craved his mercy, reminding the Prince of the ties of blood and kin, and pleading that it was ordained of God that he should be forgiven, since he had repented of his sin. So after long debate the Prince was moved to pardon him, and restored him his lands once more, but, as on the occasion of his former defection, by a new act of gift, and without the privileges acquired by original conquest.

It is apparent that this account of the trial and pardon of Geoffrey as given in the chronicle is practically a repetition of what took place at the parliament of Nikli after the defeat of Guy de la Roche at Carydi. Sanudo on the other hand, with greater probability, states that it was Manfred himself who pleaded with Villehardouin for Geoffrey's pardon. Being anxious to reconcile the most famous soldier of the Morea with the Prince, his brother-in-law, he despatched the lord of Carytena in his own ships with letters and presents and a reinforcement of horse and foot to Clarenza. Returning with this welcome assistance and Manfred's recommendation he found it easy to make his peace. Geoffrey was now ordered to Nikli to defend the eastern outposts of the principality against the Greeks of Mistra, and he remained ever after the loyal servant of his Prince.

The Emperor Michael Paleologos had now realised that the reconquest of the Peloponnese would be no easy task, and having ample occupation for his energies in other directions, he made a proposal to Villehardouin to settle their differences by a dynastic marriage. The Prince of Achaia was still without male heirs, and had as yet but one daughter, Isabella, the child of the Greek Princess Anna Comnena, to whom a second daughter, Margaret, was born about this time. Michael proposed that his own son Andronicus should take up his residence at the court of Villehardouin, with a view to his eventually marrying Isabella and succeeding to Achaia on the death of the prince. This proposal met with the determined opposition of the Frankish barons, and Villehardouin had no option but to decline any overtures for a settlement on such a basis.

In the meanwhile Venice, after maintaining the war at sea with varying success since the recovery of the capital by the Greeks, had initiated negotiations for peace and despatched envoys to Constantinople, in anticipation of an intended attack by the Byzantine fleet on Euboea, from whose harbours the pirate ships of the triarchs terrorised the whole archipelago. In June 1265 the basis of an agreement was drafted, which was eventually ratified with certain modifications in 1268. Coron, Modon, Crete, and the islands of the archipelago which were subject to the Doge, were guaranteed to him on the condition that he should not oppose the recovery of Euboea. Venice was to have full enjoyment of her actual possessions in the island, and trading quarters were to be reserved to her in Thessalonica, Volenos, Aenos, Adramyttium, Smyrna, Ania, and at Stenon in Constantinople. The ambassadors of the republic proposed as a condition the expulsion of the Genoese from the empire and the cancelling of the Treaty of Nymphaeum. In return for the humiliation of her hereditary foe, Venice was prepared to become the ally of Palaeologus, to abandon her old brothers-in-arms, the Franks of Romania, and pledge herself to give neither support nor countenance to the enterprises of Charles of Anjou, to whom already in 1262 Urban had offered the throne of Sicily, and who now, bearing the banner of the Church and rallying round him all the elements which looked to the restoration of the Latin ascendency, appeared as a menacing cloud on the horizon of the east.

The lifelong struggle of Frederick II with the papacy, and his efforts, premature and unappreciated, to free mankind from the cramping yoke of an intolerant and overbearing priesthood, had terminated in 1250 with his death in tragic isolation among his Saracens at Luceria. Of his children none were present at his lonely deathbed save Manfred, the son of the beautiful Bianca Lancia. Conrad, the legitimate heir, who was maintaining the struggle with William of Holland, the rival pretender to the empire, for away in the north, succeeded by his will to the kingdom of Germany, while Manfred, who alone of his illegitimate children is mentioned in that document, was to govern as his representative in Italy and Sicily. Not four years later Conrad IV also perished after a brief career of victory in Italy, ever fatal to the race of Hohenstaufen, while Conradin, as his only son came to be called, was left in Bavaria a child but to Manfred, on whom as the champion of the Ghibelline cause fell the mantle of Frederick, and with it the undying hatred of the Church. Italian by birth and manners, he was able to identify the national with the Ghibelline cause, and dared to aspire not only to the throne of Italy, but even to the imperial crown.

The successes of his partisans in Tuscany, the homage paid to Manfred by Siena, and the conversion of Florence after the battle on the Arbia, compelled the Church and the demoralised Guelphs to look for assistance abroad. This disposition was encouraged by the elevation to the papal chair of Urban IV, a French priest, the son of a shoemaker in Troyes. The throne of Sicily which had been proposed to Henry III of England, and by him accepted for his son Edmund, but subsequently renounced, was in 1262 offered by Urban to Charles of Anjou, the youngest brother of Louis IX of France. Charles had married Beatrix, the elder daughter of Raymond Berengar, last Count of Provence, who as her father's heiress brought her husband the territories of Forcalquier and Provence. Her sisters had all made great marriages. Margaret of Provence was Queen of France, Eleanor Queen of England, while Sancia as bride of Richard of Cornwall claimed the title of Empress. The early historians ascribe to the jealousy felt by Countess Beatrix of the exalted positions occupied by her younger sisters, the determination of Charles of Anjou to persist

in an enterprise against which his brother St. Louis had protested as a violation of public right, and have recorded his oath never to rest until his wife was also crowned a queen. But the boundless energy and ambition of that sinister prince, with the grim face which was never seen to smile, needed no stimulus to induce him to accept the great part which the Guelphs of Italy had invited him to play. Urban IV did not live to see his plans realised, but upon his death in 1264 another French Pope replaced him in Clement IV. In the following spring Charles embarked at Marseilles, leaving the bulk of his army, which had been raised on the crusading tithes of Europe and the promise of the spoils of Italy, to make its way overland from the north. After successfully weathering a storm which dispersed the fleet of Manfred, he landed with a small following at Ostia. Fortune favoured his daring, and the Guelphs of Rome came out to escort him to the gates of the city which he reached on Whitsun eve. Manfred issued a dignified protest to the Romans, in which he asserted his title to rule over nearly the whole of Italy, over Sardinia and Tunis beyond the sea, and over a great part of Romania, the portion of Helena of Epirus. This was the inheritance of which, at the summons of the Pope, Charles had come to take forcible possession.

Meanwhile the Provencal army, ill equipped, unpaid, and led by chiefs whose names ominously recalled the Albigensian horrors, moved southward under the banner of the Cross, spreading devastation in its path. No resistance was offered by the Ghibellines of Northern Italy or Tuscany, and if Charles had little immediate prospect of satisfying the clamour of his ragged legions, he was at any rate relieved by their arrival from the danger, to which his foolhardy race to Rome had exposed him, of remaining isolated in a hostile country. On the 6th of January 1266, Charles and Beatrix were crowned in St. Peter's by a delegation of five cardinals representing the absent Pope, and a fortnight later he led his starving army towards the promised land.

If the depletion of his treasury and reluctance of the western nations to respond to the Pope's appeal on behalf of this so-called crusade made it imperative for Charles no longer to delay the issue of battle, the gallant but unfortunate son of Frederick was impelled by reasons no less cogent to grapple with his adversary forthwith. Treason was rife among the heterogeneous elements of which his kingdom was composed, and every day's delay increased the disaffection among his superstitious adherents, awed by the dread of the interdict and intimidated by monkish emissaries, the weapons of the Church that are ill to fight against. With restless energy Charles pushed forward and finding the line of the Ceprano abandoned, crossed without opposition. One by one the unstable cities of the south opened their gates, and the fortresses of Campania capitulated to the terror of his name. On the 25th of February the rival armies faced each other at Benevento, and on the following day was fought the bloody and eventful fight which ended in the discomfiture and death of Manfred. It was no conventional battle of chivalry. The cavaliers of Provence were followed by foot soldiers who ran in and clubbed the unhorsed knights to death. Once more, as at the passage of the Ceprano, "craven each Apulian proved," and, when the German lines were broken, the Italian reserves turned and fled without waiting to be attacked. Manfred, scorning to save himself by flight from the stricken field, sought death in the ranks of the enemy. His body, stripped of his arms, was found two days later lying naked where he had fallen, and buried under a cairn of stones raised by the French soldiers in honour of the illustrious dead. It remained for the bishop of Cosenza, at the bidding of the Pope, to tear the body of the excommunicated King from this honourable resting-place and fling it out to rot on the banks of the Liris. A massacre of the helpless population of

Benevento followed. To crown the tragic story the cowled spies of Clement, following up the traces of the widowed Queen and her infant children in their flight, discovered them in the castle of Trani waiting to embark for Epirus. By terrifying the castellan with the menace of eternal torments, they prevailed upon him to raise the drawbridge and detain them pending the orders of the conqueror. The Provencal horsemen followed close behind. The fair young Princess of Epirus, now only in her twenty-fifth year, was brought to Nocera and imprisoned for the remainder of her broken life in the Castello del Parco, where she died in 1271. Her daughter Beatrice and her three sons were transferred three years later to the Castello del Ovo at Naples, where they grew up in a living death.

The butcher of Benevento and his haughty queen entered Naples in triumph, amidst the acclamations of its fickle population and, not six weeks after he had set out from Rome, Charles of Anjou was master of the Italian inheritance of the Hohenstaufens with its Norman appanage in Epirus.

All the efforts of Baldwin II to enlist adherents in the west for a new expedition to recover his forfeit throne had regained without practical success. Promises he had bought in plenty with nominal grants, from portions of his vanished empire, and negotiations were in progress with the Duke of Burgundy, lately invested with the kingdom of Thessalonica, to whose shadowy crown there were already, many pretenders. But in the west there was no real heart for the cause, and he bent his footsteps southwards once more. Charles of Anjou had just succeeded in what might well have seemed a desperate enterprise, and on the ambition of that energetic monarch, who had already a foothold in Romania, he rested his latest hopes. On the 27th May 1267 a treaty was concluded between Baldwin and Charles at the papal court in Viterbo, with the full assent of Clement TV, and counter-signed by Leonardo da Veruli, Chancellor of Achaia, sent to represent the interests of Villehardouin, which were so largely affected by this instrument. Baldwin transferred to Charles of Anjou the sovereignty over Achaia, which must be taken as including the duchy of Athens and the baronies of central Greece; the islands of the archipelago dependent on the empire, with the exception of Lesbos, Chios, Samos, and Cos; the dowerlands of Helena in Epirus, which had hitherto been administered by Philippe Eschinard as Manfred's bailie, including Corfu and the mainland opposite the island between Butrinto and Valona; and finally, a third part of all the conquered territory they should together acquire in war. Charles on his part undertook within a term of six years to provide a force of two thousand knights, or else to take the field in person for the reconquest of the empire. Constantinople itself, with the four islands specified, and two-thirds of the area recovered by conquest, was to be the portion of Baldwin, but grants already bestowed upon other princes were to be made good from his share. Baldwin's son Philip was to marry Beatrix, daughter of Charles of Anjou, and in the event of a failure of heirs, the reversion of the whole empire was to fall in to the King of the Sicilies, reservation being made only of the rights of Venice. The republic, however, had already negotiated a treaty of alliance with Palaeologus, which was confirmed in the following year. Nothing came of the contract which the Frankish Emperor had concluded with the Duke of Burgundy, nor of a similar agreement with Count Thibaut of Champagne, King of Navarre, to whom he had offered a quarter of his prospective conquests. Such portions of Romania as were still actually in the hands of the Franks thus passed irrevocably under the' influence of Charles of Anjou, whose pensioner the Emperor henceforth became. He occupied a palace in Naples, where he maintained a small retinue, and continued to cherish vain hopes of restoration until his death in 1273, when his son, Philippe de

Courtenay, succeeded to his aspirations and his titular crown.

Meanwhile the last survivor of the race of Hohenstaufen, the youthful Conrad, known in history by the diminutive name of Conradin, was preparing to dispute his Italian inheritance which Manfred had usurped with the sinister tyrant at Naples, and his Ghibelline partisans, recovering from the shock of Benevento, were prepared to receive him as their leader in arms. The Pope had vetoed the election to the imperial throne of this "poisonous serpent from the dragon's seed," and his territorial possessions were confined to his own small duchy of Suabia, where Ghibelline envoys came to offer him the fair kingdom of his fathers in the south, and the promise of a glorious vengeance for the wrongs of his illustrious race. The romantic boy, now just fifteen years of age, nurtured on the songs of the minnesingers and the memory of his great ancestors, felt that irresistible impulse which had for so many centuries drawn the German across the Alpine barrier and, accepting the traditional mission of his house, he defied the Pope, and issued a manifesto to the Romans. At the very time when the dispossessed Emperor of the east was negotiating the treaty of Viterbo, the Ghibelline vicar of the disinherited Conradin entered Pisa and proclaimed his cause in Tuscany, while Guy de Montfort was despatched in haste to Florence to defend the Guelphic city with Apulian troops. In October 1267, accompanied by his stepfather, Meinhard Count of Gorz, his uncle, Louis of Bavaria, Rudolf of Hapsburg, and Frederick of Baden, he crossed the Alps and entered Verona. The standard of revolt was raised in Sicily, the Saracens of Luceria declared for the grandson of Frederic, and fickle Rome turned Ghibelline once more. The situation was critical in the extreme, and while the Pope called upon the sons of the Church to rally to her aid, Charles summoned all the vassals of his new kingdom to join his banner. As overlord of Achaia, he was entitled to feudal service from the Moreote barons, and Villehardouin, in whom self-interest was always the dominant impulse, was nothing loth to recognise his obligation to the conqueror of his old ally in Apulia, the gaoler of his sister-in-law, the widowed Helena of Epirus. Such service could not well be forgotten when once the throne of Sicily was safe, and in the ambition of Charles and the favour of Rome lay all the hopes of Frankish Romania. He therefore determined to make no merely formal display of zeal, but to contribute materially to the success of the holy war. An armistice of one year's duration was concluded with the Greek governor of Mistra, a loan was raised with Venetian bankers, and the flower of the Achaian chivalry, to the number of four hundred knights, was summoned to cross with the prince into Epirus, and thence embark for Brindisi. With him went the veteran de Bruyères, Gautier de Rosieres of Akova, Jean Chaudron, the constable of Achaia, and Geoffroi de Tournay of Calavryta, whose barony had been recovered by the Greeks, and who hereafter, it would appear, received fiefs in the kingdom of Naples, where members of his house, as well as of the Moreote family of Toucy, figure in subsequent history. Riding north from Brindisi by rapid marches, Villehardouin found the king at Benevento.

Meanwhile from the windows of his palace on the walls of Viterbo the Pope watched the long files of the imperial army marching unmolested across the great Etrurian plain. Conradin entered Rome in triumph. The ancient city draped with crimson, carpeted with flowers, went mad with enthusiasm to welcome the boy soldier who had put on his maiden arms to expel from his fair inheritance that gloomy tyrant in whose hands a French Pope had placed the keys of Italy. Rome was whole-heartedly Ghibelline once more. In the middle of August he left the city, marching through the Abruzzi by the old Valerian road, with the intention of relieving Luceria, to which Charles was now laying siege, and

reinforcing his army with the loyal Saracens. Charles however raised the blockade and hastened to oppose his progress, in some uncertainty as to the route which he would take. At length his scouts brought news that the enemy was approaching the lake of Fucino, and making a forced march he encamped near Alba with some three thousand weary troops. Conradin, passing by Tagliacozzo, advanced some six miles further and halted within sight of the rival camp, which was only separated from his own by the little stream of Salto. The battle which ensued has been called the battle of Alba, but the genius of Dante has stamped it for ever with the name of Tagliacozzo.

The chronicle describes at length the stratagem by which the battle was won, and attributes it to the merit of Villehardouin, who reconnoitred Conradin's camp and found the enemy nearly double in number the force of which Charles could dispose. The device employed consisted in despatching the light troops, drawn up in two or three battles, to meet the enemy, while the flower of the cavalry was held in ambush behind the camp. The advancing squadrons were to draw the enemy's attack and then to turn and fly, and when the German and Tuscan horsemen following in pursuit dispersed to loot the camp, the ambushed knights were to issue in compact formation and ride them down, while the Provençals scattered by the first attack returned to rally round them. The evidence however of Villani, Guillaume de Nangis, and others goes to prove that the tactics adopted on this occasion were not so much due to the invention of Villehardouin as to the advice of Girard de San Valeri, a veteran of the wars in Palestine, who was returning home through Italy, and Dante has embodied in a single line the tradition which assigned to him the honours of the day. For a brief space success appeared to crown the maiden arms of Conradin. The charge of the Germans broke the first and second line of the French, and Henri de Cousance, the marshal, who wore the king's arms and bore the royal standard, fell. A cry went up that the butcher of Benevento was slain, and wild with the intoxication of victory, the imperial troops scattered through the tents to loot, while the impetuous Don Arrigo of Castile, who commanded the van, pursued the flying enemy too far. Suddenly a fresh body of eight hundred knights, and among them apparently the famous chivalry of Morea, emerged from the fold of mountain in which they had lain concealed, and riding in close formation through the disbanded Germans, turned the issue of the day, which the desperate valour of Don Arrigo, returning too late from the pursuit, was powerless to retrieve. Conradin himself, with five hundred horsemen and his faithful comrade Frederick of Baden, escaped from the fatal field, where the cause of the usurper finally triumphed. Betrayed by Giovanni Frangipani of Astura into the hands of his enemy, the last of the Hohenstaufens perished with his devoted friends on the scaffold at Naples, appealing to a higher tribunal for judgment on his executioner. Tradition records that before he bent his neck to the axe he flung his gauntlet to the crowd and cried, "I bequeath my rights and my crown to him that shall take up my glove." The sacred pledge was borne to Peter of Aragon, the son-in-law of Manfred, who was destined to become the avenger of the house of Suabia. No voice of intercession from Viterbo had stayed the tyrant's hand, and a month later the Pope himself followed the last victim of ecclesiastical tyranny to the grave.

The chronology of the chronicle now becomes once more very defective, and its historical value for the period during which the ascendency of the house of Anjou was established over the Frankish states of Romania is very slight, though the narrative abounds in picturesque detail. The Angevine archives at Naples, however, contain a long series of documents bearing upon the relations between the kingdom and the principality,

which serve to correct the errors of the chronicle and to re-establish the order of events in their proper sequence.

Villehardouin remained as a guest at the court of Naples for some months after the battle of Tagliacozzo, and was no doubt a witness of the tragic end of Conradin's romantic enterprise. There was much to discuss respecting the future relations of Romania to the Sicilies, and the masterful Charles had ample occasion to study the character of his crafty vassal. During his sojourn there the scheme for the marriage of Isabella Villehardouin and Philip of Anjou, his father's eldest and favourite son, was first discussed. Ancelin de Toucy remained behind when, early in 1269, William returned to the Morea, but followed him after a short interval, escorting envoys from Charles, who brought with them the draft of a marriage contract. In accordance with the terms of this document all the barons and feudatories of Achaia were to be bound by an oath to hand over the fortresses on the death of William to the legitimate heir; Princess Anna was also to be bound by oath to renounce all intervention in the affairs of the Morea; Calamata and Clairmont were to be reserved to her as a widow's portion, and it was specifically laid down that her claims would not revive even if Isabella's marriage should prove childless, in which case the principality passed to King Charles and his heirs.

Villehardouin had also left Erard d'Aunoy in Italy to act as his plenipotentiary in a joint negotiation with Venice for common action against the Greeks, which he and Charles desired to bring to a successful issue. But Venice had only in the previous year secured the Emperor's ratification to the treaty which had been drafted in 1267. Considerable modifications had been made in the terms. Michael had declined to purchase peace with the republic by the expulsion of her Genoese rivals from the empire or to reserve special quarters in his cities for Venetian trading-stations. The principal stipulations of the treaty were, however, maintained, and in return for the concessions she obtained, Venice abandoned the Franks of Romania. Under these circumstances, the mission of Érard d'Aunoy and Jean de Cleri, who acted as ambassador for Charles, proved fruitless, although Lorenzo Tiepolo, the friend of Villehardouin and his vassal for certain island fiefs, had now succeeded Zeno in the ducal chair. The first act of the new Doge had been to sign a suspension of hostilities with Constantinople for a period of five years, and to nominate a bailie to take charge of the Venetian colony and interests in the capital. The failure of this combination made Achaia more and more dependent upon Naples, and envoys came and went between the two princes, who continued their preparations for a campaign against Palaeologus. The crusade of St. Louis to Tunis, and the demands which he made upon the chivalry of his brother's new kingdom, contributed further to postpone its execution. In 1270 Villehardouin again visited his sovereign at Naples, and secured for his relative Jean Chaudron, constable of Achaia, who had acted as his envoy in the previous year, the command of a fleet which Charles was collecting at Bari.

Final arrangements were also made for the marriage of Philip with Princess Isabella, and Villehardouin, having received the overlordship of Vallona in Epirus as a token of goodwill from the king, returned under the escort of this fleet to the Morea.

At the end of the same year the child-bride, accompanied by her father and his suite in two galleys, crossed over to Barletta, whence she was conducted to Naples, and lodged in the Castello del Ovo. Her marriage was solemnised with great pomp in the following May at Trani, at this period one of the busiest harbours of the Adriatic. The great sea-

girdled cathedral church had some twelve years earlier witnessed the union of Manfred to the sister of her mother. The wedding festivities were on a scale of great magnificence, and the four districts of Basilicata, Terra di Bari, Capitanata, and Terra di Otranto were placed under contribution to supply numberless sheep, oxen, fowls and geese for the entertainment of guests and retainers. On the day of Pentecost Philip and his brother Charles of Salerno received the honour of knighthood from their father, and on the conclusion of the wedding ceremonies the newly-wedded pair returned to the Castello del Ovo. A few miles away, among the gorges which lead to Salerno, where the broken-hearted Helena of Epirus was still living in her prison at Nocera, a sad little princess of about Isabella's own age may have heard through her mother's gaolers of the public rejoicings which greeted the return to Naples of her cousin of Achaia. The story of this grim age is full of such contrasts. About the same time Villehardouin's second daughter Margaret of Achaia, a child of five years old, was betrothed to Isnard de Sabran, son of the Count of Ariano, a baron of the realm of Sicily. Philip of Anjou was born in 1256, and he was therefore fifteen years old at the time of his marriage. The date of Isabella's birth is uncertain, but if it took place during the early months of her father's captivity, she might have already entered on her twelfth year.

The almost continual warfare to which the state of Achaia had now been exposed since the release of the Prince from Constantinople, the ever-recurring raids and the devastation of fertile areas had reduced the country to a condition of gloomy contrast with that epoch of prosperity, which the prudent government of his two predecessors had ensured. It is evident from numerous Angevine rescripts, preserved in the archives at Naples, which authorise the export of cereals to the Morea, that the resources of the principality were well-nigh exhausted. Moreover, large drafts had been made on the local populations since the re-establishment of the Greeks in a portion at any rate of the peninsula. The Byzantine historians record that at this time not only were recruits obtained for the imperial fleet from the people known as that is to say the children of Greek women by Frankish fathers, but also that large numbers of the Tzaconians, a name probably somewhat vaguely used to indicate the population of Laconia and Maina, were transported with their women and children to Constantinople, to be trained for service as a corps of marines. It was high time for energetic measures, if the remnant of the Frankish dominion in Romania, more than ever in jeopardy since the defection of Venice, was to be maintained. In 1271 Ancelin de Toucy brought over reinforcements from Naples, and received the title of captain-general in Achaia, but the veteran soldier was no longer equal to the rough campaigning in the mountains, and was soon compelled to relinquish his command. He was succeeded as captain-general in the following year by Dreux de Beaumont, who continued operations against the Greeks through the few months during which he retained office, and it is probable that the raid into Tzaconia, ascribed by the chronicle to Galeran D'lvry, who only became captain-general after the death of Villehardouin, belongs to the period of Dreux de Beaumont's command, if indeed it has any historical basis. The chronology is in any case at fruit, for this campaign is described as having taken place immediately after the marriage of Isabella and before the battle of Tagliacozzo. An expedition was also undertaken at this period by the prince and the Neapolitan forces in support of the triarchs in Euboea against the Greeks, who had been called in by the renegade Licario. In the course of this campaign Villehardouin took the castle of Cuppa. Dreux de Beaumont was succeeded by Guillaume de Barre, who remained in command of the Angevine troops in Achaia till 1274, when he was recalled and Villehardouin himself became captain-general for his liege lord, who poured money, corn

and arms into the Morea, and furnished sailors from Naples for the galleys. Meanwhile circumstances arose which made for a suspension of hostilities. The ex-Emperor Baldwin died in 1273, not long after the marriage of his son Philip to Beatrix of Anjou, and Michael Palaeologus, seriously alarmed at the growing power of King Charles, sent envoys to the Council of Lyons, and eventually made his submission to the Roman Curia.

If, however, the triumphs of Gregory X at the great council threatened to frustrate the ambition of Charles of Anjou, the menace was only of a temporary character, for the illustrious pontiff died almost immediately after his return to Italy, and the master of intrigue at Naples succeeded in procuring the election of a more complaisant candidate to the papal chair. At the same time, although Palaeologus had obtained recognition in the west by his apostasy from orthodox independence, it had only been at the price of alienating the sympathies of his Greek subjects. Epirus [and Thessaly became the focus of a movement against the union with Rome, and the dissentient clergy rallied round the Sebastocrator Johannes Dukas, whose dominions now comprised a large area of country extending from Olympus to Parnassus. He had long cultivated the closest relations with the Franks of Euboea and Attica, and had contracted commercial agreements with Charles of Anjou. It became the chief preoccupation of the Emperor to curb the growing power of the bastard, who had inherited all the restless ambition of the illegitimate branch of the Angeli, while the designs he had long entertained for the reconquest of Euboea, where his treaty with Venice had given him a freer hand, absorbed the military energies of the imperial forces. The Morea consequently enjoyed a brief respite.

In Epirus the aged Michael II, after maintaining peaceful relations with Palaeologus for some five years, had died in 1271, and his son and successor Nicephoros, the legitimate half-brother of the bastard Johannes, was a prince of weak character who desired to remain on good terms with Constantinople, and had, after the death of his first wife, allied himself in marriage with the Emperor's niece.

The story of Epirus and the efforts of Charles of Anjou to extend among the Albanian clansmen the footing he had gained there through the reversion of the marriage portion of Manfred's widow, do not strictly concern the history of Achaia. But a glance at contemporary events in Thessaly, Attica, and Euboea will be indispensable in view of the close relations existing between the states of central Greece and the peninsula, and they will be briefly described in a subsequent chapter. It was the defeat of the imperial troops in Neo-Patras, and the hard fighting which ensued in Euboea, that chiefly contributed to the maintenance of peace in the Morea until the death of Villehardouin.

Military operations were, however, still undertaken there against the Slavs of the mountain regions, who were no doubt encouraged to prolong their resistance by the support of Greek garrisons established in such advanced posts as Calavryta, and it was to suppress the raiders of the Arcadian highlands that Geoffrey of Carytena, with the aid of reinforcements from Naples, started on his last campaign in 1275. The cold of the mountain regions during the winter season made havoc of his small force, and the veteran soldier himself contracted a malady which eventually proved fatal. The Greek chronicle embodies in its text a lament for the dead hero which has a striking resemblance to the myrologies or death-chants, which, improvised on traditional themes, may still be heard in the villages of living Greece. "All wept for him, small folk and great folk alike. The very birds sang songs of lamentation. Deep sorrow fell on all the land of Morea. Who was there

that spoke not rueful words nor realised the measure of his grief? The orphan had in him a father, the widow a husband, all the poor a champion and a lord, who protected them from injustice. He gave comfort to those in affliction and raised the poor out of misery. Alas, the pity of it that death should take so good a man, so great a warrior, and orphan all the hearts that loved him."

Geoffroi de Bruyères left no children. Half of his barony was made a portion for his widow, and the other half reverted to the domain of the Prince. A claim to Carytena was put forward by his next-of-kin, a nephew it would appear, of the name of Pestel, who appealed to Charles of Anjou against the action of Villehardouin, but in vain. The Prince was firm in maintaining the principle which he had laid down when he restored the forfeit barony to Geoffrey, that it had been vested by a new deed of gift in himself and the heirs of his body only, and was no longer his own to devise as he chose by right of original conquest. Two years later Isabella de la Roche took another husband in Hugues de Brienne, Count of Lecce, grandson of that Gautier de Brienne who took the cross at the tournament of Écri, and died in Southern Italy. This marriage had the full approval of the Prince, who was present at the ceremony in Andravida, and who gladly welcomed the establishment of one of the most powerful Apulian vassals of King Charles in half the barony of Escorta. Isabella died, perhaps in childbirth, not very long after, leaving a son who was destined to be the last Duke of Athens with the blood of the de la Roches in his veins.

About the same time another question of succession came up for settlement. The history of the disinheritance of Marguerite de Neuilly, which is given with much wealth of detail in the chronicle, is curious and valuable as an illustration of the feudal ethics of the time. Jean II de Neuilly, baron of Passava and hereditary marshal of Achaia, had married the sister of Gautier II de Rosières, baron of Akova, by whom he had one only daughter, who became in course of time the heiress of Akova as well as of Passava. Her first husband, Guibert de Cors, lost his life at the battle of Carydi. She then married Guglielmo II dalle Carceri, one of the triarchs of Euboea, who acquired with his wife the title of marshal of Achaia. Upon the release of Villehardouin from imprisonment at Constantinople, hostages were taken for his good behaviour, and the baroness of Passava was required to make this sacrifice for her overlord. Marguerite remained at Constantinople for many years, and there is no record of how she eventually obtained her release. Possibly it was granted after the Emperor Michael made his submission to Rome at the Council of Lyons, or she may have appealed successfully to the sympathies of her gaoler after the death of her second husband at the battle of Demetriada in 1275. In any case she returned to the Morea about that time and claimed the investiture of Akova, which the Prince had taken over more than two years before, upon the death of her uncle, Gautier de Rosières, to hold for the lawful heiress detained as a hostage abroad. To her consternation Villehardouin declared her rights forfeited on the pretext that she had not appeared to prove her claim within the term prescribed by the custom of the country. The Assises of Romania, referring to this very case, laid down that when a fief fell vacant, the next in title should lose his rights if, being within the principality, he failed to demand investiture before a year and a day had expired, even if valid grounds could be adduced for his failure to do so. Should he have been outside the territories of the principality the term was extended to two years and two days.

It was in vain that Marguerite de Neuilly urged her plea that she had only been prevented from making good her claims by detention as hostage for the Prince in

Constantinople. She could obtain nothing from her ungenerous lord, but an offer to submit the question to the decision of the high court. Her friends and advisers therefore, seeing that a feeble woman would never be able to assert her rights against the will of so mighty a prince, counselled her to marry a man who would be powerful enough to defend her interests. Overtures were accordingly made to John, the youngest of the three sons of Bela de St. Omer, and first cousin to the Duke of Athens. Of these three brothers the eldest, Nicholas, one of the wealthiest nobles in Greece, by his marriage to the Princess of Antioch, was now lord of the half-barony of Thebes, in which the second son Otho afterwards succeeded him. It was said of the three brothers in those days that when their minds were set to do a thing, there was not found any one likely to say them nay. A marriage was arranged, and Jean de St. Omer assumed the title of marshal of Achaia by right of his wife. With her and his two brothers he set out for the court of Villehardouin, and appeared with an imposing retinue before the Prince, who was holding his parliament in the minster church of St. Sophia at Andravida. Messire Nicholas de St. Omer took upon himself the part of advocate for his sister-in-law, and addressed the Prince, setting forth the equity of her demand for investiture, on the ground that it was to gain the liberty of her liege lord that she became a prisoner, and was thus prevented from claiming her own before the term expired. Now therefore, he said, preferring loyal service as was due, she came with her husband to ask the Prince to reinvest her with the barony of Akova. Villehardouin replied that he was well aware that it was through being a hostage for himself that madame Marguerite had been unable to claim her lands within the law's delay, and had lost her inheritance. Therefore he would fain know whether they desired grace of him or law. Nicholas de St. Omer replied that they sought not grace but right. "Then," said the Prince, "since you claim it, you shall have the law of my high court, and I will lay it on their souls to judge uprightly according to the usages of the empire of Constantinople."

So the high court of the Morea was assembled in the Church of St. Francis, and Messire Nicholas there upheld the cause of his sister-in-law, while the Prince, placing the sceptre in the hands of his chancellor, Leonardo da Veruli, constituted himself advocate for the defence of the usages of Romania. The case was put by St. Omer in the following terms: " Seeing that the lady was in prison, and seeing that my lord the Prince had put her there in his own place, she could not of right be disinherited, since the default lay with my lord the Prince and not with the lady." Villehardouin then called for the book of usages to lay before the court and made clear his point of law, namely, that the lady was bound by her feudal obligation to go to prison for her liege lord, and that it was while accomplishing this her bounden duty that the heritage escheated, and thus because of her essential obligation, and not from any voluntary sacrifice on her part, arose the disability to present herself before her lord within the term prescribed. The court after long deliberation found that according to the tenor of the book the lady had no claim to the inheritance, and that it rested with the Prince in his liberality to show grace to the lady, because she had lost it through being in prison on his behalf. The Prince then thanked the court for its decision, and turning to Nicholas de St. Omer he addressed him in the following terms: "Relying too greatly on your wit, you have done an ill turn to madame Marguerite, for I well knew, and better than you did, the matter of the book, how she could plead no right, and therefore I inquired if you would have law or grace: now had you craved me grace, by my soul, I was minded to have shown it to your sister, since I know that by mine occasion she was disinherited. Let this be my excuse before God and these gentlemen here present."

Nevertheless, after humbling the pride of the haughty baron, who believed his own

influence all-powerful, Villehardouin relented in some measure, realising no doubt how little so inequitable a decision would be appreciated by his feudatories. He instructed the chancellor to draw up a charter of investiture of one-third of the barony in favour of Madame Marguerite, and when it was ready, concealed it under the coverlet of his couch, that he might surprise her by his magnanimity. He then recalled the lady, who had abandoned all hope, and when she came into his presence, drew out the document and invested her with his glove in due feudal fashion with eight of the twenty-four fiefs of Akova, the eight best fiefs, five of domain and three of signoralty, which last entitled her to the homage of such great nobles as Jacques de la Roche of Veligosti and Guy de Charpigny of Vostitza, for these particular fiefs. The rest of the original barony of Akova, together with the castle of Matagriffon, he retained to constitute a portion for his younger daughter Margaret.

By a strange fatality the families of the conquistadors had for the most part failed in the male line after the first generation. The baronial houses of Patras, Nikli, and Gritzena had already ceased to exist. If there were still Nivelets and Tournays in the peninsula, their original seats of Gheraki and Calavryta had now long since been recovered by the Greeks. Veligosti had passed to the de la Roches, who were also, like the Stromoncourts of Salona, to die out early in the fourteenth century. The heirs of the first titular barons of Akova, Carytena, and Passava left no sons to succeed them. Villehardouin himself, though three times married, saw the principality which his father had won, and which he had struggled to maintain and extend, destined to pass with the hand of his daughter to a prince of the house of Anjou. And now, even such guarantees as the succession of Philip might have seemed to afford to the future of the Frankish supremacy were rendered illusory, for in 1276 the young Prince received a serious injury from the snapping of the string of a crossbow which he was winding, and after many months of failing health, he died early in the following year at Bari, whither he had gone to invoke the aid of St. Nicholas, leaving the heiress of Achaia a very young widow in Apulia. This heavy blow and the cloud of uncertainty which overhung the future darkened the latter days of William Villehardouin and probably accelerated his end. He lay a long while ill, and, realising that his disease was mortal, made his will, leaving Jean Chaudron, the grand constable, in charge of the principality until the commands of King Charles should be made known. He commended to his honoured overlord his wife, his two daughters, and his followers, praying that all his gifts and bequests to the Church and to his friends should be confirmed after his death. He died on the 1st of May 1278, and was buried in the Church of St. James at Andravida, on the left side of his illustrious father.

He reigned with vigour and energy for thirty-three years, strenuous in action and a ruler of men, who found ready service among his adherents. His character, however, even judged by the unexacting standards of the age, was in no sense heroic. Scheming, avaricious, and grasping, in no single instance does he appear to have sacrificed self-interest to generous sentiment, and even in the history of which he is the central figure, the picture afforded us has little to attract our sympathy. He was himself no soldier, although circumstances continually forced him into the field, and his conduct before the battle of Pelagonia was justly denounced by his martial nephew. He succeeded to a prosperous realm, which under the equitable rule of his father and brother had peacefully developed its material resources, until its reputation stood high among contemporary states. Early successes stimulated his natural ambition, and drew him into a struggle which unsupported he was not strong enough to maintain, and thus, after his humiliation in the

prisons of Palaeologus, he became, instead of the protagonist in Romania, a mere pawn in the far-reaching schemes of Charles of Anjou, which the Sicilian vespers finally shattered. Meanwhile the prosperity of the Morea, harassed by continual raids t and wasted by years of desultory warfare and internal; rebellion, rapidly declined, and he ended dependent on foreign blood and treasure for the preservation of his diminished borders. Nevertheless he remains a striking and dominant personality, moving impressively through a cycle of vicissitude and adventure in the chronicle composed in the following century. Himself the last survivor among the direct descendants of the knights of the conquest, he closes with his death the romantic period of the story of Achaia

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CHAPTER VII

CHARLES OF ANJOU, PRINCE OF ACHAIA—THE DUCHY OF ATHENS, 1263-1287—EUBOEA AND THE ISLANDS

ON the death of William Villehardouin, Charles of Anjou, as the reversionary of his son Philip under the terms of Isabella's marriage contract, assumed the title of Prince of Achaia. It was retained by his successor also until the year 1290, when Charles II ceded the principality to Florence of Hainault and Isabella on their marriage, and gave orders that it should no longer be included in the enumeration of his own titles. For the ensuing period the Angevine archives at Naples are the real source of our historical knowledge, and they serve to correct the errors of the chronicle, which is once more most misleading in its account of the events immediately following the death of the Prince. Villehardouin is even there represented as having predeceased his son-in-law Philip. It is, moreover, circumstantially stated that Charles lost no time in despatching to the Morea a bailie to take charge of his daughter-in-law's inheritance, and that the latter, Hugues de Sully, known as le Roux or le Rousseau, took an oath on landing before the Archbishop of Patras that he would respect the rights and usages of the principality, and then received the homage of the barons on behalf of Isabella. All of which is demonstrably fiction. Hugues de Sully went in 1278 not to the Morea, but to Epirus, as captain general of the Neapolitan army, to prepare the way for a contemplated invasion of the Greek empire, and there, after a distinguished career of success, fell at last into the hands of the Byzantines and was sent as a prisoner to Constantinople. It was in reality Galeran d'Ivry, appointed to govern in the name of Charles of Anjou and not in that of Isabella, who took over the administration of the principality from Chaudron the grand constable, and filled the post for two years, as indeed did most of his immediate successors.

Galeran's administration was beset with many difficulties. The Greeks, encouraged by the knowledge that the kingdom of the Sicilies was absorbed in preparations for the eastern campaign and actually involved in hostilities in Epirus, continued their tactics of encroachment, and a fresh outbreak among the unruly inhabitants of Escorta led to a serious defeat of the Franks, and the capture by the enemy of Érard d'Aunoy, who had now succeeded to the barony of Arkadia, which Prince William had conferred upon his father Vilain, one of the great nobles who came to the Morea upon the expulsion of Baldwin from Constantinople. The execution of the testamentary dispositions of Villehardouin, who had made large bequests to the Church, led him into disputes with the clergy, and grave discontent was produced throughout the principality by the exactions of his Neapolitan troopers. Complaints were lodged at Naples that Galeran had violated the established customs of Morea, and in 1280 he was replaced by the marshal of the Sicilies, Filippo di Lagonessa, who was accorded a salary of 500 ounces of gold, and provided with a personal establishment consisting of four knights, ten esquires, and a notary. A few months later he was joined by one of the royal chamberlains, Gautier de Collepierre, who bore the title of protovestiarius, and was entrusted with the examination of accounts and superintendence

of the mint at Clarenza, where the standard coinage was now struck with the initials of Charles of Anjou.

The two strong castles of Clairmont and Calamata had been bequeathed by Villehardouin to his widow Anna Comnena of Epirus, who three years later became the wife of Nicholas de St. Omer, lord of half the barony of Thebes. It was of capital importance to the sovereign power to control these two fortresses. Charles accordingly despatched two Italian lawyers to Achaia to negotiate an exchange of the castles and their dependencies for other fiefs of equivalent value in Naples and the Morea. The cession appears to have been effected without any great difficulty, and Anna received, among other estates, a portion of the lands formerly held by the wealthy chancellor of the principality, Leonardo da Veruli, which had fallen in at his death. The investigations of Lagonessa and Collepierre revealed a very unsatisfactory condition of affairs. The pay of the garrisons was everywhere in arrear, and the fortresses themselves were ill supplied and deficient in engines of war. The state, which had prospered and developed all its natural resources under the administration of the first Villehardouins, was exhausted by the continual warfare with the Greek governors, and security had grown so precarious that in many large areas cultivation had ceased. The necessity of importing grain from southern Italy for the consumption of the Morea has already been referred to, and the permission which was now accorded to Chaudron to transport both com and horses from Apulia, appears from the Angevine registers to have been from this time forward repeatedly sought and obtained for Achaia. Chaudron visited Naples in 1280 and again in the following year. He had complaints to prefer as to the action of the former bailie, who had sequestrated the fiefs of Érard d'Aunoy, after the latter became a prisoner, and he was successful in obtaining their restoration to a procurator. The new bailie, Lagonessa, entertained friendly relations with Guillaume de la Roche, who in 1280 succeeded his brother, and he arranged a marriage between his own nephew Carlo, seneschal of Sicily, and the Duke's sister Catherine. He prosecuted the war against the Greeks with energy, only consenting to a temporary intermission of hostilities in 1281, when the strategus at Mistra proposed an exchange of prisoners, to which King Charles assented. After a successful administration of two years, he was replaced by Guy de la Trémouille of Chalandritza, who as a Moreote baron, and in view of the great confidence which his sovereign reposed in him, was appointed to the office for life.

And now quite suddenly, without any apparent warning, a crisis involving tremendous issues broke upon the threshold of the east, with a shock which uprooted the foundations which the French Popes had so laboriously prepared for the extension of their spiritual edifice, and dissipated for ever the ambitious dream of Charles. The King of the two Sicilies, in league with the titular Frankish Emperor and the republic of Venice, had long been maturing his plans for the reconquest of Constantinople, and only the submission of Palaeologus to the Roman Curia and a fraternal regard for the good opinion of St. Louis bad hitherto restrained the sword of Anjou. The temporary breach which had been created between the Church and her zealous champion was widened by the elevation of an Italian to the papal throne in the person of Giovanni Gaetano Orsini, who as Nicholas III laboured, not without success, to undermine the growing influence of his masterful vassal. But after a brief pontificate of only three years he was succeeded by another French prelate, proclaimed as Martin IV in February 1281, who placed himself unreservedly in the hands of Charles, and restored to him the senatorial power in Rome in tenure for life. All therefore seemed propitious for the resumption of the great enterprise. A treaty

between the interested parties was signed at Orvieto on the 3rd of July, and ratified by the Doge a month later. The bann of excommunication was pronounced against Michael Palaeologus, who had not carried out the stipulations laid down at the Council of Lyons. The Sicilian fleet of three hundred fighting ships and transports, with forty Venetian galleys, was ordered to concentrate in the Apulian ports. Philippe de Courtenay, the titular Emperor, was to lead the expedition in person, accompanied by Charles of Salerno, the heir to the throne of Naples, and a second Dandolo who now wore the ducal cap in Venice.

Meanwhile the countermine prepared by Palaeologus and his unnatural ally, the Orsini Pope, had had full time to mature. The oppressions of an alien government in Naples and Sicily had excited the deep resentment of the native population. In the former the dominant personality of the King himself and the constant vigilance of his agents overawed their sullen ill-will, but in Sicily a natural genius for secret conspiracy had been adroitly manipulated by the inspiring counsels of John of Procida, a stranded adherent of the house of Hohenstaufen, who ably prepared the way for rebellion. Through his agency the fiefs of the Church were, on behalf of Nicholas III, offered to and accepted by Peter, King of Aragon and Catalonia, the husband of Manfred's daughter Costanza, to whom tradition alleges he had also carried the gauntlet conveying the inheritance of Conradin. Subsidies were provided by the Greek Emperor for the equipment of a fleet, and two years were consumed in undemonstrative preparations. An incident trivial in itself served as the spark which produced the explosion. During a procession at Palermo on Easter Eve, the 31st of March 1282, an insult offered by a French man-at-arms to the daughter of a noble house became the pretext for an outbreak of sudden fury, which was not appeased until every Frenchman in the island, to the number of eight thousand, had been massacred. Peter of Aragon, who was already lying off the African coast, crossed to Trapani and was hailed by the Sicilians as their liberator and prince.

The great fleet now assembled in the Apulian ports and destined for the conquest of the east was now ordered to invest Messina and exact an exemplary vengeance. But navigation, always difficult in the dangerous channel, was rendered impossible by storms which drove them back to the Calabrian coast, where the mighty armament was dispersed by Roger de Luria, the famous Catalan admiral? A proposal now put forward with the approval of Pope Martin for the settlement of their rival claims by single combat between Charles of Anjou and Peter of Aragon, each supported by forty chosen knights as seconds, would have afforded the world a memorable example of chivalrous warfare, had it not miscarried owing to circumstances for which it is difficult now to assign the responsibility. The preliminaries were all arranged and Bordeaux, as British and therefore neutral territory, was chosen as the place of meeting. But Peter, who travelled thither incognito, did not await his antagonist, and having made a formal appearance before the local authorities, returned to Sicily with no less haste than he had displayed in going, and was in consequence excommunicated by the Pope. Charles in the meantime, after making a careful selection from the chivalry of his realm, set out on a fruitless journey across the Alps. Among the chosen band which accompanied him were five knights from the Morea; Jean Chaudron, son of the old constable; Jacques de la Roche of Veligosti, and Geoffroi de Tournay of Calavryta, with his two sons Jean and Othon.

The great expedition to the east had now become problematical. In November 1282 Charles despatched Chaudron with other nobles of his court to urge upon Dandolo the necessity for equipping forty galleys. But in the following month Michael Palaeologus died,

having lived just long enough to see his throne secured by the embarrassments of his rival. The Doge found plausible reasons for pleading the inability of the republic to carry out her engagements at that particular time, and gave the Venetian admiral Morosini instructions to disarm, retaining only twenty galleys in commission for the defence of stations in Romania. Morosini then concluded an armistice with the Greeks, and in September 1283 Venice despatched an envoy to Constantinople to negotiate with the pacific and somewhat insignificant prince who had succeeded his energetic father, for the conversion of this armistice into a seven years' peace. The death of the titular Frankish Emperor, Philippe de Courtenay, just a year after that of Michael, was of good omen for the success of these negotiations, which were however conducted with the habitual Byzantine procrastination, and it was not until after the death of Charles of Anjou that peace was finally concluded for a term of ten years between Venice and the empire. The Duke of Naxos and Bartolommeo Ghisi of Tinos, both of them Venetian subjects, were made parties to the treaty which was eventually signed in May 1285. This instrument was effectual in actually preserving peace until the year 1294, when the rivalries of the Genoese and the Venetians in their struggle for supremacy in the markets of the east drew the empire once more into a conflict in support of the former, which was prolonged over a period of seven years. Its terms provided for a number of reciprocal trading facilities and obligations, but the most important stipulation was an engagement taken by the two contracting parties not to give countenance or support to a third party hostile to either. To this general principle a curious exception was admitted in the special case of Euboea, and it was laid down that the Venetian bailie might assist the barons of the island against the Greeks, without his action entailing a casus belli. A similar stipulation had been included in a suspension of hostilities negotiated in 1277 after the battle of Demetriada.[1] A parallel for this dispensing provision will also be found in a convention concluded by Florence of Hainault with the Greek governor at Mistra, which was eventually amplified into a seven years' treaty of peace with the empire. It was there laid down that while peace was to be maintained in the Morea itself, it would not constitute an act of war if the Prince of Achaia supported the enemies of the Emperor in other quarters.

In 1284 a fresh disaster befell the gloomy tyrant of Naples. His eldest and favourite son had died eight years earlier, the victim of a trivial accident. Now his second son and heir, Charles of Salerno, having in his father's absence accepted battle without adequate preparation, was defeated in a naval action by Roger de Luria in the gulf of Naples itself, carried off as a captive to Sicily, and, after being saved from the vengeance of the Messenians only by the intervention of Queen Costanza, interned in the castle of Matagriffon, whence he was transferred eventually to Spain, to remain for several years the prisoner of Alfonso of Aragon. Charles of Anjou himself never recovered from the blow dealt him by the loss of Sicily. His ambitious dream of empire had ended in the contraction of his own dominions. Crushed by disappointment he died at Foggia in January 1285, only a few weeks before his creature Martin IV, leaving a distracted kingdom to the regency of Count Robert of Artois who, during the captivity of Charles II, governed in the name of his eldest son, Charles Martel, a boy of fourteen years.

At the end of the same year King Peter followed them to the grave, leaving Sicily to his second son James, while the eldest, Alfonso, who had married the daughter of Edward I of England, succeeded to the Spanish dominions. The intercession and guarantee of the English monarch resulted in the treaty of Campo Franco, under which Charles II was in 1288 provisionally restored to liberty, on handing over three of his sons as hostages,

pledging himself however, to return to captivity within a year if its conditions were not carried into effect. Pope Nicholas IV, whose predecessor had gone so far as to confer Aragon on Charles of Valois, the brother of Philip IV of France, as a fief of the Church, refused to sanction the treaty of Campo Franco and forbade the King as the vassal of the Holy See for Naples and Sicily to fulfil its stipulations. Nor was Charles II able to obtain the renunciation he had undertaken to procure from Charles of Valois of his Aragonese investiture. Faithful therefore to his promise, he returned to Spain at the end of the year to surrender himself once more a prisoner. But no emissary from the King of Aragon was present at the frontier to receive him, and he was enabled honourably to withdraw, having fulfilled his conventional obligation.

In 1291 King Alfonso of Aragon died, and James, who had renewed and strenuously prosecuted the war with Naples, being anxious to enter into possession of his Spanish inheritance, endeavoured to make peace with the Pope. Charles was no less eager for peace and the regulation of the unfortunate situation which had arisen from the non-execution of the treaty of Campo Franco. He offered to Charles of Valois, as compensation for the abandonment of his pretensions in Aragon, the hand of his daughter with Anjou and Maine as a dowry. Hostilities between Aragon and Naples were suspended and James agreed to surrender Sicily. But the population of the island, notwithstanding the defection of John of Procida, who also made his peace with Borne, opposed any attempt to barter away their hardly won independence and, seeing themselves menaced with the re-establishment of the intolerable rule of the Angevines, sought and found a new leader in Frederick of Aragon, the youngest of King Peter's sons, whom James had left behind him as Viceroy. Boniface VIII, who had supplanted the visionary Celestine V. after his brief pontificate of six unhappy months, at the end of 1294 endeavoured to disinterest Frederick by offers of the senatorship of Rome and the hand of Catherine de Courtenay. But if, as may well have been, he wavered for a time, the adventurous young prince preferred an actual to a titular crown, and, after the definite and final renunciation of Sicily by James in June 1295, he assumed the crown at Palermo in conformity with the national desire. The two brothers were thus forced by circumstances into opposing camps, and Frederick thereby lost the services of the invincible Roger de Luria. The latter was, however, replaced before long as admiral of Sicily by another Roger, not less famous as a sea captain, whose romantic career forms one of the most curious episodes of this meteoric epoch. James of Aragon visited Rome in 1297, accompanied by his mother Costanza, the daughter of Manfred, who now, in her joy at being reconciled with the Church, buried the bitter memories of the past, and consented to the marriage of her daughter Violanta with Robert of Calabria, the son and successor of Charles II. James himself became captain-general of the armies of the Church, and was rewarded by the Pope for his services with the islands of Corsica and Sardinia.

And now the struggle between Naples and Sicily was resumed with vigour. Excommunications were once more launched against the rebellious kingdom, and Boniface provided a perhaps more effectual weapon by devoting the tithes of the Church to the prosecution of the war. His Ghibelline contemporaries did not hesitate to accuse him of instituting the pilgrimage in the year of jubilee in order to obtain funds for the same purpose. The war continued without intermission until 1302, when peace was at length brought about by a dynastic marriage between the daughter of Charles II and Frederick, who was finally recognised by his father-in-law as the sovereign of an independent Trinacria. The vicissitudes of the two kingdoms in this long conflict were fertile in their

influence on the fortunes of Greece, and it is matter for speculation how far the whole course of history in the east may not have been modified by the bloody episode of the Sicilian vespers.

The death of Michael Palaeologus relieved the tension on the frontiers of the Frankish principalities. His successor, the priest-ridden Andronicus II, had little sympathy with the militant policy of his ambitious father. He was not, however, greatly concerned to lighten the burdens which pauperised his subjects and depleted the imperial exchequer, so that the ruinous expenditure which Michael had incurred in consolidating his realm, was only diverted by Andronicus to defray the extravagancies of his court, or to propitiate the Church which his father had gravely offended. He discharged the seamen recruited from the Gasmulian populations, or drawn from the races which occupied Mani and Tzaconia, and suffered the fleet to fall into such decay that the Byzantine admirals were no longer able to keep the very harbour of the capital immune from piracy. He reduced the famous Varangian guard, and filled the ranks of his army with mercenaries of inferior quality, indifferently led and irregularly paid. Thanks to these conditions the Seljuk Turks, long divided by internal quarrels, were enabled under a succession of competent emirs to consolidate their forces on the ruins of the ancient kingdom of Iconium, and became a standing menace to the Greek dominions on the other side of the Bosphorus. The efforts which with inadequate resources the empire was now compelled to make, in order to stem their rapidly increasing power, diverted attention from the Frankish states, and the governor of Mistra received little material assistance in the weary struggle with his western neighbours. Andronicus himself contracted a marriage with an Italian princess, and the traditional claims of the Lombard marquisate to the kingdom of Thessalonica were transferred to him with the hand of Irene of Montferrat.

One of the first public acts of the regent at Naples was to supersede Guy de la Trémouille in the bailieship of Achaia, notwithstanding the life tenure which Charles of Anjou had conferred upon him. The office was transferred to Guillaume de la Roche, who had in 1280 succeeded his brother Guy as Duke of Athens. The regent perceived that in critical times the wealth and position of the Duke offered a better guarantee for the safety of the principality and for united action on the part of the Frankish states, than the stewardship of one of the minor barons. It is possible, moreover, that la Trémouille was in failing health, as he died not long afterwards, leaving a daughter as sole heiress of Chalandritza. She married Giorgio Ghisi, son of Bartolommeo, lord of Tinos and Myconos, who after her death became, by a second marriage with Alix dalle Carcere, a triarch of Euboea. Thus yet one more of the old Moreote baronies passed, in default of male heirs, into another family. It was eventually divided between Ghisi's two daughters and held in 1324 by their respective husbands, Pietro dalle Carcere and Martino Zaccaria, the first member to acquire a footing in the Morea of that Genoese family which ruled in Phocaea, in Samos, Chios, and Thasos, and was destined to give Achaia its last Frankish prince.

The Duke of Athens administered the affairs of the principality until his death in 1287. Charles II was at that time still a prisoner, and the regent selected Nicholas II de St. Omer to replace him as vicar in Achaia. The choice of the eldest of the Fauquenbergue brothers was clearly indicated as appropriate by his high reputation and great influence in Romania. His first wife, the daughter of Bohemond, Prince of Antioch and Tripoli, had brought him a dowry which, added to his own revenues in the prosperous half-barony of Thebes, made him the wealthiest of the Frankish nobles. He had built himself on the

Cadmeia a palace fortress which was proverbial for its magnificence, adorned with paintings representing the victories of the Franks in Syria. One massive tower, with walls nine feet in thickness, still stands to mark the site of this princely residence, said to have been destroyed by the Catalans, and recalls its founder's name in the local appellation of Santameri. His second wife, Anna Comnena of Epirus, the widow of Villehardouin, brought him the Moreote fiefs of Mantichorion and Zonklon on the bay of Navarino, which she had received in exchange for Clairmont and Calamata.

The chronicle assigns to the period of the administration of St. Omer the attempt made by a young adventurer of the house of Bruyères to gain possession of the barony of Carytena, half of which when it fell in to the Prince had been retained by Villehardouin as a portion for his daughter, while the other half had been conceded to the widow of Geoffrey, who had since married Hugues de Brienne. The interest of the story lies in the evidence which it affords of the superiority of the defence over the attack in fortified positions, and of the difficulties which confronted a besieging force, investing a castle quite inadequately garrisoned, where the mountainous nature of the country made it impossible to bring up the cumbrous engines of war which served as siege artillery.

Soon after the assumption of office as bailie by Nicholas de St. Omer, this new Geoffrey de Bruyères appeared at the court of Naples and laid before the King, or more probably the regent, evidence duly attested by the clergy and nobles of Champagne, establishing his next-of-kinship to the old hero of Escorta. The question of his title to the barony could not be decided at Naples, and the pretender was sent to the Morea with letters instructing Nicholas de St. Omer to investigate his claims. A parliament of the barons was summoned, and after much discussion they rejected his suit on the plea that Carytena had been forfeited as a barony of original conquest and then granted afresh by new investiture to Villehardouin's nephew and the heirs of his body only. The pretender, after this rebuff, conceived a stratagem which, if successful, would enable him to plead that occupation as an accomplished fact entitled him to more consideration than did the legitimate claims of absentees. He withdrew to the district of Xerochori, and established himself in the neighbourhood of Araklovon, or Bucelet as the Franks had renamed it, feigning to be sick of fever. From the village where he lodged he sent one of his esquires daily to the castle to procure from the cisterns a water which he pretended was a specific for his malady. After a little while he craved and obtained permission to take up his residence for a few days in the fortress, so as to be enabled to drink the water freshly drawn. The best chamber in the tower was placed at his disposal, and as his malady appeared to assume a more aggravated form, his four esquires were allowed free access to his room. He engaged them under an oath of secrecy to aid him in recovering his inheritance, and quoted the injustice done by the Moreote barons to the house of Champlitte as a parallel to his own exclusion. They were then instructed to convey into the castle with due discretion their arms and a store of provisions from Xerochori, concealed in their baggage. When this had been successfully accomplished, two of them were to invite the men-at-arms to the tavern in the village below, and ply them with drink till they were heavy and somnolent. They were then to slip quietly away, and encountering their comrades at the castle gate were to overpower and expel the gatekeeper, secure the defences, and bring Geoffrey the key. In the dungeons were twelve Greek prisoners. These he proposed to liberate, arm and engage for the defence under the pretext that it was his intention to hand over the castle to the Emperor. Two of them he intended to let down from the wall by night and despatch with letters to the commandant of the Greek troops,

requesting him to come and take over the fortress. Information of their plans would also be conveyed to the men-at-arms who had been shut out, and they would at once carry news to the bailie. He calculated that the latter, rather than suffer the fortress to be surrendered to the Greeks, would be glad to come to terms, and would allow him to remain in possession of the barony as the King's liegeman.

All fell out as he had schemed, and by this simple device he became master of Bucelet. The victims of his strategy at once despatched messengers to the bailie at Clarenza, and to Simon de Vidoigne, the captain of Escorta. Both Nicholas de St. Omer and Simon hastened to the spot with all the men they could muster, and closely invested the castle. But the absence of roads and the rough nature of the country made it impossible to bring up the heavy siege-train of the period, and the little garrison continued successfully to defy the beleaguerers. In obedience to Geoffrey's summons, a Greek force advanced on the Alpheius, and Simon de Vidoigne was sent to protect the border of the principality from invasion. At length the bailie found it advisable to parley with this troublesome adventurer, who presumed to justify his action; but declared himself at the same time ready to do homage to the King and loyally perform all the feudal service which the tenure of the barony entailed. He was told in reply that unless he surrendered the fortress, the investing troops would never be withdrawn until justice had been done upon him as a traitor. His little store of provisions was now running short, and he was glad at last to accept a compromise. He agreed to hand over Bucelet and to renounce all further claim to the barony on receiving seizure of the fief of Morena and the hand in marriage of the heiress of Lisarea, Marguerite de Cors, the stepdaughter of the marshal, Jean de St. Omer, and daughter by her first husband of Marguerite de Neuilly, lady of Passava. From this marriage sprang a daughter who married Vilain d'Aunoy, the second of that name in the Morea, Baron of Arkadia. The genealogy of their descendants recorded in the chronicle furnishes some of the most useful evidence available for determining the period at which the various versions of the text were compiled.

The bailie retained possession of Bucelet on behalf of the state, and it was secured by Charles II as soon as he recovered his liberty, together with Carytena, to Isabella Villehardouin. The claims of Hugues de Brienne, acquired through his marriage with Isabella de la Roche, to a portion of the barony, although recognised by the regent at Naples, appear to have been eventually disallowed by Charles II, who seems to have reunited Escorta in favour of Isabella and her heirs. About this time St. Omer was relieved of his stewardship, and Guy de Charpigny of Vostitza was appointed in his place. He held office, however, for a few months only. The King, who had at length come to his own but was still involved in very complicated negotiations with Aragon, France and the Holy See, had little time to bestow on the details of administration in the remoter portions of his precarious inheritance. He was therefore the more disposed to lend a favourable ear to the representations of the Moreote nobles who, discontented with the vicars appointed from Naples, and jealous of the authority of a bailie chosen from their own order, petitioned for the nomination of a prince better able by continuity in administration to guarantee the welfare of the country and its defence against the encroachment of the Greeks. Isabella Villehardouin, left a widow while still almost a child at the court of Naples, was universally felt to be the real legitimate Princess of Achaia. The obvious course by which to unite all suffrage was to find a capable and energetic husband for the heiress of so great a name, and to restore in their persons the old conditions under which the principality had prospered.

At this point of the story it will be opportune to review briefly the course of events in the neighbouring duchy of Athens and the island state of Euboea with which the duchy stood in such intimate relationship.

Such few historical facts as may be derived from the scanty material available concerning the administration of Guy de la Roche, up to the time when he returned from France with the title of Duke of Athens to act as the bailie of Achaia, have been recorded in a previous chapter. He did not long survive the restoration of Villehardouin, and died in the year 1263, after a government of nearly forty years in the principality which his uncle, the first feudatory, had made over to him. His two sons John and William lord of the barony of Livadia succeeded him in turn. Of his three daughters Alix became the wife of Jean d'Ibelin, lord of Beyrout, and had gone to live there in the sumptuous palace which Syrian artists had adorned for their Frankish master; Catherine had married Carlo di Lagonessa, seneschal of Sicily, while the youngest, Isabella, has already been referred to as the wife of the hero of Carytena, after whose death in 1275 she married Hugues de Brienne.

Jean de la Roche, the second Duke, succeeded in remaining a passive spectator of the hostilities in which, almost immediately after his release from Constantinople, Villehardouin became involved with the Greeks of Laconia, and did not despatch the contingent which he was summoned to provide. There are practically no historical data for the earlier years of his reign, and in the absence of any record of disturbing elements it may be assumed that the period was one of peaceful and prosperous development, an assumption which is supported by the knowledge that at the time when Guillaume de la Barre served as captain-general for King Charles in the Morea, Jean de la Roche was able to advance a considerable sum of money to him for the pay of his troops, a loan which the King duly refunded. He was a victim to a disabling form of gout, which affected more than one of the French nobles. But in spite of his physical infirmity he proved himself an energetic ruler, and, at the time when the star of Villehardouin was declining, he maintained the high reputation of the Franks for chivalry and daring in the wars of Euboea and Thessaly, in which he became involved through his friendship for the ruler of Neo-Patras. The chronicle throws little or no light on the history of Athens and Euboea during this period of conflict with the armies of Palaeologus, but adequate and trustworthy information is found in the Byzantine historians, and in the treatise of the Venetian Sanudo.

The constitution of a new state in Thessaly or Greater Viachia, where on the death of Michael I. of Epirus the bastard Johannes Dukas had made himself an independent prince, has been already described. His growing power, his intimate relations with the Franks and the encouragement which he gave to all the malcontents who protested against the Romanising tendencies displayed by Palaeologus after the Council at Lyons, soon brought him into conflict with the Greek Emperor who, as will be seen hereafter, about this time secured a footing in Euboea, and menaced the position of the Lombard rulers of that island.

In 1275 the Emperor despatched a powerful army under the command of his brother, Johannes Palaeologus, and the grand strategus, Johannes Synadinus, to Great Viachia, while at the same time a Byzantine fleet under the grand admiral Philanthropinus cooperated at sea, and threatened the Thessalian coast. Dukas counted on the support of

the Franks, but, left to fight his own battles, was compelled to withdraw into his strong fortress at Neo-Patras, which occupied a commanding position under the slopes of Mount Oeta, on the projecting hill which diverts the Spercheius or Elladha from its direct course into the Maliac gulf. Neo-Patras was closely invested, and the fertile plains surrounding the capital were laid waste by the invading army. Then, as no help came to him from the south, Dukas resorted to a bold expedient. Disguised as a groom or herdsman he left the leaguered fort alone at night, and pretending that he was in search of a beast which had strayed, he succeeded in passing undetected through the hostile lines, and so made his way to Thebes in safety. He persuaded the Duke of Athens to come to his assistance, and offered him the hand of his daughter Helena, who was no less renowned for her beauty than had been her father's half-sister, the ill-starred Helena of Epirus. Jean de la Roche pleaded his physical infirmities as a bar to marriage, but he proposed that his brother and heir, William of Livadia, should espouse the bride of Thessaly, to whom a goodly dower was assured, including Zeitoun, Gravia, Gardiki and Siderokastron. The Duke then took the field in person with a force of 300 knights, and marched to raise the siege of Neo-Patras. Looking down from an eminence on the hostile army, which is said to have included 30,000 horsemen, for the most part Turkish mercenaries, the Duke repeated to his ally the contemptuous epigram of the ancient cynic, "A crowd of people, but few men," and while the camp was still in confusion, led the Frankish chivalry into the midst of the unsuspecting enemy. The resistance of the Turks was overborne by this handful of men, the great army fled in panic rout, and the camp became the spoil of the conquerors.

The victory of the Duke of Athens at Neo-Patras afforded the Barons of Euboea an opportunity for which they had long been seeking. A state of warfare with the Greek Emperor had already subsisted for some years in the island, where the cause of Palaeologus was upheld with energy and daring by an Italian renegade whom lust of power and thirst for revenge had induced to betray his countrymen. The wholesale practice of piracy and shameless slave raiding carried on there by the unscrupulous Veronese nobles had made them the terror of the archipelago, and a hundred corsair craft issued from the fortified creeks of the island to ravage the havens of Asia Minor and harass even the distant shores of Cyprus, in league with adventurers from Navplia in the pay of the de la Roches of Veligosti. They had accumulated great hordes of ill-gotten gold in the fortress towers which still crown the sea-washed cliffs, and their excesses had brought them into conflict with the empire which, though it might at times find it politic to give some countenance to privateering, still stood for ordered government, and could not be deaf to the bitter cry of those whose captured children were sold into unendurable slavery.

The younger branches of the house of dalle Carceri had received fiefs in the island, but in spite of continual subdivision the original triarchies continued to exist, and the incumbents had been confirmed in their position by Villehardouin in the settlement which took place after his return from Constantinople in 1262. Of the triarchs who then became definitely his vassals far the most influential was Guglielmo dalle Carceri, who was moreover one of the titular claimants to the kingdom of Thessalonica by his marriage with the daughter of Manuel Angelus, the stepson of Bonifazio of Montferrat. After her death he allied himself with the family of his Prince, and married Simonne, a niece or more probably a cousin of William Villehardouin. His fellow-triarchs, Narzotto and Grapella, were also his sons-in-law, respectively married to his daughters Felisa and Margherita. After the settlement of 1262, he became the staunch friend and confidant of the Prince who, according to Sanudo, had contemplated making him feudal overlord not only of the

whole of Euboea, but of the duchy of Athens as well. The project, if it was ever seriously entertained, came to nothing, as Guglielmo died in the following year leaving his barony to his eldest son Guglielmo II, who, in virtue of his marriage with the daughter and heiress of Jean de Neuilly, held the hereditary office of marshal of Achaia. Two other sons survived him. The second, Giberto, succeeded his brother as triarch. The third, Francesco, had three sons, of whom the two eldest divided the triarchy of Grapella, while the third, Bonifazio da Verona, as he was generally called, played a conspicuous part in the subsequent history of Euboea and of Athens. Both Grapella and Narzotto appear to have died within a year or two of Guglielmo, the former without direct heirs, the latter leaving a son, Marino II., who succeeded while still of tender years, and remained under the guardianship of his mother Felisa, who lived at Negripont in the palace of her brother Giberto. By some arrangement which cannot now be traced, perhaps in virtue of an arrangement entered into by the surviving *terzieri*, the triarchy of Grapella did not pass to his own brothers, but was divided between his wife's nephews Grapozzo and Gaetano, the sons of Francesco. During the minority and afterwards during the absence of Gaetano, who was for some time prisoner at Constantinople, his barony of one-sixth was administered for him by Leone dalle Carceri, the younger brother of Grapella. Grapozzo married the daughter and sole heiress of his uncle Giberto. All the barons had their palaces in Negripont or Chalcis, which served as a common capital, where moreover the Venetian commercial settlement formed a sort of *imperium in imperio*, under the jurisdiction of the bailie appointed by the Doge. The large quantities of plunder put up for sale by the Euboean corsairs gave the market of Negripont an exceptional importance, and a flourishing Jewish colony did business there.

In the suite of Giberto dalle Carceri a young soldier of the name of Licario, a Vicentine of Castel Nuovo by origin, was conspicuous for gallantry among the knightly retainers of that wealthy house, and pre-eminent in all their contests of chivalry. Between this Licario and the young widow of Narzotto there grew up an attachment, which led to a clandestine marriage. When at length the secret was divulged the brothers of Felisa, indignant at their sister's misalliance, swore to be avenged on the presumptuous upstart. Licario took refuge in flight, and endeavoured to gain the favour of the Frankish barons of the mainland. He was eventually suffered to return and granted a residence in the ruined castle of Anemopylse, in the neighbourhood of Carystos. He gathered round him a band of young adventurers and, having restored the ramparts of his mountain fortress so effectually as to render it practically impregnable, he entered into negotiations with the imperial authorities, addressing himself in the first instance to the admiral who had been despatched to check the lawless raids of the Euboean corsairs, and later proceeding in person to .Constantinople. His advances were favourably received.

He admitted a Greek garrison into his castle and undertook to reduce the whole island to subjection for Palaeologus who, having thus gained a foothold in the formidable pirates' nest, assisted Licario in extending his operations over a wider radius. Before long he secured possession of the castles of Larmena, Cuppa, Cleisura, and Manducho. Seriously alarmed by these successes, William Villehardouin came in 1272 with Dreux de Beaumont, who commanded the Angevine troops in the Morea, to the assistance of the Euboean barons. He retook the fortress at Cuppa, but Beaumont was badly beaten and driven back to Negripont with the loss of most of his transport. Venice had at this time, as has been seen in the previous chapter, contracted agreements with the empire, by which she pledged herself to a policy of non-intervention in favour of the Franks, so long as her commercial privileges were respected. Nevertheless on the approach of the fleet which

sailed south under Philanthropinus, simultaneously with the advance of an imperial army by land against Neo-Patras, a number of mercenaries were sent as a precautionary measure to Negripont which, it was assumed, would be the objective of the Byzantine admiral.

The easy victory gained by Jean de la Roche encouraged the Lombards of Euboea to take the offensive and, hastily equipping twelve ships of war, supported by vessels from Crete and other craft, they came upon the imperial fleet of eighty galleys, lying close to the shore off Demetriada in the gulf of Halmyros, where the routed army was reassembling under cover of the ships. Filippo Sanudo, the son of a former Venetian bailie, had been put in command, and although he had no previous experience of naval war he gave a good account of himself in the first action, in which the Byzantine line was broken and a number of vessels were driven on a lee shore by the wind. Johannes Paleologos, who had in the meanwhile imposed some order on his discomfited army, succeeded in remaining the flying galleys with fresh fighting crews and reengaged the Beans while they were still exhausted from their previous effort, inflicting a disastrous defeat on the over-confident islanders. The triarch Guglielmo II was killed in the action. His brother Francesco with the hexarch Gaetano his son, Butarello dalle Carceri, Filippo Sanudo the admiral, Guillaume de Cors, and many others of less distinction, together with all the crews of the captured vessels, fell into the conqueror's hands. Giberto alone of the Lombard barons got safely back with two or three ships to Negripont and assumed the government of the island. The Duke of Athens at once despatched troops to co-operate in the defence of the city, which he organised with the assistance of the Venetian bailie. But Johannes was not in a position to follow up his advantage, and returned with his prisoners to Constantinople where he retired into private life, humiliated by the failure of his attempt to annex Thessaly, for which the subsequent minor success at Demetriada did not atone. In 1277 Venice negotiated for a suspension of hostilities with the Emperor, and obtained the release of five hundred Venetian prisoners. The Euboean prisoners were probably set at liberty at the same time. In this instrument a reserve was made of her right to support the Franks of Euboea against the Greeks without such action on her part constituting a casus belli.

Meanwhile guerilla warfare both by sea and land had continued in the island. In 1276 Licario, who had become an admiral of the Byzantine fleet with the title of Megaduke, was directed to attack the strong fortress of Carystos, the key of southern Euboea and the citadel of an independent barony, held by Othon de Cicon and his wife Felisa, the daughter of Ravano dalle Carceri, one of the original feudatories. This Otho was one of the wealthiest of the Frankish barons, and at the time of the expulsion of Baldwin II from Constantinople he had been able to lend the fugitive Emperor no less a sum than 5000 hyperpers, receiving in pledge a very precious relic, an arm of John the Baptist, which he entrusted to the abbot of Daphne to carry to France, and deposit in the parent house of his order at Citeaux. He had strengthened the defences of the town and castle so as to place them beyond the danger of assault. Licario therefore determined to reduce the port by blockade, and in the meantime harried the coasts and the neighbouring islands with his ships. After a long siege Carystos fell, and Michael Palaeologus evinced his satisfaction by finding a wealthy Greek bride for Licario, whose first wife must have died in the meantime, and by conferring upon him the whole of Euboea, to be held as a fief of the empire, subject to the obligation of feudal service with a body of 200 knights. Step by step he established his authority over the greater part of the island, and little save their joint capital of Negripont was left to the triarchs.

At the same time his galleys pursued their career of success in the archipelago. Nature and art had combined to make the defences of Scopelos so formidable that its Venetian men-at-arms had proudly asserted that, were all Romania to fall, they could still hold out in their fortress, and were the Latin dominion doomed to disappear, they would fight their way through the enemy unsubmitting in their ships. Filippo Ghisi, who ruled as a prince over Scopelos, Scyros, Sciathos, and Amorgos, was no less confident, and had been heard to boast, “major sum quam cui possit fortuna nocere”. Nevertheless Licario, selecting for his attack the midsummer months when the drought had exhausted the water supply in the cisterns, made himself master of the isles, and carried off the haughty Ghisi a humble prisoner to Constantinople. Ios and Anaphe likewise fell to his arms. Even the islands south of the Morea, Cerigo and Cerigotto, were captured, and for a while the Byzantine fleet once more controlled the 2Egean. Lemnos, or Stalimeni as it was then called, gave more trouble. This island had been acquired with the title of Megaduke or admiral of the 2Egean by the Venetian, Filocalo Navigagioso, who in 1210 did homage as a great feudatory to the Emperor Henry at the parliament of Ravenika. His son inherited one-half of the island, while the other half was divided into portions for his two daughters, who had married into the Venetian houses of Foscari and Gradenigo. His grandson Paolo now made an obstinate defence with his 700 men-at-arms, after the castles of both Foscari and Gradenigo had fallen into the hands of the Greeks, who used them as bases for their further operations. An attempt made by Palaeologus to acquire his rights from him by purchase was indignantly rejected. Paolo himself died during the siege, but his wife, the daughter of Angelo Sanudo, Duke of the archipelago, continued to hold out, and the investment was maintained for three years. At length, when the greater part of the long-accumulated treasure of the Navigagiosi was exhausted, she availed herself of a favourable opportunity to escape with the remnant, and abandoned the island to the Greeks. She found a safe asylum in Negripont, where her two daughters had married, Maria, the triarch Giberto, and Agnese, the younger, his nephew Gaetano. During the same year, 1278, Licario’s fleet took possession of Ceos, Seriphos, Astypalsea, Santorin, and Therasia.

The Navigagiosi never reconquered Lemnos, but after the lapse of a few years the older Venetian dynasts were for the most part re-established in their island states. The Michieli and Giustiniani recovered Ceos and Seriphos, the Quirini Astypalaea, the Barozzi Santorin and Therasia, the Ghisi Amorgos. Bartolommeo Ghisi, lord of Tinos and Myconos, had been included in the arrangement for a cessation of hostilities negotiated by Venice with the empire in 1277, and thus escaped the storm. The same is true of the Duke of the archipelago, now Marco Sanudo II, who moreover reoccupied Anaphe, formerly the property of the Foscolo family. The Sanudi continued to rule over their island dynasty till 1383. Tinos was actually the last of the eastern possessions held by the Venetians and was retained by the republic into the eighteenth century.

Under these conditions of chronic warfare piracy, always the bane of the archipelago, had assumed an immense development. Genoese, Pisans, Lombards, Gasmuli, and Greeks cruised at will on lawless adventures, either in single ships or small squadrons. The Genoese were the worst offenders. Encouraged originally by the Frankish barons to carry out reprisals on the Greek coasts, they prosecuted on their own account what had proved a most profitable enterprise, and later hoisted the imperial flag to cover their raids on the merchant shipping of Venice. The islanders, according to Sanudo, made friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, and purchased immunity by sheltering and revictualling the corsairs. A graphic picture of the scale which privateering had assumed in these waters is

afforded by a report drawn up by three lawyers, whom the Doge had directed to assess the approximate losses suffered by Venetian subjects, in which no less than ninety names of notorious filibusters are cited. The principal refuge of such private craft was Anaia on the Asiatic shore, and the neighbouring island of Samos, but they were also made welcome by the Greek governor of Rhodes, and they anchored with impunity in the harbours of Morea, subject to the jurisdiction of the governor of Mistra.

The range of their operations extended from Crete in the south to Epirus and the gulf of Corinth on the one side, and on the other to the Black Sea and even the distant Crimea.

Emboldened by his career of success, Licario in 1278 determined to possess himself of Negripont, to which the jurisdiction of the Lombards of Euboea was now practically restricted, with the assistance of Spanish and Catalan mercenaries. Giberto dalle Carceri was the de facto ruler in the capital. Marino II. died about this time, probably before this final aggression of Licario, as he is not mentioned as having taken part in the battle. The hexarchs Grapozzo and Gaetano were also absent, the latter being perhaps still a prisoner in Constantinople, and their baronies were administered, in so far as they had not ceased to have any practical existence at this time, by Leone dalle Carceri. The Duke of Athens, however, was on the spot, and marched out with Giberto to meet the renegade. In the battle which ensued, both were wounded and fell into the hands of the enemy. A number of the Frankish knights were killed, and the rest, deprived of their leaders, fled back to Negripont, pursued right up to the gates by a band of Spaniards who followed them into the town and were thus made prisoners. The bailie of Venice now organised the defence, and Jacques de la Roche of Nauplia, hearing the disastrous news, pushed overland by forced marches across Attica and Boeotia to join him, and crossed the Euripus in safety. Meanwhile another imperial army under Synadinus and Michael Cavallarius threatened Thessaly from Demetriada and Halmyros, where they had established their headquarters. But Johannes Dukas inflicted a crushing defeat upon them at Pharsalos, where Synadinus became his prisoner and Cavallarius died of injuries received by a fall from his horse while flying from the stricken field. The news of the reverse and the knowledge that Dukas had renewed his pact with the Franks was not without its effect on Licario, who abandoned the attempt to reduce Negripont which was still capable of making a stout defence. He contented himself with taking the castle of Filla, built to defend the fruitful plain of Lelanton, whose famous vineyards were in ancient days an object of unceasing strife between the rival cities of Chalcis and Eretria. After establishing garrisons in the other fortresses from which the Lombards had been expelled, he then proceeded with his prisoners to Constantinople and was appointed by Palaeologus grand constable in place of Cavallarius. When the triarch Giberto, still weak from his injuries, was led into the royal presence, the sight of his bitterest enemy, “but yesterday his servant,” conversing in the Emperor’s ear, was more than he could bear. The old wound, not yet cicatrised, burst open once more, and the frail thread of life was broken. Licario succeeded not long afterwards, on the death of Philanthropinus, to the chief command of the Byzantine navy, and therewith his name unaccountably disappears from the history of Romania. Two years later Giovanni del Cavo of Anaphe is found filling his place as the imperial admiral. The Duke of Athens was well received by Palaeologus, who, in view of the impending struggle with Charles of Anjou, had good reason for seeking to neutralise one of the most important of the Frankish states. He ended by forming so high an estimate of his prisoner that he offered him the hand of his daughter in marriage. The Duke excused himself on similar grounds to those which he advanced when the hand of Helena of Thessaly was proposed

to him, and after agreeing to maintain peace with the empire, was released on payment of a ransom of 30,000 solidi. He did not however long survive his return to Thebes, and was universally regretted in 1280.

Guillaume de la Roche, who succeeded his brother, sent ambassadors to Naples and begged Charles of Anjou to dispense with a personal act of homage on his part, on the plea that the situation made his absence from the country undesirable. In acceding to his request Charles at the same time accorded him permission to import horses from Apulia. He maintained cordial relations with the Neapolitan bailie in Achaia, and married his sister to Carlo di Lagonessa's nephew. The marriage was no doubt one of convenience, as Catherine can no longer have been very young, but only the one son of William and Helena Dukas stood between her and the reversion of the duchy. He did not apparently consider himself to be bound by the obligations which his brother had personally contracted as a prisoner under constraint towards Michael Palaeologus, and he continued to support the cause of the Franks in the war which had now become endemic in Romania, fitting out a squadron of nine galleys which, in concert with six others equipped by Lagonessa, were placed under the command of Jean Chaudron.

It was not long before a reaction set in in Euboea, where for a time the Greeks had been all-powerful. The influence of Venice, for whose sphere of activity the island had always been claimed, had greatly increased as the power of the Veronese barons declined, and their fiefs, in accordance with the fatal law of destiny in Romania, passed into female hands or fell under tutelage. The republic had gradually with persistent purpose acquired large tracts of territory by purchase, and already in 1273 had held it opportune to raise the annual salary of the bailie from 450 to 1000 hyperpers, in view of the importance of his position. Niccolo Falier, the energetic representative who in 1280 succeeded Morosini, did much to advance the cause of his country, and with the assistance of treachery within the gates, recovered the strong castles of Cleisura and Argalia. Fresh impulse was given to the efforts of the Latins in Euboea by the death of Michael Palaeologus in December 1282, on his way to attack Johannes Dukas in person, and the succession of a weak and unmartial prince to the imperial throne. Step by step all the lost ground was regained, until only the castles of Carystos, Larmena, and Metropylae were left in the hands of the Greeks. In 1285 Venice concluded a suspension of hostilities with the empire, and it was not until 1296 that the last of the Byzantine garrisons were finally expelled from the island. The history of this period in Euboea is, however, again very obscure, and there are unfortunately lacunae in the Angevine archives at a point where they would have proved of great service.

While the maritime frontier of Guillaume de la Roche was thus secured from menace by the waning of the Greek power in Euboea, and his northern boundaries were guaranteed by the friendly neighbourship of the Despot of Thessaly, the duchy of Athens had hill scope to develop its internal resources. Thebes replaced Andravida as the centre of activity in Frankish Greece, and the court became, like that of the Villehardouins in their prosperous days, a resort for the adventurous spirits of the west. Hugues de Brienne, whose wife Isabella de la Roche had died soon after her eldest brother, leaving him with an infant son, paid several visits to his younger brother- in-law, and in 1285 the Duke, who was at the time bailie of Achaia, received the instructions of the regent at Naples to assist him in entering into possession of his wife's inheritance in the half-barony of Carytena, to which other pretenders had put forward claims. He was also called upon to determine a difficult point of feudal law arising out of a disputed succession to the barony of Bodonitza.

The Margravine Isabella, who followed her brother Ubertino Pallavicini there, had died without an heir. Her stepson claimed the inheritance, but his claim was contested by a collateral descendant of the first conquistador. The latter, Tomaso, was recognised as fourth Marquess. With his son and heir, the fifth Marquess, the male line of the Pallavicini of Bodonitza became extinct.

The short and brilliant administration of Guillaume de la Roche lasted seven years, and he died in 1287, leaving the duchy to his only son Guy II, generally known as Guiot, who was still a minor, under the regency of his mother Helena of Thessaly. When in 1291 she contracted a second marriage with Hugues de Brienne, the brother-in-law of her first husband, he assumed the guardianship of his stepson.

CHAPTER VIII

FLORENCE OF HAINAULT AND ISABELLA VILLEHARDOUIN

Towards the end of the year 1287 there appeared at the court of Naples a cadet of the great Flemish house of Avesnes, which was already well known in Romania as having lent one of its strongest arms to the con-quering host of Bonifazio of Montferrat. Florent d'Avesnes or, as he is more generally called, Florence of Hainault, lord of Braine-le-Comte and Hall, the last of five brothers of the reigning Count of Hainault, was tempted by the glamour of the east which had offered a fortune and even sometimes a throne to many of the younger sons of the west. Naples, where the war between Anjou and Aragon still afforded oppor-tunities for military distinction, appeared to be the stepping-stone to that land of promise. Before start-ing in quest of adventure he set his affairs in order, founded a chapel to be maintained in perpetuity in his house at Estruen, and signed a deed acknowledging that he had received from his brother the fiefs of Braine and Hall, which were to revert to the county of Hainault in the event of his dying without heirs. His military services in southern Italy were rewarded by Charles II., who was liberated the year after his arrival, with the empty title of constable of Sicily, but his prospects and ambitions were unexpectedly advanced, according to the chronicle, by a friendship which he contracted at the Neapolitan court with the Moreote barons Geoffrey of Calavryta and Chaudron the constable, who had come to greet their liege lord on his return from Spain, as old and trusted friends of his father. It was through their influence that the King was induced to make arrangements for the marriage of Florence to Isabella Villehardouin, who, since she had been left a child widow in 1177, had continued to reside in Naples. The Moreote nobles were all jealous of one another, but still more intolerant of alien masters appointed from Italy. A restoration of the principality to the heiress of the house of Villehardouin, to which all acknowledged a traditional loyalty, appeared to them to offer the best prospect of reuniting the great feudatories in a common cause against the Greeks. Florence on his side had undertaken to be guided by their counsels, and to devote himself, if he succeeded in securing the principality with the hand of Isabella, to the good of the land and the reform of those abuses which had prevailed under the administration of the Neapolitan vicars. Charles II was not prepared to undo altogether his father's work and replace Isabella in uncontrolled possession of the inheritance which her grandfather had acquired. He nevertheless consented to the proposed marriage of his sister-in-law, and on the 16th of September 1289, which was probably their wedding day, he formally transferred to Florence and Isabella conjointly the principality of Achaia, which had in 1278 reverted to the house of Anjou. He bestowed on Isabella personally the portion of the baronies of Carytena and Bucelet which was not actually held by Hugues de Brienne, as the widower of Isabella de la Roche, and which had fallen into the domain of the Prince on the death of Geoffroi de Bruyères. While he instructed the barons of Morea to receive Florence and Isabella as their lawful rulers, he attached a condition to the cession which reserved to

Naples the right of intervention in certain eventualities. Should Florence die before Isabella, the Princess was to continue in possession, but only provided she did not contract another marriage without the King's consent, a step which would entail the immediate reversion of the principality to Naples. A similar condition was imposed on her daughter or grand-daughter should male issue fail. About the same time Corfu was ceded to Florence, but he renounced it in the following year in favour of Hugues de Sully, who had returned from a long detention as a prisoner in Constantinople.

After the wedding festivities the new Prince and Princess of Achaia took ship at Brindisi and sailed to the Morea, with a hundred knights and three hundred bowmen in their train. They touched at Coron to visit the Venetian administrator and then sailed northwards to Clarenza. There they were met by the bailie,1 who came from Andravida to welcome them, and the barons, nobles, and prelates were summoned to the minster church of St. Francis, to hear the reading of the King's letter, announcing that he had bestowed the principality on Florence and Isabella conjointly, and ordering all men to do homage to the Prince as their liege lord. It was, however, not till the following year, in a rescript dated the 21st July 1290, that Charles II made public and formal renunciation of the principality in favour of Florence, reserving only the overlordship for himself. Bartolommeo Ghisi of Tinos was deputed in May of that year to receive from the Prince the oath of allegiance on behalf of his sovereign, and he at the same time himself performed the act of homage for the islands which he held as liegeman of Achaia.

Guided by the counsels of Chaudron and Tournay, Florence at once took energetic measures to reform the evils from which the country had suffered during its vicarious administration from Naples. He imported from Apulia the grain which the Morea no longer provided in sufficient quantities for its needs. He visited the neglected fortresses, and investigated complaints as to the exactions of unscrupulous officers. The offenders were replaced by trustworthy agents, selected from his own immediate following. Ruggiero di Benevento, who had been in charge of the finances and had grossly abused his position, was flung into prison, whence he was only released after a portion of his defalcations had been refunded, some eight months later, in obedience to the commands of King Charles. A brief survey of his dominions convinced Florence that the first need of the Morea was internal peace, and this could only be secured by an under-standing with the Greek strategus at Mistra. An armistice was arranged, but the governor could only negotiate for the brief term of his own office and the question was therefore referred to Constantinople. Andronicus, preoccupied by the continued advance of the Seljuks in Asia Minor and the aggressions of the Bulgarians in Europe, welcomed such a proposal and despatched Philanthropinus to Andravida, where terms were arranged without difficulty. Chaudron and Geoffroi d'Aunoy were sent to Constantinople to obtain the Emperor's ratification. The conditions of peace, which was preserved for seven years, until shortly before the death of Florence, included a familiar stipulation. The cessation of hostilities was to cover Achaia only. Florence remained free to contract alliances with the enemies of the empire, and to support them with arms in other quarters, without prejudice to the peace in Morea. An analogous condition was included in the treaty of peace signed by Andronicus with Venice in 1285, by which the Emperor recognised the right of the republic to support the barons of Euboea against him without her armed intervention being regarded as entailing a *casus belli*.

It was not long before Florence elected to make use of the liberty of action thus

reserved to him, and he supported his wife's uncle, the Despot at Arta, in a renewal of hostilities between the empire and the Angeli, which followed the failure of negotiations for a dynastic marriage. The masterful and ambitious Anna Cantacuzena, the wife of Nicephorus Angelus of Epirus, had aspired to bring about an alliance between her favourite daughter Ithamar and Michael Palaeologus, the eldest son of the Emperor. As the niece of the restorer of the Greek empire, her sympathies had firmer root in Byzantium than in Arta, and she had undertaken to secure, after the death of her weak and in-significant husband, the reversion to the empire, not only of Ithamar's dowry, but of all the inheritance of the Angeli in Thessaly as well as Epirus, to the detri-ment of Thomas, the infant son of Nicephorus, and of his cousin the heir of Johannes Dukas of Neo-Patras, who was now through Anna's treachery a prisoner in Constantinople, where he died in 1295. The Emperor Andronicus had, however, formed a very different project for his son. The grand-daughter of the second Baldwin and of Charles of Anjou, Catherine de Courtenay, as heiress of the Frankish claim to the throne of the east, maintained the titular dignity of Empress at the court of Naples, supporting a semblance of state on the bounty of Charles II, who appreciated the importance of controlling so important a piece on the political chess-board. An union between the young Michael Palaeologus and the titular Empress would reunite the Frankish and the Greek pretensions. Negotiations were accordingly initiated with this object. An embassy despatched in 1290 to Naples met with a favourable reception, and in the following year Charles sent a mission to submit his conditions to the Emperor. But the negotiations, which dragged on for several years, did not lead to any practical result, beyond that of shattering the ambitious dream of Anna Cantacuzena. The definite rejection of the hand of Ithamar was a slight which she could not forgive, and Epirus took up arms to avenge it.

If the veteran Johannes of Great Viachia found himself at the same time in open hostilities with the Emperor, it was not from any love which he bore his kinsfolk at Arta. Some years earlier when his son Michael Dukas was preparing to attack Thessalonica, and the Byzantine army, after losing its able leader Michael Tarchaniota, was retiring before him, the Emperor had made unscrupulous use of the family jealousies and the passion for intrigue which had always characterised the house of Angelus. He had enlisted the assistance of Anna Cantacuzena, who invited Michael Dukas to Arta, ostensibly to discuss a project for his marriage to Princess Ithamar, and on his arrival she caused him to be treacherously made a prisoner, and handed over to Andronicus. By this bold stroke the heir of Thessaly was removed from the scene of action, and a first step was gained in the ambitious scheme which the Despina had devised for the restoration of the province to the empire. The alliance with Naples secured Epirus from any reprisals on the part of Johannes, who sought reparation by aggressions on the imperial frontier. Meanwhile Epirus had in turn again fallen out with Andronicus, who, accepting the challenge, prepared to attack both branches of the Angeli simultaneously. A host of Germans, Cumanians, and Turks invaded Thessaly, and Johannes, powerless without a Frankish contingent to fight for him, was compelled for a time to abandon his province. The imperial mercenaries marched through Viachia into Epirus, while thirty vessels chartered from the Genoese by Andronicus, now wholly dependent on foreign troops, threatened Art a from the sea.

Nicephorus appealed to the Franks for support. Count Richard of Cephalonia, who now for the first time begins to play an important part in the affairs of Romania, offered a hundred horsemen, and Florence, who was promised the investiture of certain fiefs in the

despotate, after he had obtained the approval of his barons in parliament at Andravida, took the field with four hundred more. Previous experiences in the wars of Epirus, however, had not been forgotten, and Isabella would hardly have failed to remind her husband of the fate which befell her father owing to the desertion of his allies at the battle of Pelagonia. Hostages were therefore demanded from the Despot, who sent his infant son Thomas to Achaia, where he was lodged in the castle of Clairmont, and his daughter Maria to the court of the Count of Cephalonia. The Moreote horse, under the supreme command of the prince, were, according to the chronicle, led by Nicholas III. de St. Omer, who in 1290 succeeded his father Jean as hereditary marshal; a very youthful noble, endowed with every grace and virtue of chivalry, who was destined to become the wealthiest and most influential of all the barons, having already entered into posses-sion of his mother's inheritance at Passava and Akova, while he was also the ultimate heir to the great domains of his uncle Nicholas, baron in Thebes, to-gether with the ample portion which Anna Comnena, Villehardouin's widow, had brought her second hus-band. He cannot, however, at this period have been more than fifteen years of age, and while he may well have accompanied the expedition in virtue of the office which he had inherited, it seems somewhat premature on the part of the chronicler to assert that his thoughts were already occupied by his consuming passion for the fair Guglielma, Count Richard's daughter, who was married to Jean Chaudron, the constable.

The Frankish cavalry still maintained their high reputation, and on their appearance in the field the imperial mercenaries refused battle, and withdrew beyond the borders of Epirus. Meanwhile landing-parties from the Genoese fleet had disembarked near Preveza and were threatening Arta. The combined Epirote and Moreote force which had advanced against the invaders from the east hastened back to the capital, and the Genoese, perceiving that they had been abandoned by the land army with which they were to co-operate, retreated in haste to their ships after setting fire to some villages in the neighbourhood of Arta. Nothing more was attempted by the ships than a hasty raid on Vonitza and Sta. Maura before they made sail for Constantinople.

After this tame conclusion to the campaign, Florence lost no time in restoring his child hostage to his parents. Count Richard on the other hand, instead of liberating Maria Angela, despatched two Franciscan monks to announce to Nicephorus that his son and heir had fallen in love with the Epirote princess, and that he had had no choice but to marry them forthwith. The Despot's indignation was not easily appeased, for his own two sisters had been brides of reigning princes, and the haughty Anna Cantacuzena regarded the union of their eldest daughter to the son of a vassal as a grave misalliance. Nor was his anger diminished by the form of the message in which Count Richard announced that he could not find any other bride as suitable for his son in all Romania. But having no fleet, and being therefore unable to coerce the truculent lord of the Ionian isles, he was forced to accept the conditions proposed by the Count, which included the cession by John of Cephalonia of half of his future inheritance as a marriage portion to Maria of Epirus. The document is preserved in which John, Count Palatine of Cephalonia and Zante, after the assassination of his father, confirmed this cession to his wife on the 7th of April 1304, in the presence of Isabella Villehardouin and her third husband, Philip of Savoy, at Clarenza. A reconciliation being thus effected, the young couple repaired to Arta, where Nicephorus received them graciously, and ended by becoming extremely attached to his grandson, who subsequently fell out with his own father, and disapproving of his second marriage with Marguerite Villehardouin, continued to reside in Epirus until he succeeded in 1304.

The reappearance of the Byzantine fleet in the southern Adriatic, the seizure of Durazzo and the contraction of the territories which he claimed as the reversionary of Manfred by the disaffection of the Albanians, drew Charles II into conflict with the Emperor, and convinced him of the necessity for cultivating closer relations with the court of Arta. This strange association between the son of the butcher of Benevento and the brother of Manfred's unhappy widow was destined to have an important influence on the future of the Frankish east. Through Florence of Hainault, now a welcome guest at Arta, a proposal was made in June 1291 for the marriage of Ithamar, the innocent subject of more than one illusive negotiation, to a son of Charles II, who was ready to guarantee that the Greek Princess should in Naples be allowed to retain the customs of her country and the practice of her own religion. Florence and Pierre de Lille, as the King's ambassadors, had full powers to arrange all conditions. But it was not till the following year that a return mission from Nicephorus submitted his proposals to Charles, whose second son, Philip, was destined to be the future husband of Ithamar. The Despot proposed to make his daughter universal heiress, not only of the dominions over which he actually reigned, but also of the regions which the imperial forces had occupied, disregarding the rights of his son Thomas, who was only four years old, and who manifested symptoms of mental and physical weakness. Philip was to receive with his wife immediate possession of Lepanto, Volochos, Angelo-kastron, and Vonditza. Nicephorus, or his wife if she survived him, was to remain in possession of the rest of Epirus for life, and provision was to be made for their son Thomas by the bequest of a fortress which he would hold as the vassal of his brother-in-law. It was, however, specially laid down that it should not be Jannina or Arta, or any one of the dower fortresses already handed over. Of lands reconquered from the empire two-thirds would accrue to Philip and one-third to the Despot for his life. The fiefs given to Florence and Isabella were to be confirmed to them. Philip on the other hand was pledged to guarantee the maintenance of the Greek church in Epirus, and to respect the religious liberty of his wife. In order to provide a portion for Ithamar in the event of Philip's premature death, Charles proposed to bestow on his son the principality of Tarentum and the island of Corfu. Negotiations of so complicated a character proved no easy task to carry through, and repeated missions from either side went to and fro. The disinheritance of Thomas was inconsistent with western ideas, and Charles II affected to have scruples in accepting the proposal. The Despot on his side cavilled at the scanty provision made for the Princess in case she should be left a widow. Thus three years passed before any contract could be concluded. Then Charles played a trump card. By the treaty of Viterbo the Emperor Baldwin had not only transferred to Naples the overlordship of Achaia and the islands, but had undertaken that in the event of a failure of heirs to his house, the reversion of the empire should pass to the reigning family of Anjou. Charles now forced his niece, the titular Empress Catherine de Courtenay, to confirm the treaty of Viterbo and to undertake not to contract a marriage without the consent of the crown of Naples. He then conferred the rights thus secured to him on his favourite son Philip, who had already been invested with Tarentum, and at the same time bestowed on him Corfu and Buthroton (Butrinto) in return for an annual payment of six velvet robes. By this transaction Philip of Tarentum became in the year 1294 the overlord of all the Frankish possessions in the east. Charles however retained, as ultimate sovereign, power of disposal over Achaia, and in 1301 transferred the principality itself to Philip, though the transfer was not publicly notified until some years later.

Such scruples as Charles may have entertained with regard to the position of Thomas were overcome by an undertaking given by Philip to recognise him after the death of

Nicephorus as Despot in Epirus, in return for the cession of Vagenetia and St. Donato, and a promise that his own claim to the reversion should not be raised until the male line became extinct, either in Thomas himself or his descendants. Philip of Tarentum had now become so important a personage that he could command his own conditions, and no further obstacles were raised to the marriage, which was celebrated at Naples in September 1294. Guy de Charpigny of Vostitza, whom he appointed his vicar in Epirus, took over the administration of Ithamar's dower lands, including the fortress of Lepanto, and after his tragic end in the Morea Ponzard de Douay became Philip's bailie in Epirus.

Meanwhile, in consequence of these developments, the scheme for the marriage of Catherine de Courtenay to Michael Palaeologus had necessarily to be abandoned, although Charles is reported by the chronicler to have been at one time willing to transfer all his hypothetical claims with his niece's hand to Michael in return for the tangible consideration of the kingdom of Thessalonica. He was now contemplating the possibility of securing peace with Sicily by a dynastic marriage between Catherine and Frederick of Aragon, and found plausible excuses to plead at Constantinople for breaking off the negotiations. The Princess, he represented, showed no inclination for the proposed alliance, the consent of the Pope could not be obtained, and he himself had not exclusive control over the titular Empress, who had been summoned to the court of France. The contemplated marriage with Frederick of Aragon, however, came to naught, and another suitor, the Infant James of Minorca, was also rejected. Meanwhile Catherine spent her time between Naples and Paris. It was during her sojourn in France that she first attracted the attention of Charles of Valois, now Count of Anjou, whom she eventually married. Impatient with the impotence of the Neapolitan administration, Pope Boniface had invited this brother of Philippe le Bel to assist in the subjugation of Sicily, and among the inducements by which his co-operation was enlisted were the senatorship of Rome and the hand of Catherine, carrying with it the claim to the imperial throne. The marriage was celebrated in 1301, and in the summer of that year Charles of Valois arrived with a band of mercenaries at the papal seat of Anagni, where he met Charles II, who promised after the reconquest of Sicily to support him in vindicating the claims of his Countess to her titular throne in the east. The Valois, however, played but a sorry part in Italy, both in Florence, whither he went in a fruitless mission as captain-general of the Church and subsequently in Sicily, where he suffered a disastrous defeat. The peace of Calatabelotta in 1302 dissipated the ambitious dream with which his personal qualifications were altogether incommensurate.

Florence of Hainault had returned from Epirus towards the end of 1291. In the same year Helena Dukas, the widow of Guillaume de la Roche, was married to Hugues de Brienne, Count of Lecce, who accordingly became the guardian of the infant Duke Guy II. His uncompromising attitude on the question of homage to Achaia and his refusal to acknowledge the obligation led to a dispute somewhat similar to that which had disturbed the neighbourly relations of Guy I and William Villehardouin. The issue, which was referred to the court of Naples, threatened to lead to grave complications, and it was only finally settled some years later by Charles II in favour of Achaia. There were, moreover, several troublesome questions which imposed upon Florence the necessity of visiting his liege lord in the spring of the following year. Venetian merchants had reported unfavourably of the restrictions placed on the liberty of commerce at Clarenza, and the Moreote nobles had lodged com-plaints with regard to spoliations effected in favour of the Prince's retainers. He went to Naples in May, leaving the Princess to act as regent during

his absence. After due explanations had been given he took his leave in the middle of June, having probably cut his visit short, in consequence of news received from the Morea. For it appears to have been during this brief absence, and not as the chronicle puts it some years later, that an episode took place, which, it is evident from the manner of its relation there, became a favourite theme in the saga of Frankish chivalry.

A suspension of hostilities had been concluded between Naples and Sicily when James made his peace with the Pope on his succession to the throne of Aragon. His admiral, the famous Roger de Luria, was for the moment relieved from the duty of raiding or blockading the Neapolitan coasts, and he was free to seek adventure elsewhere. The Greek Emperor had favoured the Aragonese so long as it was his policy to counteract the ambitious designs of the Angevines. But once negotiations were opened for a dynastic marriage between the son of Andronicus and Cathe-rine de Courtenay, it was arguable that the Greeks had gone over to the enemy. In any case so notable a free-lance as the admiral of Sicily needed no better excuse for a raid' on the Aegean outposts of the empire. The thirty galleys which he led from Messina lay off Clarenza, but the Frankish possessions in the Morea were covered by the suspension of hostilities with Naples, and there he came and went in peace. He did not, however, spare the islands of the Ghisi and the Sanudi, and he ruthlessly despoiled the wealthy Chios, and raided Lemnos and Lesbos. Then he made for Monemvasia, and having lulled its prosperous merchants into a false belief in their security, entered the city suddenly by night and got clear away with loot and provisions in plenty before the garrison could muster to the rescue. Rounding Cape Malea, he secured by a treacherous device a number of Mainote captives to sell into slavery, and then refitted in Crete. After touching at Modon on his homeward journey, he put into the bay of Zonklon (Navarino) and landed men to water. It is probable that, as he had in the first instance refrained from any hostile action at Clarenza, his intentions were still peaceful as far as the principality of Achaia was concerned. But the presence of the Sicilian fleet off Modon had aroused the suspicions of the governor of Calamata, Giorgio Ghisi, who by his marriage with the daughter and heiress of Guy de la Trémouille was now lord of the barony of Chalandritza. It is possible, moreover, that Ghisi had heard of Roger's raid on his father's property in Tinos and Myconos. He hastened to Andrusa to enlist the assistance of Jean de Tournay, lord *in partibus* of Calavryta, and his brother Othon, who had, together with their father, been included among the hundred knights selected by Charles of Anjou to second him in the projected duel with Peter of Aragon. Collecting the available troops in the neighbourhood under their banners, they marched to the coast and attacked Roger de Luria's watering party at Zonklon. This roused the great sea-captain's wrath, and calling for his arms, he landed with his horsemen and attacked the Moreotes in turn. Jean de Tournay, who was accounted the most redoubtable cavalier in the principality, engaged the admiral in person and unhorsed him with a stroke of his lance. He was, however, soon surrounded by the Catalans, who killed his horse, and was defending himself single-handed with his sword against a ring of enemies, when Roger, with an old j ouster's generous admiration for the knight who had unseated him, called off his followers and summoned Tournay to put up his sword and surrender, since further resis-tance was useless. A fresh horse was sent for and the admiral himself escorted his prisoner to his famous red galley, where he invited him to lay aside his armour, and dressing him in a scarlet mantle of honour, he entertained him with every courtesy. His father, whom Roger de Luria had known personally, he described as one of the finest knights of his day, and he expressed his great regret that his illustrious prisoner was already married, for "otherwise", he said, "I would have given you my own daughter and made you one of the

richest knights of Sicily."

Meanwhile Othon de Tournay, Ghisi, and six others had been brought down to the ships as prisoners. Jean begged that they might be taken to Clarenza, where the conditions of their ransom could be discussed, and money advanced for each to pay according to his means. Roger demurred to accepting any ransom for his late antagonist. Ghisi, however, he said, was rich, and his old father Bartolommeo, the lord of Tinos and Myconos, was richer still. He could well afford to pay ten thousand hyperpers to Jean de Tournay, to be expended on a suit of armour bearing the admiral's blazon, which he was to wear in remem-brance of this encounter, and a second similar suit which Jean was to present to himself. For the other knights he asked no ransom. Tournay, however, honourably declined to purchase liberty at Ghisi's expense, and sent an esquire to Clarenza to raise a sum of four thousand hyperpers on his own account. The galleys followed, and Princess Isabella, who had collected all the forces she could muster, sent Roger an invitation to a parley. They met at the tower of Kalopotami, outside the walls of Clarenza, and there Roger ex-plained that he had in no way been the aggressor, being well aware that Prince Florence, as the vassal of Naples, was included in the peace with Sicily, but that having been attacked while he was taking water, he had only acted in self-defence. Eight thousand hyperpers, advanced by the merchants of Clarenza, were paid as a ransom for Ghisi, and four thousand for Jean de Tournay. To the latter Roger gave his favourite horse and a complete suit of armour, lauding him in the presence of his liege lady as one of the bravest knights of the world, from whom it was an honour to have received a fall. Isabella offered costly gifts of jewellery to the chivalrous freebooter, who revictualled his galleys and then took his leave in peace. In spite of his protestations, however, he showed little ceremony in visiting Patras, Cephalonia, and Corfu on his homeward journey to Messina, filling up such vacant space as remained in the holds of his ships with the plunder of their citizens.

The raid revealed the urgent necessity of making better provision for the safety of the principality, and Venice, aroused to a sense of danger which her colony had only escaped through Rogers forbearance, undertook some repairs in the neglected defences of Modon. In the following year Isabella gave her husband a daughter, who was christened Mahaulte or Maude, the last Princess of the house of Villehardouin to rule in the Morea.

Another interesting episode in the history of Achaia during the reign of Florence, recorded by the chronicler, should follow next in chronological sequence. Two Slavonians from Maina, who had acquired con-siderable wealth, probably by the successful pursuit of brigandage, and had established themselves at Gianitza, on the slopes of Mount Paximadhi, which lean down to Calamata, had occasion to observe that the castle was but weakly held, and accordingly formed a design to obtain possession of it by a sudden surprise. This fortress, the ruins of which still exist, is situated on an eminence rising from the maritime plain, strengthened by a natural perpendicular cliff on the side towards the town. One of their followers, while a prisoner in the keep, had secretly taken measurements of the walls with a string, and ladders of a suitable height were prepared. Choosing their opportunity, they brought up a band of fifty men unmolested to the castle wall, which they scaled, and were successful in overpowering the feeble garrison. These were followed by six hundred more marauders from Gianitza, who occupied the town in the name of the Emperor. When the news reached Florence of Hainault, he summoned the garrisons of Beauvoir and Clarenza to follow him, and marched to Nisi. Chaudron, who was deputed to tempt the invaders to surrender by the promise of fiefs, met with no

success, and the Greek governor of Mistra, who was bound by treaty obligations to keep the peace, pleaded that he had no authority over the Slavonians, who lived in complete independence with their own laws and traditions. Florence was therefore compelled to undertake a siege, and to despatch envoys to the Emperor to request his intervention. The constable was selected for this pur-pose, and with him was associated Geoffroi d'Aunoy, who had special qualifications for the mission, inasmuch as a long imprisonment at Constantinople had made him familiar with the language and the customs of the Greeks.

On their arrival in the capital of the empire the envoys took up their residence in the Venetian quarter, but it was in vain that they applied for an audience of Andronicus, who was, they were informed, occupied with weighty affairs, and they were instructed to re-main in the hostel till they received an invitation to court. A fortnight had thus passed without any further communication, when by a happy coincidence they met the Neapolitan ambassador, Pierre de Surie, who was conducting negotiations for the proposed marriage between Michael Palaeologus and Catherine de Courtenay. He undertook to procure them an audience with the assistance of the Emperor s brother Theodore, with whom he was on very friendly terms, and urged them when summoned to the palace to affect surprise at seeing him there, and greet him as if they had not met before. They were now without further delay conducted to the imperial presence and, when Chaudron set forth the matter of his embassy, Pierre de Surie improved the occasion by exclaiming in an audible voice that there was evidently little hope of his carrying through the mission with which he had been entrusted, if in such small matters as this the Greeks showed no regard for justice. Andronicus, sensible of the reproach, ostentatiously issued orders that Calamata should be restored to the Prince of Achaia, but at the same time he secretly took steps to prevent any effect being given to these orders. After the envoys had returned to their hostel they were joined there by a Greek captain of cavalry from the Byzantine portion of the Peloponnese, named Sgouromalaeus, who was well disposed towards the Franks. He had been present at their audience and, after pledging them to secrecy, informed them that the Emperor had in reality no intention of surrendering Calamata, and that he had personally received orders to take ship and hasten to Monemvasia with counter instructions, while they were making their way overland. He therefore recommended them to apply for a second audience, taking care that Pierre de Surie and the Despot Theodore should be present, and to crave the Emperor's permission to travel by a galley which they had heard was starting immediately for Monemvasia. They must also obtain letters ordering the restoration of the fortress to Florence. It was agreed that three thousand hyperpers should be paid to Sgouromalaeus for his services in this matter. The second audience was procured, once more through the agency of Theodore, and the Emperor was unable to improvise any reasonable excuse for refusing their application, but he announced that it was to Geoffroi d'Aunoy personally, who was connected through his wife with the imperial family, that the castle was to be handed over. The envoys expressed their gratitude, and embarking on the galley, arrived at Monemvasia armed with the Emperor's letters, after a week's jour-ney. Thence they made their way to Nisi to rejoin the Prince, while Sgouromalaeus with three hundred horsemen rode by Veligosti through the Makryplagi passes to Calamata. He entered the castle accompanied by ten of the archons and harangued the Slavonian chiefs, to whom he announced that the Emperor, as an expression of his approval of their action, had assigned them lands of the value of ten thousand hyperpers. Meanwhile some fifty of his men pressed their way into the fortress, where they took up posts of vantage, and as soon as he felt himself strong enough to overawe the garrison, he read out the imperial rescript bestowing Calamata on Geoffroi

d'Aunoy, and threatened to fling the Slavonians from the ramparts if they did not immediately evacuate the place. Chaudron and d'Aunoy hastened down from Nisi and took over the castle, while Jean de Tournay was sent to Maina to convey the thanks of the Prince to Sgouromalaeus for his services, with the sum which had been promised and a richly caparisoned charger as a gift. The counter order revoking the cession to d'Aunoy had in the meantime arrived at Mistra, and Sgouromalaeus paid for his devotion to the Frankish interests by the loss of his office, and ended his career in misery, a fugitive from the vengeance of the Byzantine authori-ties. D'Aunoy, who had received from the Emperor the personal cession of Calamata, now considered him-self entitled to put forward a claim on his own behalf as a condition of its restoration to his liege lord. Arkadia, which had originally formed part of the patri-mony of the Villehardouins, had in 1262 been constituted a supplementary barony of the principality, and bestowed on Vilain d'Aunoy, who came to Achaia after the Greek reconquest of Constantinople. His two sons, Erard and Geoffroi, each succeeded apparently to one-half of the barony, and Erard bequeathed his share to his widow. On her death it appears to have fallen into the domain of the Prince or to have been confiscated. Geoffroi d'Aunoy was now successful in inducing the Prince to restore to him the other half of the barony, which he henceforth held in its entirety, and eventually bequeathed to his son Vilain II. After strengthening the defences of Calamata and furnishing it with an adequate garrison, the Prince, according to the chronicle, returned to the Morea, which is here used in the specialised sense to signify the maritime plains of Elis.

Not long after these events the constable Jean Chaudron died. He was one of the last of the old French stock, familiar with the local language and usages of the country, whose place had been largely taken in Achaia by hangers-on of the Neapolitan court or Flemish adventurers who had followed the fortunes of Florence. His widow, the fair Guglielma of Cephalonia, the beloved of the hereditary marshal, Nicholas III of St. Omer, obtained from Charles II a confirmation of her title to such of his possessions as had been settled on her as a widow's portion, and the rest of his fiefs went to his only daughter Bartolommea, who eventually married Niccolo Ghisi of Tinos.

Florence was thus deprived of his most experienced counsellor at a time when his advice was sorely needed. The conflict with the duchy of Athens had not yet found a solution, and Charles II had recently instructed him to furnish a complete report on all the feudal tenures and princely domains of the Morea, whither he despatched a commission of inquiry. The Prince sent his chaplain to Naples to furnish explanations, and was not too well pleased when his envoy returned with a letter which was addressed in identical terms to himself and to the Duke of Athens, announcing that the overlordship over both of them had been transferred by the King to his son Philip of Tarentum, to whom their homage was in future due. He feared that this transfer of sovereignty might pre-judice his own claim, and refused to acknowledge any obligation to Philip until he had himself first received homage from the Duke as his sub-feudatory. At the same time other feudal suits and complaints which had been formulated against his administration compelled him to return to Naples in the summer of 1294, and Othon de St. Omer was appointed vicar during his absence. While he was at Naples the marriage of his sister-in-law Margaret Villehardouin, lady of Matagriffon, to Isnard de Sabran was celebrated there, and when he returned in October she accompanied him to the land of her birth with her husband. Three years later Isnard died, leaving an only daughter named after her aunt, Isabella, and his widow contracted a second marriage with the old Count of Cephalonia, whose sons and

daughters were contemporaries of the Princess herself

The vacant office of grand constable was bestowed on a nephew of Prince Florence, Engelbert de Liederkerke, who, as brother-in-law of Jean Chaudron's widow and guardian of his daughter Bartolommea, had a sort of family claim to the dignity. His brother, a great favourite with the Prince, had been appointed to the important post of captain of the fortress of Corinth, where he lived in great state with a magnificence which his revenues were not adequate to maintain. He was therefore in perpetual straits for money, and eagerly sought for opportunities to replenish his exchequer. Now there were in the captainate of Corinth certain areas known as *terres de parchon*, a designation which seems to imply that these lands were cultivated by the local peasantry and that the seignorial revenues had been divided on the advent of the Franks between the original territorial proprietors and their new feudal masters. A certain Photius, belonging to the influential clan of Zassi, had rights over some of these lands and owned a large house in Corinth. The Zassi were a Greco-Slavonic family possessed of considerable substance in various parts of the peninsula, but chiefly in the neighbourhood of the Venetian colonies of Coron and Moron, with whose administrators they were from time to time in conflict. A brother of Photius, Jacobus Zassi, who had the reputation of being one of the best soldiers in the service of the Greek Emperor, had long been established in the old Frankish barony of Calavryta. During the continuous fighting which had unsettled the Morea, it would seem that many of the old proprietors of Greek or Greco-Slavonic origin had withdrawn from the regions under Frankish occupation, but after the cessation of hostilities they began to find their way back, and the peasantry of Corinth, who for many years had only had their new masters to satisfy, complained to the captain that Photius had settled down with a large retinue among them devouring their substance, and that with two lords instead of one to rule over them their lot was unendurable. Gautier availed himself of the pretext to have Photius arrested and brought up to his castle on Acrocorinth, where he reproached him with having established himself on the partition lands, which the Franks had always respected, and threw him into prison threatening him with death, and finally declaring that he would only release him on payment of ten thousand hyperpers, which his brother Jacobus Zassi was to guarantee. Photius however, in spite of the indignities inflicted on him, held firm until Messire Gautier began to exercise physical pressure, and caused two of his teeth to be torn out. He then paid a first instalment of one thousand hyperpers, and promised to make up the rest of the sum in time. On his release he hastened to Calavryta to his kinsmen, and enjoined them to submit his case to the Prince. Florence, who had doubtless received a very different version of the story from his nephew, rejected the appeal of the Zassi, and they therefore determined to avenge themselves in their own fashion. They set spies to watch the movements of Gautier, who had probably journeyed in person to Andravida to report on the incident, and these in due course announced that a Frankish baron, believed to be the captain of Corinth, was coasting along the gulf from Vostitza to the Isthmus, while his horses and men were travelling overland. The Frankish baron was, however, Guy de Charpigny, the universally popular lord of Vostitza who, delighted to have returned from his onerous charge as Philip of Tarentum's vicar in Epirus to his own domain in the lovely neighbourhood of the ancient Aegion, was on his way to pay a visit to his neighbour of the Isthmus. He disembarked to take his midday meal with his little company of two knights and four esquires beside a spring at a spot known as St. Nicholas by the Fig-tree. While they were sitting there unarmed in apparent security, Photius and his following came upon them, riding slowly so as not to excite suspicion. As they drew near Photius, seeing the long fair hair of Guy de Charpigny, mistook him for his

enemy, to whom he bore some resemblance, and spurring his horse, dashed up and struck him a deadly blow on the head, exclaiming, "Now, Messire Gautier, you have your payment in full!" Hardly had the blow been struck when he realised his fatal error with bitter remorse, for he accounted the lord of Vostitza his good friend. Leaping to the ground, Photius took him in his arms and shed hot tears, imploring his forgiveness. The Franks, who were altogether outnumbered, decided that the only course to take was to place their wounded lord in the boat and hurry on to Corinth, which they reached the same evening. Painfully and with great difficulty Messire Guy was brought into the city, where the doctors pronounced the wound so deep that only a miracle could save life. The verdict was broken gently to the wounded knight, who heard it with com-posure and thanked the doctors for their honesty. He made his will in favour of his son Hugh, and after receiving his dues as a Christian man, died in the course of the following day, to the great regret of Frank and Greek alike. Photius took refuge with the governor of Mistra. The representations of the Prince, who demanded justice against the Zassi of Calavryta, were met with a counter-claim for the punishment of Gautier de Liederkerke, whose avarice had provoked this disastrous act of reprisal. The only immediate result was the exodus from the Frankish territory of a number of the Romaic settlers who had taken advantage of the peace to establish themselves in so desirable a station as Corinth.

It did not suit the policy of Florence at that moment to make this episode a pretext for denouncing the suspension of hostilities with Mistra, and he preferred to bide his time. His relations with the Frankish barons were not of the best. The feudal dispute with Athens had not been solved by the transfer of sovereignty to Philip of Tarentum, and, encouraged by the attitude of Brienne, Othon de St. Omer, who in 1294 succeeded his elder brother Nicholas as lord of the half-barony of Thebes, had also refused the act of homage to Florence, and was kept under arrest for a year. Othon on his side revived a claim against the Prince for the repayment of a sum of seven thousand hyperpers advanced by his brother, and devoted to strengthening the castles of Achaia. It was only on express orders from Charles II. and from Philip of Tarentum that he was eventually released. In 1296 Florence went once more to Naples, leaving the Princess to act as regent during his absence. On this occasion as on his former visits he obtained an authorisation to import corn from Apulia, the constant source of supply for both grain and horses. But little of the country held by the Franks in the Peloponnese was adapted for horse-breeding, so that the maintenance of the cavalry arm, in which lay their traditional superiority, depended on a constant supply of remounts from the kingdom. The corn which the Morea produced was evidently also insufficient for its requirements. But it seems probable that many arable tracts had been devoted to more profitable crops, for the principality had its staple produce, and the Venetians who obtained plentiful supplies of cotton there, held their commercial interests in the country sufficiently important to justify the establishment of a consulate at Clarenza.

During the visit of the Prince to Naples an episode occurred which eventually did actually bring about a rupture of the peace with the Greeks. In a level meadow-land known as the Livadi, not far from the town of Vervena, in Arcadia but close to the Laconian border, there was held in the early summer of every year an important fair which was largely frequented by both the Greeks and Latins. Thither came, as was his wont, the knight Gerard de Remy from the castle of La Ninice. As chance would have it he fell out, perhaps over a bargain, with a Greek silk-merchant named Chalcocondyles, and in a high-handed manner struck him with the shaft of his lance. The blow rankled and

Chalcocondyles meditated revenge. He had a son-in-law named Anino, who was employed as a cellarer in the castle of St. George at Great Arachova, a position of great importance to the Franks on the Arcadian border of Laconia, south of Nikli, protecting the northern roads against the governor of Mistra and watching over the highway to Escorta. Brooding over his wrongs, he conceived the design of obtaining possession of the castle with the connivance of Anino and offering it to the strategus. Once St. George was in the hands of the Greeks, it would, he argued, be easy for them to invade Escorta, by which the ultimate end of his ambition, the surrender of Gerard de Remy to his vengeance, might be effected. Anino entered into his plans and was successful in corrupting the sergeant who had charge of the fortress, while Chalcocondyles approached his kinsman Mavropapas, who commanded a band of a hundred Turkish mercenaries in the imperial service. Mavropapas again referred the proposal to the governor at Mistra, who, remembering the satisfaction secretly expressed in Constantinople at the treacherous seizure of Calamata, gave countenance to the scheme. The Turks were quartered at Chelmos, where they affected to be occupied with the pleasures of the chase. Meanwhile Chalcocondyles with ten of his men approached the castle under cover of night, at an hour previously concerted with Bonifazio the sergeant, and found a ladder in position by which they were enabled to gain access to the keep. The unsuspecting garrison were easily overpowered, and signal fires were lighted to summon the band of Mavropapas, who entered the castle at daybreak and took possession in the Emperor's name.

Florence had only just returned to Andravida from Naples when the bad news was reported. He at once proceeded with the garrison of Beauvoir and a hundred horsemen to the spot to support the captain of Escorta who had already invested the castle. He pitched his tent among the chestnuts by a neighbouring spring, and swore that he would not return until the fortress was surrendered. A counter-fort was already in process of construction on a height to the west of the hill of St. George, but Florence disapproved of the site selected and commenced another stronghold on a high scarp of Mount Malevo,1 while he requested the administrator at Coron to furnish him with six catapults capable of launching thence missiles of fifty pounds weight. In spite of all his efforts the siege dragged on, and when winter set in early and with exceptional inclemency he was compelled to abandon his lofty counterwork and build a castle lower down to contain the hostile position. Thus arose the new stronghold of Beaufort, constructed with infinite difficulty owing to the inequalities of the ground. The Franks were always short of troops, and Isabella now went herself to Brindisi to collect expert bowmen for the garrison, while Florence entered into negotiations with a Slavonic chieftain of Taygetus, who agreed to furnish him with two hundred capable men in return for a cession of two villages in the Calamata district. The Prince established his cavalry at Vervena and then returned to Andravida, deferring active measures against the Greeks, with whom there could no longer be any question of maintaining the peace, until the spring. But the gallant Florence of Hainault was not destined to see the return of the campaigning season, and a successful and still promising career was cut short by his premature death in January 1297. He was the last of these knights-errant from the north who followed the quest of adventure in the lands towards the sunrise, and proved a not unworthy successor of the dead Villehardouin, identifying himself as Prince of Achaia with the fortunes of his adopted country. Like so many of the Frankish nobles he left no son behind, and Mahaulte or Maud of Hainault, his only daughter, succeeded to his fiefs in the Netherlands and became prospective heiress of the principality.

CHAPTER IX

ISABELLA VILLEHARDOUIN AND PHILIP OF SAVOY - PHILIP OF TARENTUM

Isabella now succeeded to the administration of Achaia, in accordance with the arrangement sanctioned by Charles II in 1289. She remained sole ruler for some four years, and caused coins to be struck in her own name at Clarenza. According to the chronicle, which becomes a more trustworthy document as we approach the time at which it was composed, she soon after the death of Florence withdrew from Morea, that is to say from the maritime plain of Elis, and took up her residence first at Calamata and then at Nisi, appointing Count Richard of Cephalonia to act as her vicar. At the same time she conferred on Benjamin of Calamata the office of chancellor, which had been filled by Leonardo da Veruli in her father's lifetime. A new fortress was constructed by her orders in the "Val de Calami", and called Chastel-neuf, to be the headquarters of a captanate controlling all the stations in the direction of Zonklon (Navarino) and Arkadia.

The governor was empowered by a general council of the local barons and feudatories to collect all the dues formerly paid to the Greeks at Mistra and Gardiki, for a term of seven years. Suitors were naturally not lacking for the hand of so well dowered a widow and, if Pachymer may be believed, a proposal was actually mooted at Constantinople for reuniting the whole Peloponnese to the empire by the marriage of Isabella to the son of Andronicus, who was still a young boy. A more suitable but also a youthful competitor was Philip, son of Thomas III, Count of Maurienne and Piedmont, the nephew of Amedeo V of Savoy, who sent a confidential agent to Rome to bespeak the support of the Pope. Isabella herself was for the moment rather concerned with the prospective marriage of her little daughter. In an age when the matrimonial alliances of princes were almost exclusively arranged in dynastic or feudal interests, there was little or no repugnance either to the conclusion of such contracts between infants, or to the union of the most incompatible ages. Isabella had inherited from her late husband the long-standing feud with the duchy, which will be more fully discussed in a subsequent chapter, and so embittered had relations be-come between the two principalities, that there had seemed at one time to be actual danger of war. Having been herself removed in early childhood from the bright atmosphere of chivalrous Morea to the gloomy state of the Angevine court, she saw nothing strange or unnatural in the advice of Count Richard, of St. Omer the marshal, and the other barons assembled at Beauvoir, that she should open negotiations for the marriage of her daughter Mahaulte, who was then only five years old, with the young Duke Guiot, a marriage which would finally terminate the conflict by an eventual union of Athens and Achaia. Messengers were accordingly despatched to Thebes to submit the proposal to the Duke, to whom it could scarcely be other than acceptable,

and he forthwith set out for Vlisiri. The marriage settlements were drawn up without delay, Calamata being assigned to the future-Duchess as her portion. The bishop of Olenos did not scruple to perform a ceremony which was perhaps no more than a binding betrothal. Guiot remained the guest of Isabella for three weeks, and then took his- leave, carrying with him *sa feme la duchesse*, just when she most needed a mother's care, over rugged and difficult passes to the court from which his own mother, Helena Dukas, had recently withdrawn. Such were the hard uses of those heartless days.

So far all had gone smoothly and the internal peace of the Frankish states seemed to be assured, but essential preliminaries had been omitted, the papal dispensation and the permission of Charles II on which, under the terms of the settlement of 1289, the inheritance of Achaia by Isabella's daughter was conditional. A peremptory order from Naples instructed the Duke to restore the little Duchess to her mother's, arms; the royal consent to the match would be forth-coming when she had reached a suitable age. Before long, however, Charles relented and, in a rescript dated April 18, 1300, he duly sanctioned the marriage, having realised that it was for the advantage of the western supremacy. His recognition was followed by the issue of the necessary dispensation from Boniface VIII. It was about the same time that Margaret Villehardouin, Isabella's sister, whose husband Isnard de Sabran had died, leaving her with an only daughter, married the old Count of Cephalonia to the extreme annoyance of his existing family, and brought him as a marriage portion Matagriffon and other fiefs in Achaia.

In the meantime Charles II had despatched the Neapolitan governor in Epirus, Geoffrey of Porto, as commissioner to the east with instructions to negotiate for peace with the empire. He visited Achaia, which was to be included in the arrangement, as well as Athens, whose ruler now exercised a controlling influence at Neo-Patras, where the old adventurer, Johannes Dukas, had been replaced by his second son Constantine. His efforts were so far successful that in 1300 a suspension of hostilities was concluded, the terms of which also comprehended Thessaly.

At the instance of Boniface, Isabella was now called upon to deal with a somewhat difficult question, in which Thomas of Salona had become deeply involved. The Celestine Eremites had become an object of particular aversion to the Pope. They were fanatical mendicant monks, a branch of the Franciscans, who claimed to observe the stricter rule of the saintly founder, but were denounced as sectarian by the majority of the order. They had become an independent congregation under the protection of Peter of Murrone, the unhappy hermit, who was reluctantly dragged from his mountain solitude and set by the irony of fortune on the proudest of all thrones, to resign it after a few miserable months, and earn by his renunciation the sincere eulogy of Petrarch and the eternal commendation of Dante. Like that minority of the first followers of St. Francis, who rejected the milder rule of the more practical Fra Elia, they clung to the extreme literal interpretation of unconditional poverty, in opposition to the expressed will of the supreme Church. Believing in the proximate advent of the kingdom of the Holy Ghost, foretold by the mystic Joachin de Flore, their teaching was subversive of existing political organisations and fatal to the development of civil society. The election to the papal see of the most conspicuous of these religious anarchists may well have seemed to menace the whole social order. Benedetto Gaetani, who succeeded him as Boniface VIII, had played a very conspicuous part in bringing about the abdication of the scared anchorite and, with the political instincts of a man of the world, he set to work to .suppress the dangerous teaching of the

Celestines, not the less zealously because they asserted the invalidity of a papal resignation, while not a few of them contemplated the restoration of their patron. Celestine, placed under restraint in a fortress at Fumone in the Hemican mountains, died after eighteen months' confinement, and his followers were hunted down with ruthless severity. A number of these monks, led by Liberatus and Pietro di Macerata, crossed over into Greece, where the archbishop of Patras gave them countenance, and a little island was allotted to them as a residence by Thomas of Salona, the third of that name. Not even there, however, were they suffered to remain in peace. The provincials of the Franciscans persecuted their sectarian brethren, and in a rescript of January 11, 1300, Charles II instructed Isabella to take energetic measures for their suppression.

Having doubtless earned the gratitude of the Holy Father by a loyal execution of these orders, Isabella determined herself to visit Rome, where the Bull of Jubilee offered remission of every sin to all save the enemies of the Church, who should during the secular year make a pilgrimage to the great basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul. By the advice of her barons she conferred the bailieship of Achaia during her absence on Nicholas III of St. Omer, the most brilliant nobleman of the time in Frankish Romania. The Count of Cephalonia, who had previously held the office, was considered too advanced in years to undertake the charge again. The Princess embarked in one of the Venetian galleys which touched at Clarenza on the return journey from Alexandria, and landed at Ancona, whence she made her way across the mountains to the Holy City. Rome was at that time thronged with pilgrims from all parts of the world, and not the least of the wonders which appealed to its visitors was, according to Giovanni Villani, the manner in which that vast concourse of people found shelter and nourishment for themselves, their attendants and their transport animals, without any disturbance or confusion. It was not altogether by mere coincidence that in her daily visits to the famous shrines her train was con-stantly attended by another noble pilgrim, Philip of Savoy, Count in Piedmont, who had received timely notice of her intended journey, and now availed himself of her presence in Italy to pay his court in person. Charles II, who counted on the eventual reversion of Achaia to his own family, was bound to oppose the projects of Count Philip, and was entitled to do so by the terms of his contract of retrocession to Isabella on her marriage to Florence of Hainault. But the Princess considered herself the legitimate heiress of the principality which her grandfather had acquired, and the countenance of the Church encouraged her to disregard conditions which she might justifiably argue had been unfairly extorted from her. On the 13th of February 1301 she gave her hand to her youthful suitor in the presence of his uncle the Count of Savoy, the archbishop of Lyons, and other nobles, just six days after Charles had formulated a definite protest. The wedding was celebrated in great pomp and circumstance, with due attendance of jongleurs and troubadours, and Isabella, in view of her possible death without an heir, made over to her husband the castle and town of Corinth with all its appurtenances and rights, to indemnify him for his services and costs in maintaining the principality. Charles was at the time on his way to Rome to crave subsidies from the Pope for the prosecution of the war with Sicily, which had entirely depleted his treasury. It appears from the contents of a rescript of the year 1306, in which he finally disposed of the claims of Isabella and Philip of Savoy, that he foresaw the intercession of the Pope in their behalf at this time, and realised that he would be in no position to hold out against such an appeal. He therefore, not intending that such intercession should avail to extinguish Isabella's transgression, disingenuously determined to anticipate it by secretly conceding the principality to his son Philip of Tarentum und, as the latter was then absent from the realm, he invested John of Veruli as

proxy with his ring at Calvi, in order to prevent any concession which the Pope might extract from him causing prejudice to his son's eventual rights. It was therefore explicitly declared in the rescript that although he afterwards ratified the marriage already contracted between Isabella and Philip of Savoy, the cession of the principality pre-viously made to his own son was to be held valid and irrevocable. This transfer of Achaia to Philip of Tarentum, withheld from publicity at the time, and only for the first time notified in a rescript of 1304, may seem hardly consistent with the fact that there was a previous cession of the overlordship to him at the time of his marriage to Ithamar in 1294. But in conferring on his son the right of receiving homage for Achaia and Athens as a *pheudum nobile*, to be held by himself and his heirs, Charles did not intend to curtail his own real power of disposing of the principality, or to divest himself of any of the rights secured to his father by the treaty of Viterbo.

The anticipations of Charles II were realised, and he was unable to resist the strong pressure brought to bear upon him by Boniface after his arrival in Rome. He therefore, ten days after the wedding, acting on behalf of his absent son, invested Philip of Savoy with Achaia at his hostel in the quarter of St. John Lateran,1 and duly ratified the marriage contract. The bride and bridegroom then left Rome for Pignerolo in Piedmont, where Isabella's second daughter Margaret was born and the notables of Achaia were meanwhile informed that the principality had been conferred upon her third husband. It was not till December of the following year that she returned with Philip to the Morea. Arrangements were made with Venice for the transport of the princely pair and their followers, and they embarked for Clarenza at Ancona, accompanied by Count Guido de Montbel, Hugo de Miribel, and other nobles of Savoy and Piedmont, together with a company of sixty knights and three hundred foot soldiers.

Philip of Savoy pledged himself to respect the usages of Achaia and received the homage of the barons, who duly verified the ratification of the marriage contract. His first care was to set the finances in order and collect arrears of revenue, and he early began to incur unpopularity by laying heavy burdens on the country to meet the expenses of a court which he maintained on an extravagant scale. He filled the fortresses with Piedmontese mercenaries and was criticised for displaying a disposition to apply in the Morea the system which he had learned from the tyrants of Lombardy. Before long financial embarrass-ments led him to adopt questionable expedients, and he arrested Benjamin of Calamata on an unsupported charge inspired by a certain Vincent de Marays, of having filled his own pockets from the public exchequer during Isabella's absence in Italy. This Vincent de Marays, a knight from Picardy, was a partisan of the Count of Cephalonia, and bore a grudge against the chancellor, whom he suspected of having counselled the supersession of his patron as bailie. The chancellor appealed to Nicholas de St. Omer, who, uniting in his person the representation of the ancient baronies of Passava, Akova, and Thebes, was regarded as the typical champion of the old Moreote nobility. Nicholas warmly espoused his cause, and entering the Prince's chamber with little ceremony, haughtily demanded to be told on what grounds the arrest had been made, in defiance of the usages of the land which Philip had sworn to observe. "And where, fair cousin", said the Prince, "did you discover these usages?" The marshal for answer unsheathed his sword, exclaiming: "Herein behold our usages; with the steel our forefathers won this land, and with the steel we uphold our freedom, and the customs which you seek to curtail or ignore". The Princess, who apprehended an attack upon her husband, interposed; but Nicholas protested that he was a liegeman and true, and had no sinister intent. Nevertheless if the

Prince did not abide by his oath and respect the usages of Achaia, the barons could not respect their oath to him. He was convinced, however, that the action taken was due to the inspiration of evil counsellors. In the end an account was required of the chancellor, who was restored to liberty, but had to make a deposit of 20,000 hyperpers, in return for which Philip assigned him lands estimated as yielding an annual revenue of 6000. On Count Richard, whom he rightly judged to be the real instigator of the charge, Philip took revenge by extracting from him a loan of 20,000, interest on which was provided by the assignation of certain crown lands to the Count and the children of his second marriage. The fiefs in question fell in again before long to the Prince's treasury, as Richard's only daughter by Margaret Villehardouin did not long survive her father, who in 1304 was killed at the door of his own house in Clarenza by one of his knights, whom he had struck in a moment of passion.

In the summer of 1303 Guiot, Duke of Athens, paid a ceremonial visit to Philip and Isabella, and did homage for the duchy, for his Peloponnesian possessions, and his wife's dower of Calamata. Their meeting was cordial and distinguished by all the pomp and luxury in which the Prince of Achaia delighted. The scene was Vostitza, on the beautiful bay of Aegion, with its unrivalled prospect over the gulf of Salona and the rugged heights of Delphi, over which towers the haunted summit of Parnassus. From this encounter Guiot was suddenly called away to undertake the regency of Thessaly as guardian of the infant Johannes Angelus. In the following year aggressions on the territory of Great Viachia, instigated by the intriguing Anna of Epirus, forced him actually to take the field there, and he consequently claimed the feudal service of Nicholas de St. Omer, who was his vassal for the half-barony of Thebes. Philip refused to sanction the marshal's departure, but St. Omer, haughtily disregarding the interdiction, joined the Duke, not without some misgivings as to the possible confiscation of his fiefs in the Morea.

The Prince was under no illusions regarding the precarious character of his tenure, especially after Philip of Tarentum had in 1302 regained his liberty with the peace of Calatabelotta. He determined therefore that, if he should at any time be compelled to withdraw from the country, he would not leave it empty-handed. His evil genius, Vincent de Marays, who lived in the country of Escorta, moved once more by the desire to gratify some personal rancour, persuaded him to lay a heavy impost on the stubborn and independent Arcadian population, which included many wealthy proprietors. Arbitrary and irregular levies were wholly contrary to the usages and privileges established by a century of Frankish rule. But Philip, listening to the suggestions of the crafty Picard, took advantage of the departure of St. Omer, the defender of the old tradition, to place the archons under contribution. The absence of the marshal, however, had also its effect in encouraging the Escortans to resistance. Rallying round their head men, Georgi and Janni Mikronas, they declined to pay the tribute, and sent emissaries to the strategus at Mistra, offering allegiance and declaring that all the archons of Escorta were ready to rise in favour of the Emperor. The strategus accepted these over-tures and collecting a force marched on Andritzena, while the insurgents carried and destroyed by fire the weakly-defended castle of St. Helena, in the region known as Xero-Carytena, south of the Alpheius, after which they battered down the castle of Crèvecoeur, situated still deeper in the mountains towards Andritzena, where they effected a junction with the troops from Mistra. On the south-eastern border, however, the stronghold of Beaufort, which had been solidly constructed of cemented limestone by Florence of Hainault to counterbalance the advantage secured by the Greeks when they seized the fort of St. George, resisted all their efforts and was

stoutly defended by Gracien de Boucère with an adequate garrison of archers and crossbowmen. Meanwhile the captain of Escorta, Nicholas Lenoir of St. Sauveur, who held Carytena for the Duke of Athens, collecting all the men-at-arms he could muster, occupied the heights above Beaufort and sent urgent messages to the Prince at Andravida, bidding him hasten to the rescue, if he was not prepared to lose Escorta altogether. Philip had now good cause to regret the marshal's absence. He summoned his barons to follow him, and marching south spread panic among the Greeks who withdrew in haste towards St. George and Arachova. Lenoir failed to understand the signals made to him from the keep at Beaufort, and believing himself about to be attacked, lost time in following up the retreating enemy. He was, however, not too late to secure a considerable booty. All was over when Philip him-self arrived on the scene, and it only remained for him to confiscate the property of the ringleaders, and strengthen the garrisons in Escorta under the orders of Lenoir.

The disposal of the property of Count Richard of Cephalonia led to a fresh and serious dispute between the Prince and St. Omer in his character as advocate and champion of the Moreote nobles. The old Count's reluctance to give execution to his elder son's marriage settlement, which entailed the cession of Ithaca and other lands, had led to a family feud in consequence of which Count John resided permanently at the court of his father-in-law at Arta. After his father's assassination, he returned to take possession of his inheritance, and was duly invested at Clarenza by Philip, who on this occasion received a handsome consideration from his vassal in anticipation of favours to come. John confirmed the obligation he had contracted on his marriage with Maria of Epirus to assign half of his possessions to her as a portion for her widowhood, but, counting on the indulgence of Philip of Savoy, he showed no disposition to carry out the provisions of his father's will, by which the reversion of all his movable property was assigned to his widow, Margaret Villehardouin. The Prince supported his vassal against his own sister-in-law, whose only hope of attaining justice appeared to her to lie in the intervention of Nicholas de St. Omer. In the summer of 1304 the marshal returned from Thessaly and chivalrously responded to her appeal. It was no doubt at this time that his wife, the fair Guglielma of Cephalonia, whom he had married after the death of Chaudron, first conceived that violent jealousy of her stepmother, which was before long to occasion a grave scandal in the Morea. He accompanied Margaret to the presence of the Prince, who after the brief campaign in Escorta was spending the hot summer season at the estate of one of his vassals, perhaps Vincent de Marays, on the banks of the Alpheius. When her advocate had expounded the claim of the Princess to the property illegally withheld, Count John, who was also present, addressed his stepmother in somewhat unbecoming language. Thereupon St. Omer interposed, reproving him for want of courtesy to the sister of his liege lady, and already their hands were fretting at their sword-hilts when the marshal, realising that the lady's case would only be prejudiced by violence, deftly changed the tone of his discourse. His forbearance, however, did not go so far as to brook the interference of Vincent de Marays, who supported the contentions of the Count. The indignant marshal was on the point of using violence once more, and insisted in any case on the withdrawal from the court of one who had no right to speak there. Not even the Prince himself, he contended, could judge an issue between the daughter of Villehardouin and the Count of Cephalonia, but only the twelve barons who were peers of the realm. To this plea there was no reply, and the court adjourned until the morrow. Meanwhile the Prince consulted his advisers and bitterly complained of the arrogant behaviour of the marshal, who had not for the first time put a slight upon him, and whose pride he intended to humble. But the

constable, the bishop of Olenos and others preached conciliation and prudence. The marshal's plea could not be gainsaid, for it was in accordance with the usages, and any attempt to humiliate so great and universally popular a noble must be fraught with danger, seeing that there were very many who might throw in their lot with him even against the Prince himself. It was safer policy to have him for a friend than for an enemy. The wisdom of this advice appealed to Philip, who inquired how he might best compose the quarrel between his stepmother and the Count. His advisers suggested a compromise on the ground that Count Richard's provision for his widow had been made upon too liberal a scale. If the whole of his personal estate were valued at 100,000 hyperpers, they argued that in equity 20,000 should suffice to satisfy the claims of his widow. The master of the Templars and Hugues de Charpigny were deputed to persuade Margaret and her champion to agree to this solution. The settlement, accepted perhaps with a reservation, did not prevent her from once more putting forward a claim to the whole amount ten years later, when her daughter was married to Ferdinand of Majorca.

The Prince was now suddenly compelled to abandon his pleasant retirement in the garden lands on the banks of the Alpheius by a summons from his over-lord to take the field in an expedition to Epirus, this time against and not in support of the Despina Anna, whose son-in-law John of Cephalonia was also called upon for a contingent. The Despot Nicephorus was dead, and his son Thomas had reached the age of fifteen years. His sister Ithamar, the wife of Philip of Tarentum, had, in spite of the engagements taken before she married, either been induced or compelled to abandon the orthodox rite, and now bore the catholic name of Catherine. The ambitious Anna Cantacuzena did not apparently contend that the other conditions of the marriage pact were thereby annulled, but she could not contemplate with equa-nimity the cession of the real power in the despotate to the catholic Philip. She looked for support, as a patriotic Greek, to Constantinople, and sought to arrange a marriage between her son Thomas and the daughter of Michael Palaeologus, who was now associated as co-Emperor with his father, promising to hand over to his authority all the territories which had not yet passed under the control of her daughter's husband. Charles II had offered Anna and her son the choice between either surrendering the whole of the despotate forthwith, or doing homage for its retention. The Despina replied, not without justice in view of the existing engagements, that her son was the vassal of the Emperor, and that the claims of Philip of Tarentum would only come up for practical consideration in the event of his death without heirs. This message was met by a declaration of war, and a small expedition, consisting of 200 horse and 300 foot, under Jean Maucevrier and Raymond de Candolle, the Angevine bailie, were landed at a little port not far distant from Arta. St. Omer, once more his Prince's loyal vassal, accompanied the band of 300 horsemen which the latter conveyed across the gulf of Corinth to join the bailie, who was further reinforced by 100 more under John of Cephalonia. The campaign was brief and inglorious. The Despot and his mother abandoned Arta, and withdrew to Jannina, where the castle, strongly garrisoned, defied the besiegers so successfully that they exhausted their supplies and were compelled to retire upon their transports at the coast. An assault on the fortress of Bogus, crowning a height between the channels of the river St. George, was not only repulsed, but some hundred of the attacking party were sacrificed by a reckless want of precaution. A blockade of Arta was commenced, but the surrounding country yielded neither forage nor supplies, and the season being far advanced the siege was raised and further hostilities were abandoned. Raymond de Candolle remained behind in charge of the Neapolitan castles, and Philip and St. Omer returned to the Morea for the winter season. On their homeward march through the defiles

of Makrinoros they were attacked by the Despot's army in force and compelled to take higher ground. Count John, however, fought a rearguard action and succeeded in dispersing the Epirotes, who did not further molest their retirement.

Philip's position was now full of difficulty. He had alienated the sympathies of the Frankish nobles. The shabby treatment accorded to Margaret Villehardouin had attracted attention at Naples, and doubtless many other complaints of his levies and exactions had reached the ear of King Charles. He had not yet paid the formal act of homage to Philip of Tarentum, and he had been ill-advised enough to make conditions before undertaking this obligation. So dissatisfied was the King with his attitude that, in October 1304, he reverted to the decision he had taken at the time of Isabella's third marriage, and declared that, as that union had been contracted without the sovereign's consent, her lands were forfeited, and Philip of Tarentum was empowered to do what he chose with Achaia. It is true that for the moment this decision was not put into execution, but the Prince's tenure had become a precarious one, and from thenceforward he could only feel himself in the position of a vicar from the court of Naples, removable at pleasure.

Nor did the gallant St. Omer return to find peace at home. His wife Guglielma was at least ten years his senior. He had first conceived a hopeless passion for the fair Cephalonian when she was still the wife of Jean Chaudron, and on the latter's death he had loyally married the object of his lawless love. As years went by and Guglielma began to doubt the power of her waning beauty to retain her young husband's affection, her jealousy made his life intolerable. The marshal endeavoured by all fair means to humour his unreasonable lady, but when gentle words and courteous manners proved of no avail, and every absence from home, even when duty summoned, was attributed to motives of gallantry, he at length assumed the part which he had so long been accused of playing, and paid marked attentions to her stepmother Madame Marguerite, the lady of Matagriffon, who was Guglielma's contemporary. Meanwhile he devoted himself to the chase, paying brief visits at rare intervals to Rhoviata, where he had established his wife in a sort of honourable captivity in charge of ten esquires, with two chaplains and a physician to complete her household.

So that winter passed and, with the returning spring of 1305, the Despina realised that Epirus was menaced by a renewal of invasion and the advent of a still larger contingent from the Morea to wipe out the humiliations of the last expedition. The Moreotes, accustomed to mountain warfare and familiar with the tactics of the Greeks, were in her eyes the more formidable enemies. Therefore, being well aware of their Prince's acquisitive character, she counted on purchasing immunity by buying him off. A secret emissary was despatched with ten thousand gold hyperpers, six thousand of which were handed to Philip and four thousand to the marshal, as the price of their abstention from hostilities. Neither showed any hesitation in accepting the bribe. The only difficulty lay in finding an adequate excuse to plead at Naples when the summons should arrive. The mar-shal proposed to the Prince that he should assemble a parliament at Corinth for the discussion of urgent local affairs. If, he submitted, their orders should only reach them there, they would be able with good reason to reply that they were far away from their own particular fiefs, and having made no preparations for a campaign, could not at a moment's notice muster the necessary levies.

The barons were accordingly summoned to Corinth, and by the end of April the

Dukes of Athens and Naxos, the Marquis of Bodonitza, the triarchs of Euboea, and the Count of Cephalonia were all on their way to the isthmus. St. Omer begged the Prince to dispense with his company on the road. He had occasion, he asserted, to pay a visit to the lady of Matagriffon, with a view to contracting a loan, but as soon as he had concluded his business he would rejoin his lord at Corinth by the road through Polyphengo. Count John learned with indignation that his brother-in-law had gone to Matagriffon, and despatched his younger brother William to Rhoviata. In the dead of night he presented himself at his sister's house, and carried her off to Clarenza, where a galley was waiting to convey her to Cephalonia. The brothers announced their intention of escorting her to the parliament of Corinth, where St. Omer would be invited to make good any charge he might have to urge against his wife, or in default be proved to have behaved as ill became an honourable man. Meanwhile the news of the escape from Rhoviata was brought to Matagriffon, and St. Omer, swearing vengeance on the brothers for the insult they had offered him, hastened to Corinth, where he arrived before the Prince. From Thebes he summoned all his vassals to attend him in martial equipment, and ordered forage and provisions for a month to be made ready. The Prince arrived soon after, and with Count John and Maria Comnena his wife came Guglielma herself and her sister, the wife of the constable, Engelbert de Liederkerke. Here at this critical point in the story the sequence of the French chronicle is suddenly interrupted and several sheets are missing. It must, however, be assumed that Philip succeeded in effecting a semblance of reconciliation between the marshal and the Cephalonian faction, for great festivities ensued and a tournament of open challenge, in which a thousand knights took part, was proclaimed, to last for twenty days.

It appears from the mutilated text of the manuscript that seven knights, who had been on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, arrived during the parliament, and being desirous of achieving fame in this new field and finding service in Morea, they issued a challenge to all comers, and proclamation was duly made that seven knights from beyond the sea would encounter any knight who was willing to meet them on horseback. Among the seven, whom the Prince had caused to be furnished with green harness and devices of scallop-shells in token of their quality, was a certain Guillaume Bouchart, who was reputed to be one of the best jousters of the west. Nothing would satisfy the young Duke of Athens but to pit himself against this champion. The chronicler, who must have become acquainted with such details from personal observation, relates that Guiot was protected by a thick padding underneath his armour, because the conditions of battle were very severe, and a charge of horse against horse was sanctioned. Bouchart, however, refused to follow his example, and wore only the ordinary equipment of the tourney. It was his intention to have spared his adversary, because of the Duke's high rank and comparative inexperience. But the eager youth bore down upon him with such impetuosity that he was perforce compelled to sustain the attack, and in the shock of their encounter the steel headpiece of his horse struck and penetrated the chest-plates of the Duke's charger, which was thrown dying to the ground. Guiot, however, did not attempt to disengage himself, and maintained his seat in the tourney saddle, until the umpires had satisfied themselves that he had not been unhorsed. This feat of gallantry aroused such enthusiasm that a host of stalwart arms hoisted up dead horse and living rider, and so carried the young Duke in triumph round the lists. St. Omer failed to induce his old enemy John of Cephalonia to break a lance with him, and when his challenge was met with the pretext that the Count's charger was unsound and could not be ridden, retired to his pavilion in disgust. Bouchart, however, got hold of the horse, and put it through its paces in the lists, crying out to the spectators, "This is the mount which is not fit for jousting!" and Jean de Nivelet, who had announced the

lame excuse, lost caste in that chivalrous assembly. The French chronicle, which carries the history of the Morea some fourteen years further than the existing Greek versions, comes suddenly to a conclusion in the middle of the story of the great tournament of Corinth, and the end is evidently missing.

The relations between Philip of Savoy and the house of Anjou had gone from bad to worse. Negotiations regarding his investiture and the homage due to Philip of Tarentum, as overlord, had led to no result, and his evasion of his obligations to prosecute the war in Epirus was by feudal standards accounted felony. The Angevines were now menacing his Piedmontese possessions from the neighbouring borders of Provence, and so he decided in November 1305 to sail for Italy, accompanied by Isabella, leaving St. Omer, whom he perceived to have more authority than himself, as bailie in the Morea. Isabella never returned again to the land which her father had acquired. Mahaulte Villehardouin, who now with her twelfth year attained her majority, remained with her husband in Thebes, but the infant Margaret of Savoy accompanied her mother to Piedmont. By an investiture made by Philip in 1303, and confirmed by him before the chief barons of the principality in the following year, she had been granted the captanate of Carytena and Bucelet as her inheritance. Margaret also appears never to have returned to Achaia, and she left no issue by her husband Rainard de Forez, lord of Malleval.

In June 1306 Charles II finally extinguished the claims of Philip and Isabella by the issue of the rescript to which allusion has already been made, confirming the possession of Achaia to his own son. The Frankish barons were at the same time absolved from the consequences of breaking the oath of fealty to the deposed Prince. In the same month Philip of Tarentum, who had fitted out a fleet with the assistance of Florentine bankers for one more effort to make good his claims in Epirus, came to the Morea and received the homage of the barons. Nevertheless the claims of Isabella Villehardouin to her father's principality and personal estates could not be altogether overlooked, and Charles II, anxious above all to make definite provision for the future of his favourite son, proposed to liquidate them by a concession of lands in his Italian dominions. An agreement was concluded in May 1307, by which Philip and Isabella resigned all further claims in Achaia, and received in exchange the countship of Alba, on the lake of Fucino, and other lands in the Abruzzi. Inasmuch, however, as Alba had already been bestowed as an appanage for life on the wife of Philip of Tarentum, Charles pledged himself to pay 600 ounces of gold annually to the dis-possessed Prince as long as his daughter-in-law survived. Alba was soon afterwards raised to a principality. Margaret of Savoy was compensated for the loss of the castles and fiefs which had been assigned to her in Achaia, by lands in the neighbourhood of Alba, and a yearly revenue of 200 ounces of gold.

In the archives of Mons are preserved the docu-ments in which Isabella announced to the kinsman of her first husband her renunciation of any further claims in the Morea, a renunciation which it would seem from the terms of her will she regarded as political and only personal to herself. Permission had been accorded her to reside in Naples, but she rather chose to withdraw from a scene which can have had few pleasant associations for her, to the Low Countries, where she did homage to Count William of Hainault for the fiefs of Estruen, and busied herself with her daughter's estates. The Duchess of Athens, after she became a widow in 1308, confirmed a cession which had been made by herself and Guy II conjointly to her mother of power to administer these lands in Hainault, and also granted her for life the usufruct of the original Villehardouin fief of Calamata. The

remainder of Isabella's life of strange vicissitude was passed in the unfamiliar north, not, we may surmise, without a wistful longing for the sunny land of her birth, which her father had won by the sword of conquest and the grasping Angevine had taken from her. In 1311, in spite of her formal renunciation, she made a will constituting her eldest daughter Mahaulte her universal heiress in Morea, but reserving Carytena, Beauvoir, and Beauregard as a dowry for her younger daughter Margaret of Savoy, and soon afterwards she died, barely fifty years of age, apparently at the court of William of Hainault. Philip of Savoy in the following year took another wife, Catherine, Dauphine of Viennois, and he and his numerous descendants continued to bear the empty name of Princes of Achaia.

The results to Philip of Tarentum of the new expedition to Epirus were an estrangement with his wife and serious pecuniary entanglements with the Bardi of Florence. The Despina had secured the support of the Greek Emperor, and an epidemic broke out among the Neapolitan troops which compelled Philip to come to terms with his mother and brother-in-law. Some brief attention was then directed to the affairs of Achaia, where he remained de facto Prince from 1307 to 1313. One of his first acts of authority was to transfer the bailieship from St. Omer to the Duke of Athens, who as the husband of Mahaulte Villehardouin would be more readily accepted as a ruler than the hereditary marshal by his opponents of the Cephalonian faction. How far this appointment may at the same time have been intended as a temporary satisfaction to the Duke in view of a refusal on the part of Philip to entertain a claim put forward by Mahaulte to the principality itself after her mother's renunciation will be discussed in the following chapter. Guiot, however, died in 1308, in the flower of his age, leaving the fifteen-year-old Duchess a widow in Thebes, under the protection of his friend Bonifazio da Verona, lord of Carystos, whom he designated to act as bailie until such time as Gautier de Brienne, the son of his aunt Isabella de la Roche, should come to claim his inheritance. Bertino Visconti was then sent to Achaia as Philip's vicar. In the following year, on the death of Charles II and the accession of Robert the Wise, Bertino returned to Italy and was succeeded by Tomaso di Marzano, who was financed by a further loan from the Florentine Bardi. Philip himself never resided permanently in the Morea, which now relapsed into the condition of a mere dependency of Naples.

The position which had been forced on the house of Villehardouin by Charles of Anjou, confirmed by his heir in his treatment of the second generation, appears to have caused some misgivings to his less unscrupulous descendants. In spite of all the devices by which the title to Achaia had been secured to the Angevine dynasty, some doubt would appear to have been entertained whether a flaw might not be found in it, some dread lest perhaps an appeal to the high court of chivalry in France, or the feudal conscience of the age, might gain support for the claims of the disinherited great-granddaughter of the original con-queror, which it is probable had been asserted by the Duke of Athens on behalf of his wife. For Philip at one time contemplated the final incorporation in his own family of all existing claims by arranging a marriage between the young widow and his eldest surviving son Charles, the child of Ithamar, from whom, on the plea of her misconduct during his absence from Naples, he now became permanently separated. The solemn ceremony of betrothal was celebrated at Thebes, but the actual marriage never took place. The death of Ithamar, who seems to have retired into the obscurity of a convent, must have taken place not long after her repudiation, and Philip, who had by no means renounced his pretensions to his wife's unrealisable dower in Epirus, had now full liberty to indulge his ambition by himself contracting another dynastic alliance, which would

concentrate in his person all the potential claims of the Franks to the eastern empire. To compass this ambition he successfully intrigued to bring about one of the most remarkable combinations recorded in history, involving not less than four marriages, and two transfers of betrothed brides to other husbands.

One only daughter, who bore her mother's name, had been born of the second marriage of Charles of Valois with Catherine de Courtenay, the titular Empress, who died in 1308. Catherine de Valois, who then became the heiress of the Frankish title, was in her early childhood betrothed to Hugh V, Duke of Burgundy. Such betrothals, sanctioned by the Church, were held to be solemn contracts which only the dispensation of the Church could set aside. The Prince of Tarentum was not in a very favourable situation for negotiating directly with the curia, having fallen under the interdict for killing a Benedictine friar whom he suspected of similar designs against himself. Influences were, however, brought to bear upon Catherine, and arguments were put into the mouth of this child of eleven years, which she could never have initiated herself, in order to make out a case for the dissolution of the engagement. The consent of Hugh was readily obtained and, in view of the consideration promised, his own secure position in Burgundy seemed vastly preferable to the obligation to fight for a problematical throne on the Bosphorus. A new bride was, moreover, provided for him by King Philippe le Bel, the daughter of his second son Philippe le Long. The Prince of Tarentum, having secured for himself the reversion of the hand of Catherine, which Hugh renounced in a formal contract in 1313, then made over all his rights in the principality of Achaia to the Duke's younger brother, Louis of Burgundy, who was to marry Mahaulte of Hainault, the widowed Duchess of Athens, released with this object from her engagement to Charles of Tarentum. Philip reserved the homage due to himself as overlord and stipulated for a renewal of the obligation, which had originally been imposed on Isabella Villehardouin, making his consent an indispensable condition of any subsequent remarriage of Mahaulte, should she once more become a widow. The future Prince of Achaia was pledged to furnish material support for the reconquest of the empire, by providing a contingent of two hundred knights. If no heirs were born to the marriage Achaia was to revert to the house of Burgundy. The French King, who was regarded as the fountain-head of chivalry by the Franks of Romania, exercised a controlling influence over these negotiations and endeavoured to curb the insatiable appetite of the Ange vines. In the document in which he accorded his sanction to the new dignities of Louis of Burgundy, Philippe le Bel insisted on a special clause providing that, should Louis die before his wife and leave no heir, Mahaulte should at any rate retain the principality of Achaia for her own lifetime. To this stipulation Philip of Tarentum signified his agreement and pledged himself to obtain the approval of his brother Robert, under penalty of a fine of 40,000 livres if unsuccessful. Louis also received from his brother a wedding gift in the form of the transfer to himself of the titular rights to the kingdom of Thessalonica, which Baldwin II had pawned to the house of Burgundy. The Duke's sister Jeanne was, on her marriage with Philip of Valois, a son of Charles by his first wife, to receive from Catherine the reversion of Courtenay and the other lands she had inherited from her mother. Another Jeanne, the sister of Philip of Valois and half-sister of Catherine, was to become the bride of the young Charles of Tarentum, who had had to renounce the hand of Mahaulte. A number of arrangements affecting the ultimate dis-posal of the empire *in partibus* between the heirs of Philip and Catherine were included in the bargain and discussed as seriously as though they concerned realisable assets. Since, however, the territories to be partitioned remained in the category of castles in Spain, it is unnecessary to burden the text with the details of their distribution.

To us, with our knowledge of subsequent events, the energy, ingenuity, and persistency displayed by the Angevines, and by Philip of Tarentum in particular, in order to concentrate in his own person all the existing claims of the westerns to the titular throne of Constantinople, may present somewhat of an enigma. But to the strenuous man of action nurtured under the immediate influence of Rome, the possible reconquest of the eastern throne was in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries no shadowy dream. The idea which had predominated the preceding epoch of two supreme institutions, one temporal the other spiritual, the Papacy and the Empire, co-existing for the governance of mankind, still exerted their influence. The Holy Roman Empire had practically expired as a world-power with the Hohenstaufens. In the discord of the two forces the Church had triumphed. But the principles which underlay the imperial theory were not dead, and if Rome was the seat of the Papacy, the legitimate traditional seat of the Empire was in Byzantium. The Angevine dynasty, imported into southern Italy by the Popes, became their secular and executive arm, and the re-establishment of the empire in its immemorial place, as the temporal complement to the spiritual system of the curia, seemed a natural solution of the idea which had for so long exercised a potent fascination over the minds of men. The Franks had occupied that throne, if only for a term of fifty years, and the Roman Church had extended its authority, nominally at any rate, over the Balkan peninsula. To a firm believer in the ultimate triumph of the Church it was inconceivable that the ground once gained had been more than temporarily lost, and the ideal of the restoration of the Latin empire through the Latin Church was a vital and practical moving force. Nor in view of the ease with which the conquest of the east had been effected by the crusaders, and the weakness of the Greeks after their restoration, could this ideal have seemed particularly difficult to realise.

During the course of the complicated negotiations in France, Catherine of Valois had completed her twelfth year, and with it attained her majority. Her marriage was celebrated at Fontainebleau on the 13th of July 1313, and thenceforth Philip of Tarentum was entitled to consider himself the legitimate Frankish pretender to the throne of Constantinople. The marriage of Mahaulte of Hainault apparently took place about the same time, and in the same year Louis of Burgundy took the oath of fealty to Philip and assumed the title of Prince of Achaia. After some not unnatural delay he proceeded to Venice and completed his preparations for the journey. It was not, however, till the spring of 1316 that he actually started for his new principality. The prospect before him, in view of the internal developments in the Morea, was not particularly inviting, and in the meantime, during the administration of Philip's bailie, a catastrophe had occurred which led to the annihilation of the old feudal nobility of Romania and dealt the Frankish prestige a blow from which it never recovered. To make the occasion of this disaster clear, it will be necessary to revert for a while to the contemporary history of Athens and Euboea, and to trace the rise and progress of the redoubtable Catalan adventurers whose arrival on the scene marks the real close of the age of chivalry in Greece.

CHAPTER X

THE ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF THE CATALAN COMPANY

The Catalan Company was the creation of Roger de Flor, one of the most remarkable adventurers of this or any age. Our knowledge of his extraordinary career is chiefly derived from the contemporary chronicle of Ramon Muntaner, who claims for him all the virtues of the ideal leader. The gifted soldier-author is as a rule careful about facts and truthful in the main, with a bias venial in one of that band of buccaneers, to whose credit he has set it down that they assigned the glory of their lawless exploits to God, while in their mutual relations they respected the principle which even thieves have proverbially found it their interest to observe. Giovanni Villani on the other hand, to quote a less interested authority, has described him as both cruel and dissolute.

The name of Roger de Flor has gained an additional savour of romance by translation from its Teutonic original into the language of the south. His father, Richard Blume, a favourite falconer of the Emperor Frederick II, married the daughter of a notable of Brindisi, where he settled and lived in tolerable affluence. When southern Italy was startled by the news that the boy Conradin was descending the Alps to reconquer the inheritance of the house of Suabia, he took up arms in the cause of his old patron's grandchild, and met an honourable death on the disastrous field of Tagliacozzo, leaving a widow with two little sons of whom the younger, Roger, was then only in his third year. The confiscations which overtook all the partisans of the Hohenstaufens reduced the family to poverty, and the boy grew up among the sailor-folk who frequented the Apulian port, then one of the busiest in the world. He was about eight years old when a fighting ship of the knights of the Temple, commanded by brother Vassal, a native of Marseilles, put in to Brindisi to winter there. This lay Templar took a great liking to the little lad, who was all day long climbing in and out of his vessel, laid up near the widow's house, and he persuaded her to confide her son to his care to learn an apprenticeship at sea.

By the time Roger reached the age of twenty he was a past master of navigation both in theory and practice, and his abilities were recognised by the Grand Master of the Temple, who bestowed on him the cloak of the order and appointed him to command the Falcon, a vessel reputed to be the largest then afloat, which the knights had purchased from Genoa. The young captain, who was open-handed and had a facile charm of manner, made friends at all the ports he touched. But after the fall of Acre, where he grew rich by the transport of wealthy refugees, he was accused before the Grand Master not only of having retained a portion of the treasure brought away from Palestine, but even of deliberate acts of piracy. Believing his life to be in danger and having probably none too clear a conscience, he abandoned the Falcon at Marseilles and went to Genoa, where friends assisted him to equip a galley on his own account. Sailing for Catania in Sicily, he

offered his services to Robert of Calabria, the son of Charles II of Naples, who had made that port his headquarters from which to prosecute the war with Frederick II of Sicily. Robert either declined or ignored the offer of the renegade Templar, as a faithful partisan of the Church was indeed bound to do, and so the Olivette set her course for Messina, where the son of Richard Blume was received with open arms by the grandson of Manfred, who had recommenced the struggle which his brother James had renounced in order to recover his ancestral throne in Aragon. Armed with Frederick's commission, he soon became a thorn in the side of his rivals, and by a series of brilliant exploits on the Calabrian and Apulian coasts, was not only able to revictual the Sicilian garrisons and replenish his master's treasury, but also to equip a powerful squadron of galleys and enlist a band of Catalan and Aragonese adventurers for the service of the grateful prince, who loaded him with honours and appointed him vice-admiral of Sicily. Among the first to join a troop of horsemen raised by him was Muntaner, the chronicler of the wars of Aragon and Romania, and he became the acknowledged leader of a group of adventurous nobles from the court of Frederick, which included Berengar d'Entenza, Guillen Gallerno, and Blasco d'Alagona. His next great exploit was to conduct his galleys in the teeth of a storm through the troubled waters of Scylla and Charybdis into the beleaguered Messina and force the Duke of Calabria to raise the siege. With this episode and the miserable failure of Charles of Valois, who led a last great expedition equipped with all the resources of the Church, the twenty years' struggle between the houses of Anjou in Naples and Aragon in Sicily came to an end. Charles II had no instinctive love of war, and was disposed to lend a favourable ear to the intercession of his daughter Blanche, the wife of King James II of Aragon. Frederick, who now held him completely in his power, met Charles of Valois in the Duke of Calabria's tent at Calatabelotta, embraced him and swore eternal friendship. By the peace there contracted in 1302 Frederick was recognised as King of Sicily for life, under a promise that on his death it should revert to the reigning Angevine sovereign at Naples, and he received the hand of Leonora, the daughter of Charles II, who pledged himself to obtain the rescission of the interdict which had been laid upon the island. Frederick undertook to restore all the fortresses he had gained north of the straits, and released Philip of Tarentum, who had been his prisoner since the disastrous battle of Falconara in 1299. Boniface VIII was not induced without considerable difficulty to give his sanction to the treaty, and by repealing the ban to enable the marriage to be celebrated in the cathedral at Messina. The rivalry between the French and the Aragonese, which had for so long distracted southern Italy, was now to be transferred to Romania with not less far-reaching effect.

No man, says Muntaner, was so shrewd as Roger in forecasting the probable trend of events. The long war in Sicily had attracted thither a great army of mercenaries, of Catalan horsemen, of experienced sailors, and of those redoubtable Spanish infantry soldiers, known as Almogavars, adventurers whose subsistence depended less on their pay than on the opportunities which a state of war afforded them for plunder. In time of peace such an assemblage of unruly swashbucklers menaced the tranquillity of the country in which they were stranded. Roger perceived that with the peace of Calatabelotta the advantages of his career as vice-admiral of Sicily were at an end. The reconciliation of Frederick with Rome might even raise the question of his surrender to the Grand Master of the Temple, and he realised it was time to seek a new scene of action. He accordingly submitted to the King his plan for ridding the island of the dangerous Catalan element. He had been able while in Frederick's service, as the enemy of the house of Anjou, to be of use on more than one occasion to Greek ships of war. He proposed to remind Andronicus of

these and earlier friendly acts, and to offer his sword to the empire, which was now menaced by the growing power of the Turks in Asia Minor, taking with him as many of the mercenary troops as were ready to share his fortunes. For himself he claimed the dignity of a megaduke of the empire, and the hand in marriage of one of the princesses of the imperial family; for his followers he stipulated that every horseman should receive four ounces of gold a month, every foot soldier one ounce, and that pay for four months in advance should be remitted to Monemvasia, where the company would touch on their passage east. These terms were accepted with alacrity by Andronicus, who was almost without serviceable troops for the defence of his frontiers. He promised him the hand of his niece Maria, conferred on him the coveted title, and sent him the imperial banner. Some 5000 Almogavars and half as many horsemen eventually joined the expedition. Roger de Flor was the recognised leader, but only a portion of these troops were his own immediate adherents. Other chiefs brought their own contingents, and not the least in this noble company of adventurers was Ramon Muntaner himself.

Frederick parted with his successful admiral like a generous prince. He presented him with two galleys and two transports, which, added to eight galleys already in his possession and other vessels which Roger had bought or captured, made his fleet a formidable one. He also furnished him with money and victual for the journey, biscuit, cheese, salt pork and onions. In all thirty-six sail assembled at Messina to embark the adventurers, and in September 1302 the advance guard appeared in the Bosphorus, under the command of En Fernand Ximenes d'Arenos, who led a contingent of his own. Two of Roger's old companions in arms, who had agreed to join the expedition, were to follow at an early date, the noble En Berengar d'Entenza as soon as he had completed his contingent, and Berengar de Roccaforte, a soldier of fortune of humble origin, but able, shrewd and very ambitious, as soon as he had arranged with Naples respecting the surrender of certain castles in Calabria, which should in accordance with the terms of peace have been handed over, but which he claimed to hold as a guarantee for arrears of pay, due from the King of Sicily.

The marriage of Roger with the daughter of Irene Palaeologa, the wife of the Bulgarian king, was celebrated without loss of time, and the sixteen-year-old bride, who before his arrival must have contemplated the alliance with some misgivings, is said to have become passionately attached to the magnificent adventurer, whose power of personal fascination was not less than his tireless energy and resource in action. The reluctant testimony of a Byzantine historian may be quoted in evidence of his qualities both of heart and intelligence. But the wedding festivities were disturbed by a quarrel which broke out between the Catalans and the Genoese, at this time the most numerous and influential foreign community in Constantinople, established in the suburbs of Pera and Galata. The leaders of the company were obliged to ride into the melee with their battle-axes to restrain their lawless troopers, who, after an indiscriminate slaughter of Genoese, were advancing on the commercial quarter. The Emperor had perhaps not been altogether displeased to see the haughty Ligurian colony humiliated, but the pillage of their banking-houses would have spelled disaster. He therefore lost no time in speeding the riotous adventurers to draw their swords against the Turks. The Genoese controlled the maritime resources of the empire, and as their enmity had been incurred by this episode, Roger perceived the necessity of providing for the safety of his galleys and transports and of having an adequate fleet at his own disposal. He therefore induced the Emperor to confer the office of admiral on the Catalan En Fernand d'Aunes, who also

obtained the hand of a Greek princess. Six weeks after his arrival he left his young bride in Constantinople, and landing at Artaki immediately inflicted a signal defeat on the Turks.

This important victory, not unjustly held by Greek historians to have stayed the tide of invasion which menaced the very existence of the empire, only excited the jealousy and suspicion of the Byzantine administration, and in particular of Michael, the son of Andronicus, who was indignant that the uncouth Catalans should have succeeded where himself had failed. The season was too far advanced for further operations and the army went into winter quarters at Artaki, whither the young megaduchess came accompanied by her mother and an illegitimate daughter of Roger by a Cypriote lady, whom he had without shocking the spirit of contemporary ethics confided to their care. Muntaner describes in detail how the billeting and victualling of the men during the winter was entrusted to a joint-commission of six notables of the country and six representatives of the army, with a view to making equitable arrangements for the Catalans and preventing injustice to the local population. At the end of the winter the troopers had lived so well and found such good entertainment among the Greeks, whom Byzantine historians represent as groaning under their exactions, that many of them had spent a whole year's pay in anticipation. Roger, who had escorted his wife and mother-in-law back to Constantinople, now proposed to take the field again, and assembling his forces caused all the notes of account, made out in duplicate, to be collected for revision. The bills of the Greeks were forwarded to his treasury for liquidation, and the liabilities of the Catalans were generously assumed by their leader, who not only made them a free gift of all they had spent in winter quarters, but issued another advance of four months' pay. During their stay at Artaki a breach between Roger and Fernand Ximenes led to the withdrawal of the latter. He took ship with his detachment for Athens and offered his services to Guy II de la Roche, who welcomed him, having need of additional troops to guard the extended frontier which he had acquired by his regency in Thessaly. This diminution of strength was, however, balanced by the arrival of 200 horsemen and 1000 foot, the contingent of Berengar de Roccaforte, who was created seneschal of the army and affianced to Roger's illegitimate daughter.

Before he again took up his winter quarters Roger had compelled the Turks to raise the siege of Philadelphia, and by a series of successful cavalcades had liberated a great part of Anatolia from the invaders, while in the meantime the galleys under Fernand d'Aunes had raided the coastwise islands, not sparing the Venetian settlements. The following year, 1304, witnessed less military activity, and it is possible that there was less disposition to treat the local populations equitably, for the exactions of the Catalans were represented at the capital as being merciless and intolerable. A suspicion gradually grew to a conviction there, that the megaduke was aiming at the creation of a subject state in Asia Minor, over which he might rule himself as a vassal of the Emperor. A fresh revolt of the Bulgarians, who were raiding the narrow confines of the empire in Europe, afforded an opportune pretext for the recall of the Catalans to co-operate with Michael Palaeologus, and at the end of the year the host was conveyed back across the Dardanelles and established in headquarters at Gallipoli. Roger proceeded to Constantinople and pressed for further advances, which Andronicus endeavoured to meet by an issue of debased coinage. The tension which consequently arose between the harassed sovereign and the formidable captain of adventure, of whom he was genuinely afraid, had not been diminished by the arrival of En Berengar d'Entenza with a further band of 300 knights and 1000 Almogavars. Andronicus complained that he had never contracted to engage so large a number of men

and, while outwardly continuing to bestow marks of favour on Roger, he secretly endeavoured to sow the seeds of rivalry between him and Berengar d'Entenza. Such endeavours were disarmed by Roger's declaration that he was ready to surrender the title of megaduke to his friend, whose oath of fidelity to the Emperor had been qualified by the reservation of his allegiance to Frederick of Sicily as his legitimate sovereign. Roger himself received the proud title of Caesar of the empire, and Berengar, in whose loyalty to his fellow-adventurer the Byzantine historians found it impossible to believe, joined him at Gallipoli, where the Catalans were busy entrenching their camp. Their return to the European side had sufficed to frighten the Bulgarians into submission. But in the meantime the Turks were recovering their lost ground in Asia. They once more attacked Philadelphia, and the Emperor found himself obliged to come to terms with his troublesome mercenaries. It was agreed that after the relief of Philadelphia military fiefs should be constituted in Asia for the soldiery, who would then cease to draw pay and perform feudal service for their tenure, forming a sort of buffer state between the empire and the barbarian. The cities, however, were to be exempted from their control. In the meantime four months' pay in advance was forthcoming, and Roger accepted the debased currency which he had hitherto declined to recognise. He refused, however, to consider the reduction of the force for which the Emperor had pressed.

Before leaving for Anatolia he determined, in response no doubt to a flattering invitation, to go to Adrianople and take leave of Michael Palaeologus, in spite of the entreaties and warnings of his wife and mother-in-law, who feared treachery with only too good reason. Roger, however, laughed at their fears and, after despatching his wife, who three months later became the mother of a boy, to the capital, set out escorted by 1000 Almogavars and a small band of horsemen for Adrianople, in which fortress Michael had secretly assembled a force of some 9000 Alans and Turcomans. For a week Michael entertained him hospitably and then, on the eve of his departure, as he sat at supper at the Prince's table, a band of assassins, led by the Alan chieftain Gircon, invaded the chamber and despatched him at the feet of his treacherous host. He was not yet forty years of age when the sailor lad of Brindisi who had become a Caesar of the empire ended his fantastic and brilliant career, the victim of his own temerity in trusting in the good faith of his constant enemy. His men, who had been billeted about the town, were simultaneously hunted down and massacred.

Michael hurried off a force of Turcomans and Alans to Gallipoli to attack the Catalans before the news could become known there. The movement was a complete surprise. Nearly all the horses out at grass were destroyed or captured, as well as a great number of the unsuspecting troopers. Berengar d'Entenza retired with the rest into the fortress, where they defended themselves vigorously against their assailants. A few survivors from the massacre of Adrianople straggled in with the disastrous news, and the Catalans exacted terrible reprisals from all the Greeks who came within their reach. Leaving Muntaner and Berengar de Roccaforte in charge of the fortress, d'Entenza put to sea with five galleys and two armed transports and harried all the Byzantine seaboard. The Greeks had resolved as far as lay in their power to exterminate the Catalans. Fernand d'Aunes, the admiral, was assassinated at Constantinople by the Emperor's orders; all the troopers found in the capital were massacred, and the envoys sent by the captains at Gallipoli to reproach Andronicus with his breach of faith were, after their audience and in defiance of the safe-conduct accorded to them, put to death and mutilated at Rhedestos. A fresh disaster befell the company through the treachery of the Genoese, whose fleet of

eight galleys met the Catalan squadron returning laden with booty. The Genoese admiral, gave Berengar d'Entenza a safe-conduct and invited him to sup on board the flag-ship. Once there he was disarmed and made a prisoner, his vessels were overmastered, and the galleys with their prizes sailed for Genoa. It was in vain when they appeared off Gallipoli that Muntaner endeavoured to effect his release by offering a ransom of a thousand hyperpers.

The little band of Gallipoli, reduced to some 1300 men, now formed a heroic resolution. The sea was still open to them, but to withdraw would have been in their eyes an eternal infamy. They therefore knocked the bottoms out of their remaining ships that none might be tempted to run away. Berengar de Roccaforte assumed the supreme military command, and Muntaner was appointed chancellor and general administrator1 to the force. Dramatic preparations preluded their sortie against the overwhelming host of the besiegers. On the tower of the castle they hoisted the banner of St. Peter, and made three standards ready to carry into action, two bearing respectively the arms of Aragon and Sicily, and the third the effigy of St. George. They invoked the favour of Heaven on their desperate venture, and a seaman was found who could chant the canticle of the blessed St. Peter, which brought tears to the eyes of the hardened adventurers. Then all kneeling down they sang the *Salve Regina*. The June sky was clear, but as they sang a cloud passed overhead and a gentle rain fell upon them, ceasing with the last notes of the chorus, an omen which filled their hearts with joy. At even every man confessed himself, and at day-dawn communicated. It was a Saturday morning, twenty-two days before the feast of St. Peter, when they marched out to battle. There was no van, nor centre, nor .reserve, but the Almogavars were on the right, the remnant of the horsemen on the left. The enemy had their camp on a height some two miles distant, whence their first battle issued to dispute the advance of the Catalans. Both sides attacked with vigour, but the Emperor's troops were rolled back to the hill where their main body was massed, and, with shouts of "St. George and Aragon", the Spaniards pressed their victory home, and went through the broken and flying mass, slaying till they grew weary. As is usual in the accounts of battles at this time, the number of the killed recorded by Muntaner is evidently fantastic. Three only of the Catalans were found missing, while the losses of the enemy, many of whom were drowned while trying to escape in the boats of the local fishermen, are set down at 26,000. The booty secured was enormous: it took eight days to apportion the spoils of the camp, and 3000 captured horses more than made good their original losses. Another army was nevertheless brought up, this time by Michael Palaeologus in person, and once more the Catalans, leaving only a hundred men to protect their women and children in the fortress, boldly took the offensive. The same order of battle was observed, with the same result. The Alans in the Byzantine van were routed and flung back in hopeless confusion on the centre, while a number of their Turkish mercenaries deserted to the enemy. Michael, who fought bravely, was himself wounded in the face by the gallant sailor who had chanted the canticle of St. Peter, and he was severely reprimanded by his august father for having in his own sacred person exposed the dignity of the empire to the perils of war. Once more an immense booty fell into the hands of the Catalans, who were now effec-tually masters of the country. So great was the terror which their name inspired, that their horsemen rode unmolested and almost single-handed up to the very outskirts of Constantinople in the pursuit of a highly profitable brigandage. Rhedestos, where the Catalan envoys had been murdered, was subjected to a terrible reprisal, as a warning that such breaches of faith would not meet with impunity. Every inhabitant, without regard to age or sex, was put to death, and Roccaforte made the empty city his headquarters. Fernan

Ximenes soon afterwards returned with eighty men from the duchy of Athens, and, leading a second division to Madytos, took and occupied the fortress after an eight months' siege. Muntaner remained in charge of Gallipoli. From these three points they raided and scoured the surrounding country.

It still remained to exact vengeance from the Alan tribesmen and their chief Gircon for the murder of Roger de Flor. This entailed a twelve days' march inland, and the lot fell upon Muntaner to remain behind in charge of the headquarters, at which all the women and children had been collected, with only seven armoured knights of his own personal household and 130 seamen and Almogavars. The Alans, some 10,000 strong, were most effectually sur-prised in their camp, only about a tenth of their number being under arms when the onslaught was made. Having their women and children with them, after the manner of the Tartars, they bravely stood their ground. Their chief Gircon fell and was decapitated. Encumbered with their families they could neither retreat nor manoeuvre, and barely three hundred are said to have escaped from the field. The women and children were either killed by their husbands and fathers before they met death them-selves, or became the spoils of the victors. Mean-while a Genoese squadron under Antonio Spinola, which was conveying to Italy the younger son of the Emperor as successor to the marquisate of Montferrat, attacked the little garrison at Gallipoli. Muntaner called upon the women to take charge of the ramparts, and making a sortie with his handful of men, succeeded, although himself severely wounded in the first phase of the engagement, in driving their assailants back to the ships. Spinola himself was among the six hundred slain.

The company now received an important acces-sion of strength by incorporating a band of Turkish deserters from the imperial army, to the number of 800 horse and 200 foot, under their emir Ximelek. They led a merry life, growing prosperous and rich at the expense of the unfortunate local proprietors. Themselves they neither sowed nor pressed the grape, but every man eat and drank of the best, requisi-tioning whatever his necessities suggested. Gallipoli remained their headquarters for some seven years, and it was not until the whole country round for a march of ten miles had been sucked dry that the question arose of moving their camp from the scene of their devastating operations. Meanwhile Berengar d'Entenza, ransomed from the Genoese by the King of Aragon, returned with five hundred men whose equipment he had provided by the sale of his paternal estates, and was recognised by Muntaner as his chief and superior. Roccaforte however was not prepared to treat him as more than an equal. Ximenes and the Catalonian sailors ranged themselves on the side of Berengar d'Entenza, while the Almogavars and the Turks continued to regard Roccaforte as their leader. Thus, although there was no open breach thanks to the efforts of Muntaner, the company was divided into two partisan camps. King Frederick of Sicily whose banner the Catalans had adopted, and who still claimed their allegiance, attempted to reconcile the menacing schism by despatching to Gallipoli the Infant Ferdinand, son of the King of Majorca, to take over the supreme command of the company and enter into possession in his name of the towns and fortresses which they had occupied. He arrived with four armed galleys and was joyfully welcomed as captain by Berengar d'Entenza, Muntaner, and Ximenes. Roccaforte on the other hand, who was absent conducting the siege of Nona, realised that the appointment of the Infant would deprive him of the advantages of his dominant position. He was well aware that the other leaders, who were all of noble blood, regarded him as an upstart adventurer, and that, having been the first to recognise Ferdinand, they would take the opportunity to undermine his position. He aimed at succeeding himself to the place of Roger de Flor, and

it was consequently his object to get rid of the new comer by any available means. So before the Infant could arrive in the camp under Nona, Roccaforte had already privately arranged with the representatives of his companies what answer was to be returned him, when he caused the letters of Frederick of Sicily to be publicly read. It was to the effect that nothing was nearer to their hearts than to accept Ferdinand as their chief; he was a Prince of the house of Aragon and the pattern of chivalry, and they would gladly do him homage, if he would accept the position on his own account, but they were not prepared to receive him as the representative of King Frederick, who after all their hard service in Sicily had dismissed them with a few loaves of bread as their only reward. Roccaforte himself knew that the Infant had pledged his word to Frederick, and, being the most loyal of princes, would only accept the leadership as the King's representative and vicar. His followers, moreover, far outnumbered the rest of the company. Ferdinand of Majorca on receiving their reply announced that under such conditions he could not remain, and must return to Sicily. He agreed, however, to march with the company until they had entered the territories of the kingdom of Thessalonica, whither they had now determined to transfer their sphere of operations. And so in a spirit of mutual mistrust, and not without profound misgivings, the captains took their dispositions to break up the camp at Gallipoli.

It was arranged that Muntaner, after levelling the defences at Gallipoli and Madytos, should embark all the sailors with the women and children in such vessels as were available and sail to Christopolis, while the men-at-arms marched overland. As a precautionary measure it was further agreed that Roccaforte with his own immediate following and the Turkish allies should start a day's journey in advance of the other bands who were to escort the Infant. When they were only two stages from Christopolis an unlucky chance led to a misunderstanding which had the gravest consequences. Muntaner himself has no doubt whatever that it was the machinations of the Evil One, always on the look-out for his opportunity, which inspired a detachment of d'Entenza's troopers to break up their camp at an earlier hour than usual, so as to begin their march before the heat of the day, while Roccaforte's men for similar reasons lingered beyond the appointed time in pleasant quarters, where fresh water, fruit, and wine abounded. Thus it happened that the rearguard of the latter found themselves in touch with the advance guard of the former, and either party, excited by the quarrels of their leaders, believed that the other was about to attack. At the cry to arms, Roccaforte and his followers put on their harness in hot haste, but Berengar d'Entenza, perceiving the sudden tumult and ignoring the cause, leaped unarmed upon his horse and, with a hunting-spear in his hand, rode to the head of the host to prevent a panic and keep his men in hand. The brother and uncle of Roccaforte, believing him to be urging on his troopers to the attack, charged down upon d'Entenza, and run-ning him through the body with their lances, killed him on the spot. Ximenes, who was following close behind, saw him fall and, being unarmed, turned his bridle and saved himself by flight. Then the en-counter became general. Roccaforte's men and the Turks pressed on till they saw the Infant's banner. Ferdinand rode forward and strove to arrest the unnatural combat, and Roccaforte with his cavaliers formed a ring round the Prince to protect him from the Turks. With difficulty order was at length restored, but not until some six or seven hundred victims had been uselessly slain. The host then halted for three days to do honour to the gallant Berengar d'Entenza, who was universally regretted. Fernan Ximenes had taken refuge in an imperial castle, and the Prince held him under the circumstances excused, when he declined to rejoin the company, fearing treachery from his mortal enemy Roccaforte, who had now prompted the rest of the army to subscribe to the decision which his own corps had adopted. The Infant, finding that all were now firmly

persuaded not to acknowledge him, unless he would take over the leadership in his own name and not on account of King Frederick, took his leave of them with a good grace and embarked in his own galleys which had followed the line of march along the coast. In the neighbouring island of Thasos he fell in with the Catalan fleet on its way to Christopolis in charge of Muntaner, who now learned from the Infant what had taken place since they parted, and promised loyally to remain under his orders and accompany him to Sicily. But he craved and obtained permission first to cany out his commission and bring his convoy safely in, after which he would return to Thasos. Muntaner found the company about a day's march from Christopolis, and he at once obtained from Roccaforte a safe-conduct for all the men, women and children who belonged to the contingents of either Berengar d'Entenza or Ximenes to pass through the lines and rejoin the banner of the latter. To such among them as did not wish to remain he assigned vessels to carry them to Negripont. He called a general assembly of the army, and after reproaching his former comrades with their disloyalty, adjured them at least to stand honourably by Fernan Ximenes, who at a great sacrifice to his own interests had given up the service of the Duke of Athens in order to return to the company. He then handed over the great seal and all the hooks and records. Many efforts were made to induce him to stay, and the Turks were most instant in their prayers that he would not desert them. But Muntaner, who was the most loyal of men, had given the Prince his word that he would return, and indeed there was little inducement for him to remain. So he took leave of them, and with three armed boats, and the handsome fortune he had accumulated in some five years' campaigning, he returned to Thasos. Ximenes never rejoined the Catalans. He offered his services to Andronicus, who accepted the offer, bestowed upon him the hand of a lady of the imperial house, and eventually appointed him Grand Admiral. The rest of the company, under Roccaforte's now undisputed leadership, lingered in the passes of Rhodope, living on the country and extending their raids over a considerable area. An attack on the city of Thessalonica was however energetically repulsed, and one at least of the wealthy monasteries in the holy peninsula of Athos defended itself with success. At length they established a new Gallipoli at Cassandria.

In Thasos the Infant and Muntaner were hospitably entertained by the Genoese Tedisio or Ticino Zaccaria, who had been enrolled on the company's lists under the following circumstances. In the latter days of the Catalan occupation at Gallipoli he had gone thither to crave their assistance in consummating an act of private vengeance by a raid on Phocaea. Under the auspices of the Emperor Michael Palaeologus, with whom they were connected by marriage, the Genoese Zaccarias had founded a prosperous vassal state at Phocaea, where they grew immensely rich by the development of the alum mines, of which the monopoly had been conceded to them. Ticino Zaccaria, who had secured a footing and a stronghold in the island of Thasos, was in 1306 appointed governor of Phocaea by his uncle Benedetto, the sovereign and chief of the family. But Benedetto died in the following year, and Palaeologo Zaccaria, who succeeded, dismissed Ticino and appointed another relative in his cousin's place. With the assistance of a band of buccaneers placed at his disposal by Muntaner, who also supplied the necessary ships, Ticino took his revenge by raiding and devastating the flourishing city, returning with an immense booty, which was honourably divided, according to the code extolled by the chronicler, between the two partners in this iniquitous reprisal. Muntaner himself obtained possession by lot of a piece of the true cross, encased in gold and precious stones, which had once belonged to the Apostle St. John, while the dalmatic woven by the Virgin herself, in which the Evangelist performed the mass, and a copy of the Apocalypse written

by his own hand in letters of gold, were the portion of his Genoese associate.

Zaccaria entertained his guests for some days with princely hospitality and engaged permanently for his own service a certain number of loyal Catalans, who consented to remain in Thasos. Then the Infant took his leave and sailed with Muntaner for Halmyros, where on his outward journey he had left behind four men to bake biscuit for the ships. As these were no longer to be found and could not be satis-factorily accounted for, no further excuse was needed for indulging the predatory instincts of the Catalans, and Halmyros was raided with fire and sword. Thence they passed on to Scopelos, and without apparently any semblance of pretext laid the island waste. In spite of the wiser counsel of his followers, who realised that their most recent exploits might be called in question there, Ferdinand determined to touch at Negripont, where he had been well received on his voyage to Gallipoli. As ill luck would have it, there had just come in from the south ten Venetian galleys and an armed boat, the transport and escort of Thibaut de Sipoys, the presumptive admiral of a restored western empire, sailing on a mission from Charles of Valois, who as husband of the titular Empress Catherine de Courtenay still dreamed of reconquering the Byzantine throne, and was therefore anxious to enlist the services of the Catalan Company.

While the Infant and Muntaner were on shore contracting for a safe-conduct from the triarchs, whose waters were notorious for the immunity they offered to pirates, the Venetian galleys attacked the little Spanish flotilla. In the ensuing fight fourteen of the crew of Muntaner's vessel were killed and all the treasure he had amassed, which, as he naively says, amounted to no trifle, was carried off. He himself with En Garcia Gomez Palacin, another Catalan noble who had incurred the enmity of Roccaforte and had therefore abandoned the company, were arrested by order of Thibaut de Sipoys, who did not scruple also to lay hands on the person of the Prince of Majorca. The Infant was then placed in charge of Jean de Noyers, who was instructed to convey him to Thebes, where the Duke of Athens was requested to detain him at the pleasure of Charles of Valois. Muntaner and Garcia Gomez were sent back at the instance of the Euboeans as a propitiatory offering to the Catalans at Cassandria, where it was anticipated they would receive short shrift, the former because it was supposed he had carried off the public funds of the company, and the latter because he was the personal enemy of Roccaforte. No question would then, it was hoped, be raised with regard to the plunder of Muntaner's vessel. These anticipations were only partially realised, for while on the one hand En Garcia Gomez was beheaded immediately on landing by the orders of Roccaforte, Muntaner was received with demonstrations of affection and loaded with gifts by both Catalans and Turks, and his old comrades made it a first condition of opening negotiations with Thibaut de Sipoys, that the property sequestrated in Negripont should be restored in full. Roccaforte, who had compromised himself irretrievably with Frederick of Sicily and the whole house of Aragon, perceived the advantage of coming to terms with Charles of Valois and, on the arrival of the Venetian squadron at Cassandria, the company took the oath of allegiance to his envoy. Muntaner resisted the entreaties of the Catalans, seconded by those of Thibaut himself, to remain with the company, and embarked on board the galley of Giovanni Quirini, who was returning to Negripont with the Venetian flotilla.

It was not long before Roccaforte, who felt himself to be master of the situation, began to treat the representative of Charles of Valois with as little ceremony as he had shown to the nominee of Frederick of Sicily. He had, according to Muntaner, conceived the ambition of reviving in his own favour the independence of the old kingdom of

Thessalonica, where the Empress Irene still held her court, and he had already had his own great seal engraved. He endeavoured also, and apparently with some prospect of success, to induce the Duke of Athens, in whom the seeds of a mortal disease were now developing with fatal rapidity, to bestow on him the hand of his half-sister Jeanette de Brienne. With this object he acknowledged himself the vassal of the Duke, who it was evident had not long to live. Gautier de Brienne, the heir, was far away in Italy. With the resources at Roccaforte's disposal, the foundation of a powerful state by the fusion of Athens, Great Viachia and Thessalonica seemed not impossible to the ambitious dream of an adventurer, who had risen from the ranks to the absolute position which he now enjoyed. It would even seem that Thibaut de Sipoys, in order to retain his hold upon, or safeguard his own position with, the Catalan leader, at one time gave some countenance to this marriage project, for a record exists of the gifts bestowed by him upon the minstrels who were sent from the duchy to make arrangements for the approaching ceremony. But Venice, whose influence in Euboea was now predominant, had reason to fear a possible coalition between the Catalans and the Lombard triarchs. and both the bailie of Negripont and Thibaut de Sipoys were warned to be on their guard. Meanwhile the health of the young Duke grew rapidly worse, and on the 5th of November 1308 he died, leaving the succession to Gautier de Brienne, the son of his stepfather, who on the mother's side had the blood of the de la Roches in his veins. Until he should arrive to claim his inheritance, Bonifazio da Verona was to act as bailie.

Roccaforte's despotic arrogance and unscrupulous exactions soon rendered him intolerable to the company, and Thibaut, whose position in the camp was humiliating and, as he believed, far from secure, took advantage of the mistrust which Venice entertained for the adventurer to request the republic to furnish him with six galleys. Pending their arrival he pursued a temporising policy, when the troopers disclosed their grievances and invited his assistance, suspecting that a trap was being prepared for his undoing. But as soon as his son had returned with the galleys which Venice was readily disposed to supply, he took a firmer attitude. He secretly consulted the twelve leaders who composed the council of war, and in accordance with their advice a general assembly of the company was summoned to meet, at which Roccaforte and his brother were called upon to answer for the murder of Berengar d'Entenza, and other deeds of violence. The two brothers were arrested and the treasure accumulated by the ambitious adventurer was distributed among the host, every man receiving thirteen gold hyperpers. Sipoys, into whose hands the prisoners were delivered, lost no time in shipping them off to Naples, where Robert of Calabria had just succeeded Charles II. Robert had an old grudge against the former lieutenant of Roger de Flor, who had declined to hand over at the appointed time certain fortresses in his titular province which were to have been restored on the conclusion of peace with Sicily. He flung them into the dungeons of the castle of Aversa, where they were allowed to die of starvation.

Cassandria had by this time become as untenable as Gallipoli. The whole surrounding country had been stripped bare by the raids of the bandit army, and Chandrenos, the energetic commander of the imperial armies, not only barred their return towards the north, but was menacing their actual position. Thessaly, governed by a very young and wholly inexperienced prince, still lay open to them, and beyond lay the duchy of Athens, which had just lost its capable and popular ruler. Early in 1309, therefore, Thibaut de Sipoys led his unmanageable mercenaries through the vale of Tempe into the wide and fertile Thessalian plain. Johannes Angelus II, accepting the inevitable, concluded

an agreement with the company by which he undertook to pay a hand-some subsidy for the maintenance and defence of his frontiers. The primates were well satisfied with an arrangement which, in the event of the death of their delicate prince, would dispose of any preten-sions on the part of Gautier de Brienne to assume the regency. Thibaut de Sipoys also endeavoured to negotiate with the bailie in Euboea, but the latter, to gain time, pleaded the obligation of consulting the Triarchs Ghisi and Pallavicini, as well as the Duke of Athens, and referred to Venice for instructions.

Meanwhile Catherine de Courtenay had died in 1308, and Charles of Valois seemed further than ever from realising the ambition which his qualifications and performances so little justified. His admiral and envoy realised, not without bitterness, that the intractable company had forced upon him the unenviable position of a leader of buccaneers, and his continued presence in the hornet's nest was both irksome to himself and unjustifiable on public grounds. The difficulty was how to escape from a situation in which he had been the victim of circumstance. Two of the six Venetian galleys still remained at his disposal and, choosing his opportunity, he got safely on board in a Thessalian port and surreptitiously departed for France in September 1309, with-out taking leave of the band of adventurers of whom accident had placed him in temporary command.

The Catalans, when his desertion became known, vented their rage on the ringleaders of the conspiracy which had led to the deposition and death of Roccaforte, the captain whom they appreciated and deserved. The leadership was put into commission and a democratic administration was adopted. Two knights, together with one representative of the Almogavars and one of the Turks, were elected to form the executive, working side by side with the existing military council of twelve. Thus the company constituted itself a republic, and under the title of "The conquering host of the Franks in Romania," these adventurers continued to drain the resources of Thessaly until the day when Gautier de Brienne was so ill-advised as to call in their assistance and attract the hungry rabble south.

CHAPTER XI

ATHENS AND EUBOEA—THE LAST OF THE DE LA ROCHES—GAUTIER DE BRIENNE

Guy II de la Roche, or Guiot as he was generally called to distinguish him from his grandfather, was only ten or eleven years old when his father died and the regency of Athens was assumed in his name by his mother Helena Dukas. Nicholas II de St. Omer was at that time bailie in Achaia, and the powerful barons of the Fauquenbergue family were always scrupulously loyal to the overlords to whom their homage was due for their domain of Thebes. But after the arrival of Florence and Isabella in the Morea, policy perhaps not less than inclination induced Helena to seek a new protector by contracting a second marriage with Hugues de Brienne, Count of Lecce, whose first wife, her own sister-in-law, Isabella de la Roche-Bruyères, had now been dead for some years. Brienne was one of the most powerful vassals of the crown of Naples, and his family, not less influential in France, had given a King to Jerusalem and an Emperor to Constantinople. In the latter half of the year 1290 he came to the Morea to look after the fiefs in Escorta which he claimed as the inheritance of his first wife, and he then went on to Athens to visit his nephew the young Duke. The precise date of his marriage with the widowed Duchess is not recorded, but it was apparently in 1291, as, in a rescript of that date addressed by Charles II to St. Omer, it is referred to as about to take place. The context seems to imply that Brienne had in the meantime returned to Naples and submitted to the King certain issues respecting the feudal obligations which he would incur after his marriage by taking over the guardianship of his stepson. Nicholas II de St. Omer was instructed to receive the formal act of obeisance from Brienne on the King's behalf, as soon as the marriage had actually taken place, without prejudice to the settlement of a dispute which had arisen between the Duchess and the Prince and Princess of Achaia, who claimed from her an obligation of homage which she repudiated. In this attitude she was supported and probably inspired by Brienne himself, who regarded it as humiliating to his dignity to recognise a feudal superior in Florence of Hainault, a mere upstart adventurer. As regent of Athens, on behalf of his stepson and ward, he returned to the position assumed by the first Guy de la Roche, and declined to acknowledge any feudal tie between the duchy and the principality. Both parties to the quarrel appealed to Charles II, who summoned them to appear personally before him at Christmas 1291, and later, as this notice proved too short, at Whitsuntide of 1292 before the feudal court at Aix in Provence. Such a journey, however, was not compatible with their duties in Romania, and for the time being they were both admonished to keep the peace. Brienne had even gone so far as to put forward a claim to compensation from Achaia, for expenditure incurred by Guil-laume de la Roche, during his administration as bailie, but was recommended by the King to desist from prosecuting it. Meanwhile an envoy from Naples ap-peared in the Morea and subsequently visited Athens, but was unable to arrange a satisfactory settle-ment. There can have been

little doubt as to the merits of the dispute, and in any case there could be no excuse for a refusal on the part of the regent at Athens to do homage for Argos and Nauplia, which lay within the boundaries of Achaia. But Charles II was evidently reluctant to put pressure on his influential vassal, and Brienne, conscious of his advantage, remained obdurate. Neither a personal visit which he paid to Naples nor the mission of a second arbitrator led to any definite result, and the quarrel was threatening to assume a dangerous aspect, when the King, in order to secure the hand of Ithamar for his son, resolved to transfer the rights of homage over all the Frankish possessions in Romania to Philip of Tarentum, who thus became overlord of both the jealous feudatories. Orders were sent to Florence and to Brienne, on behalf of his ward, to do homage to Philip, and it was pointed out that the dangers which menaced the Frankish territories rendered a single authority preferable to the duality which had hitherto divided their strength. Charles no doubt hoped that in subjecting the rival vassals simultaneously to a new common allegiance, he could induce them to drop the burning question of their reciprocal relations. But the issue between the Prince of Achaia and the Duke of Athens could not be solved by any such compromise, and Florence now asserted his right to receive the homage of Guiot before fulfilling his own obligations to Philip of Tarentum.

Compelled thus at last to make a definite pronouncement, and having less regard for the prejudices of the young Duke, who attained his majority in the spring of the same year, 1294, than he had felt for those of the powerful and truculent Brienne, Charles II. in July of that year declared the duchy to be a dependency of Achaia and, without reopening the old question of principle, determined the matter by announcing that, in investing Florence with Achaia, it had been his intention at the same time to place Athens under his feudal overlordship. The influence of Brienne was, however, still strong enough to make his stepson recalcitrant and, in spite of the pressing demand of Florence, the act of homage was delayed until after the death of the former, when Charles, on the 1st of October 1296, issued a categorical order to Guy II as well as to his vassals, Othon de St. Omer, Thomas de Stromoncourt of Valona and Francesco da Verona, to take the oath of allegiance to Florence before certain deputies selected for the purpose. Helena had in the meantime induced her brother at Neo-Patras to do homage to Philip of Tarentum for Great Viachia. Thus at length a feud was finally composed which had at one time threatened to lead to active hostilities in Romania. Brienne himself had in July 1296 taken up the command of the Angevine armies as captain-general in the war with Frederick of Sicily. There, hardly a month later, he fell mortally wounded, leaving an only son by his first marriage, who succeeded to Brienne,

Lecce, and his mother's portion of Carytena, and who eventually in 1308 became for the brief space of three years Duke of Athens, the last of the kindred of the house of de la Roche. By his second marriage with Helena Dukas he had one daughter, Jehanne or Jeanette, who was wooed by the Catalan Roccaforte, and eventually became the wife of Niccolo Sanudo, Duke of Naxos.

During the reign of Guillaume de la Roche and the early years of his successor, the records of Euboea are scanty and barren of incident. When in the year 1278 Galeran d'Ivry, coming from Naples as bailie to Achaia, carried letters also to the Terzieri, Giberto II and Marino II, as well as to Leone dalle Carceri, who was administering a sixth part of the island for his cousin Gaetano, a prisoner in Constantinople, the power of the Lombards in Euboea had fallen to a very low ebb. With the death of Giberto the elder, after his

humiliation by the renegade Licario, the triarchies were in danger of degenerating, like more than one of the old Frankish baronies, into mere titular dignitaries. On the other hand, the Venetian bailie, who in the hour of need had organised the defences of Negripont and had succeeded in maintaining open access to this important trading-station, became inevitably a more influential personage in the island. By the year 1285 the Franks had to a great extent re-established their ascendency, and only the castles of Larmena, Metropylae, and Caristos were still held by the Greeks, when Venice, on entering into the agreement already mentioned for a ten years' cessation of hostilities with Constantinople, reserved the rights of the republic to support the Euboean barons against the Emperor. A fleet under a Venetian admiral accordingly made Negripont its headquarters. It was the interest of Venice to make herself indispensable to the triarchs, and become the paramount factor in this half-way station so necessary to her eastern trade, a task which was now rendered easier by the fact that a great part of the island at this period had fallen under female government.

Giberto II, whose two sons died in early youth, left only a daughter, Beatrice, to succeed him in the central triarchy, which seems to have been administered by his widow Maria Navigagioso, as long as she lived. This daughter married Grapozzo dalle Carceri, who had divided the inheritance of Grapella with his brother Gaetano, the husband of Beatrice's aunt, Agnes Navigagioso, one brother taking a southern and the other a northern hexarchy. Marino II, the son of Narzotto, who held the two other hexarchies, in northern and southern Euboea respectively, must have died soon after the arrival of Galeran d'Ivry, as he does not appear to have taken part in the battle in which Giberto was defeated, and, having no heir, he was succeeded by his sister Alix, the wife of Giorgio Ghisi of Tinos. Gaetano, who after his liberation from durance in Constantinople appears to have resided for some time at the court of Naples, perhaps during the period when Licario was all-powerful, also left an only daughter Maria, who married Alberto Pallavicini, Marquis of Bodonitza, and, after his death in 1311 at the battle of the Cephissus, Andrea Cornaro of Scarpanto. Grapozzo, who like his brother Gaetano comes down to us only as the shadow of a name in the annals of Euboea, left one son by his marriage with Beatrice, Pietro dalle Carceri. His widow early in the fourteenth century found a second husband in the lord of Maisy, a cadet of the Burgundian house of Noyers, who in virtue of his wife's prospective inheritance, and as guardian of his stepson, exercised a powerful influence there. Thus, about a century after the Lombard conquest, one-half of the island had passed away from the dalle Carceri by the failure of male heirs.

The ten years of peace with the Emperor, for which Venice contracted in 1285, had not yet quite run their course when the rivalry of the two great Italian republics, competing for the trade of the east, led to active hostilities into which the empire was inevitably drawn in support of the Genoese, who were attacked in their mercantile quarter at Pera. Venice on her side found an ally in Pisa. A semblance of legality was given to the raids of Aegean pirates, who under the name, so familiar in later years, of armatoli sailed with the commission of the Doge, while powerful Venetian squadrons assisted in undoing the work accomplished for the empire by Licario in the islands. Phocaea, where the Genoese Zaccarias, who were related by marriage to the family of Palaeologus, had established a sort of vassal state, and amassed great wealth from the profits of their alum mines, was ruthlessly sacked by Ruggiero Morosini Malabranca. On the other hand, in the year 1298 the Venetian fleet under Andrea Dandolo was severely defeated at Cursola by Lamba Doria. This reverse was again counterbalanced by the successes of Venetian privateers and

both sides having suffered equal losses, Matteo Visconti of Milan was able by opportune intervention to induce the two republics to conclude a general peace in 1299. A reservation of the kind with which the history of this period has made us familiar, nevertheless, still provided that support given by Genoa to the Greeks against Venice should not entail direct hostilities between the contracting parties. With the Emperor Venice only came to terms again in 1303, securing a heavy indemnity and a revival of her old privileges. But the cessation of hostilities then negotiated was prolonged for a further period of twelve years in 1310. The restoration of the island lords, once dispossessed by Licario's roving squadrons, which had been effected under the auspices of Venice and secured by the terms of peace, had the effect of detaching their allegiance from the Duke of the archipelago, and transferring it to their more efficient protector. This was indeed not accomplished without keen resistance on the part of Guglielmo Sanudo, who upheld the old feudal connection with Achaia, and his policy was followed by the Ghisi, who had material interests in the Morea and in Euboea itself.

The paramount influence of Venice inevitably led to a certain amount of friction with the triarchs. In 1303 the Lombard podesta in Negripont endeavoured in his section of the town to exact a payment of taxes from a Venetian subject, who during a previous residency of twenty years had never been called upon for any contribution. The dispute occasioned by his protest raged so high that Venice, fearing aggression from the Lombard lords, determined to fortify her own quarter of the city. The bailie, Francesco Dandolo, was instructed to erect barriers at the gates, and the necessary funds were as usual provided by a contribution levied on the Jews. Three years later a fresh quarrel between the Venetian magistrate and Giorgio Ghisi, respecting the ownership of a portion of the bridge of St. Conrad which the republic claimed, led to further energetic measures for the protection of the commercial city. So generally was Venice now regarded as the dominant factor in the island that, when in 1309 a convoy of slaves, which a certain Enrico di Lusani had brought to Oreos, was landed and the captives were released, it was to the republic that Frederick of Sicily, as Lusani's overlord, addressed his complaint. The Doge, however, replied that the town of Oreos was not "altogether" under the control of Venice, and referred him to the Lombard barons. In spite of internal troubles and a divided authority the island continued to prosper; its population increased; its mercantile importance attracted a wealthy Jewish colony, and churches and religious foundations became more numerous.

Meanwhile another member of the old Veronese house of dalle Carceri had become a power in the south of the island. Bonifazio da Verona, as he is called in the annals, never became a triarch, but he nevertheless created a preponderating position for himself in his castle at Carytos, and for some twenty years was the most powerful noble in Euboea. His first appearance on the stage takes us back once more to the history of Athens, and dates from the ceremonies connected with the coming of age of Guiot de la Roche, of which Ramon Muntaner, who no doubt picked up his notes on the subject during his visit to Negripont and Thebes not many years after the event, gives a very picturesque description.

The rules of chivalry prescribed it as customary that a prince, on the attainment of his majority, should receive the accolade as knight, from some cavalier of high renown, whose selection would distinguish both the giver and the recipient of the knightly stroke. Among the Duke's vassals Othon de St. Omer, who had in the same year succeeded his brother in the half-barony of Thebes, might well have been chosen for such an honour, or

Thomas, the third lord of Salona, “the wisest head in all Romania”, or who indeed would have been more appropriate than his own stepfather, Hugues de Brienne, if indeed he was at the time in the country. To the surprise of all present, however, it was a portionless cadet of the family of dalle Carceri, who was unexpectedly called upon by the young Duke to perform a service for which the King of France or the Emperor himself would have esteemed it an honour to be chosen. This Bonifazio was the youngest son of Francesco, “the ancient”, brother of the hexarchs Grapozzo and Gaetano. He had only inherited a small castle in Euboea, and had established himself during the regency of Helena at the ducal court at Thebes, where he soon became a conspicuous figure and distinguished himself by excelling in all the accomplishments of chivalry. As such he had attracted the hero-worship of the generous boy-Duke. The ceremony had been fixed for St. John’s day in the month of June. Of all the nobles who obeyed the summons to the festivities, none made a braver show than Bonifazio, who had pledged his future salary in order to raise funds with which to equip his retinue in a manner becoming the occasion. A hundred candles blazoned with his arms were carried before him in the procession to the church, where the arms of the knight-postulant were deposited on the high altar, while the archbishop of Thebes celebrated the mass. Then Guiot summoned Bonifazio to take his place beside the archbishop and give him the stroke of chivalry. He protested and asked the Duke why he should thus mock him before the world. But Guiot repeated that it was his deliberate resolve to be made a knight only by his hands, and when, thus pressed, Bonifazio had accomplished his task, the Duke addressed him in the presence of the assembly and said that ancient usage prescribed that he who gave the accolade should also offer a gift. In the present instance, however, he should receive the gift instead. The gift should be of castles and fiefs, bringing in an annual rent of 50,000 solidi, with the hand of his ward, daughter of a vassal of the duchy, who was heiress to a third of the city and island of Negripont. The lady was Agnes de Cicon, titular heiress of Carystos, which had, however, remained in the hands of the Greeks since the days of Licario. The fiefs were Gardiki in Phthiotis, near the site of the ancient Larissa Kremaste in the Myrmidon’s land, and Selizeri, the site of which cannot now be identified. The island of Aegina, which also fell to his lot, was probably a third gift from the Duke, and not, as Muntaner supposes, an appanage of Agnes de Cicon. Two years later Bonifazio, with the co-operation of the Venetian bailie Jacopo Barozzi, during the renewed hostilities between the republic and the empire, recovered the strongholds of Carystos and Larmena, which he also continued to hold, perhaps as a fief from Gaetano, and by this feat of arms he expelled the last of the Greek garrisons from Euboea.

Soon after Guiot had attained his majority, he found himself at issue with his mother, the widowed Duchess Helena, who carried her complaint to Naples, pleading that she had been unjustly deprived of the monastery of St. Luke at Stiris,1 where she had intended to reside. Guiot on his side brought counter-charges against his mother, whom he represented as claiming to dispose of certain fiefs which were indispensable to the integrity of the duchy. A reconciliation between mother and son was eventually brought about by the influence of Charles II. The complications which arose with Naples and with the Pope on account of the marriage or solemn betrothal of Guiot to the infant Mahaulte of Hainault have been referred to in a previous chapter. The ceremony appears to have taken place in 1299, for it was on the 3rd of July in that year that Charles declared the contract invalid. The little Duchess, however, continued to reside at Thebes, and in the following year the recognition of both the civil and the ecclesiastical authority was accorded.

There exists unfortunately no consecutive history of the house of de la Roche, such as the chronicle offers for the family of Villehardouin. We find there only a series of episodes, separated by considerable chronological intervals, necessary to illustrate the relations existing, or the conflicts arising between the principality and the duchy. The next such episode in sequence of time is the visit paid by Guiot to Isabella Villehardouin at Vostitza, on her return to Morea with her third husband, Philip of Savoy, who was the young Duke's contemporary. The author of the chronicle does not mention whether the little Duchess was brought to see her mother, but he is careful to record that the Duke paid homage to Philip not only for Athens, but also for his wife's dower estate of Calamata, as well as for the hereditary fiefs of Argos and Nauplia.

Guiot was now called to play an important part, beyond the confines of his own dominions, as an administrator and a captain in the field, in the duchy of Neo-Patras, whose fortunes had been for many years past closely linked by dynastic friendship and family alliance with those of Athens. It would be beyond the scope of the present study to follow in detail the perplexed and ever-shifting story of the wars and truces of Great Viachia, since the death of the veteran adventurer Johannes Dukas. The treacherous arrest and surrender to Palaeologus of his son Michael by the intriguing Anna Cantacuzena has already received mention. His second son, Constantine Angelus, who succeeded him, had with another younger brother carried on a long war of reprisals against the despotate and the Angevine governor in Epirus. When in 1296 Constantine was recalled by the death of his father to Neo-Patras, he made peace with Philip of Tarentum and with the Despot Nicephorus, just before the death of the latter, and turned his arms against their common foe at Constantinople. The danger he thus provoked impelled him like his father to seek intimate relations with the Franks, and especially with his nephew the Duke of Athens. He was included in the cessation of hostilities negotiated between Naples and the Emperor in 1300 by Geoffrey of Porto, and he availed himself of this breathing-space to prepare for a new raid on Epirus, trusting no doubt that the captivity of Philip of Tarentum, who in 1299 became the prisoner of Frederick of Sicily, would give him a freer hand. A rescript of Charles II, however, dated July 1302, warned the barons of Achaia and Athens that the enemies of the Despina Anna, now regent for her son, were his own no less, and that they were therefore on no account to lend countenance or support to Constantine. He died in 1303, entrusting on his deathbed his only child Johannes Angelus II to the guardianship of his sister's son, Guy II. of Athens, who was to be regarded as the legitimate ruler of the land until the heir became of age.

The succession of an infant to the throne of an unredeemed province of the old dismembered empire exposed it not only to the covetousness of the Palaeologi, but also to the ambitions of the Despina and the marauding raids of the Bulgarians. The archons therefore lost no time in appealing to the Duke of Athens to undertake the administration, in accordance with the testament of Constantine. Guiot accepted the mandate with eagerness, and summoning his vassals, Thomas of Salona and Bonifazio of Verona, he set out for his castle at Zeitoun where the leading men of Great Viachia assembled and did homage, while he on his part undertook to respect the usages of the land and to maintain the garrisons in adequate strength. He visited his infant ward at Neo-Patras and took the necessary dispositions to ensure an efficient administration, appointing a marshal to control military affairs, a Visconti, as it would seem from a doubtful passage in the chronicle, with Jean le Flamenc as his lieutenant. As his own vicar and plenipotentiary he named Antoine le Flamenc, the father of Jean, who, according to an inscription read on

the spot by Buchon in 1843, built the church of St. George at Carditza, where he possessed estates. The whole system of the country was now remodelled on a Frankish pattern, and coins were minted which accurately reproduced the type of the French tourney. During his absence in Thessaly, some specious rumour, to the origin of which the chronicle affords no clue, seems to have been bruited abroad that the young Duke had met with a sudden death, for Carlo di Lagonessa, the husband of his aunt, Catherine de la Roche, advancing a claim to the succession, provisionally appointed Thomas of Salona to act as his vicar in the event of the rumour proving true. His hopes, however, were short-lived, and he died himself in the following year. His son did not long survive him, and thus a formidable competitor for the reversion of the duchy, should Guy II have no heir, was eliminated.

The protection of Athens did not prevent the Despina from seeking compensation for the narrowing bounds of her son's dominions in Epirus at the expense of Neo-Viachia, and in the early spring of 1304 she seized the castle of Phanari, which commands the roads leading from Thessaly to Jannina and Arta. Guiot did not hesitate to respond to such a challenge, and among the feudatories, whom he called upon to accompany him with a complete equipment for a three months' campaign, was the marshal of the Morea, Nicholas III de St. Omer, who was his vassal for the half-barony of Thebes. Relations between Naples and the Despina had altered not a little since Charles II had warned the princes of Romania that the enemies of Epirus were equally his own, and now that she had shown her determination not to give effect to the marriage settlement of Ithamar, it was improbable that any remonstrance would be offered to the expedition organised by the Duke. Philip of Savoy nevertheless refused his sanction to the departure of St. Omer, who could ill be spared from the Morea. But the marshal, who was on bad terms with the Prince, since he had intervened to protect the imprisoned chancellor of Achaia, did not prefer his request in person, or wait for the reply. Nor did the news of his father-in-law's assassination, which reached him at Vostitza when he was about to embark, deter him from obeying a congenial summons to the field. He crossed over to Galaxidhi with a following of some ninety horsemen, and marched by Salona to Gravia and Siderocastro. Guy had already set out for Thessaly. The lord of Salona and Bonifazio da Verona were following with their contingents, and when at length they all joined the standard of the Duke in the neighbourhood of Thaumakia, at the entrance to the Thessalian plain, his army constituted an imposing force, including 900 Frankish knights, over 6000 Vlachiote horsemen, and some 30,000 infantry. With him also marched a small band of the redoubtable Catalans under En Fernan Ximenes d'Arenos, who, in consequence of a personal quarrel with Roger de Flor, had abandoned the com-pany at Artaki and taken service with the Duke. The chief command was graciously offered to the marshal of Morea. After holding a council of war they advanced by Trikala and Stagus, now better known as Kalabaka, to a place described in the chronicle as Serquiche, only three days' march from Jannina.

Here they were met by parliamentaries from Anna, who, realising the formidable character of the invasion, now assured the Duke that Phanari had been seized without her authority and against her wishes. She was ready to restore the castle and pay an indemnity of 7000 hyperpers, with 3000 more for St. Omer. These terms were accepted, and the campaign was at an end so far as Epirus was concerned. But so tame a conclusion was a disappointment to the adventurers who aimed at distinction, and to the troopers who counted on plunder. A pretext was therefore sought for a march into imperial territory, notwithstanding that the Duke was bound by the suspension of hostilities which his

sovereign had contracted with Andronicus. It was given out that Byzantine troops had made a raid in Thessaly, and heralds were sent to the fortress of Servia in Macedonia to announce reprisals. The army then advanced, looting as it went, to within a day's journey of Thessalonica. Here there appeared in the camp two Lombard knights and two archons, despatched as envoys by the Empress Irene of Montferrat, the second wife of Andronicus, who had separated from her husband and now held her court in Thessalonica, which she claimed, with more justice perhaps than most of the pretenders to this theoretical kingdom, as the heiress of the great Marquis. She reproached the Duke with having violated peace without adequate reason, and with making war on a defenceless woman. If, however, he would come with the leaders of the expedition and pay her a friendly visit, she would make them welcome as guests and kinsmen. To such an appeal the chivalrous Guy could not turn a deaf ear, and he withdrew into Thessalian territory, dispersing the army at Zeitoun, whence the feudatories returned to Euboea, Argos, and Navplia. He once more visited Neo-Patras, confirming the dispositions he had taken for the government of Viachia, and on his return to Thebes detained St. Omer as his guest before the latter went back to the Morea by way of Lepanto. During his unauthorised absence the rebellion in Escorta had taken place, and the marshal was not without misgivings that his fiefs in Achaia might have been sequestrated by a prince who was always in want of revenue. He was, however, too influential and popular in the country for Philip, whose own position was none too secure, to attack him with impunity, the more so as he was so close a friend of the Duke of Athens, whose reputation was greatly enhanced by his success in Epirus. In the following spring the parliament of Corinth took place under the circumstances described in a previous chapter, and a little later, at the end of 1305, the Duchess of Athens completed her twelfth year and was declared of age in a document addressed to Count William of Hainault, which is still preserved in the archives of Mons, attested by her aunt Margaret of Matagriffon, the archbishop of Athens, Nicholas III de St. Omer, and Engelbert de Liederkerke.1 At the same time she was declared entitled to take over the inheritance of her father in Flanders, and a representative was empowered by the Duke and Duchess to perform the act of homage for these fiefs to Count William.

In 1307 Philip of Tarentum appointed Guiot his bailie for Achaia, in place of St. Omer, to whom Philip of Savoy had entrusted the administration of the principality on his departure for Italy. There is good reason to believe that a title to the principality itself had been asserted by the Duke as husband of Mahaulte of Hainault. It is stated in the Aragonese chronicle that Isabella died soon after she had left the Morea, and that such a claim was thereupon advanced on behalf of her daughter, the Duchess of Athens. This claim the marshal Nicholas de St. Omer, who was bailie at the time, repudiated on the ground that the principality had been forfeited by Isabella's breach of her engagements in marrying without the sanction of her feudal overlord. The Duke, it is said, responded by sequestrating the marshal's barony of Thebes. If this were so it would account for Guiot's being in possession of the castle of St. Omer in 1307 when he detained the Infant Ferdinand of Majorca as a prisoner there. The Aragonese chronicle goes on to state that when Philip of Tarentum paid a visit to the Morea, in the same year, the Duke came to perform homage as he was bound to do to his overlord, and then renewed his petition for the surrender of the principality which was his wife's inheritance. Philip, however, replied that he must address himself to King Charles at Naples, from whose paternal hands he had himself received the investiture of Achaia. This account seems at first sight somewhat difficult to reconcile with the established fact that Guiot was now appointed bailie of Achaia in place of St. Omer. But it may, on the other hand, be argued that such

appointment was made as a temporary satisfaction to the Duke, who was thus constituted the real ruler of all Romania, and who at the same time superseded his old friend St. Omer, with whom he had fallen out. A number of difficulties in our historical materials, which cannot well be cleared up on any other hypothesis, are ex-plainable if we may accept the story of the Aragonese chronicle and assume that Guy II. and Gautier de Brienne, as his successor after him, persisted in claiming the principality of Achaia as incorporated with Athens by Mahaulte's marriage with the Duke, and that this claim was as persistently ignored by Philip of Tarentum. We find, for instance, a double set of feudal officers co-existing for Achaia. While Tomaso di Marzano acted as bailie for Charles of Tarentum from 1309 to 1313, having succeeded Bertino Visconti in that capacity, one of the witnesses who signed the will of Gautier de Brienne, on the 11th of March 1311, is Gille de la Planche, who is therein described as bailie of Achaia. Again, although Nicholas de St. Omer, the hereditary marshal, did not die until the 30th of January 1313, if the chronological table prefixed to the French chronicle can be trusted, Thomas of Salona was already in August 1309 described in a letter addressed to him by the Venetian republic as marshal of Achaia. Moreover in a list of the dynasts of Romania in the Venetian *patti*, which must have been drawn up in or before 1311, he is also referred to as Principatus Achaye Mareschalchus. That Venice, whose representative in Modon had fallen out with Marzano immediately after his arrival in the Morea, affected to regard the Duke of Athens as also reigning in Achaia is indicated by her having in the year 1309 called Gautier de Brienne to account for certain outrages committed against Venetian subjects at Clarenza. It would seem therefore as if, after his feud with St. Omer, the Duke had transferred the office of marshal to Thomas of Salona. Such a situation and the recognition which it had obtained would account for the anxiety of Philip of Tarentum to bring about an engagement between his son Charles and Mahaulte, as soon as she became a widow. On the occasion of their solemn betrothal in April 1309, before the arrival of Gautier de Brienne, St. Omer was once more in Thebes. He then disappears mysteriously from the story. He was not present at the fatal battle of the Cephissus in 1311, and if the evidence of the •chronological table can be accepted as proving that he lived on for two years afterwards, his absence from the field, when the Catalans were menacing Thebes, can only be explained on the assumption that Gautier, considering himself as the reversionary of Guiot's claims in Achaia, kept up the feud of his predecessor with the hereditary marshal, who had defended the cause of Philip of Tarentum. In one of his fiefs in the Morea, on the slopes of Mavrovouni, near the Achaian border of Elis, St. Omer built himself a new castle, and the village which clusters round its ruins as well as the mountain itself still preserves the memory of the last of this great race in its name of Santameri.

A strange vicissitude of fortune had brought Guiot into personal relations with another young prince,, not unlike himself in high spirit and adventurous disposition, the Infant Ferdinand of Majorca who, after his arrest by Thibaut de Sipoys in Euboea, was carried to Thebes and delivered into the custody of the Duke until the good pleasure of Charles of Valois had been made known. Guy was himself entitled to ask for explanations from the Infant for his unwarrantable raid on Halmyros, but he appears to have treated him with every courtesy in an honourable confinement in the castle of St. Omer. Muntaner, who on his final withdrawal from the company was entertained on board the galley of the Venetian Giovanni Quirini, induced the latter to remain for four days at Negripont, and thus enable him to visit his prince at Thebes. He had brought letters from Thibaut to Jean de Noyers and Bonifazio da Verona inviting their assistance in the recovery of his stolen property, and Quirini used all his influence with the Venetian bailie to force the guilty

parties to disgorge. Promises and assurances of goodwill were not wanting, but he never saw a soldo of his own again. Meanwhile he crossed the bridge over the Euripus and rode to Thebes, where he found the Duke lying sick. An incurable disease was mining his strength, and the last of the de la Roches was already doomed. But ill as he was he received Muntaner kindly, promising to assist him to the best of his power to repair his losses, and readily accorded him permission to visit the Infant, whom he regretted to be thus obliged to detain. Muntaner spent two days with the Prince, and volunteered to ask for authority to remain in attendance on him. But Ferdinand urged him rather to go at once to Sicily, and carry a letter from him to Frederick. Such money as he had brought with him he handed to the Prince, and gave presents to the cook, whom he enjoined to keep a strict watch lest any attempt should be made to put poison in the Infant's food. The cook laid his hand on the gospel and swore that he would suffer no such foul play. Then Muntaner took his leave and went back, the richer for many costly gifts which the generous Duke had bestowed upon him. The chronicler of so many adventures has left a bright picture of the court of Athens under the "good Duke", thronged with brilliant knights who sought their wives from the noblest families of France, and preserved in the land of their adoption the purity of their western blood, though we may be disposed to regard as somewhat exaggerated his affirmation that as good French was spoken in Greece as in France.

Muntaner returned to Negripont and rejoined Quirini. They sailed by Monemvasia and Cape Malea to Coron and the island of Sapienza, where they fell in with four galleys under the command of En Riambault d'Esfar, an Aragonese in the service of King Frederick, and proceeded in company with these to Modon and Clarenza, where Muntaner parted from the Venetians and took passage with his countryman for Corfu and Messina. He delivered his1 letters to Frederick, who at once sent news of the Infant's imprisonment to the Kings of Majorca and Aragon. Before long, however, Ferdinand was conveyed to Naples where the Queen, his sister, made the remainder of his captivity easy, until the King of France and Charles of Valois ordered his restoration to liberty.

Guiot's half-sister, Jeanette de Brienne, had now reached a marriageable age. The Empress Irene of Montferrat had already made advances in Athens with a view to securing her hand for her son Theodore, but as the proposal was bound up with a scheme for depriving Guiot's ward Johannes Angelus of his Thessalian territories, which were to be transferred to the young Marquis, the plan was necessarily repudiated by the chivalrous Duke. The ambitious Roccaforte now conceived the idea of taking his place and thus establishing a claim, which the support of his Catalans would enable him to make good, to the eventual reversion of the duchy. Thessaly was already menaced by the Catalan invasion, and Athens, as soon as the last of the de la Roches had succumbed, seemed also destined to become their prey. Enfeebled by the progress of his disease, Guiot appears to have yielded to the inevitable, hoping secretly perhaps nevertheless that the Venetians, who saw their supremacy in Euboea threatened by a Lombard and Catalan combination, might not be unsuccessful in delaying the match. There was a brief revival of hope that his malady might after all not prove fatal, when Athanasius, the patriarch of Alexandria, a practical physician and militant ecclesiastic, who had been ordered to leave Constantinople and, being threatened on his passage from Euboea by the fanaticism of the Minorites, took refuge in Thebes, offered the dying Duke a sovereign specific in lieu of a ransom in gold. But neither his skill nor his piety availed, and on the 5th of October 1308, the last of the de la Roche dukes died, and was buried on the following day in the Cistercian monastery at Daphni, on the old sacred road to Eleusis. This fact, which is recorded in a

document certifying his death, drawn up for William of Hainault, and signed by the archbishop of Athens and others, warrants the conjecture that he had been carried out on a last pilgrimage to die in the cloistered-peace of that refuge from the world, which had been endowed by his ancestors and was used as the mausoleum of his house. There the traveller may still see engraved on a marble sarcophagus in the vestibule a shield emblazoned with the lilies of France.

By his will he had designated his friend Bonifazio da Verona to act as vicar, until his successor should arrive to claim the duchy. The nearest male of kin was his cousin and stepbrother Gautier, the son of his aunt Isabella de la Roche and her second husband Hugues de Brienne, and he had apparently been already recognised as the heir. According to the Aragonese chronicle, where the story as told is rather more suggestive of romance than history, the succession was disputed. It is there related that Gautier arrived in due course with letters from Philip of Tarentum to the bailie of Morea, in which office Guy had been replaced by Bertino Visconti, instructing him to examine the validity of his claims and to invest him if they proved well founded, Another claimant, however, appeared before the bailie in Eschiva, the daughter of Alix de la Roche who had married Jean d'Ibelin, lord of Beyrout. Her claim was based upon her mother's primogeniture. Isabella was the third daughter, and the only son of Catherine de Lagonessa, the second sister, was already dead. The feudal court, sitting in the church of St. Francis at Clarenza, gave judgment on grounds of expediency in favour of Gautier, considering that as a powerful noble he would better serve the cause of the Franks in Romania than a lady and a widow. Thereupon the lady of Beyrout, kneeling down before the high altar of the church, prayed in the hearing of all that if her cousin, the Count of Brienne, had justice on his side in assuming the inheritance, his heirs might have and hold it after him, but that if the duchy was not justly his, he might die an evil death within the year, and that his sons might never succeed him. Having commended the judges of the feudal council with a similar alternative benediction and imprecation to the judgment of heaven, she re-embarked in her galley and returned to her Syrian home. The collateral branch of the de la Roches of Veligosti and Damala, a representative of which was still alive when Gautier came to Athens, does not appear to have advanced any claim to the duchy.

The child-widow of Duke Guy continued to reside at Thebes, and, barely six months after her husband's death, Philip of Tarentum, who claimed the title to dispose of her hand and desired to associate with his own family the hereditary rights of the heiress of the Villehardouins, negotiated for her solemn betrothal to his eldest son Charles, who was only eleven years of age. The ceremony, which took place at Thebes , in April 1309, was solemnised by the archbishop of Athens in the presence of a brilliant gathering of vassals including Bertino Visconti, Nicholas de St. Omer, Thomas of Salona, Bonifazio of Verona, Antoine and Jean le Flamenc, and Rainaud de la Roche of Damala.

Gautier, who arrived in the summer of the same year from Brienne, was now in the prime of his manhood. He had won his spurs in the wars of Anjou and Aragon, and had succeeded his father as Count of Lecce in 1396. According to Muntaner he had been confined in his youth, as a hostage for his father, in the castle of Agosta in Sicily. According to other authorities he was made a prisoner after his father's death, and only regained his liberty with the peace of Calabelotta. In any case he had during a long detention in Sicily become acquainted with the Catalan mercenaries, had learned their language and gained their goodwill. In 1306 he had married Jeanne de Chatillon, daughter of the constable

Gaucher de St. Pol-Percien and great-granddaughter of the illustrious Villehardouin, marshal of Champagne and historian of the fourth crusade. In spite of the double link which connected him with the fortunes of Romania, he came as a stranger to Greece, and the Thessalian archons were by no means disposed to continue under his tutelage.

The situation in Thessaly was menacing for the security of Athens and demanded immediate attention. For many years past the Dukes and the Sebastocrator had maintained relations of loyal alliance, and during the long guardianship exercised by Guiot over the infant Johannes Dukas II, Great Viachia, adminis-tered by his agents and vassals on a Frankish system, had become practically a province of the duchy, a condition which to some extent explains, if it cannot excuse, the project for the dispossession of the lawful heir, put forward by the Empress Irene, in favour of her son Theodore and Jeanette de Brienne. After the death of Guiot Johannes Dukas, supported by the archons, who regarded with suspicion the advent of an intruder from France, declared himself somewhat prematurely of age, and the Emperor Andronicus, eager to re-establish his influence over another unredeemed province of the empire, endeavoured to draw the young ruler away from the Frankish connection, by bestowing the hand of his natural daughter upon him in marriage. The reconciliation of the Sebastocrator with the Emperor and his zealous ally, the Despina Anna of Epirus, brought the influence of Byzantium up the borders of Frankish Romania, and imperial troops concentrated in southern Thessaly to bar the way to Gautier in case he should endeavour to reassume the administration. He at once opened negotiations with the leaderless Catalans, to the disgust of the Venetians who, equally mistrusting the intrigues of the Lombards, had commanded their governors and administrators, under pain of imprisonment, not to enter into any relations with the bandit army. Arrangements for a six months' contract in the service of Athens were negotiated with the company which, though now composed of many heterogeneous elements, was at least 7000 strong, through the agency of Roger Deslaur, a knight of Rousillon. After paying them for two months in advance, Gautier took the field at the head of his redoubtable mercenaries, who readily followed a leader whom their veterans had learned to know in Sicily. Thus supported, in a very short time he expelled the Byzantine garrisons from Phthiotis, forcing the Emperor and the Despina to make peace. According to Muntaner he then permanently engaged in his service 200 Catalan horsemen and 300 Almogavars, to whom he paid the stipulated salaries for the full six months and assigned lands in fee, while he repudiated his obligations to the rest of the company for the other four months of their contract, peremptorily ordering them with threats to evacuate the duchy. Vowing vengeance they withdrew to Thessaly. Such was, no doubt, the version which Muntaner obtained from his old comrades in arms. But it is in the first place improbable that Gautier, himself still almost a stranger to the Franks of Greece, would have deliberately incurred the hostility of such formidable enemies by an unwarrantable breach of contract, nor would he at once after the close of their Thessalian campaign have been in a position to defy a resolute host of some 7000 men, united by a common sense of outrage. We are assisted in supplementing Muntaner's information by the Greek chronicle and the later Aragonese compilation, which would scarcely err in misrepresenting the case for the Catalans. From the latter source we learn that the company declined to give up the custody of the strong castles they had occupied in Thessaly, as they were by con-vention bound to do, while the former corroborates this information indirectly by attributing the dispute to their seizure of Thaumakia. These strong places they requested to be allowed to retain as fiefs of the Duke. But Gautier, realising, as Andronicus had had reason to do, that the presence of these turbulent raiders in the border castles would prove an intolerable

burden to his subjects, refused to entertain the proposal. Until this question was settled it would seem that the payment of arrears was withheld, Gautier on his side refusing to discharge his liabilities until the surrender of the castles was completed; the Catalans, on the other hand, making his refusal to pay a pretext for remaining in possession. Thus an embittered feud arose between the old allies, and the winter of 1310-11 was spent in preparations for an inevitable campaign in the spring.

The suppression of the Catalan adventurers was a matter of common interest to the Franks of Romania, and it is probable that many of the Moreotes rallied round the banner of Gautier de Brienne, whom a certain number moreover regarded as the legitimate representative of their old line of princes. Among his own vassals, Thomas of Salona, the Flamencs of Carditza, Rainaid de la Roche, and the lords of Euboea, Giorgio Ghisi, Alberto Pallavicini, and Bonifazio da Verona, brought their contingents. Jean de Noyers was with the Duke at Zeitoun five days before the battle, and was therefore probably present. So also, as appears from records in the archives of Venice, was Nicholas Sanudo, a son of the Duke of Naxos, with his following, but neither of these two are mentioned by Muntaner as survivors, though they are known to have lived for many years afterwards. Nicholas de St. Omer was not among the vassals who responded to the call, though Thebes was directly menaced, and it must either be assumed that he was still at feud with the Duke, as has been sug-gested earlier in this chapter, or that the date assigned for his death in the table appended to the French chronicle is erroneous, and that he had ceased to live before the Armageddon of the Frankish chivalry, from which it is otherwise difficult to account for his absence.

In all 700 knights had joined the finest fighting force which the Franks of Romania had ever mustered, numbering some 8000 foot and 6000 horse. The Catalans, whose army included a number of expert bowmen, perhaps Comans or Alans, taken as prisoners of war and eventually affiliated to the company, could put 3500 cavalry and 4000 infantry in the field. A good many Thessalians had joined them for the campaign against the Duke, and their Turkish allies accompanied them, though not without misgivings. They had also been rejoined by the 500 men, who had taken service with Gautier, but now refused to fight against their former comrades.

From Thebes Gautier marched north towards the Thessalian frontier. Five days before the battle he was at Zeitoun, where he hoped to arrest the advance of the Catalans from Phthiotis into Boeotia, whether they selected the eastern passage at Thermopylae, or the inland passes further west. Here he drew up a will witnessed by Bonifazio da Verona, Gille de la Planche, and Jean de Noyers, in which he appointed his wife guardian of his son Gautier and his daughter Isabella, made liberal bequests to the church of our Lady in the Parthenon, and directed that if he fell in battle his body should be interred at Daphni, in the mausoleum of the de la Roches. The enemy mean-while had not waited to be attacked and had already slipped round his flank and entered the territories of the duchy. Striking the Boeotian Cephissus, they probably crossed the five-arched bridge of Frankish construction over that river which may still be seen, and took up a position on the right bank in the wide plain, stretching eastward from Livadhia to the river, which in winter and spring overflowed its banks and converted the lowlands into the marshy lake of Copais. The Copais, which in Strabo's time covered a considerable area of the fertile plain, was apparently under the Frankish rulers much reduced by careful attention to drainage works and embanking. Within recent times its marshes in the winter season spread over a great

superficial area, and as the overflow gradually found an escape through subterraneous passages, the population from the surrounding hills followed up the receding waters to sow in the rich flood-lands. Now by scientific canal-cutting and tunnelling the surplus water is carried off to the sea, and the condition of the Copais has been largely modified. The Catalans, selecting a position where they were protected to the north and the east by the Cephissus and the lake, perhaps opposite the modern Skripu and the site of the ancient Orchomenos, availed themselves of the few days' grace before they could be overtaken to make their camp unassailable. In the middle of March the plain was covered with a luxuriant crop of growing corn, already high enough to conceal the nature of the ground. They opened the irrigation channels and cut the dykes, letting the waters of the river inundate the plain and thus making it quite impracticable for the movements of cavalry. Entrenched as it were on an island between the spongy soil of the flooded cornlands and the river itself, they calmly awaited the attack of the enemy. As the Franks approached, the Turks, who had so long made common cause with the Catalans, adopted a neutral attitude and withdrew to a certain distance. They suspected, it seems, that they had been led into a trap, and that the two western armies intended at the last moment to combine and exterminate them.

Gautier, on learning that the Catalans had marched south in the direction of Thebes, followed in hot pursuit, and on the morning of Monday, the 15th of March 1311, the united chivalry of Romania stood face to face with the bandit army, in a land where both were aliens. As the Duke reviewed his host and proudly saluted his seven hundred knights with their golden spurs, the thought may well have crossed his mind that, once he had broken the formidable and devastating organisation of the Catalans, there was little to prevent his carrying his banner, with the lion of Brienne set in its field of blue, across Thessaly and Macedonia, up to the very gates of Constantinople, and himself realising the scheme for which the house of Anjou had so long toiled in vain. Beyond the green expanse the Almogavars stood their ground imperturbably. Surveying the plain which seemed ideally suited for the evolutions of cavalry, and impatient to decide the issue, Gautier placed himself at the head of the armoured knights, and shouting the battle-cry of his house, led an impetuous charge over the intervening space into the treacherous morass which the enemy had deliberately prepared. There, as the vanguard struggled for a foothold or sank deep in the clogging mud, the fierce onslaught was suddenly checked, and the mailed squadrons following close behind were borne on into the helpless mass of men and horses. Some of these rolled over on the slippery ground never to rise again. Some shed their heavily armoured riders, and floundering back to the firm soil, stampeded through the host of foot-men. Others, encumbered by their harness, sank up to their girths, and stood still bearing their riders immovable as statues in the quagmire. The Catalan archers meantime poured in a deadly fire of bolts and arrows on the arrested mass. The Turks, seeing how the battle was going, rejoined the Almogavars who, advancing by the narrow stone causeways which they had carefully marked, mowed down the broken ranks with mace and battle-axe. The Duke himself was among the first to fall, and the golden lion of Brienne went down in the fatal morass. The foot-soldiers, seeing the annihilation of the strongest arm, and realising that the day was irretrievably lost, broke and streamed back in panic flight to Thebes'. According to Muntaner, out of that splendid band of seven hundred knights only two escaped inevitable death, Bonifazio da Verona, who had probably been an un-willing participator in the battle, and Roger Deslaur, who had acted as agent for the Duke in negotiations with the Catalans. Their lives were spared on account of their personal popularity with the conquerors. But Muntaner's account is evidently

exaggerated. The Aragonese chronicle is nearer the mark in simply stating that many were killed or made prisoners. At the same time, with the exception of Jean de Noyers and Nicholas Sanudo, who was wounded in the head and the hand, none of the more prominent barons reappear in subsequent records. Thomas de Stromoncourt of Salona, the last of his house, Alberto Pallavicini of Bodonitza, Giorgio Ghisi, and apparently also Rainaid de la Roche fell round their leader, whose head was cut off, fixed on a lance, and carried in triumph through the Catalan camp. Thus in one fatal day the historical chivalry of Romania was practically annihilated, and the power of the Franks, which rested on the prestige of their swords, was strangled in the marshes of the Cephissus. Thus the duchy of Athens, the bulwark of western civilisation on the threshold of the east, after a hundred years of able administration and great material prosperity, fell into the hands of a horde of Spanish adven-turers, who have handed down the terror of a name, still proverbial as a stigma of reproach in a land not wanting in bitter memories.

Of the reign of panic and the confusion which followed their overwhelming victory but few details have come down to us. Livadia compounded with the conquerors and secured favourable conditions. Thebes appears to have surrendered without resistance, and the widow of Gautier, who had at first taken refuge in Athens, realising now that all was lost, although the strong castles of Argos and Navplia were still held for her, fled with her two children to Achaia and thence to France. The populations of the towns found an asylum in Euboea, where the seaboard was protected by a chain of strong castles, and a fleet in observation was maintained by the Venetians. The company determined to settle down in the pleasant land of Attica which they had so easily acquired and, abandoning their life as wandering buccaneers, to establish themselves as a body politic. But the republican organisation by which they had, since the withdrawal of Sipoys, been governed in a rough and ready manner, had neither administrative experience nor constructive capacity, and, in order to conciliate in some measure the local populations and obtain the recognition of other states, it appeared to them advisable to adopt a form of government similar to that which they had found in existence. The occasion called for a single and a powerful arm. But there were no longer any leaders of pre-eminent influence among their own ranks and, realising the complications which their future relations with Euboea might entail, they endeavoured to solve the double difficulty by offering the leadership to the most powerful personality in that island, Bonifazio da Verona. The offer, which was rich in possibilities, was a tempting one to an ambitious man, but Bonifazio declined to acquire the throne of his former friend and benefactor at the bloodstained hands of the Catalans, and they therefore invited Roger Deslaur, their other prisoner, to become the provisional governor of the duchy. He accepted the nomination, and until the end of 1312 presided over the exactions of a military caste which, appropriating not only the fiefs but also the wives of the fallen Frankish nobles, substituted a rule of organised oppression for the mild government of the de la Roches, under which Attica, prosperous and envied, had acquired in degenerate days a prestige which was her appropriate inheritance. To Roger himself fell the richest prize of all, the widow of the last Stromoncourt, who had left no child, and with her he obtained the ample barony of Salona. Their Turkish allies, whom the company, numerically inadequate to the task of colonising the conquered country, wished to establish as feudatories on the land, declined the offer and withdrew with the rich booty they had collected. A portion of them found employment in Servia. The rest determined to rejoin their kinsmen in Anatolia, and marched north through Macedonia and Thrace. Ten Genoese galleys, which were really in the ser-vice of the Emperor, contracted to carry them across the Dardanelles. Having received every assurance of loyalty from the captains,

confirmed by the most solemn oaths, the Turks went on board and piled their arms. The seamen then fell upon them and a general massacre ensued. Those who surrendered were sold as slaves in Naples and Genoa. A certain number who had remained at Gallipoli were annihilated by the imperial troops.

The appointment of Roger Deslaur as provisional president of a military republic did not, however, solve the real difficulties with which the Catalans were con-fronted. Surrounded by enemies, and menaced by a combination of the western powers in response to the appeal of Gautier's widow, they realised the necessity of securing the countenance of a powerful prince and turned once more to Frederick as their natural protector, offering him allegiance and recognition as their sovereign lord. By a compact formally concluded between that Prince and the "Fortunate Host of the Franks in Romania," the duchy of Athens was annexed to Sicily, and became the appanage of his second son. As, however, the young Manfred was only five years old, Frederick appointed En Berengar d'Estanol vice-regent. To him now fell the difficult task of evolving a form of political organisation from the prevailing anarchy, and during an administration of four years he accomplished not a little. Some prospect of stable order was guaranteed by a confirma-tion of the partition of fiefs which the conquerors had made among themselves, though the sovereign retained the revenues of the two principal cities and of the ducal domains. This assimilation of the old feudal relations established an essential link between the chief of the state and the company which, under the executive administration of the vice-regent, continued its corporate existence as a republican organisation, holding parliaments and affixing its seal alongside that of the Duke to public documents. The offices of state, to which the sovereign made nomination, and the direction of municipal government were retained by the Catalans for themselves exclusively and, while they adopted some of the ordinances of their predecessors, such as the prohibition of intermarriage between Franks and Greeks, unless the latter had obtained the Frank-right, the usages of Barcelona became the foundation of the local law. Their whole political system was based solely on consideration for the advantage of the conqueror, and the native population which, under the mild rule of the Frankish princes, had enjoyed a privileged position as compared with the majority of their neighbours, were now reduced to a condition of abject serfdom.

CHAPTER XII

FERDINAND OF ARAGON AND LOUIS OF BURGUNDY— MAHAULTE OF HAINAULT—JOHN OF GRAVINA—THE CATALANS IN ATHENS

The tragic story of the last princesses of the house of Villehardouin, the victims of Angevine megalomania, closes with a singular pathos the secular record of that spirited race. In the same year in which the chivalry of Athens succumbed to the maces and battle-axes of the Catalans in the marshes of the Cephissus, Isabella Villehardouin had died in the Low Countries. Mahaulte of Hainault about the same time found her way to France, where she became a pawn in the game of dynastic alliances played with consummate skill by Philip of Tarentum. The last representatives in Greece of the Achaian dynasts were her aunt, Margaret of Matagriffon, widow of Isnard de Sabran and of Count Richard of Cephalonia, and the daughter of her first husband, whom she had named Isabella after her own sister. Another daughter by her second husband appears to have died in infancy.

The feud between Margaret and her stepson, Count John, remained irreconcilable, in spite of the temporary pacification effected by Philip of Savoy. So long as Nicholas de St. Omer lived, her neighbour in his new castle on the slopes of Mavrovouni, she had a strong protector against the aggression of her Cephalonian kinsfolk who, as the great barons disappeared, became the dominant element in the Morea. They had drawn into their camp the few remaining men of influence, such as the bishop of Olenos, the chief ecclesiastical authority after the archbishop of Patras, who had now assumed a semi-independent position, and Nicholas Lenoir of St. Sauveur and Arkadia, who seems to have acted as bailie for Mahaulte and Louis of Burgundy, when they acquired the princely title. But St. Omer, who after his last appearance in Thebes to witness the formal engagement of Mahaulte to Charles of Tarentum mysteriously passes out of the story, died according to the chronological table of the French chronicle in January 1313, and Margaret was left alone with her implacable enemy. She had herself never recognised the intrigue by which her sister had been dispossessed of their father's inheritance, nor was she more disposed to admit the juggling by which the principality had been transferred to the house of Burgundy, subject only to the life-interest of her niece, who was not entitled to consent to any such disposal of Achaia so long as there were still princesses of the old stock living. Muntaner asserts that her own claims had been clearly defined in her father's will. It was, however, the oppression of the Cephalonian faction in the first instance which compelled her to seek for a new protector, and it may be conjectured that the recent successes of the Catalans were not without influence in guiding her selection. The Infant Ferdinand of Majorca, after his release from captivity in Athens and Naples, where the Queen, his sister, treated him rather as a guest than as a prisoner, had returned to his father's court, and had greatly distinguished himself at the siege of Almeria in the war with the Moors. When,

after his father's death, hostilities once more broke out between Naples and Sicily, he offered his sword to his uncle Frederick, who received him with joy, and assigned to him the domain of Catania. Margaret now sent an envoy to Frederick, and offered the hand of her daughter, with all that it entailed, to his nephew, the chivalrous Prince of many adventures, who, as the younger son of a minor sovereign, had no very brilliant prospects. The King at once invited the lady of Matagriffon and her daughter to Messina, whither they proceeded with a regal train of ladies, knights, and esquires. Isabella de Sabran must have been at this time about sixteen years of age, and was, to quote Muntaner, "the most exquisite creature on earth that a man's two eyes could behold, so white and rosy and well shapen, and as quick for her years as ever young lady in this world was." Ferdinand had no sooner set eyes on her than he declared he would have no other, and each day seemed to him as long as a year, until he should be wedded.

The contract was signed at Messina in February 1314, and the marriage itself took place immediately afterwards. By this instrument Margaret undertook, under penalty of a heavy fine for breach of contract, to hand over to her son-in-law, not later than the following September, the barony of Matagriffon and all other lands which she possessed or might enter into possession of, with some small personal reservations. She also transferred to him such title as she could claim to the principality, or at any rate to a fifth part of it.1 Furthermore, she made over to Ferdinand various unrealised obligations, a debt of 28,000 hyperpers due from her sisters heirs, and 100,000 hyperpers owed her by her stepson,—together with her claim to Calamata and a portion of Clarenza. She agreed to provide her daughter with a dowry of 40,000 hyperpers, 17,000 immediately and the remainder in the following September.

The bride and bridegroom, passionately in love with each other, withdrew after the wedding festivities to Catania. Margaret remained four months longer in Sicily, and returned to the Morea in the early summer. The now omnipotent triumvirate, John of Cephalonia, Nicholas Lenoir, and the bishop of Olenos met her with an ominous greeting: "You have dared to give your daughter to the Catalans. Ill shall betide you, and all that you possess be taken from you". Her estates had been sequestrated in her absence, and the unfortunate Princess herself was made a prisoner. Ferdinand's intervention had no effect, and he began to muster volunteers for an expedition to occupy the principality and obtain his mother-in-law's release, while Frederick, who gave him every assistance, endeavoured to secure the neutrality of Venice. Among those who volunteered for service was his faithful follower in old days with the Catalan company, Ramon Muntaner, who had for the last seven years been acting as governor of the island of Jerba in the gulf of Gabes, whence he came with Frederick's full authority to Sicily, as soon as he heard that the Prince to whom he was so fondly attached was once more about to take the field in Romania.

Arriving in the spring of 1315, Muntaner found the Infanta Isabel about to become a mother, and at Ferdinand's request he proceeded to Messina to await his orders. On the 15th of April a boy was born, the Infant James, who afterwards succeeded his uncle Sancio as King of Majorca. Meanwhile Margaret Villehardouin had died, her stepson's prisoner, but the bad news had been purposely withheld from her daughter. No sooner did the Infanta's health warrant his departure than Ferdinand hastened to Messina to make preparations for the expedition, on which his wife was to accompany him as soon as her recovery was complete. He instructed Muntaner to see King Frederick and resign his post at Jerba, after which he would receive further instructions. It may be that the news of her

mother's death was now prematurely broken to the Infanta Isabel, and came with too great a shock immediately after her husband's departure, for suddenly her condition gave rise to anxiety, and couriers were despatched to summon him back to her side. Ferdinand took horse without a moment's delay and rode through the night to his young wife's sick-bed. On his return she rallied for a while, but some premonition of impending doom had already prompted her to make a will, by which she bequeathed the barony of Matagriffon and her claims in Achaia to the Infant En Jacme. His devotion and despair were of no avail, and just two-and-thirty days after the birth of her son, the young Princess, whose ephemeral love-story brightens a grim page of sullen memories, died in the arms of her broken-hearted husband. Never was such grief witnessed, wrote the hardened veteran of twenty years' campaigning, as when they bore her to her grave beside the shrine, where lies the body of the blessed virgin Agatha, in the church dedicated to her memory.

Ferdinand sought distraction from his grief in the expedition to Morea, on which he started at the end of June. Just before he embarked he addressed Muntaner, who had placed all his property at the disposal of the Infant, in the presence of his assembled followers. No man, he said, owed greater obligations to another than himself to Muntaner. Then, rehearsing all that the latter had done for him in times past and present, he announced that he was about to require of him another and a yet greater service. The old soldier kissed the Infant's hand, and pledged himself while life remained to fall short in no duty entrusted to him. So Ferdinand bade him take charge of his infant son, En Jacme, carry him with every precaution for his safety to Catalonia and deliver him into the hands of his mother, the Queen-dowager of Majorca. When this task was accomplished, he was to return to his own country and enlist all the horsemen and footmen he could engage for Morea. King Sancio would provide him with money, and he himself would be bond for his agent's word, and would execute whatever he promised or undertook.

The genial personality of the veteran adventurer, who was called upon to perform this unusual service, and his qualities of heart, uncommon in that stern age, justify a brief digression to follow his wanderings from Sicily to the Spanish coast. His first care, after chartering a stout Barcelona ship for the voyage, was to secure the services of a god-fearing lady of good family, belonging to the household of Berengar de Sarria, who could hardly fail, as the mother of two-and-twenty children, to be a qualified expert in the management of babies. In addition to the official wet-nurse, Muntaner with remarkable forethought provided two others to be held in reserve, who were shipped on board together with their infants. He enrolled a hundred and twenty men-at-arms as a guard and, as soon as he heard of Ferdinand's successful landing in Achaia, proceeded to Catania to fetch his precious charge, whose identity he was careful to establish by sworn testimony. Thence he set sail on the 1st of August. At Trapani news was received that four Neapolitan galleys were on the watch to intercept them, and that it was intended to capture the child and hold him as a hostage for the restitution of Clarenza. The vessel remained for three weeks in Malta, where twenty Genoese and Catalan barks joined company. Then sailing west together they encountered a terrible storm, in which seven of their number were lost. All the women travellers were incapacitated by sickness, and day and night while the tempest blew Muntaner held the child in his own arms. It was not till All Saints' day that they made the Spanish coast at Salou, having been ninety-one days on board, during which time he had never left the ship. A few days later they reached Barcelona, where the King of Aragon then was. November proved wet and stormy, and Muntaner therefore had a litter constructed with a rainproof covering, in which both nurse and child were carried by relays

of twenty men, on their shoulders, across the French border four-and-twenty days' march to Perpignan, where the Queen-mother was residing. Muntaner himself bore his charge, dressed in a miniature Catalan mantle, embroidered with gold, into the presence of the saintly Esclarmonde de Foix and her daughter-in-law, and having duly proved the identity of En Jacme by the testimony of witnesses and docu-ments, after receiving full discharge and acknowledgment of the accomplishment of his task, placed the infant in the arms of his fond grandmother. A fortnight later he made his way to his home in Valencia, where he began at once to enlist troops, having received messages from Ferdinand urging expedition. Then counter-orders came. Men were to be collected in Majorca. But before anything practical had been accomplished, the gallant Prince had met his predestined fate, and there was no longer any need for reinforcements.

On sighting Clarenza, Ferdinand brought his transports to shore some two miles from the port. A body of two hundred horsemen issued from the gates to dispute his landing, but were kept at a distance by the crossbowmen, until fifty Catalan troopers had disembarked with their horses. Then charging with the Infant at their head they threw the Moreotes into disorder and pursued them into the town, where Ferdinand was acclaimed by the burgesses. Clairmont forthwith surrendered, as did Beauvoir after a short resistance, and the other castles opened their gates. The Infant ordered public proclamation to be made of the terms of Villehardouin's will, in which, according to Muntaner, there stood a clause providing in certain eventualities for the succession of his daughter Margaret. Her rights were now, he claimed, vested in his son, in whose name he took over the government of Achaia. The Count of Cephalonia, Nicholas Lenoir of Arkadia, and the bishop of Olenos received a gracious pardon after doing obeisance, and recognised him as sovereign lord. It was not long, how-ever, before they opened communications privily with his enemies, and the bishop, whose treachery was detected, was made a prisoner, his property to an amount of 40,000 hyperpers being sequestrated. Still inconsolable for the loss of his wife, but realising the necessity of a young mother's care for the future Prince of Achaia, where his tenure now seemed fairly established, he sent envoys to Cyprus to ask the King for the hand of his cousin, Isabel d'lbelin, daughter of the Count of Joppa, whose beauty, youth, and name would all remind him of his first Princess. Towards the end of the year the fifteen-year-old bride was escorted to Clarenza, where the marriage was celebrated. And so for the best part of a year he remained in undisputed possession of Frankish Romania.

Although the arrangement by which Philip of Tarentum had transferred Achaia to Mahaulte and Louis of Burgundy had been concluded in the summer of 1313, it was not till nearly three years afterwards that they made any attempt to take possession of the principality. Ferdinand's descent on Clarenza and his recognition as de facto Prince made it imperative to lose no further time. In October 1315 Louis left France with his reluctant bride. Mahaulte had spent many years of her early life in intimate relations with her aunt, and it cannot have been in any cheerful mood that she left France to dispute the possession of Morea with Margaret's son-in-law, and secure it for the house of Burgundy. Negotiations with Venice for transport had been in progress since the month of March. On his arrival there Louis made his will, giving the customary directions for the disposal of his body, which was to be entrusted to the Cistercian order for burial, whether he died in Greece or in France. If he died childless, the Duke of Burgundy was to inherit both his French estates and the principality, with due reservation of Mahaulte's life-interest. If he had more than one child, the eldest was to succeed him in Achaia, and the younger children

were to receive portions from his possessions in France. From the names of the witnesses to this document it appears that Hugues Pioche, lord of Montlahin, had been appointed marshal of Morea. His departure was still delayed for some months and he applied for and obtained corn, ships, and reinforcements from Apulia, while Ferdinand, whose available forces were quite insufficient to hold the principality, sent urgent messages to Majorca and Catalonia to press on the enlistment of troops.

At length in April 1316 Louis and Mahaulte landed at Patras, which was now practically outside the confines of Achaia, and advanced on Clarenza, where Ferdinand had made his capital. Regardless of their pledges, the Moreote nobles at once went over to the side of Isabella's daughter, and Louis was also joined by Nicholas Sanudo, one of the few survivors of the battle of the Cephissus, who was no doubt summoned as a vassal of Achaia. The leaders appear to have entered into negotiations with Ferdinand's own personal adherents, and to have been successful in shaking the fidelity of Andrea Guitier, the captain of the Almogavars in Clarenza. As yet no reinforcements had appeared on the scene, and it was with a very inadequate following of doubtful loyalty and divided counsels that the Infant, on the 3rd of July 1316, marched to meet Louis. On the following day, a Sunday, at a place called Espero, he had sight of the enemy and bivouacked in a wood within bowshot range of their archers. The next morning, the 5th, the Burgundians broke up their camp and continued their march on Clarenza. It would have been a more prudent policy to have suffered them to exhaust their strength in an attack on a fortified town, and to have awaited the arrival of the levies from Majorca. But when two of the Catalan captains, des Fonts and William Den, in reporting the advance at the same time counselled an attack on the rearguard, the high-spirited Ferdinand was incapable of declining an invitation to battle. So he ordered his lines and prepared to attack. At the sight of the enemy's numbers his followers began to waver, but they had gone too far to draw back. It was the contingent of the Count of Cephalonia, his arch-enemy, which the Infant thus engaged. In the first onslaught his standard-bearer and a few of the Moreote knights, who had remained faithful to his cause, were struck down, whereupon, with a unanimity which suggested treachery, the rest of his force turned and fled, leaving the Prince alone with William des Fonts, Adhemar de Mosset, who was the principal witness regarding the manner of his death, and two esquires. These urged him, while a line of retreat was still open, to fly to Clairmont, but he chivalrously refused to leave the field and faced his inevitable doom, while the others saved themselves by flight. In a moment he was surrounded, overpowered, and brutally decapitated on the field, apparently by the order of Count John, who thus wreaked his vengeance on the gallant Prince who had taken up the gauntlet on behalf of the hapless Margaret Villehardouin. "What a loss his death was", wrote Ramon Muntaner, "I can find no words to express, for he was the bravest and most enterprising cavalier of all princes then in the world, the most just and the most capable. His body was brought to Perpignan. And well it was for his mother the queen that she never knew his fate, for God had already summoned her to His presence, of whom we may well say that she is now a saint in Paradise, for in this world was never Christian lady so god-fearing, so free from pride and pure of heart."

When the head of Ferdinand fixed on a spear was publicly paraded, as evidence of his death before the gates of Clarenza, Andrea Guitier agreed at once to an armistice, and messengers were sent to Mosset and des Fonts, who had escaped to Beauvoir, and to Den at Estamirra, with an invitation to come in and discuss conditions of peace. Guitier imposed upon the Almogavars by ostensibly proclaiming the Infant James Prince of

Achaia, while he continued to negotiate secretly with the Burgundians. William Den protested against any composition with the enemy, and a considerable body of the Spanish troops supported his proposal to hold out in the fortress until assistance from Majorca enabled them to take the offensive. Guitier, however, urged that supplies had run short, and that he was without pay for his soldiers, both of which pretexts were afterwards found to be false. He also produced a pretended will of Ferdinand's purporting to direct that, in the event of his falling, the principality should be surrendered to Mahaulte. Louis offered to take over the houses occupied by the Catalans at Clarenza at an adequate valuation and to pay compensation for the redemption of Isabella d'Ibelin's marriage portion. So at length it was agreed that all the castles should be surrendered, and in the meantime Ferdinand's treasury, which was by no means empty, was ruthlessly plundered. The negotiation had scarcely been concluded when Berengar de Ulmis appeared off Clarenza with re-inforcements. The traitors closed the gates and, announcing that peace had been signed, contemplated effecting the disarmament of his men by leading them into a trap, when a section of the Almogavars, who were dissatisfied with the surrender, informed them of the real state of things and, while the beard of Adhemar de Mosset was seen to quiver as his teeth chattered with fear, they threw open the gates inviting the new-comers to join in resistance to the Burgundians. But their food had been exhausted on the journey, and Guitier, still withholding supplies, called in the Count of Cephalonia to overawe them. They abandoned any further idea of resistance, and all the Catalans, with the exception of one or two who married and settled down there, withdrew in a sorry enough plight from the Morea. The leaders were subsequently called to account in Majorca for their conduct. Ferdinand's young widow was sent back to Cyprus, where before long she became the mother of a son, who received the name of his famous father. She afterwards married a cousin, the Count of Joppa, and so passes out of this history.

The triumph of Louis was short-lived, for less than a month after Ferdinand's dramatic end he followed him to the grave, the victim, according to the popular voice, of poison administered by John of Cephalonia, who now overshadowed all other personalities in Achaia. In the ensuing year he also ended his ungracious life, and his son Nicholas, who succeeded him, paid but little attention to the affairs of the Morea, having more important ambitions to satisfy in Epirus, where, after assassinating his uncle, the Despot Thomas Angelos, he took possession both of his widow and of his throne, only to fall himself five years later in 1323, murdered in turn by his own brother John.

An attempt now made by the King of Aragon to negotiate a compromise by which Frederick should take over both Albania and Achaia in exchange for his kingdom of Sicily, encountered strong opposition from the French Pope at Avignon, who was interested in upholding the Burgundian claim, and Mahaulte, for the second time a widow at the age of twenty-three, was suffered to reign in an anarchical Morea. An energetic governor at Mistra, Cantacuzenus, whose son was destined before long to wear the imperial purple, was succeeded by Andronicus Palaeologus Asan, son of the ex-King of Bulgaria, who encroached on the defenceless borders of the Frankish state, which the Catalans of the duchy also treated with scanty respect. Their aggressions at the same time in Euboea, which was nominally at any rate under the feudal supremacy of Achaia, led Mahaulte to make representations to the Doge, who was requested to send troops to the island and to warn the Venetian bailie not to make any composition with the Catalans.1 Her embarrassments soon compelled her, however reluctantly, to implore assistance from Naples, and Robert accordingly despatched thither Eustachio Pagano of Nocera as his

rector and captain. He moreover invited Mahaulte to proceed to Italy, having in contemplation a new matrimonial alliance for her with his brother John of Gravina. The support of the Pope at Avignon was enlisted for this scheme, and John XXII undertook to give the necessary dispensation for the marriage. The title of the Burgundians to Achaia, to which it would in any case have been difficult to give practical effect, did not come into question so long as Mahaulte was alive, and might be disposed of later with the assistance of the Pope, who did in fact write to the Duke to persuade him to relinquish his claims. By the marriage of his brother to the Princess who was at the same time the reversionary of Louis and legitimate representative of the Villehardouin title, Robert speculated on still securing the return of the principality to the house of Anjou. The student of this period cannot fail to be struck with the want of finality in the various arrangements devised by the court of Naples for ensuring the ultimate absorption of Achaia. They point to the extreme difficulty in feudal conditions of extirpating the paramount claims of the next-of-kin.

Mahaulte declined to be a party to the scheme, but the formal act of betrothal was drawn up in spite of her opposition. The Pope inquired of the envoys whom she despatched to Avignon whether they knew of any reasonable grounds why the marriage should not take place, and as they had none to advance wrote to her setting forth the advantages of such a union, to which he could not understand her objections. He urged her to consent without delay, unless she had some real and not merely a feigned reason for resistance. On the 29th of March 1318 the Pope again addressed a joint letter to Mahaulte and John, formally releasing them from the impediments to marriage arising from consanguinity, in answer to an alleged request on their part, which probably amounted to no more in Mahaulte's case than a rehearsal of the existing disabilities. A summons to Naples was now conveyed to the Princess by king Robert's admiral in a manner which admitted of no refusal, and on her arrival the question of the marriage was again renewed but without success. Mahaulte then obtained permission to make a pilgrimage to Rome, whence she undertook to return upon its conclusion. But, having learned that she contemplated proceeding to France, Robert sent a mission to arrest her and bring her back to Naples. The formal betrothal had placed her completely in the hands of the Angevines. Such a tie once contracted was a solemn obligation which only the Church could annul. John of Gravina now assumed the title of Prince of Achaia, and appointed a bailie, Federigo Trogisio, who was succeeded in 1321 by Ligorio Guindazzo. These arbitrary proceedings were followed by a convention to which King Robert induced Mahaulte to adhere by an oath, taken, as its terms record, of her own free will, with a penalty for non-observance of 4000 ounces of gold. By this convention Achaia was handed over to the King to govern and administer in accordance with the customs of the principality. The Princess was to nominate a treasurer who would collect the revenues, and meet all the requisitions of the Neapolitan bailie for its defence, providing him also with a personal guard of fifty knights and a hundred sergeants. Her rights to Calamata were recognised. She was to remain in control of the barony, and if the marriage contracted between herself and John of Gravina were duly consummated, the principality itself would then be restored to them conjointly without any question of title. If, on the other hand, the Church released her from her engagement, restitution would also be made for the term of her own life, with due reservation of all the rights of other parties interested. Should, however, the King or his heirs desire to take possession of the principality, they were entitled to do so, on making her adequate compensation, which was to be fixed either by mutual agreement or arbitration. Mahaulte undertook not to alienate Calamata, or any of its appurtenances,

without the consent of the King or his heirs; but she was entitled to hand the barony over, with the servitudes which its possession entailed, to her sister, Margaret of Savoy, provided always that the latter definitely renounced any further rights she might assert to the principality itself, and did homage to the King for Calamata. Should King Robert, however, desire himself to take over Calamata, he should be entitled to do so, on assigning to the Princess fiefs in Italy of an annual value of 500 ounces of gold in compensation, or paying the same sum from his revenues until the fiefs were assigned; and if he should at any time elect to hand over the 500 ounces in land or money to Margaret of Savoy, the Princess would no longer have the right to transfer Calamata to her. In the event of such an arrangement it was to be clearly laid down that the captain and sergeants were to take the oath of fidelity to the King's representative, and undertake not to restore Calamata to the Princess or to Margaret or to anyone else. If before any such transaction Mahaulte were to die, Calamata would pass to Margaret of Savoy, to whom the King would then have to pay the equivalent agreed upon for his entering into possession. Donations and grants made by Mahaulte and Louis were confirmed up to an annual total amount of 500 ounces, and obligations which they had contracted during the war, secured on lands and property, were taken over up to a maximum total of 700 ounces. Also a special grant to the knight Riccardo di Menavia, of estate in the principality valued at twenty-five ounces, made on account of personal services to Mahaulte, was guaranteed by the King.

Although the Princess had no choice but to subscribe to this act of spoliation, she found an opportunity of appealing to Venice for assistance, and she held out firmly against the union with John of Gravina. Venice only referred her to the Pope, who had already exhorted her to validate the marriage. Meanwhile a complication arose which threatened to upset the calculations of the court at Naples. Eudes IV, who in 1315 had succeeded his brother Hugh as Duke of Burgundy, made over his title to the reversion of Achaia and his claims to Thessalonica to Louis of Bourbon, Count of Clermont, for a sum of 40,000 livres. But Philip of Tarentum as overlord of Achaia intervened, and once more displayed his talent for solving political difficulties by dynastic marriages. He arranged for the betrothal of his eldest son to the daughter of Louis of Bourbon, and provided the sum of 40,000 livres which the latter stood pledged to pay to the Duke of Burgundy, thus buying up the claim and leaving Mahaulte once more the only interested party. Time, however, had not worn out her power of passive resistance to the marriage with John of Gravina, and she was now compelled to accompany Robert to Avignon, where the issue was to be finally decided by the Pope. In his presence she at length confessed that the project could never be realised, as she had already contracted a secret marriage with a Burgundian knight, Hugues de la Palisse. This admission was equally if not more advantageous to the Angevines, and she was forthwith declared to have forfeited all title to the principality by marrying without the consent of her overlord. John of Gravina was accordingly once more formally invested with Achaia. Giovanni Villani relates that in September of that year, 1322, while Robert was still at Avignon, a plot against his life was detected, instigated it was supposed by Hugues de la Palisse, because the King refused to recognise his marriage with Mahaulte, and he adds that the Ghibellines of Lombardy and Tuscany were also presumed to be compromised by the conspiracy, the whole truth regarding which remained obscure. The pretext in any case sufficed to decide the fate of Mahaulte, who was conducted back to Naples and imprisoned in the Castello del Ovo. Count William of Hainault in vain strove to effect her release. He gave a procuration to Cardinal Napoleon of S. Adriano and Godfrey, abbot of Vicogne, to treat at Rome for her deliverance, and engage his credit up to an amount of 100,000 livres. But the captive was too valuable. Her

half-sister Margaret, on her marriage in 1324, made over all her rights to her father Philip, and as he already accepted compensation for the surrender of Achaia, he could scarcely be regarded as a claimant to anything but an empty title. The Infant James of Majorca was still a child. There was therefore no one to contest the usurpation of Anjou. In 1331 the tragic life of Mahaulte of Hainault closed. She died still protesting against the injustice of which she had been a victim, and repeating, in lieu of the testamentary dispositions which she was not suffered to make, that James of Majorca was her rightful heir. King Robert salved his conscience by providing a sumptuous funeral, at which upwards of fifteen hundred pounds weight of wax was consumed in tapers. The Neapolitan house of Anjou has left an unenviable notoriety for the persecution of women and, after Helena of Epirus, the history of the time presents no more pathetic figure than that of the last heiress of the Villehardouins. Tom away from her mother's side by a travesty of the marriage ceremony at the age of four, at fifteen she was left a defenceless child widow. Compelled once more to become an unwilling bride, she was for the second time a widow at twenty-three. Refusing to be forced into a third political marriage, and following for once her own natural instincts, she was deprived of liberty, and after nine years of seclusion, ended her harassed life, still young enough to be entitled to look for some happiness, childless and friendless, the innocent victim of her indefeasible rights and the blood which she had inherited.

Meanwhile John of Gravina's bailie had been steadily losing ground in the Morea. A constant change of allegiance and the instability of all authority tempted many of the lesser feudatories to contemplate with favour the greater prospect of security offered them by peaceful absorption in the area controlled by the imperial officers at Mistra, whose appointments, now prolonged for terms of successive years, enabled them to develop the resources of a prudent administration, and to make their rule popular. Under these conditions Monemvasia had become a serious competitor to Clarenza, and its inhabitants, guaranteed by privileges and immunities, grew rich by combining commerce with piracy. Already in 1320 Asan had established himself in Matagriffon and Carytena, two of the most famous strongholds of Frankish annals, which their captains were bribed to surrender, as well as in Polyphengo on the high-road from the Arcadian uplands to Corinth, and in other castles in the mountain area. From Carytena he advanced against St. George, which the Franks had lost by treachery in the days of Florence of Hainault, and which had now been stormed and recovered by Mote de Liege and Nicholucho of Patras, a Greek archon from the Frankish side, who was appointed captain of the castle The bailie of Achaia collected a force and marched in haste to relieve the beleaguered fortress, accompanied by the bishop of Olenos, the constable Bartolommeo Ghisi, and a contingent of the Teutonic knights and the order of St. John, having learned that the captain had promised to surrender if he did not receive assistance by a specified day. Meanwhile the Greeks occupied the passes and prevented any communications with the besieged. Despairing of relief the captain surrendered, and Asan garrisoned the fortress. He however kept the banner of the Prince flying from the tower, and concealed a strong force in an ambush nearby. He then pretended to withdraw, thus leading the Franks, who believed the castle to be still in the hands of friends, to press on without suspicion. As they drew up to the walls the Prince's flag was suddenly replaced by the imperial standard, and the enemy issued simultaneously from the gates and the ambush, while Asan and the main body at the same time wheeled round to the attack. The stratagem was entirely successful. The fighting bishop was wounded and, together with Ghisi, was made a prisoner, while the bailie with difficulty succeeded in withdrawing a remnant of his men.

In the following year Asan was recalled to Constantinople, and nominally replaced by Johannes Cantacuzenus, the future Emperor. The latter did not come in person to the Morea, but devoted his energies to supporting the faction of the younger Andronicus, who in 1325 was associated with his grandfather in the government of the empire, and compelled his resignation three years later, So weak was now the hold of the Angevines on what remained of the Frankish state, that in 1321 Jean de Baux, preceptor of the order of St. John, who was acting for the Neapolitan bailie, in concert with the bishop of Olenos and the chancellor, approached Venice, through the prior of the Franciscans in Romania, a monk of the family of Gradenigo, with a scheme for placing Achaia under the protection of the Doge, and thus securing immunity at the same time from the aggressions of both Greeks and Catalans, with whom the republic was at peace. The Doge, however, was unwilling at this time to prejudice the prospects of Mahaulte, who had appealed to him for assistance. Some rumour of these intrigues reached the ear of John of Gravina, and convinced him that it was high time to take measures to reassert his authority in the neglected principality. In 1322 he prepared for a campaign on an important scale, and addressed himself for the necessary advances to the Florentine banking-house of Acciajuoli, to which he mortgaged a number of remunerative fiefs in Achaia. The bailie, Ligorio Guindazzo, was now replaced by Nicholas de Joinville, who held the office when the belated expedition of Gravina arrived on the scene.

Meanwhile Nicholas of Cephalonia, the assassin of the Despot Thomas, had himself been murdered by his brother John, who usurped the throne of Arta, and was now endeavouring with the assistance of the Greeks to emancipate himself from Angevine fetters. The contemplated expedition offered an opportunity for the accomplishment of a double object, and the “Emperor”, Philip of Tarentum, entered into a compact with his brother by which it was stipulated that John of Gravina should first land in Epirus and, if the Cephalonian appeared in his camp in obedience to a summons, should invest him on Philip’s behalf with the despotate which he had already seized. He was at the same time to place garrisons in certain fortresses, and then to march from Arta through Aetolia, which the Greeks had occupied, inflicting appropriate punishment, to Lepanto, and so enter Achaia by the Corinthian Gulf. The two Princes were to contribute in equal shares to the cost of the undertaking, and furnish equal contingents of horse and foot.

Since her flight from Thebes Jeanne de Chatillon, widow of Gautier de Brienne, had not ceased to plead the cause of her disinherited son with the sovereigns of the western states. Clement V, who endeavoured to persuade the knights of Rhodes to undertake a crusade in Attica, and after him John XXII had constantly supported her appeal and denounced the iniquities of the Catalans. Their encroachments on the captanate of Corinth, and their efforts, hitherto unsuccessful, to reduce Argos and Nauplia, identified the interests of Gravina with those of the young Gautier de Brienne, who accordingly agreed to furnish a contingent of 300 horsemen from his country of Lecce. Time was lost in endeavouring to draw the Doge, who had stronger motives for the renewal of a peaceful understanding with Constantinople, into the combination, and, although the Moreotes did not cease to urge the necessity for early action, it was not until the summer of 1324 that preparations were sufficiently advanced for Simone da Sangro to embark as captain of the advance guard. It was under the orders of the latter as the precursor of John of Gravina, that Philip commanded the nobles of Achaia to rally at Clarenza. It is interesting to

compare the list of notables to whom these instructions were addressed, with the roll of feudatories drawn up in the days of the first Villehardouins. The spiritual authorities cited are Nicholas, the Latin patriarch of Constantinople, who generally now resided in Euboea; the archbishops of Patras and Corinth; the bishop of Olenos; the vicar and chapter of Coron and Modon; the preceptors of the Teutonic order and of the Knights of St. John. The temporal nobles are Nicholas Sanudo, Duke of Naxos; John Misito, captain of Calamata, with the dependent feudatories; Guy de Centenay; Hugo Raoul; Langes de Lans, and the vassals of the captanate of Corinth; Pietro dalle Carceri, triarch in Euboea, who by successive marriages had also acquired the half-baronies of Arkadia and Chalandritza; Etienne Lenoir of St. Sauveur, whose wife, Agnes d'Aunoy, brought him the other half-barony of Arkadia; Beatrice de Noyers (dalle Carceri), triarch in Euboea; Bartolommeo Ghisi, the constable; Benjamin, the chancellor; Martino Zaccaria, lord of Chios, Damala, and half of Chalandritza; and finally Bartolommeo Zaccaria, who had married Guglielma, daughter of Alberto Pallavicini and heiress of Bodonitza.

In January 1325 John of Gravina himself set sail from Brindisi with a fleet of twenty-five galleys. He did not follow the plan of campaign laid down, and only landed in Cephalonia and Zante. His occupation of these islands practically without opposition, did not compel the submission of the Despot John, who sheltered himself behind the defences of Arta. From Zante Gravina crossed the narrow strait to Clarenza, where he received the homage of the Moreote barons, the triarchs of Euboea, and Nicholas Sanudo, Duke of the Archipelago. A commercial treaty was negotiated with Venice, entitling goods imported from Clarenza to be subjected only to the very moderate customs duty of one and a half per cent., and, according to the Aragonese chronicle, a vain attempt was made to recover Carytena. Meanwhile the Prince became more deeply involved in financial obligations to the Acciajuoli, who had contracted to provision his force during the campaign. After a few months he withdrew ineffectually to Naples, evacuating the islands, and leaving matters, both as regards Epirus and the Catalan duchy, precisely as they were. This was his only visit to the Morea, which continued to be administered by his bailies, of whom little can be recorded but their names. The semi-independent archbishop of Patras cultivated the friendship of Venice. Argos and Navplia were still held for Gautier de Brienne. Two powerful barons divided the Frankish interest in Achaia, Misito of Calamata and Martino Zaccaria, whom Philip of Tarentum and his wife, the titular Empress, in 1325 created Despot of Asia Minor with a number of adjacent islands. The hold of the Angevines on the principality meanwhile became weaker and weaker, and in practice a condition of feudal anarchy subsisted there till the death of Philip of Tarentum and the renunciation of John of Gravina led to a new and curious phase in its decline. Before tracing the story of its disruption and eventual reoccupation by the Greeks it is necessary once more to examine the sequence of contemporary events in Athens and Euboea.

Under the able rule of Berengar d'Estanol, as vice-regent for the Infant Manfred, the Catalan Company had settled down in the duchy, though its old dependencies, Argos and Navplia, had not surrendered, and the bounds of possible extension were still prescribed by the captanate of Corinth, the marquisate of Bodonitza, and the Lombardo-Venetian combination in Euboea. The menace of the latter power was to a great extent neutralised by the friendly attitude observed towards the Catalans by Bonifazio of Carystos, who would have welcomed the transfer to the company of the island, in which he would then have remained the paramount, if not the only great feudatory. After an abortive attempt to induce the grand master of the knights of Rhodes, who had recently established

themselves in that island, to undertake a crusade against the Catalans, Clement V had vainly addressed a protest to Frederick of Sicily, and then with as little success to James II of Aragon. The latter replied not without reason to his representations, that if the Catalans had indeed been at one time for the most part under his allegiance, they had long emancipated themselves from any subjection to his authority, that no efforts of persuasion were likely to induce the invaders to give up what they held by right of conquest, and, moreover, that the Duke of Athens, having broken his plighted bond to them, had deserved his fate.

The quest of thrones and baronies in the east was still a traditional object of ambition among the younger sons of the great nobles in the west, and when an emissary from Guy de la Tour, baron of Montauban, son of the Dauphin of Vienne, arrived in the duchy with an offer of service from his master, the Catalans in the first year of their domination were so flattered by this acknowledgment of their sovereignty, that they forthwith proposed to invest him with the kingdom of Thessalonica, which Roccaforte had coveted, and promised their help for its re-conquest from the schismatical Greeks who, it was frankly admitted in the contract, still held it. A more practical cession which they undertook to confer was that of the castle of St. Omer. But Guy de la Tour, in spite of the negotiations thus opened up with the company, eventually elected to become the man of King Robert, and was appointed his captain in Lombardy.

The permanence of the Catalan occupation and its constant menace to Euboea caused no little anxiety to the Venetians, who equipped a fleet for the protection of the island, and in 1313 called upon the Lombard barons to contribute one-half of the cost. The triarchies and hexarchies were at that time distributed as follows: Giorgio Ghisi, the husband of Alix dalle Carceri, the heiress of two hexarchies, had perished at the battle of the Cephissus and was succeeded by his son Bartolommeo. Beatrice dalle Carceri and her husband Jean de Noyers held one whole tri-archy, apparently the central division of the island, and Beatrice moreover acted as guardian to Pietro, her son by Grapozzo, who while still a minor had inherited his father's hexarchy. The remaining sixth was the portion of Grapella's daughter Maria who, after the death of her first husband, Alberto Pallavicini, had married Andrea Cornaro of Scarpantos. By an arrangement with Venice, whose sovereignty he acknowledged, he left his son as regent in his island, and came to Euboea to assist the bailie in organising the defences. Bonifazio of Carystos, who was included in the summons to pay ship-money, refused to comply, alleging various grievances against the triarchs as a pretext. This brought him into conflict with Cornaro and local warfare ensued. Estanol, while giving his moral support to the lord of Carystos, had his hands too full to devote much attention to the affairs of Euboea. On his death in 1316 the company elected a provisional regent in William Thomasii, but referred the nomination, as they were bound by the terms of their allegiance, to Frederick of Sicily, who in the following year sent his illegitimate son Alfonso Fadrique as vice-regent. The high-spirited and ambitious bastard of Aragon, who boldly styled himself son of the most serene king of Sicily, brought with him a fleet of ten galleys and a large contingent of soldiers of fortune, recruited in Catalonia. Announc-ing his intention to settle permanently in the duchy, he took up his residence at Athens, on the Acropolis, and at once established relations of friendship with the powerful lord of Carystos. Bonifazio's daughter Manilla, whom Muntaner had seen as a graceful child of eight in her father's house at Negripont, was now eighteen, and according to his testimony as renowned for her beauty as for her intelligence. In offering the hand of this favourite daughter to Alfonso Fadrique, Bonifazio practically

disinherited his son Thomas in her favour, making her the heiress not only of Carystos and Larmena, with the island of Aegina, but also of the important fiefs of Zeitoun and Gardiki, bestowed upon him by Guy II. This alliance led to a vigorous prosecution of hostilities between the Catalans and the Lombardo-Venetian power. Andrea Cornaro and the bailie Michele Morosini were severely defeated on land in the island itself, and sued for a suspension of hostilities, in spite of which Alfonso Fadrique occupied Negripont. By the death of Bonifazio, which occurred soon afterwards, he also entered into actual possession of Carystos and Larmena. The Venetians to whom Mahaulte of Hainault, as feudal suzerain of Euboea, appealed for energetic intervention, protesting that Cornaro was playing into the hands of the Catalans and that the bailie himself was not above suspicion, recalled Morosini and sent Francesco Dandolo to take his place, with a powerful fleet in support. Frederick of Sicily, who on grounds of policy was anxious to remain on good terms with the republic, at the same time ordered his son to restore Negripont, and leave the island, an order with which he only complied after renewed fighting in which he was less successful. The cessation of hostilities was then confirmed, but Alfonso Fadrique secured the inclusion in its terms of a stipulation exempting from the peace such Venetian subjects as were feudatories of Achaia, and he remained in occupation of Carystos. Venice having borne the brunt of the war and the cost of recovering the island, now openly assumed the position of the predominant partner and took charge of all the fortresses, confining the administration of the Lombards to the country districts. In the same year the Infant Manfred died, and the duchy passed to his younger brother William, whose long prospective minority guaranteed to Alfonso Fadrique a considerable extension of his vice-regency.

The Angevines laboured strenuously at Venice to bring about a renewal of hostilities, but the Doge, well knowing on whom the burden of war must fall, returned evasive replies. Jeanne de Chatillon also endeavoured to persuade the republic, by tempting offers of commercial privileges and feudal allegiance, to furnish her son with money, ships, and men for the recovery of the duchy, a step which would at the same time facilitate the final acquisition of Euboea. Finally John XXII, on whom the mantle of Pope Clement had fallen, exhorted the Venetians to uphold the cause of Christendom against the sons of perdition, who, in addition to their iniquities, had now dis-inherited the lawful heir of Carystos and availed themselves of the assistance of infidel Turks. The republic, however, continued to temporise. But it would seem that the pressure which was being exerted on her councillors caused some alarm both to the King of Sicily and to Alfonso Fadrique, now once more involved in difficulties with the bailie, owing to the buccaneering exploits of the Catalonian seamen, who had established a veritable pirates' nest in the Piraeus. His relations with Venice since the peace had moreover not been improved by a raid which he had made with a Catalan fleet on Melos, a possession of the Duke of Naxos, who, though a Venetian subject, was as a vassal of Achaia excluded from the benefits of the cessation of hostilities. While the Neapolitan envoys were therefore urging upon the Doge the remorseless prosecution of the company, King Frederick was also concerned by the mouth of his envoys to explain away the misdeeds of the Catalan corsairs As Venice was above all things anxious to see order established in the affairs of Euboea, they were successful in obtaining a prolongation of the truce on the expiry of its term. It was not, however, the policy of the republic for the present to afford the Catalan usurpers the sanction involved in an actual treaty of peace, implying permanent obligations, but rather to deal with an unwelcome situation which had to be faced, by provisional agreements susceptible of termination or of renewal. To secure even such an arrangement the company had to make considerable

concessions. They were required to renounce the harbouring of pirates in their ports and the maintenance by themselves of any corsair craft, to equip no new vessels, and dismantle those actually in commission, depositing all the gear in magazines, not at the Piraeus itself, but on the Acropolis. Only certain vessels at Livadostro were exempted from this provision, but even these were to remain unmanned. On this basis an agreement was signed at Negripont on the 9th of June 1319, to last until the following Christmas. The triarchs, Jean de Noyers, Pietro dalle Carceri, Andrea Cornaro, and Bartolommeo Ghisi, were included in this instrument, which also covered the islands administered by the last named, Tinos and Myconos, and extended its benefits to the Duke of Naxos, to whom his Venetian origin proved of more practical value than his Achaian allegiance. The truce was subsequently renewed between Alfonso and the bailie Ludovico Morosini for a whole year in May 1321, and then again for several successive terms. There were, however, additional stipulations. The Catalans were not to renew the contract with their Turkish mercenaries or to tolerate their presence in the duchy. Turkish corsairs had for years been the terror of the island sea, and it was a matter of universal interest that their compatriots should not gain a footing on the western mainland. Alfonso was to dismantle the fortress of Philagra near the cape of that name in Euboea, and to construct no new fortresses in the district of Carystos. Venice on the other hand undertook not to erect any military works between Larmena and Carystos. A month's notice on either side was necessary for the denunciation of the treaty, which was signed by fifty notables of the company. The undertaking of the vice-regent not to add to the fortifications of Carystos implied the recognition of his title by Venice, and the bailie now opened negotiations with him for the purchase of this all-important position. Alfonso, however, declined to be tempted by an offer of 30,000 hyperpers, although he was eventually induced to cede Larmena to his disinherited brother-in-law.

Peace having thus, for a time at any rate, been established with Venice, he turned his attention to Thessaly, of which since the death in 1318 of the weakly Sebastocrator, Johannes Dukas, a portion had been absorbed by the empire, while the remainder was partitioned among the local magnates, of whom the Melisseni were the most conspicuous. In the ensuing state of confusion the company occupied the richest districts, and annexed them to the duchy with little opposition. Alfonso took possession of his father-in-law's fiefs in Phthiotis, and styled himself henceforth vicar-general of the duchies of Athens and Neopatras. Venice was suffered peacefully to absorb the port of Pteleon. The rest of Thessaly was gradually overrun by Albanian immigrants, driven eastward by pressure from Slavonic encroachment. Bodonitza appears to have now also been made subject to the company, and the feudal nexus was henceforth acknowledged by the last heiress of the Pallavicini, the wife of Bartolommeo Zaccaria, and later of the Venetian, Nicolo Giorgio, whose family succeeded to the border marquisate.

The eternal Euboean question was however des-tined once more to lead to a renewal of hostilities between Alfonso and Venice. The republic had es-tablished a predominant position in the island, and the sovereignty of the Prince of Achaia had long been only nominal, but the Lombards had preserved a certain measure of independence and could still be used as a counterpoise to the influence of the bailie. Pietro dalle Carceri had no sooner attained his majority than his ambitious and acquisitive character began to reveal itself. The title to the triarchy, or to be more precise, the two hexarchies which had passed through Alix, the granddaughter of Ravano, into the hands of Ghisi, afforded him no grounds for contestation, but as the last of his race, he considered himself the lawful

reversionary of the remaining triarchies, of which only a fourth part had devolved upon him by direct succession. When therefore his cousin Maria died in 1322, leaving no heirs by her second marriage with Andrea Cornaro, he took possession of her triarchy, without regard for the claims of the widower, whose protest would no doubt have received the prac-tical support of Venice, had not Andrea himself died in the following year. Nor did Pietro admit that any title was vested in Guglielma Pallavicini, the daughter of Maria by her first husband. His mother Beatrice dalle Carceri died in 1328, and her husband Jean de Noyers two years earlier. The triarchy which she had inherited from Giberto then also fell to Pietro, who became thus lord of two-thirds of Euboea. Tomaso, the son of Bonifazio, also died in 1326, and Alfonso Fadrique at once prepared, on behalf of his wife, to take possession of the castle of Larmena, which he had suffered his brother-in-law to occupy. Tomaso's daughter Agnese, who had married a Venetian Sanudo, appealed to the Doge. The bailie and the triarchs reported that Alfonso was in reality contemplating the subjection of the whole island to the duchy, and Venice pronounced in favour of Agnese, declaring the rights of Manilla to have been extinguished. Alfonso, however, succeeded by diplomacy in seducing the triarchs from their allegiance. Pietro, realising, no doubt, that the protection of the bailie would in the end involve the absorption of the Lombard baronies by the republic, negotiated an independent treaty with the vice-regent, and Bartolommeo Ghisi, who was not only a Venetian subject but also held the office of grand constable of Achaia, agreed to a marriage between his son Giorgio and Simona, the eldest daughter of Alfonso Fadrique, becoming at the same time his vassal for the castle of St. Omer at Thebes, with which he was now invested. The Catalans then declared war on the bailie, and once more had recourse to their Turkish allies. This gave a fresh impulse to the Anatolian corsairs, who raided Euboea, infested all the islands of the archipelago and, not distinguishing too closely between friend and foe, even paid an unwelcome visit to Athens. The disunion of the western powers gave the Turks a free hand, and the Duke of Naxos, realising that he could no longer count upon the protection of Venice, whose great resources were strained by the hopeless struggle to keep the eastern highway open, threw himself into the arms of the Emperor Andronicus III. It is stated by Sanudo that in the year 1331, not less than 25,000 Greek and Latin Christians were carried away into bondage by the Turks, and this iniquitous traffic had for many years been practically unchecked. If the Catalans were to maintain their state against what they now perceived to be the common enemy, it was imperative for them to live in peace with Venice, and there were other not less cogent reasons.

The young Gautier de Brienne attained his majority in 1319 and six years later married Margaret, the daughter of Philip of Tarentum. In high favour with the Angevines, he was sent to Florence immediately after his marriage, as the precursor of Charles of Calabria, the son of King Robert, to whom the Florentines had entrusted their signory for ten years. Thither also went Philip and the titular Empress, and there no doubt the scheme was first propounded in accordance with which Gautier was to succeed John of Gravina as champion of the Frankish interests in Romania, and resume the enterprise in which the latter had so miserably failed. Nothing definite, however, could with decency be attempted until the expiry in 1328 of a suspension of hostilities, negotiated with the Catalans in favour of Gautier's possessions in Argolis. The renewal of hostilities between Venice and Alfonso seemed to offer a favourable opportunity for action, and the birth of a son in 1329 gave the titular Duke of Athens an additional incen-tive to vindicate his rights. Fiefs in Italy were pawned to furnish resources, and the chivalry of France and Italy enrolled themselves under his banner. The Pope instructed the ecclesiastical authorities in

Romania to call upon the Catalans to evacuate the duchy within six months, under pain of excommunication, and exhorted all true believers to support the Duke with arms or with subventions.

Supplies were poured into Argos and Nauplia, and every preparation hurried on for the despatch of an expedition in the spring of 1331. Meanwhile Gautier endeavoured to secure the alliance of Venice.

Under these circumstances it was indispensable for the company to come to terms with the republic, and Alfonso Fadrique expressed his readiness to conclude a peace of two years' duration, if he were allowed to remain in undisturbed possession of Carystos. In the midst of these negotiations, however, he appears, somewhat unaccountably, to have laid down the office of vice-regent. His father Frederick had recently bestowed upon him the islands of Malta and Gozzo, and it may well be that, anticipating at no very distant date the majority of the Infant William, he contemplated withdrawing to his new possession. He was in fact in Sicily in the year 1332, but he did not permanently abandon Athens. Niccolò Lancia was appointed to succeed him as William's vicar-general in the duchies, and in that capacity signed a treaty which came into force on May 1, 1331, with the Venetian bailie and the triarchs, who had now apparently gravitated back to their natural ally. The provisions of this convention included the stipulations contracted in former agreements regarding the disarmament of Catalan vessels, and bound them afresh to renounce all composition with the Turks, and to build no new fortresses in Euboea. They were also to pay an indemnity of 5000 hyperpers for damages sustained by Venetian subjects. Alfonso Fadrique's name is cited immediately after that of the regent throughout in this instrument, which was extended so as to cover the Venetian lords of the islands. In 1333 a clause was added securing to Agnese, the daughter of Tomaso da Verona, a portion of the estates which her father had claimed. A further measure of precaution now taken by the company was to deprive the Ghisi of the castle on the Cadmeia, with which Bartolommeo had been invested in 1327. The chronicle states that the fortress was at this time pulled down by the Catalans, who feared that it might be betrayed into the hands of Gautier de Brienne, and be made a base for operations against themselves. Ghisi, after; the dismantling of St. Omer, resumed his old allegiance, and was present with other Moreote partisans of Philip of Tarentum at Patras when the Archbishop Frangipani pronounced the ban against the Catalans in 1332.

Gautier de Brienne had now nothing to hope for from Venice. He sailed from Brindisi in August 1331, with eight hundred French knights and an imposing force, too unwieldy perhaps, as Villani suggests, for the purpose in hand. As the captain of the titular Emperor, he first visited Epirus, to exact the submission of John of Cephalonia. In this he was more successful than John of Gravina. He occupied Bonditza and Leucadia, and seizing Arta, forced the Despot, who was perhaps not sorry to be liberated from obligations to Andronicus, to acknowledge the suzerainty of Philip. Then he advanced on Boeotia. But the Catalans avoided an engagement, and though their excommunication was duly pronounced by the archbishop of Patras, neither spiritual nor temporal menaces raised the local populations against their masters. He eventually withdrew to the Morea, still hoping in vain that Venice would ultimately embrace his cause. There he lost his only son, who with his mother had been conveyed to the headquarters at Patras, and at length, deprived of his principal supporter by the death of Philip of Tarentum, and impoverished by the expense of maintaining so large a force on active service, retired, in July 1332, to

see his land of promise no more. His life of adventure was, however, not yet over. Recalled to Florence some ten years later as captain and conservator, he was accused of attempting to usurp all the powers of the state and create for himself a tyranny after the models of Romagna, and was expelled from the city. Like so many of his illustrious family he was destined to die in his armour, and perished as constable of France at the battle of Maupertuis. He left no direct heir, and his posses-sions in the Morea, as well as the county of Lecce, and his titular rights to Athens were inherited by the children of his sister Isabella, who in 1320 married Guillaume d'Enghien.

The company periodically renewed and loyally maintained the peace with Venice. Freed from any immediate menace of external danger, they were little moved by such an ineffectual weapon as the ban of excommunication, which was once more proclaimed against them, and maintained until 1346, when it was suspended by Clement VI who was organising a crusade of united Christendom against the Turks and desired to secure the support of the Catalans, though in the first instance only provisionally. In 1337 Frederick II of Sicily died and was succeeded by his eldest son Peter. His second surviving son William, Duke of Athens, died in the following year, and the duchy passed to the third surviving son, John, Marquis of Randazzo, who fell a victim to the great plague of 1348. His son, Frederick of Aragon-Randazzo, became Duke of Athens while still a child, under the guardianship of Blasco d'Alagona, but he in turn succumbed to the same devastating scourge in 1355. King Peter's second son Frederick then inherited the duchies, and as by the death of his eldest brother Louis almost immediately afterwards he also succeeded at the age of fourteen to the crown of Sicily, the two titles were thus once more united.

Alfonso Fadrique died in the same year as his illustrious father, leaving several sons, of whom Bonifazio inherited Carystos, Aegina, and Zeitoun, while Peter obtained possession of Salona, it is conjectured by marriage with the heiress of Roger Deslaur, and the bastard line of Aragon continued to play an important part in the Catalan duchy.

CHAPTER XIII

ROBERT AND PHILIP OF TARENTUM—MARIA OF BOURBON —THE HOUSE OF ACCIAJUOLI—JOAN OF NAPLES AND OTHO OF BRUNSWICK.

While the young Gautier de Brienne was still battling with adversity in Romania, his father-in-law and patron Philip of Tarentum died on the 26th of December 1331. Catherine de Valois-Courtenay, the titular Empress, whom he had married at the age of twelve years, now became the guardian of their son Robert, who succeeded to all his titles. Brought up in the easy manners and gay surroundings which now prevailed at the Neapolitan court, she was as a widow of thirty not less personally attractive than she was accomplished and enterprising. In 1326 she had accompanied her husband to Florence, and there had gathered round her a brilliant group of cavaliers and ladies whose mode of life scandalised the staid prejudices of the sober old-fashioned merchant class. It was probably the advent of the Neapolitan princess to Tuscany which first gave an impulse to that unrestrained freedom of social intercourse which Boccaccio, who was at that time a boy of thirteen, has pictured in the Decameron as characteristic of Florence in the middle of the fourteenth century.

Both Philip of Tarentum and John of Gravina, not less than the King their brother, had incurred heavy liabilities to the rich Florentine banking-houses, and in particular to the great firm of Acciajuoli. The founder of this remarkable family, which became the dominant element in the last phase of Frankish Romania, had migrated in the twelfth century from Brescia to Florence, where he founded a steel factory which gave his descendants their patronymic. About a hundred years later they started the banking business, which soon established branches in all the principal marts of Europe and the Levant. Acciajuolo, apparently an illegitimate son of this house, who married into the influential family of Pazzi, became a chamberlain of King Robert, whose intimate confidence he enjoyed. After he had him-self returned to Florence, he sent his son Niccolo, then a youth of twenty-one, to Naples in the year 1331 with introductions to the court. The re-markable ability of this youthful agent and the tactful manner in which he represented the busi-ness interests of his firm, at once secured him the favour of the Angevines, and he specially ingratiated himself with the titular Empress, who soon found his counsel indispensable. After her husband's death she confided to him the management of all her affairs and the direction of her children's education, while she loaded him with benefits for which the voice of scandal accounted in the most obvious manner.

The Acciajuoli firm, moreover, at the suggestion no doubt of Niccolo, furnished the 5000 ounces of gold which John of Gravina, incapable of grappling with the problem of

the Morea and resenting the obligation to do homage for the principality to his nephew, now accepted as a further inducement to make over all his rights in Achaia to Catherine's eldest son, Robert of Tarentum, receiving in exchange the Albanian and Epirote territories and claims to which Robert, or Catherine herself as widow, had succeeded. Lepanto, however, was apparently expressly excluded from the bargain, for Bertrand de Baux, when he went to the Morea as Catherine's vicar, was especially appointed bailie for that fortress also as well as for Cephalonia, and Lepanto was thereafter administratively attached to Achaia. The confirmation of the Pope was obtained to this family arrangement, and John of Gravina then assumed the title of Duke of Durazzo. He did not long survive these events and died in 1335, while his eldest son was still a child under the guardianship of his mother Agnes de Perigord. Having successfully negotiated the recovery of Achaia by the house of Tarentum, Niccolo now made arrangements with the bank at Florence for the cession or transfer to himself of all the fiefs and estates in the principality which John of Gravina had pledged in order to raise funds for his abortive campaign. Other mortgages on lands in Morea he brought up from Diego de' Tolomei of Siena, while his domains were constantly increased by the generosity of his royal mistress, who every year conferred upon him the intestate reversion of some new estate. As one of the greatest territorial magnates in the principality, he was in 1336 enrolled among its baronial vassals, and was at the same time granted relief from certain feudal services and empowered to alienate his lands in the Morea at will. As a man of business training and instinct he was careful to have the cessions made to him by the bank in Florence confirmed not only by Catherine and her son, but also by King Robert himself.

Inspired and supported by the counsels of Niccolo, the titular Empress showed more consideration for the principality than had been displayed by any of its recent rulers, whose absentee interest had been confined to the extraction of revenue. She despatched her financial adviser, Niccolo di Bojano, to make a report on the local conditions, which were grave enough in themselves and had not been ameliorated by the administration of the bailies, Pietro de San Severo and after him Bertrand de Baux. The nobles, so long left to their own devices, were only concerned to annex estates, and assert their own independence. Centurione Zaccaria of Damala refused to recognise the authority of the Empress, and the military orders no longer admitted their feudal obligations. Marino Ghisi had forcibly abducted and married the presumptive heiress of Vostitza. Erard Lenoir of Arkadia, departing from the tradition of his grandfather Nicholas, had placed himself at the head of a party which regarded James II of Majorca, the son of the ill-fated Ferdinand and of Isabella de Sabran, as the rightful heir. The bishops of Olenos and Coron were inclined to follow in the steps of the archbishop of Patras, who had long declined to acknowledge any feudal subjection to the princes, and is not even mentioned among the vassals of Achaia in the report of Bojano. Guglielmo Frangipani, who occupied the latter see in 1337, appealed to the Pope to support his pretensions, as did his successor when Bertrand de Baux insisted on the paramountcy of Achaia. Benedict XII declared without hesitation that Patras was a direct dependency of the curia, and when Bertrand declined to restore certain places which he had occupied with the object of bringing the archbishop to reason, Achaia was placed under the interdict. Acciajuoli perceived that it was time for the Empress and her son to proceed to the Morea in person, and endeavour by their presence to impose some order on the prevailing anarchy. Thither he accompanied them, travelling with a magnificent retinue, when on the 10th of October 1338 they left for Brindisi on the way to Clarenza. He had already formed the design of constructing the great Certosa of S. Lorenzo, in the neighbourhood of Florence, where his body lies interred,

and before setting out he obtained the sanction of Catherine to a provision in accordance with which the revenues of his Greek estates should in the event of his death be devoted, until the children of his marriage with Marguerita degli Spini came of age, to the foundation which still testifies to the magnitude of his conceptions and enterprises.

Negotiations were once more opened up with the archbishop of Patras, in whose city the titular Empress established herself. The powerful prelate had received armed assistance from Venice, whose subjects had ample cause of complaint against the local administration. The conciliatory influence of the Florentine made itself felt at once. Catherine showed herself more ready than her bailie had been to bow to the authority of Rome, and Bertrand de Baux, who was made responsible for the disorders which had distracted the Morea, was placed under arrest. He was, however, before long released and regained the favour of King Robert and of Catherine herself, for whom he once more acted as vicar in 1341. The growing menace of the Turkish raiders made it imperative for the western rulers to hold closely together, and amicable relations were re-established with the Venetians, who had other troubles in the Morea, where the semi-independent Zassi of Kisterna and Janitza were threatening the "eyes of the republic" at Coron and Modon. An envoy sent to represent the claims of Venetian subjects obtained complete satisfaction. By the tact and energy of Niccolo, a semblance of normal conditions was re-established in Achaia, and in the summer of 1340 he was able to escort Catherine and her sons back to Brindisi, returning thence himself to act as her vicar for the best part of another year, when he also took his departure, delegating his authority to three plenipotentiaries, of whom one was his own relative Jacopo, son of Donato Acciajuoli.

With his departure anarchy once more supervened, and Achaia became the scene of party factions, each advocating the claims of rival suzerainties as offering the only prospect for resisting the danger of ultimate absorption by the Turks, whose swelling numbers and growing power in Asia Minor already made it plain that a new area of expansion must be sought by them on the European side. While one party looked to the son of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella de Sabran, another group, which strangely enough was led by the bishop of Coron, contemplated submission to Constantinople and the annexation of Achaia to the Greek province of Laconia. The events which had taken place in the capital of the empire, since the Frankish states were last concerned with the fortunes of the Palaeologi, and the developments which now ensued there and once more directly affected the status of the Morea, render a brief complimentary digression inevitable.

The attempt of the weak and priestridden Andronicus II, after the death of the heir-apparent Michael, to exclude his dissolute but enterprising and popular grandson Andronicus III from the succession, in favour of the family of his second son Constantine, had led to a disastrous civil war, during which the Turks were enabled to consolidate their position on the opposite shores of Asia, while on the west the new and aggressive power of Servia menaced the remnant of the dwindling empire. A peace patched up in 1325 between the Emperor and his grandson, who was invested with the purple as co-regent, was of short duration, and three years later Andronicus II was compelled at the age of seventy to resign his throne and assume the habit of a monk. The third Andronicus owed his success less to his own abilities than to the counsel and support of a remarkable man, Johannes Cantacuzenus, son of a former governor of Mistra, to which position he was himself actually appointed in 1328, though he did not proceed thither in consequence of the outbreak of the civil war in which he embraced the party of the rebellious prince. After the

younger Andronicus had finally established himself on the imperial throne he offered his faithful coadjutor the rank and title of Augustus, which Cantacuzenus with modesty or dissimulation refused to accept, though he continued to guide the young sovereign's policy, and was for a time successful in infusing new vigour into the administration. Under their joint auspices the ascendency of Byzantium was temporarily re-established in Epirus and a great part of northern Greece. The death in 1333 of the wealthy and powerful archon, Stefanus Melissenus, who ruled in Phocis as a vassal of the empire, led to a struggle for the division of his inheritance between the governor of Thessalonica and John of Cephalonia, who, after assassinating his brother Nicholas, had succeeded him as Despot of Epirus. It was, however, no longer the old Epirus of the Angeli-Comneni and included little more than the ancient Acarnania, for the duchy of Durazzo had absorbed a portion, and the despotate of Romania, which the heirs of Philip of Tarentum claimed, had further curtailed the territories on which the Servians and Albanians had encroached. The tribesmen of the latter vigorous race, who had now begun to migrate from their inhospitable mountains into the more fruitful regions depopulated by continual warfare and anarchy, were already spreading over the state of Great Viachia, which was partly dominated by the Catalan Company and partly administered by semi-independent local magnates. Andronicus III took the field in person, and entering Thessaly, was preparing to invade the dominions of the Despot, when he received the news that John had himself in turn been assassinated by his wife, Anna Palaeologina, a masterful and ambitious woman, like her namesake and predecessor, the Despina Anna Cantacuzena, and that she had proclaimed herself regent on behalf of her son, the boy Nicephorus II. The rapid advance of Andronicus alarmed her into submission, and she offered to do homage, craving at the same time the hand of the daughter of the all-powerful Johannes. Cantacuzenus for the young prince. Andronicus accepted these overtures, but insisted on her resignation of the regency, which he undertook himself, appointing an imperial governor. At the same time he received the submission of many of the Albanian subjects of John of Gravina who, alarmed at the diminution of his realm, was preparing to conduct an expedition to his disorganised duchy when he died at Naples in 1335, and was succeeded by his son Charles, afterwards the victim of the vengeance of Louis of Hungary. The young Nicephorus, on the withdrawal of Andronicus, threw himself into the arms of the Franks, and in 1338 he contrived to escape from an irksome tutelage and took refuge in Achaia, where the titular Empress made him welcome. Meanwhile the Servians under the able and perfidious Stephen Duchan, who had in 1333 secured the throne by the deposition of his father, advanced into the despotate and drove in many of the Byzantine garrisons.

The assistance of Catherine and the support which she enlisted in his behalf from the Neapolitan vicar at Durazzo were not without effect, and an opportune local rising at Arta against the Byzantine governor enabled Nicephorus to recover his throne and independence. Andronicus was thus compelled in 1339 to re-enter Epirus. But the diplomacy and authority of Cantacuzenus were successful in winning over the young Despot, who now acknowledged himself the vassal of the Emperor, and a wise moderation exercised in success seemed destined permanently to reconquer the firm allegiance of the Epirotes, when the tide of Servian invasion once more spread southwards, and Andronicus was forced to cede to the suspected parricide Stephen Duchan all the territories north-west of and including Jannina. In 1341 he died. His son and heir, Johannes Palaeologus, was a child of only nine years of age under the guardianship of his mother Anne of Savoy. Under these circumstances powerful and jealous rivals found it easy to excite suspicion in the Empress-regent of the ambitious designs of the man behind the throne, and an attempt to

dismiss Cantacuzenus drove him to take the very step which he had been accused of contemplating. The partisans of the opposing factions now once more involved the distracted provinces in internecine war, and Cantacuzenus was saluted as Emperor at Didimoteichon. The predatory forces, which were eagerly awaiting the propitious moment to dismember the moribund empire, flung the weight of their respective arms into the hitherto balanced scales. The Servians embraced the cause of the legitimate heir and the regent-mother, while the co-operation of the Turks, fatal in its after consequences, sufficed to give the upper hand in the long struggle to the usurper, whose partisans in the capital opened the gates to him in 1347, when he was definitely proclaimed Emperor as Johannes VI. In his triumph he displayed remarkable moderation and, by a treaty signed with the Empress-regent, agreed after ten years of single rule to associate the young Johannes V, who was to marry his daughter, with himself as co-Emperor. One of his first enactments was to erect the Byzantine province in the Morea into a vassal despotate, with its capital at Mistra, and to nominate as first Despot his second son, the highly gifted Manuel, who ruled there with conspicuous success and judgment for more than thirty years.

Cantacuzenus did not complete the ten years for which he had stipulated the retention of undivided authority. The stars were unpropitious to him and his popularity rapidly waned. The deadly scourge of the great pestilence depopulated his capital, which moreover became the battle-ground of a devastating struggle for the monopoly of the Black Sea trade between the two great maritime republics of Italy, who made it alternately the base or the objective of their warlike operations. Thanks to the support he had received from the Turks, who had now definitely established themselves on the European seaboard at Gallipoli, he was enabled to see his son Mathaeus crowned as Emperor in a ruined realm. But the remnant of the fickle population in the capital, making the usurper responsible for their miserable plight, turned once more to the young Palaeologus who had withdrawn to Tenedos, whence with the assistance of the Genoese he succeeded in effecting his return. The city declared in his favour and the remarkable man, who from a private station had risen to occupy a throne, was compelled to resign it, and in 1355 he retired as a monk into a cloister where he composed the memoirs which entitle him to a considerable place among Byzantine historians.

It was to Cantacuzenus in Didimoteichon that the emissaries from the Morea addressed themselves in 1341. The moderation with which thanks to his counsels Epirus had been treated after its subjugation, had convinced the Escortans and the followers of the bishop of Coron that, with a sufficient guarantee of their possessions, life would be more endurable in a province reunited to the empire than under subjection to the caprices and exactions of bailies from Naples. Their proposals were favourably received, but the events which now took place in Constantinople compelled Cantacuzenus to abandon his plan of proceeding in person to the peninsula. In the meantime, overtures, which a still more powerful faction in Achaia headed by Erard Lenoir of Arkadia, Philippe de Joinville, lord of Vostitza and Nivelet, Nicholas Misito, governor of Calamata, and many others had already initiated as early as 1338, were renewed to King James of Majorca, the son of Ferdinand and Isabella de Sabran, urging him to vindicate his legal title. For the moment James was involved in difficulties with his neighbours on the Spanish mainland, and it was only in 1344, when the King of Aragon proclaimed the incorporation of Majorca with his own dominions and further resistance offered little prospect of success, that he began seriously to contemplate the idea of asserting his claims to an inheritance which comprehended vassal islands of at least as great extent as Majorca itself. In that year

archbishop Roger of Patras, who had hitherto leaned constantly to the side of Venice and regarded the maintenance of his own independence as his primary care, presided over a meeting of the barons held at Rhoviata. At this parliament it was definitely decided that they would do homage to James of Majorca as legitimate prince and invite him to take possession of Achaia, which, if united under the strong hand of a resident authority, would have a chance of developing the great natural resources which it still possessed. The land had not yet been depopulated by the visitation of the black death or swept by the slave-raiding incursions of the Seljuk pirates and, notwithstanding its impoverishment by years of constant unrest and misgovernment, by absentee ownership of important fiefs, fiscal enactions and debasement of the coinage, the barons were still able to hold out the expectation of a revenue, after deducting the expenses of administration and garrisons, of one hundred thousand gold florins. James of Majorca accepted the summons and appointed Lenoir his hereditary marshal. But he was never destined to see the land of promise which his ancestors had won and held, and like his father he was slain and decapitated on the battlefield, defending his rights against the Aragonese.

The archbishop of Patras had secured his own position by simultaneous negotiations with Venice and Naples. The knights of St. John followed the example of the other ecclesiastical powers and ignored all bonds of allegiance to their sovereign princes. Claims to Achaia were at the same time advanced by the children of Philip of Savoy's second marriage, on the ground that Margaret, his daughter by Isabella Villehardouin, had made over all her rights in the principality to her father. But in spite of the countenance and promised support of Louis, King of Hungary, who saw in them a means of undermining the power of the Neapolitan Angevines, they met with no recognition.

Meanwhile Niccolo Acciajuoli, who had left the Morea in 1341, after a visit to his favourite Certosa, which he found so far advanced in construction that he made provision for its ecclesiastical endowment, returned to Naples and undertook the administration of the household of Louis of Tarentum, Philip's second son, to the advancement of whose fortunes he now devoted all his energies. His eminent services in Achaia had been recompensed with further grants of land in the principality, including all the estates which had formerly belonged to the constable Ghisi in the captanate of Corinth, as well as with an important monopoly of salt. His attention was for some years to come absorbed by the internal and domestic complications which arose in Naples after the death of King Robert, the history of which, in so far as they affect the leading actors on the stage of Achaia, must now be briefly recapitulated.

Joan, the elder of the two daughters of Charles, Duke of Calabria, succeeded her grandfather Robert. She had as a child been affianced to a child cousin, Andrew, second surviving son of Carobert, King of Hungary. The actual marriage ceremony was celebrated shortly before Robert's death in the year 1342, when Andrew had completed his fifteenth and Joan was entering her seventeenth year. By the provisions of Robert's will both the reigning Queen and her consort were to be regarded as minors until they reached the age of twenty-five, government being vested in the Queen-dowager and a representative council. To these conditions they were reluctantly compelled to adhere, although according to the standard of the age both were entitled to consider themselves adults at the accession of Joan in 1343. Her early engagement and marriage seemed effectually to bar the sons of Philip of Tarentum, one of whom their ambitious mother had desired to see upon the throne, from achieving that object by a dynastic marriage. The house of

Durazzo was also thus effectually excluded. The Hungarians who might reasonably have expected that in virtue of his descent from Charles Martel, the eldest son of Charles II of Naples, Robert would have allowed his crown to devolve upon Andrew, or at any rate upon Joan and Andrew conjointly, were also disappointed by the terms of the will. Rivalries and jealousies between Hungarian courtiers and the various groups at the Ange vine court were inevitable. It was not long, moreover, before the young Queen and her consort manifested a serious incompatibility of temper, which the Pope was at great pains to conciliate. Round the question of Andrew's ultimate coronation there grew up a labyrinth of intrigue and counter-intrigue, and when, on the 18th of July 1345, the dead body of the Prince, who had been gagged, strangled, and flung from a balcony, was found in the garden of the palace of Aversa, public opinion tended to inculpate the Queen and her cousins. Her mother-in-law, Elizabeth of Hungary, even went so far as definitely to formulate against her the charge of being privy to his assassination, and her brother-in-law King Louis demanded the fullest investigation. The suspicion was not diminished by the urgent rivalry of the brothers Robert and Louis of Tarentum for the hand of the young widow, and the shadow of the crime also fell across the name of their mother, the Empress Catherine, who showed favour and protection to some of the conspirators directly accused of the assassination, and was indeed in imminent peril of excommunication, when she opportunely died in all the odour of sanctity. In his zeal to divert suspicion from its natural objects Robert associated himself with Charles of Durazzo, and, usurping the functions of the justiciary and of the commission appointed by Rome to investigate the murder, succeeded in extracting a number of confessions by torture. The young Queen herself seems to have been throughout dissociated by the Pope from any complicity, and when on the 25th of December of the same year her son Carlo Martello was born, Clement VI consented to become his godfather. For a while it seemed that Robert of Tarentum, who having obtained possession of Castel Nuovo and the command of the troops, overawed Naples and probably the Queen herself, would succeed in winning her hand, and Joan was indeed induced to apply for the papal dispensation. Clement was however unwilling to facilitate such an alliance until the dark story of Andrew's murder had been cleared up, and after the death of the masterful Catherine, a change seems to have taken place. Robert was locked out of the castle by the Queen's orders, and her inclinations favoured the prospects of his brother Louis, for whom she appears to have had a marked preference. She had commanded her subjects to do homage to the infant Carlo Martello as her heir, and so long as he lived the kingdom of Naples seemed to be once more out of reach of Tarentine ambitions. Robert was himself titular Emperor, as well as Prince of Achaia and Romania. He was therefore content to seek a new alliance and obtained the necessary dispensation to marry Marie de Bourbon, the rich widow of Guy de Lusignan, Prince of Galilee, son of King Hugh of Cyprus. They were married on the 9th of September 1347, and Robert assigned to his wife rents from his Italian estates and domains in Corfu and Cephalonia. Later, apparently not until ten years afterwards, he followed the traditional precedent of Achaian princes by conferring on her Calamata as a portion for the contingency of widowhood. Provision was also made in the Morea for the son of Guy de Lusignan, by the purchase of Vostitza and Nivelet from the wife of Philippe de Joinville.

A fortnight earlier Queen Joan and Louis of Tarentum were wedded, in accordance with the advice of Niccolo Acciajuoli, without waiting for the papal dispensation, which had indeed been virtually promised but not yet issued. Although the marriage took place secretly the Pope had immediate knowledge of it, and the interdict was inevitable. But Clement was prepared to relent on receiving a frank confession. His attitude fully justified

the advice of Acciajuoli, who was well aware that, while the pontiff was obliged to affect compliance with the urgent demands of the Hungarian King for the punishment of his brother's murderers, the dissolution of the Angevine power, on which the temporal position of the Church had so long rested, could not be contemplated with equanimity either by the curia or by the Guelph party, which realised that the security of Italy was threatened by the precarious situation in the kingdom of the Sicilies and the prospect of a Hungarian invasion. Florence had in 1343 expelled her ephemeral Duke, the young Gautier de Brienne, after a brief period of sinister experiences, and declined in her honeymoon of civic independence to make an enemy of King Louis. Rome was at the mercy of Cola di Rienzo, who had attained his extraordinary position largely in consequence of the anarchy at Naples, and Joan and Louis found themselves in the humiliating position of being compelled to sue for his assistance or at least his neutrality. In defiance of Avignon the avenger from Hungary now set out on his progress south. In January 1348, as the Neapolitan troops fell back before him or deserted, Joan fled to Provence whither, when further resistance was clearly hopeless, she was followed by her husband and by Acciajuoli. Louis of Hungary entered Naples. The infant Carlo Martello, who had been left behind, was surrendered to him and transferred to Hungary where he soon afterwards died, and the other Princes of the house of Tarentum who approached the King with those of Durazzo in the hope of making conditions found themselves prisoners. Charles of Durazzo was forthwith arraigned, sentenced to death and executed on the very spot where Andrew had been murdered. Robert of Tarentum and his brother Philip were detained and eventually removed to Visegrad. The advent of the Black Death, which made terrible ravages both in the population of Naples and in the Hungarian army, at length relieved the city from the incubus of foreign occupation.

Meanwhile Joan, who on her arrival in France had been held as a prisoner by the Provençal barons until the Pope ordered her release, was induced by the diplomacy of Acciajuoli to negotiate a deed of sale of Avignon to the papal see, conditioned by a faculty for repurchase if she repaid the 80,000 gold florins which were advanced as its price. This bargain secured her the support of the sacred college. With the sum thus realised Acciajuoli was able to procure galleys from Genoa and mercenaries from Provence, and safely to conduct Joan and Louis back to Naples. The castles and fortresses were still occu-pied by Hungarian garrisons, but Acciajuoli provided funds with which many of the soldiers of fortune in charge were easily bought off, so that the Pope was able to congratulate the Queen on her happy restoration. His constant fidelity in evil times and the invaluable services which he had rendered deserved a conspicuous reward. He was now created hereditary seneschal of the kingdom. The fief of Satriano and the countship of Terlizzi were bestowed upon him, with Matera, Joha, Canosa, and other towns, which he was soon afterwards allowed to exchange for Melfi, the old Norman capital on Mount Vulture which had held out against the Hungarians under his son Lorenzo, together with Nocera and Lettere.

Desultory warfare between the Hungarian and Angevine condottieri continued through 1349, and the King, who had not ceased to demand from the temporising Clement that Joan herself should be subjected to a judicial inquiry, was threatening to return with a fresh army. Meanwhile he was pressing his suit upon the widow of the Duke of Durazzo, whom he had put to death. Clement urged the Neapolitans to remain faithful to their lawful sovereigns, and Acciajuoli laboured prodigiously to uphold their cause. The return of Louis of Hungary, who landed at Manfredonia in December, once more placed the kingdom at

his mercy, but the immense cost of maintaining an expedition so far from home and serious complications in Hungary itself, not less than the condemnation of the Holy See, gave him serious cause for reflection, and in August 1350 a treaty was negotiated, by which it was agreed that a judicial investigation of the Queen's complicity in the murder of Andrew should be held, and that she and her husband should leave the kingdom until this condition was fulfilled. Louis of Hungary was to evacuate Naples, reserving to himself the titular dignities of Salerno and Monte St. Angelo, which he had inherited from his grandfather, and was to release his prisoners on payment of a ransom of 300,000 florins, which he afterward formally renounced. The terms of the treaty were only very partially carried out. Louis on his side evacuated the Sicilies, but Joan and her husband returned after a brief absence from the capital spent at Gaeta and Procida. Nor is there any evidence to show that a trial in any form ever took place. The royal captives in Hungary were not released until 1352, after the coronation of Louis of Tarentum as King-consort had taken place. Acciajuoli, the master statesman, to whose diplomatic skill and financial assistance Joan and Louis owed their emergence from an apparently hopeless position, and Naples its redemption from disruption and chaos, was now at the summit of his influence and prosperity, and inevitably became an object of detraction to the envious. The one shadow on his marvellous record of success was the death at Barletta in 1354 of his eldest son, the gallant Lorenzo, the first of the family to be laid to rest with a princely pomp which attested his parent's love or pride, in that Certosa in Vai d'Ema which bore the name of his patron saint. One of the greatest achievements of his extraordinary career was still to be accomplished, namely, the recovery of the greater part of Sicily in 1355 from the Aragonese dynasty, a task which had baffled all the resources of Naples and the Church for nearly three-quarters of a century, followed by the coronation of his royal master and mistress at Messina. No material rewards could amply compen-sate such services, but further enfeoffments in Italy were followed by his nomination to the countship of Malta and Gozzo, which the reconquest of Sicily had placed once more in the gift of Queen Joan. About the same time he received an investiture which afforded his family the stepping-stone to a principality in Romania.

The rule of Robert of Tarentum in Achaia, exercised through his vicars, was never more than nominal, and during his imprisonment in Hungary and the political confusion in Naples the principality was left to its fate. The raids of the Seljuk Turks, many of whom had gained a knowledge of the topography by mercenary service, became more and more frequent and where the scourge of their presence had passed the grass was not suffered to grow again, and the children were carried off to be sold into slavery. The devastating war between Venice and Genoa, which had broken out in 1350, had reacted on the Morea only a degree less disastrously than on Byzantium itself. The angel of pestilence overshadowed the land with his deadly wing, and the growing depopulation of the country prepared the way for Albanian immigration. The local barons in virtual independence fought out their petty feuds. It is recorded in the Aragonese chronicle that, in the days when the archbishop of Salerno was acting as bailie during the captivity of Robert, a knight of Burgundy named Louis de Chafor, with le Petit de Vilaine and other companions, made himself master of the castle of Arkadia during the absence of its lord, and seized the persons of his wife and daughter, whom with the castle they held up to ransom. Such an episode gained a mention in a summary record because of the great reputation and influence of Erard Lenoir. But otherwise no records exist of these years of anarchy, which the imagination of the traveller who surveys the keeps and battlements which crown, like nests of predatory birds, the escarpments of the historic mountains of Morea, may complete with scenes of gay romance

or bloody raid at will. A sinister twilight broods over the paths where the gods once walked with men, and the storied hills and valleys pass under a mist of silence. It was a blessing for the neglected peninsula when the strong and capable Manuel Cantacuzenus took over the administration of the Byzantine province as Despot of Mistra, concluded peace with the remnant of the Franks, who eventually made common cause with him against the Catalans of the duchy, drove off the Turkish pirates and established an administration to which the barons soon began to look as the real power in the land.

The history of the Catalan dominion in Athens was uneventful under the first vicar-general appointed by Frederick III of Sicily, Ramon Bernardi, James, the son of Alfonso Fadrique, and Gonsales Ximenes d'Arenos. But the death of Gautier de Brienne, who fell fighting the English as constable of France in 1351, relieved them from any fear of a resuscitation of his pretensions. His title it is true passed to Sohier, the son of his sister Isabella and Gautier d'Enghien, and the fiefs of Argos and Nauplia were inherited by Guy, her second son. But the family of Enghien was never in a position to vindicate its claims. The removal from the scene of the most formidable enemy of the Catalans, who had now declined in numbers and were degenerating into habits of luxury and self-indulgence, may have tempted them to contemplate extension towards the Isthmus, and rumours had reached Acciajuoli that preparations were being made in Aragon for an expedition to Greece. The Pope had strongly urged upon the powerful seneschal the duty of saving Achaia from the unbelievers, and he in turn had impressed upon Robert the necessity of appointing a really capable vicar. The Turks had fully realised the importance of Corinth as a basis for the ultimate absorption of the Morea, and the hard-pressed inhabitants despatched an envoy to Naples, a certain Luigi, who had held and defended the castle of St. George at his own costs, to plead their cause. Their previous letters, they complained, had met with no response; their lands were falling out of cultivation, depopulated by the emigration of the scared inhabitants, who were suffering for their loyalty to the dynasty. If help did not come soon they must inevitably fall into the hands of a relentless enemy. Robert in this crisis turned for assistance to Acciajuoli, as the one man able and willing to deal with the situation, and invested him with the captanate of Corinth and all its appurtenances1 by a rescript, dated at Bari the 21st of April 1358. At the same time he annulled all previous concessions made in the captanate, remitted arrears of taxation, and summoned the peasantry who had emigrated to return to their domiciles. A few months later he also exempted Niccolo from any obligations of feudal service due for his possessions in the Morea other than Corinth.

The magnitude of the possessions of Niccolo Acciajuoli is witnessed by the will which he drew up in September 1358, before starting for Avignon on an important mission from the King and Queen. This document is of great length, and the grandiloquence of its style is in keeping with the taste for magnificence which in him was no affectation, though it exasperated many of his Florentine contemporaries and inspired Boccaccio to write of him that he believed himself destined to take part in the councils of the gods. It will be sufficient here to refer to such of his dispositions as directly or indirectly affect Achaia. His eldest son Lorenzo was dead. Three sons, "legitimate and natural", survived him, Angelo, Benedetto and another Lorenzo, who was perhaps the natural son. He had further adopted the children of two kinsmen, Angelo, the son of Alamanno di Monte, and Rainerio or Nerio, the son of Jacopo di Donato. On Angelo, the eldest of his own blood, to whom he had already ceded the countship of Malta, devolved, subject to the approval of his royal master, his hereditary charge of grand seneschal and master of the household; the

countship of Melfi, and the towns associated with it in Basilicata; Tropea, Seminar a, and Ghiraci in Calabria; Nocera, Lettere, and a number of other fiefs; his domains in Cava and Apratina; his Sicilian property in Messina and Palermo to be held in tail male; and, finally, the noble city of Corinth, with all its appurtenances, and all his domains and castles in the principality of Achaia, except those which were especially reserved for his adopted son Angelo di Alamanno. To the latter he left all the lands in Achaia which had formerly belonged to the grand constable, Niccolo Ghisi, on condition that he should succeed in securing the hand of the daughter and heiress of the Duke of the archipelago, Fiorenza Sanudo, who had just been left a widow by the death of Giovanni dalle Carceri. Should the marriage not be concluded, he was to inherit the castle of Vulcano (Messene) and a number of estates in the neighbourhood of Calamata. His sons Benedetto and Lorenzo were provided with ample estates in the kingdom of Naples. To his adopted son Nerio he left property

near Nocera. Princely provision was made for his widow and large legacies were assigned to his sisters Lapa and Andreina, the latter the wife of Charles d'Artois. There were numerous bequests to ecclesiastical foundations and especially to the Certosa of S. Lorenzo, and among them was provision for the construction by the two Angelos within three years of his death of a Benedictine monastery at Petoni, in the captanate of Calamata, with a prior and twelve monks adequately endowed, who were to say masses for his soul.

It appears from a letter addressed to him in 1359 from Avignon that Niccolo at this time contemplated the organisation of a naval expedition which he was to lead in person against the Turks, in defence of the countries where he had such great interests at stake. But the number and extent of his responsibilities in Italy and grave affairs of state made it impossible for him to leave Italy, especially after the death of Louis of Tarentum in 1362, when Joan contracted a new marriage with the young James of Aragon, titular King and son of the last reigning King of Majorca, who does not appear to have ever asserted the claims to Achaia which he might legitimately have advanced. Robert of Tarentum retained the sovereignty and was de facto Prince until his death in 1364. It was, however Niccolo Acciajuoli who really ruled, so far as any effectual government can be said to have been exercised from Naples. It was he who in 1360 induced the Pope to nominate his kinsman, Giovanni di Donato, the brother of his adopted son Nerio, to the vacant see of Patras. The new archbishop firmly upheld the independence which his predecessors had claimed, but his ambitions were rather political than ecclesiastical and, as became a scion of a practical race of business men, he con-templated in the first place the advancement of the family interest in the Morea.

In the will of Niccolo special dispositions had been made in favour of his adopted son Angelo, on condition that he should be successful in securing the hand of Fiorenza Sanudo, the heiress of the archipelago. Her father, Duke Giovanni, died in 1362. Fiorenza as widow of Giovanni dalle Carceri was guardian of his only son Niccolo, who succeeded him as triarch in Euboea. The young Duchess was thus a rich matrimonial prize. But Venice had been watching her suitors with jealous eyes in her anxiety to prevent the Genoese from extending their influence over the islands. The Sanudi had more than once owed great obligations to the Doge for protection which as Venetian citizens they were entitled to crave, and Fiorenza had been induced to give an undertaking that she would not contract a second marriage without the consent of the republic, to which the establishment of a Florentine Acciajuolo in Naxos, reasserting and confirming the feudal

link with Achaia and Naples, was hardly more acceptable than the advent of a Genoese Ricanelli from Chios. The archbishop of Patras was at the same time intriguing to secure her hand for his brother Nerio, now appointed Chamberlain to Marie de Bourbon, while Venice, in order to retain a hold upon the Euboean triarchy as well as upon the Cyclades, instructed her agents to arrange a union between the widow and some collateral member of the house of Sanudo. The archbishop addressed himself to Robert of Tarentum and to Queen Joan, who reminded the Doge that Naxos was vassal to the titular Emperor, and therefore claimed full freedom of action for the Duchess. The reply of Venice to these representations was that Fiorenza was a Venetian citizen, and that the Emperor had shown himself wholly unable to afford the duchy the protection due from a sovereign. The signoria meanwhile adopted a drastic manner of settling the question by forcibly removing Fiorenza to Crete, where she yielded perhaps not unwillingly to the authority of the Doge, and bestowed her hand upon Niccolo Spezzabanda, the son of Guglielmo Sanudo of Negripont and grandson of Duke Marco II. If the hopes of the archbishop and his brother were thwarted by this somewhat arbitrary procedure on the part of Venice, Nerio was enabled before long to secure a foothold in the Morea by the purchase from Marie of Bourbon of the barony of Vostitza and Nivelet, which she had acquired as a patrimony for her son, for whom after her husband's death she began to have wider ambitions.

About the time when the Acciajuoli became a preponderating element in Achaia, another Italian house founded a new petty dynasty in the Ionian Islands under the auspices of Robert of Tarentum. Guglielmo Tocco, who was governor of Corfu for the Angevines from 1328 to 1335, had married Marguerita Orsini, the sister of the Despots Nicholas and John of Cephalonia and Epirus, and had acquired with her hand half of the island of Zante. The Epirote despotate was practically absorbed by the Servians, and the last male of the Cephalonian line, Nicephorus, died in 1358. Leonardo Tocco, the son of Guglielmo, who was in the household of Robert of Tarentum in the year 1353, then assumed the title of Count of Cephalonia and Zante, and was created a Count Pala-tine by his patron. His marriage with the daughter of Niccolo Acciajuoli's sister Lapa1 was no doubt favourable to his ambitions, and he before long acquired possession also of Leucadia with its fortress of Sta. Maura, and took the additional title of Duke of Leucadia and lord of Vonitza. His successors eventually recovered possession of many of the old Epirote territories on the mainland.

Robert of Tarentum died in 1364. He left no children, and his brother Philip succeeded to his title to the Empire and his rights in Romania, claiming therefore not only the sovereignty over but also the immediate inheritance of Achaia. He despatched an envoy to the Morea with letters to the barons, who met at Clarenza and agreed to send Centurione Zaccaria to Tarentum to invite from the Prince the customary oath of fidelity to the usages of the principality. Philip then appointed a bailie to receive the homage of the barons who had recognised his title. On the other hand, Robert's widow, whose son Hugh of Galilee had been excluded from the succession in Cyprus, hoped to find compensation for him in Achaia, and while she could count on the loyalty of some of her late husband's officers in charge of strong positions there, she was well aware that Philip had no means of vindicating his rights by force. During a parley, Guillaume de Talay, captain of Zonklon, detained Philip's bailie, Simone del Poggio, a prisoner in the name of Marie de Bourbon, and internal warfare thus once more broke out among the Frankish partisans. She obtained support from Peter Lusignan, who was ready to assist his nephew in an enterprise which left his own claims to Cyprus uncontested. An expedition was

accordingly organised with the object of reducing the barons of the opposing faction to submission.

A fortunate accident has preserved from destruc-tion a document which was drawn up for Marie de Bourbon in the year which elapsed between her second husband's death and that of the grand seneschal, containing a list of the castles of Achaia, both those in the domain of the Prince, and those occupied by the barons. It had long been the practice to divide the principality into three provinces, namely, Morea, including the old Achaia and Elis: Escorta, corresponding roughly with the confines of the ancient Arcadia, portions of which however were now once more in the possession of the Greeks; and Calamata, which comprehended Messenia, and extended to the spurs of Taygetus, occupied by the Slavonian tribes, who practically independent nominally recognised the governor of Mistra. In this document the provinces are increased to four by the subdivision of Morea into the "plain of Morea," the maritime plains on the west, and Vlisiri (Grisera) practically coterminous with Triphylia. It is significant, in view of the attitude which he now adopted, that in the list of the barons holding castles is included the archbishop of Patras, whereas in the list drawn up for the Empress Catherine by Bojano, he is not referred to among the vassals.

What part the grand seneschal took in the dispute between Philip and his sister-in-law can only be left to conjecture. Unable to return to the Morea in person he appointed his kinsman, Jacopo the son of Donato, in January 1365, to be his vicar in Corinth and Achaia, and, on the death of the archbishop of Patras some months later, he was successful in obtaining from the Pope the nomination of his adopted son Angelo di Alamanno, who had renounced matrimonial ambitions and entered the Church, in place of the candidate supported by Venice, to the highest ecclesiastical office in the peninsula and the wealthy barony which accompanied the see. At the end of the same year his brilliant and strenuous career was cut short by death at the comparatively early age of fifty-five.

Few men have accomplished more or met with such universal success in such ambitious and critical enterprises, as this son of an illegitimate member of the great Florentine banking-house, whose life-story affords one of the earliest illustrations of the influence which the command of great resources can exercise in political life. On such a personality the verdicts of his contemporaries will naturally differ very widely. While on the one hand it is recorded of him that his personal tastes and habits were simple and unaffected a brilliant man of letters, who had in early life re-ceived acknowledged benefits from him, afterwards reviled the magnificent founder of the Certosa in unmeasured terms as a would-be Maecenas, a dishonest Midas and a satellite of criminals, while a serious historian of his native city reproached him with exhibiting the characteristics of a modern Sardanapalus. Boccaccio, who while still a boy had accompanied his father to Naples, where the brilliant life of the young Princes of the Angevine court sug-gested the scene which he has reproduced in his Fiametta, remained there till after he had grown to manhood and became intimate with Niccolo, who befriended him in the days when fortune was his foe. But the poet's gratitude was not proof against the test of time. His father appears to have been in partnership with the Bardi, who were at one time associated in business with the Acciajuoli. When however the latter house, whose branch establishments throughout the Levant enabled them to develop their operations with phenomenal success, in course of time eclipsed the older firm of Bardi, which was practically ruined by the English king's repudiation of his debts and the misgovernment of

Gautier de Brienne, Boccaccio no longer found anything good to say of his former friend and patron. There was at least one reconciliation, and his own correspondence makes it clear that in 1363 he was invited to Naples to place his brilliant pen at the service of the seneschal. But offended at the treatment he received there he denounced the career he had been summoned to glorify, and indited the well-known invective which does as little credit to the author as to the subject.

Niccolo Acciajuoli was buried in the subterranean chapel which he had constructed as a mausoleum under the church of his Certosa, where his marble effigy sculptured by the contemporary hand of Orcagna faithfully reproduces the typical strong features of the great seneschal, lying under a canopy in full armour on his bier. Close by lie his father, his sister Lapa, and Lorenzo, the son of so great promise. How many of those who look on this fine and suggestive work of the fourteenth century realise what manner of man he was who lies beneath it, or are aware of the marvellous record of his thirty years of strenuous achievement and the associations which link his name with the glory that was Greece!

Angelo Acciajuoli succeeded him both at Corinth and in the other titles which, in accordance with his will, were bequeathed to the eldest son. The con-tinued possession of the captanate of Corinth, however, required the confirmation of the legitimate overlord, and this Philip of Tarentum duly accorded to Angelo in a diploma dated the 7th of November 1366, in which he styles himself Emperor, Despot of Romania, Prince of Achaia and Tarentum. In 1371 Philip erected the captanate into a county Palatine in favour of Angelo and his heirs. Angelo had however already in 1367 recalled Jacopo from Corinth and replaced him by Nerio, to whom he mortgaged the barony. His descendants never redeemed it, and Nerio remained in possession, linking up the Isthmus with his barony of Vostitza, and succeeding to the para-mount position in the Morea acquired by his adoptive father.

As Niccolo Acciajuoli was indebted for the foundation of his fortunes in the Morea to Catherine de Valois, so Nerio, the favourite of Marie de Bourbon, owed it to her that he was enabled in 1364 to become the purchaser of Vostitza, and thus first acquire a footing in the land where he was destined to conduct the fortunes of his house to a still more triumphant issue. He must therefore have found himself in a somewhat difficult situation when Marie and her son Hugh, early in 1366, conducted a considerable army of mercenaries recruited in Cyprus and Provence to the peninsula, and found themselves opposed by his adoptive brother, Angelo, archbishop of Patras, who, realising that his autonomy was menaced, took up the cause of Philip of Tarentum. The archbishop could only set against the 6000 horsemen and all the infantry of which the invading army is reported to have been composed, a little force of 700. But he was fortunate in being able to command the services of a very remarkable man, who had already won his spurs and scars both in Italy and in fighting the Turks, and who was destined to become one of the greatest, if not the greatest of all the captains of Venice, namely, the illustrious Carlo Zeno, now a canon of Patras, where he had in early days received a cure of souls from the Pope. He valiantly defended the citadel of Patras, and by his skilful dispositions not only compelled Hugh to raise the siege and withdraw, but was enabled himself to take the offensive, and eventually to drive the invaders altogether out of northern Achaia, and carrying the war into the enemy's quarters to lay siege to the castle at Zonklon. According to the Aragonese chronicle assistance was invited and obtained from the Enghiens of Argos and Navplia, who were bound to the Lusignans by ties of relationship. The distracted

principality was thus once more a prey to the raids and forays of foreign mercenaries. At this crisis it happened that Amedeo VI, Count of Savoy, touched at Modon on his way to Constantinople, with an army of French and Italian troopers, carried in ships hired from Genoa and Marseilles, in response to an appeal from his kinsman, the Emperor Johannes V, who, hard pressed by the Ottoman Turks and seeking for alliances, had been treacherously detained as a prisoner by the Prince of Bulgaria with the connivance of his own undutiful son Andronicus. This new crusade, brilliantly conducted by the chivalrous Amedeo, gave the tottering empire a fresh lease of life. He succeeded in driving the Turks out of Gallipoli, and after a hard campaign against the Bulgarians, effected the Emperor's release.

At Modon messengers reached him from Marie, who craved his assistance in the name of his wife, her niece, Bonne de Bourbon. He at once proceeded to Zonklon and compelled the beleaguering army to raise the siege. After listening to the representations of the archbishop he offered his services as arbitrator, and by the terms of his award the Empress widow and her son renounced all further claims on Patras, while Angelo in return for the recognition of his independence agreed to pay an indemnity. Carlo Zeno was sent to Clarenza to raise the necessary funds and announce the conclusion of peace. The dissatisfaction expressed at the result of what he described as a betrayal by a certain Messire Simon, led to a challenge from Carlo Zeno, which he refused to abandon when directed to do so by the archbishop, who consequently deprived him of his ecclesiastical position. Circumstances had however long since made him a soldier, and not a churchman. Readily resigning his benefices, he married a wealthy lady of Patras and proceeded to the court at Naples, where Philip appointed him his vicar in Achaia. He thereupon returned, and establishing himself at Clarenza, held the northern section of the principality for Philip till the year 1369, while Hugh of Galilee remained paramount in the south. The subsequent vicissitudes of his remarkable career belong to Venetian history. The ambition of Marie and her son to extend their authority over Coron and Modon brought them into conflict with Venice, and the peace with the archbishop appeared to be compromised when the death of King Peter of Cyprus in 1369 created a diversion, and the minority of his son offered Hugh of Galilee a prospect of recovering his position in that island. He hastened therefore to make his peace with Venice, and claimed the regency in Cyprus. But here also his hopes were doomed to disappointment and, having lost the vantage-ground which he had acquired in the Morea, he formally renounced the guardianship of Peter II at Rome in January 1370, and on the 4th of March in that year he was glad to sign an agreement with Philip of Tarentum by which, in return for an annual payment of 6000 florins, he and Marie of Bourbon abandoned all their claims in Achaia, save his mother's legitimate rights to Calamata, as widow of a reigning Prince.

Philip II of Tarentum remained sole ruler of Achaia, where his bailie, Baldassare de Sorba, a Genoese, found his position no sinecure. It was not made easier for him by his nationality, in view of the inherited difficulties with the Venetians, under whose protection the archbishop of Patras, now a Piacentini of Parma, had placed his barony which was efficiently guarded by two of their fighting galleys. But the Prince did not long survive the settlement contracted with his sister-in-law, and died at Naples in 1373. Although he was twice married, first to the widow of Charles of Durazzo, and secondly to Elizabeth of Hungary, all his children died in infancy, and the succession to his rights and titles was claimed by Francis, Duke of Andria, who had married Philip's sister Margaret after the death of her first husband, Edward Balliol of Scotland, on behalf of their son Jacques de

Baux. Queen Joan however, as sovereign in Italy, declined to recognise Philip's nephew as universal heir, and the Duke of Andria, attempting to make good his son's claims to Tarentum by force, was defeated and compelled to fly the country. Nor did the prospects of the new titular Emperor seem at this period more favourable in Achaia, where the barons, whose one ambition was to be left to themselves, determined to offer their homage to Joan. With this object Leonardo Tocco, Count of Cephalonia, Erard Lenoir, Centurione Zaccaria, and Misito of Escorta were despatched to treat with her as plenipotentiaries.

The Queen accepted the offer, and assumed the title of Princess of Achaia. She did not long retain it in person, and the brief period of her administra-tion, exercised through her bailie Francesco di Sanseverino, was devoted to cultivating improved relations with Venice. Joan was now fifty years of age, and the early death of her third husband James of Aragon had left her once more a widow. In such troublesome times as those in which her latter years were cast a queen with many enemies stood in need of a strong arm to defend her, and as she had no surviving children the position of a prince-consort at Naples was one which offered great opportunities to the ambitious. Her choice of a protector fell upon Otho of Brunswick, a prominent leader in the band of English and German soldiers of fortune who had come to Italy under the command of Albert Stertz, and a companion-in-arms of John Hawkwood, who became famous as the captain of that company of free-lances. Soon after their marriage she invested her young and martial husband with the principalities of Tarentum and Achaia. But in the distracted condition of affairs at home it was evident that his absence from Italy could not be contemplated, and that his rule in the Morea could only be exercised by deputy.

With the transfer of authority to the knights of Rhodes as his lessees in the peninsula, the history of Achaia enters upon a new and final phase. The succeeding epoch of conflicting claims and provisional administrations lies beyond the period covered by the chronicles, and beyond that of the more or less legitimate Frankish Princes. Others were still to bear the title for years to come as Princes *in partibus*, and two more at least were actually to reign as successful adventurers. For this final phase ample historic materials may be found in the Venetian archives and the last Byzantine writers, if the personal touch of the chronicler is wanting. Indeed the decline and fall of the Frankish dynasties might well form the subject of a separate study. It can, however, only be dealt with very summarily here in a concluding chapter.

CHAPTER XIV

THE EPILOGUE

OTHO OF BRUNSWICK AND THE KNIGHTS OF RHODES- JACQUES DE BAUX AND THE NAVARRESE COMPANY — PIERRE DE SAN SUPERAN — CENTURIONE ZACCARIA—THE GREEK RESTORATION

With the exception of a brief visit paid by Urban V to the city of the Apostles, the Popes had now been for upwards of seventy years absentees under French protection in Avignon. But the prayers and exhortations of two enthusiastic and visionary women, Bridget, the widow of the Swede Olaf Gudmarson, and Catherine, the daughter of a Sienese dyer, had at length borne fruit. The Swedish sybil who long haunted the desolation of Rome had passed away, but the Tuscan saint, who had been deputed as envoy from Italy to Avignon, was not yet thirty years of age when she witnessed the return of Gregory XI as he entered the almost depopulated city from the Ostian Way by the Gate of St. Paul on the 17th of January 1377. The banner of the Church was then borne before him by the future grand-master of the military order of St. John, Juan Fernandez de Heredia, who had commanded the fleet of galleys which escorted the Pontiff to Italy.

To this remarkable man, illustrious no less for his patronage of learning than for his zeal in the cause 215 of his order against the infidel, Otho of Brunswick entrusted the administration of Achaia, when shortly after his arrival in Italy Heredia was appointed to the grand-mastership. A lease of the principality was conceded to the knights for a term of five years, during which they were engaged to pay an annual sum of 4000 ducats from the usufruct. According to the Aragonese chronicle which, having been compiled for Heredia himself, must be accepted as accurate with regard to these arrangements, a brother of the order, Daniele di Caretto, was despatched as bailie to Achaia to make known the decision of the sovereign Prince and to receive the homage of the barons at Clarenza, and there he soon afterwards died. The galleys which had convoyed the papal retinue transported Heredia and his knights, supported by mercenaries from Naples, to the Morea where he was well received by the notables. His ambition was by no means confined to the reorganisation of the principality. He contemplated the reconquest of all the territories which had drifted away from their western masters. Thus his first objective was Lepanto, where an Albanian chieftain, Ghin Bua Spatas, in cordial relations with the Turks, had now

established himself. Supported by the archbishop of Patras he succeeded in recapturing this important fortress, which was once again incorporated in the administration of Achaia. Thence he advanced upon Arta, the old capital of the despotate of Epirus, which Spatas had made his headquarters. But the Albanian had prepared an ambush into which the grand-master unwarily fell, to endure the humiliation of being sold for a price to the Turks, who anticipated the realisation of a handsome profit from his ransom. Deprived of their capable and zealous leader the knights of St. John once more lost Lepanto in 1380, and about the same time were brought into conflict with a still more redoubtable enemy in the company of Navar-rese mercenaries in the service of Jacques de Baux which now entered the Morea from the duchy of Athens. The 9000 ducats derived annually from the land tax in the principality were barely adequate to meet the cost of the rent which the knights had undertaken to pay, the expenses of their garrisons and the subventions to the barons, not to mention heavy payments at one time made to these Navarrese for their co-operation. Moreover, in spite of several tentatives at a composition, they were unable as vicars for Otho of Brunswick permanently to attract to their side the formidable adventurers who had sold their swords to a rival, and who speedily overran a great part of the principality. They were therefore compelled to renounce the ambition which Heredia had inspired of establishing a second Rhodes in the Morea and withdrew before the term of their five years' lease had run out.

From Naples no assistance against the new invaders of Achaia had been forthcoming, for the great schism of the Church had brought disaster to Joan and her husband. Gregory XI had died a year after his return to Italy. In the sacred college the ultramontane cardinals were in an overwhelming majority, though divided by acute rivalry between the French and the Limousin groups. Scared into a hasty decision, as they afterwards asserted, by the menacing attitude of the Roman populace, which feared a fresh withdrawal to Avignon, and convinced that neither of the ultramontane parties would support a candidate of the rival faction, the sacred college broke the tradition of many years and concurred in electing an Italian, Bartolommeo di Prignano, archbishop of Bari, who ascended the papal throne for which the future showed him to have possessed few qualifications as Urban VI. Otho of Brunswick was despatched to Rome to convey to the new Pope, a Neapolitan by birth, the congratulations of the Queen, who counted on his support for the design which she had formed of settling the reversion of the Angevine throne on her young husband. But Joan was too closely and inevitably identified with the French party in the Church, whose uncompromising hostility the Pope had good reason to appreciate immediately after his election, for her advances to be well received, and the Duke was treated with scant ceremony. The jealousies of the ultramontanes had placed an Italian at the head of the Church, but the cardinals had no sooner realised that his nationality involved the definite and permanent removal of the curia from Avignon than they all united against the creature of their compromise. So little sympathy did the person of the new pontiff inspire that even the four Italian cardinals were prepared to agree to the invalidation of Urban's election on the plea that it had been car-ried out under the menacing pressure of the Roman mob. The schismatic college lost no time in electing an Antipope in the person of the cardinal archbishop of Geneva, who took the name of Clement VII. In his difficulties Urban perceived the advantage of having a dependent on the throne of Naples deriving his authority, as Charles of Anjou had done, from the investiture of the Church. The sympathies manifested for the French party by Joan, who in a critical time had owed everything to the Avignon Popes, afforded him his opportunity. No sooner had the tide turned in his favour in Rome than he summoned her kins-man,

Charles, the son of Louis of Durazzo, and grand-son of John of Gravina, who had been brought up at the court of King Louis of Hungary, to put into execution a sentence of deposition which he pronounced against the Queen on the 13th of April 1380. She replied by formally adopting as her successor Louis of Anjou, the brother of the French King, a choice which the Antipope at Avignon eagerly confirmed. In Italy however the cause of Urban and the arms of Charles of Durazzo triumphed, though the churches at Rome had to be stripped and their sacred vessels thrown into the melting-pot to provide the sinews of war. Otho of Brunswick fought manfully to defend his Queen, but was defeated and taken prisoner, while Joan herself, besieged in the Castello del Uovo, was compelled to surrender in the summer of 1381, and Charles was invested with the kingdom of the Sicilies. In the footsteps of the conqueror followed Jacques de Baux who during the confusion which prevailed in the kingdom was enabled to gain possession of Tarentum.

Heredia, now released from captivity, but deprived by Urban of his grand-mastership, withdrew to Avignon, where Clement was rallying partisans to the support of Louis of Anjou, who with all the power of France behind him was preparing to contest the throne of Naples. His arrival in Italy the following year with a numerous army, in which Amedeo of Savoy held a command, was the death-warrant of the unfortunate Queen, too dangerous to the ambitions of Charles III to be allowed to live. Removed from Naples to the castle of Muro, she there suffered the same fate as her first husband Andrew of Hungary, and was strangled by the command of the king with a silken cord. Five years later Charles himself was destined to perish by the hand of an assassin. Misfortune had indeed dogged the footsteps of the Neapolitan house of Anjou, and shade after shade had prematurely descended in atonement to the manes of the Hohenstaufens.

The disaster of Joan and her husband was the opportunity of Jacques de Baux. The fourteenth century had witnessed the rise of those professional military adventurers who were known in Italy as condottieri. Companies of free-lances who sold their swords to the highest bidder then first began to play an important part in the political system. The old spirit of chivalry which had grown up during the crusades had disappeared with the enthusiasms which called it into being, and the noble and the knight without any occupation save the profession of arms or any definite cause to uphold had degenerated into the mercenary captain. The new communes and commercial republics, with a burgher class rapidly acquiring wealth by their industry, but unaccustomed to the use of arms, gave employment to the wandering troopers, to whom they entrusted their defence and the promotion of their interests, instead of maintaining standing armies recruited from their own citizens. Such were the bands of Laudon, of Hans of Bongard, of Albert Stertz and Hawkwood. Such a band had been recruited in his own country by Louis of Navarre, better known as Louis d'Evreux, the son of Philip III of Navarre, during the war which broke out between his brother Charles II and Charles V of France. On the restoration of peace in 1366 he married Joan, the daughter and heiress of that Charles of Durazzo who fell a victim of the vengeance of King Louis of Hungary, and it would appear that a number of his troopers accompanied him to Naples when he there took up his residence. A great part of the Epirote possessions which his wife had inherited had been occupied by the Albanian chief Thopia, who in 1368 succeeded in carrying the rich commercial port of Durazzo itself. The story of the various attempts made by Louis d'Evreux to expel the intruders is lost in obscurity, but it appears that in the years 1375 and 1376 a great final effort was made to dislodge the Albanians, and a number of fresh recruits were engaged for service there with the assistance of his brother Charles III of Navarre. Louis himself appears to have died in

1376, probably while fighting in Albania, and the Navarrese then disappear from history until the year 1380, when the company reappears in the service of Jacques de Baux, engaged by him for the reconquest of his Greek principality, while he himself was occupied in the attempt to recover his Italian inheritance of Tarentum. Mahiot de Coquerel, or Maiotto de Coccarelli as he is called in the Italian records, a chamberlain of the King of Navarre, who already in the days of Louis d'Evreux had been one of the principal leaders of the company, was appointed his bailie in Romania by Jacques de Baux, while the two chief military captains were Berard de Varyassa and Pierre de San Superan, also known as Peter Bordo. The knights of Rhodes were actually in occupation of Achaia as the lessees of Otho of Brunswick, and Maiotto, after first transporting the company to Corfu, which was annexed in the name of Jacques de Baux, selected the line of least resistance and advanced into the duchy, theoretically a vassal state of the principality, where a division of parties ensuing on the death of Frederick III of Sicily and the contested succession to the kingdom and to Athens itself, seemed to offer a favourable opportunity for a successful raid.

During the precarious rule over Achaia of the absentee Angevine princes and the long interlude of the Catalan occupation in the duchy, the old relations between the two Frankish states were permanently interrupted. The history of Athens under the vice-regents of the Sicilian kings and the latter-day Florentine dukes lies really outside the scope of the present study, and will therefore only be very summarily outlined here up to the point at which the Frankish epoch in Achaia closes. In Euboea also the feudal link with the principality had long been little more than a tradition, and the power of Venice and her bailies in Negripont had now completely overshadowed the semblance of authority to which the triarchs made pretence in the interior of the island. Pietro dalle Carceri, who had united two-thirds of the Lombard possessions, and was the last Terziero to show some spirit of independence, died in 1340, and his son Giovanni being then still a minor, his widow assumed the regency and placed herself under the protection of Venice. Giovanni dalle Carceri married Fiorenza Sanudo, the heiress of Naxos and the Archipelago, but died soon afterwards in 1358, leaving an infant son, Niccolo, under the guardianship of a mother over whom, as has been seen in the previous chapter, Venice exercised a very efficient control. The Ghisis who owned the remaining third of the island remained also, in spite of occasional deflections, obedient servants of the republic on which they were dependent for galleys to protect their possessions in Tinos and Myconos as well as in Euboea itself. A new stock of feudal nobles, bound by the ties of citizenship to Venice, had moreover grown up and achieved a position of influence in the island, such as the Tiberti and the Saracini, from which family Nerio Acciajuoli had chosen his bride. One further step was necessary to consolidate her power and guarantee her against any further apprehension of intrigues on the part of her untrustworthy neighbours beyond the Euripus, namely, the acquisition of Carystos, which strategical position she had made more than one attempt to acquire by purchase. After accepting a contract of sale in 1359, which he immediately afterwards repudiated, Bonifazio Fadrique, lord of 2Egina and Carystos, finally transferred the latter together with Larmena to Venice in 1365 for a sum of 6000 ducats. The house of dalle Carceri became extinct in 1383, and the Ghisis of Euboea died out seven years later. There remained no other rival to dispute her possession of the island.

After a brief tenure of office in the duchy by Gonsalvo Ximenes d'Arenos in 1359, Frederick III had despatched thither as vicar-general his seneschal Matteo Moncada, one of the most powerful and capable of his barons. But the internal situation in Sicily did not

admit of his prolonged absence from the island, and after his recall the government remained in the hands of Roger de Luria, the marshal of Athens, a member of the family of the great admiral. A combination of menacing conditions confronted him. Domestic quarrels divided the Catalans, who were following the example of the Moreote barons and assuming an attitude of independence. The pressure of the Albanians on their borders, the dread of the advancing Turks, who under Murad I had recently occupied Tzurulon and Didymoteichon, the hostility of the Despot at Mistra and of the Enghiens at Argos were for the moment outweighed by the more immediate danger of war with Venice and her bailie in Euboea, for which the oppressive fiscal policy of Roger himself was mainly responsible. In these perplexities he adopted the desperate expedient of inviting the assistance of the Turks, and suffered them to occupy Thebes, which he thus took the opportunity of punishing for disaffection. The news of a Moslem occupation in the duchy produced consternation in the west and Frederick hastened to send Moncada back. He was successful in inducing the Turks to evacuate Thebes, and Roger de Luria, whose influence at this time quite overshadowed that of the rival house of Aragon, was in spite of his initial error once more provisionally entrusted with the administration. The conditions of peace with Venice, which had remained in the state of a perpetually reviving truce, were renewed, but the republic was enabled to turn the occasion to account by now concluding the bargain with Bonifazio Fadrique for the transfer of Carystos, which had hitherto encountered unqualified opposition from the Catalans. Warned by former experience, Roger refrained from further entanglements with the Turks, and in 1367 beat off a piratical attack which they made on the city of Athens. His conspicuous services on this occasion, and the firmness with which he dealt with the anarchical barons, led to his definite appointment as vicar-general, which office he held until his death in 1371.

Towards the close of his administration the house of Enghien essayed to enlist the co-operation of Venice in one more attempt to recover the duchy from the demoralised Catalans, but the Signoria, which was not wanting in pleasant words of goodwill for the inheritors of the claims of Brienne, explained that the republic had renewed its truce with the duchy and could therefore offer no material support. Nevertheless Guy d'Enghien and his brothers did appeal to arms and, according to the Aragonese chronicle, the Count of Conversano, who was representing Philip of Tarentum in Achaia at the time when Hugh of Galilee withdrew to Cyprus, invaded the duchy and obtained temporary possession of the lower town of Athens. He was however unable to reduce the citadel, and sickness soon compelled him to withdraw. In any case the efforts of the Enghiens remained consistently unsuccessful, and peace was eventually concluded on the understanding that Guy's infant daughter and heiress should be betrothed to John the son of Roger, who would eventually thus become lord of Argos and Nauplia in virtue of the title of his wife. The projected marriage was never realised. The young de Luria became, under circumstances which history has not recorded, the prisoner of the Count of Conversano, who after the death of Guy solicited the protection of Venice for his niece. In 1377 she was escorted to the Lagoons and married to the patrician Pietro Cornaro. Ten years later he died without issue, and Marie d'Enghien was compelled to sell her inherit-ance to the republic.

Meanwhile the rapid progress in Europe of Murad I, who had established his capital at Adrianople, reducing the hapless Johannes Palaeologus to the humiliating position of a tributary, had thoroughly scared the western powers. By his brilliant campaign in 1366 the chivalrous Amedeo of Savoy had rescued the fallen Emperor from the clutches of his treacherous Bulgarian foes, and had for a moment checked the wave of Moslem advance.

But his expedition overseas was only a passing episode, and as soon as he withdrew, the resistless tide rolled on. Like the last Baldwin when the Greeks were at his gates, the Greek Emperor in his turn now wandered through the courts of Europe, fruitlessly appealing for help, and in 1369, during the brief sojourn of Urban V in Rome, he did homage to the pontiff and, in his desperate straits, consented to the union of the Churches. Urban was ready enough to accept his formal submission, but was able or willing to do little for him. On the other hand his more enterprising successor Gregory XI took up the cause of the threatened Frankish dynasties in Romania, and summoned all the states which had interests in the Levant to meet at a congress in September 1373 and discuss the project of a new crusade. Thebes was chosen as the place of meeting, a selection which not only indicated that the Catalans were restored to grace, but was also intended to insure the loyalty of that restless and unscrupulous element. The Pope's appeal was addressed both to the reigning and to the titular Emperor, the latter being at that time Philip of Tarentum, to the Kings of Hungary and Sicily, the regent in Cyprus, the republics of Venice and Genoa, the vicar-general of Athens, and the knights of Rhodes. Nerio Acciajuoli also received an invitation and welcomed the occasion of his first public recognition as ruler of Corinth, which neither Angelo nor his heirs had shown any disposition to redeem. Together with such representatives of the greater powers as responded to the summons there appeared at Thebes Niccolo dalle Carceri, Duke of the Archipelago, Bartolommeo Quirini, bailie of Negripont, Tocco of Leucadia, Francesco Giorgio of Bodonitza, and Matteo Peralta as regent for the duchy. But no agreement was possible among so many discordant elements. So little in fact did the conference tend to any improvement in mutual relations in Romania, that in the following year the enterprising lord of Corinth, who had not neglected the opportunity afforded him for observing the demoralised state of the Catalan power, found a ready pretext for declaring war on the duchy, and flung his mercen-aries into Megara, the half-way house on the road to Athens.

On Peralta's death Louis, lord of Salona, the grand-son of Alfonso Fadrique, was selected by the Catalan parliament to act as governor, and Frederick III confirmed the appointment in 1376. In the following year the King himself died, leaving only a daughter, who was still under age, and an illegitimate son. Both in Sicily and Athens a strong party contested the legality not less than the expediency of the female succession. At the head of the party which opposed the rights of Maria in the duchy stood Louis Fadrique, the vicar-general, and with him were the sons of Roger de Luria, the Peraltas, the Puig-Paradines, and the majority of the greater feudatories. The legitimist party was led by the Marquis of Bodonitza, always a somewhat unwilling vassal of the Catalan state, and was also supported by Bonifazio Fadrique of Aegina, who had long been at feud with his brother. Peter IV of Aragon contested the rights of Maria in Sicily in virtue of the provisions of the will of Frederick II, which excluded the succession of a princess, and the parliament of barons in the duchy invited him at the same time to assume the title of Duke of Athens and Neo-Patras. Peter accepted the proposal with alacrity, but the vicar-general whom he appointed, Dalman de Roccaberti, did not present himself until 1381, and in the meantime Jacques de Baux's Navarrese had seized the opportunity afforded by the internal divisions in the duchy to endeavour to make good for their employer a title which theoretically embraced all the states once vassal to Achaia. The party which opposed the claim of Aragon made their way easy, and it appears from a letter addressed by King Peter to Heredia that Niccolo dalle Carceri, growing restive under the tutelage of Venice, also entered into negotiations with the leaders. The Navarrese rapidly overran Boeotia and Attica. Galceran Peralta, marching to meet them, was defeated and taken prisoner. Thebes made no

resistance, and Livadia fell after a brief defence in which its captain met his death. The Greeks, who had small cause to love the Catalans, in many cases opened the gates of the fortresses. There was a general exodus of refugees to Euboea, which also lay at their mercy, as Venice was in no position to defend her interests after the deadly struggle with Genoa, which broke out in 1377 over the disputed possession of Tenedos, and remained memorable for the heroic deeds of the respective leaders Carlo Zeno and Ettore Pisani. It is possible that the friendly attitude of Niccolo dalle Carceri secured the island from invasion. His relations on this occasion with the Navarrese Company mark the last appearance of the familiar name of this historic Veronese family in the history of Romania. Salona held out bravely against the invaders, defended probably by Louis Fadrique in person and Zeitoun, another of his castles, was covered by the Count of Mitre, who had fifteen hundred Albanians in his pay. Resistance was also maintained at a number of other isolated points. Galceran Peralta succeeded in effecting his escape, and got safely into the Acropolis at Athens where he put heart into the defenders. Making sorties from the fortress, he soon recovered the city also, and eventually pressed the Navarrese so closely that, anticipating the speedy arrival of reinforcements from Aragon, they abandoned Attica and passed on into the Peloponnesus, before King Peter's viceroy reached the Piraeus with his fleet. What attitude Nerio Acciajuoli at this critical moment assumed towards the adventurers who marched in the name of Jacques de Baux, and who must have either traversed or at any rate coasted along his territories, there is no evidence to show. If, in view of the designs which he himself cherished, satisfaction at the weakening of his Catalan neighbours inspired a benevolent neutrality, it was ill repaid by the attack on his barony of Vostitza, which was the first feat of arms of the Navarrese in the peninsula.

Maiotto de Coccarelli himself was not indisposed to come to terms with the knights of St. John, against their common enemy in the duchy, and it appears from the accounts of the order that certain payments were actually made to the company. But the majority of the Catalans refused to recognise any other master than Jacques de Baux. Heredia was still a prisoner and, discouraged by the hopelessness of their task with this powerful element in opposition, the Order abandoned the Morea to its fate. The Navarrese went on to Zonklon and took possession of the castle. If, as has been contended, the fortress was now renamed Navarino, after its new masters, they had only to add an initial letter to the old name of St. Omer's castle. Using this position as a base, they made themselves masters of Calamata and Andrusa, the seat of the high court, and of late regarded as the capital of the principality. With the Venetian governors at Modon and Coron they entered into neighbourly relations and concluded a modus vivendi, which was signed by Maiotto as bailie of Achaia and Lepanto, and by San Superan as leader of the band. Varvassa early disappears from the scene, having perished at the hand of an assassin. Erard Lenoir of Arkadia, Zaccaria and Misito came to terms with them, and retained possession of their domains. The other baronies and fiefs, including the vast estates of the Acciajuoli, were divided among the new comers, while Maiotto held the crown lands for a phantom Prince. Thus without effort or opposition the Navarrese Company became and remained de facto masters in the Moreote principality. Jacques de Baux, in whose name the occupation had been effected, though summoned by Charles III to surrender the territories of which he had taken possession, was also successful in retaining Tarentum until his death in 1383. He was then found to have followed the precedent set by Queen Joan and to have made a will in favour of Louis of Anjou.

In the duchy the company continued for a short time to hold Thebes and Livadia.

Roccaberti had arrived in 1381 with a powerful fleet, and had restored some semblance of order there. But in the following year he was recalled, and Ramon di Villanova, who then acted for him, succeeded in expelling the other Navarrese garrisons. Corfu also about the same time rose against the officers who exercised authority in the name of the titular Emperor, and the notables offered their submission to Charles III. Four years later, after the assassination of Charles in Hungary, the Captain of the Gulf, with the connivance of many of the leading citizens, took possession of the island for Venice, under whose rule it then permanently fell. The republic was rapidly enclosing the ruins of the Frankish states with a ring of outposts. Euboea was practically hers, and the Cyclades and Sporades for the most part subject to her influence. Corfu at the entrance of the Adriatic was another link in a chain which ran through Modon and Coron to Argos and Navplia, already under her protectorate and about to be purchased outright.

Meanwhile the astute and enterprising Florentine, who had recently added Megara to the narrow bounds of his domains on the Isthmus and who thoroughly appreciated playing the part of a feudal baron, watched his opportunities for further extension at the expense of the Catalans and, while enlisting additional mercenaries in his service with the ample revenues he derived from his trading establishments, maintained peace with the Navarrese in spite of considerable provocation, and established cordial relations with the Greeks at Mistra. Nor had he long to wait in order to find the necessary pretext for a quarrel. In 1382 Louis Fadrique of Salona and Zeitoun died, leaving an only daughter by his marriage with Helena, the daughter of Matthaeus Cantacuzenus who, after having been for a brief period raised to the purple as co-Emperor with his father, had made his submission to Johannes V and was suffered to succeed his younger brother Manuel as Despot of Mistra. Roccaberti, the vicar-general, was anxious to secure the hand of the child heiress for his own son, but the project did not meet with the approval of his sovereign. Nerio, assured of the support of the other parties in the Morea, then proposed to the widow that she should bestow her daughter's hand on his brother-in-law Pietro Saracino of Euboea. Helena, the daughter of an ex-Emperor, indignantly refused to entertain such a misalliance, and supported by the sons of Roger de Luria, to whom Roccaberti had entrusted the administration of the duchy on his return to Sicily, betrothed her daughter to a Servian princeling whose father ruled over a portion of Thessaly. The prospect of such a marriage excited consternation among both the Franks and the Greeks, and Nerio, posing as their champion and protesting against the introduction of the aggressive Servians into Salona, flung his mercenaries into the duchy. He cannot have disposed of very many troops, and those which he had were apparently Albanians and Turks, but the ease with which he accomplished his object shows to what a low ebb the Catalan power had fallen. The old fighting stock had disappeared and the feudatories were corrupted by indolence and luxury. The Lurias took the field in the quarrel of the Countess but, unprepared and inadequately supported, they were easily defeated and all the level country fell into the hands of Nerio, who is already in the year 1385 described in a Venetian state paper as "Lord of Corinth and the duchy." Many of the castles however which, as has been seen in the course of this history, were capable of resisting investment with very modest garrisons, still held out for a time and the Acropolis of Athens, into which Pierre de Pau succeeded in penetrating with reinforcements from Sicily, continued to defy Nerio's mercenaries until 1387, when this last fortress fell.

The Catalans, who had occupied the duchy for seventy years, were never numerically sufficient to really colonise the country, where they took no firm root and governed as a

caste exclusively in their own interest. The one solitary act to be recorded to the credit of their administration was the establishment of a university in the city which had given culture to mankind, but it may be doubted whether the native populations were suffered to participate in its advantages. They had never attempted to win the attachment of the original inhabitants, with whom the crafty Florentine had no doubt secretly opened communications. The early years of constant warfare had thinned the rank and file, and many of the families of the original conquerors had died out. In latter days their defensive forces were probably composed of mercenaries like those which garrisoned the castles of the barons in Morea. In the final struggle with Nerio many of the feudatories were killed and others, deprived of their fiefs, drifted away from the lost land and sought refuge in Spain or Sicily. After a brief space of time not a trace of their presence remained, though Catalan corsairs continued for many years to come to harass the shores of Romania. No single building or monument in Boeotia or Attica can be identified as perpetuating the memory of their sinister passage. Only their name survives to this day as a term of reproach in the mouths of a people who hardly realise its real historical significance.

The conqueror transferred his seat of government to Athens, and it is probable that this founder of a new dynasty constructed the palace which about this time arose on the stately ruins of the Propylaea. The customs of Barcelona ceased to be the law of the land, Greek became once more the official language, and after an interval of nearly two hundred years a Greek archbishop was once more installed as a successor to Michael Acominatus. Nerio at the same time cultivated good relations with Venice, which lasted until a conflict of interests arose, and with the despotate in Laconia, which now passed from the Cantacuzeni to the Palaeologi.

The first Despot Manuel, of whose able administration his father, the ex-Emperor turned monk, was the historian, after an unsuccessful attempt of Johannes V. to supersede him and at least two rebellions of the Laconian Greeks against his authority, triumphed over all his difficulties and by consistent firmness and moderation kept the unruly archons in order. He maintained peace with the Franks, with whom he co-operated in repressing the forays of the Catalans and the raids of the Turkish pirates, and he re-colonised the depopulated areas of his province with Albanians, who were now migrating in great numbers east and south from their debateable mountains. His long and efficient rule at Mistra closed with his death in 1380. His elder brother Matthaeus, who for a brief period had worn the purple in Constantinople and after an ineffectual resistance to Johannes Palaeologus had made his submission, succeeded and reigned for three years. But his son Demetrius endeavoured to throw off the bond of vassalage to Byzantium and was deposed by the Emperor in favour of his own son Theodoras Palaeologus who, welcomed by the Greeks, was spared a long struggle for supremacy by the death of his rival. He still further developed the colonising policy initiated by Manuel and is said to have introduced ten thousand Albanian families. But he committed the fatal error of engaging Turkish auxiliaries to support his authority against the local archons, who sought to limit his absolutist tendencies. To him Nerio Acciajuoli offered the hand of his eldest daughter Bartolommea, the most beautiful woman of her time. His second daughter Francesca he gave to Carlo Tocco, Count Palatine of Cephalonia and Duke of Leucadia. By these matrimonial alliances he assured himself of the support of powerful neighbours against the Navarrese, whose enmity he rightly suspected after his successful annexation of the duchy which they had not been able to retain.

The death of Jacques de Baux in 1383 had left Achaia in the military occupation of the Navarrese with Maiotto de Coccarelli as bailie but without a Prince. It is true that by his will the title to the empire and all that it implied had passed to Louis of Anjou. But he also died a year later, leaving a son of only seven years who was manifestly unable to vindicate his claims. Meanwhile Charles III was firmly established on the Angevine throne in Naples, and Coccarelli had nothing to lose by recognising his nominal suzerainty over the principality which the Navarrese regarded as their own by right of conquest. Marie de Bretagne, the mother and guardian of the young Louis, had meanwhile induced the Anti-pope Clement VII to proclaim her son King of Naples in opposition to Charles III and his patron Urban VI, and she discussed with Heredia, who since his liberation from captivity had remained at

Avignon, the terms of a fresh transfer of Achaia to the Order of St. John. The Grand-master, still recognised as such by the Antipope, before conducting any arrangement communicated with Coccarelli who in his doubtful position between the rival forces at Rome and Avignon stipulated for the maintenance of secrecy, but declared himself ready, provided the validity of the claims of Louis to the succession received satisfactory confirmation, to agree to the following arrangement. He would on the completion of their contract of purchase hand over to the knights of Rhodes the castles in the domain of the Prince, on the understanding that the Navarrese were suffered to retain possession of all the fiefs which they had appropriated, that the usages of Achaia should be respected, and that 70,000 ducats should be paid to the company as an indemnity for expenditure in-curred by them in upholding the title of Jacques de Baux. It was by no means easy to give effect to the preliminary condition, as no doubt Coccarelli well knew, and during the protracted negotiations which ensued the pretensions of the Navarrese did not diminish. It was probably at this period, when his thoughts were absorbed in the prospect of a speedy return to the Morea, that Heredia began to collect the historical material for the archives of his order from which was eventually compiled the Aragonese chronicle, completed in 1393, and included in the first volume of his Grant *crónica de los conquistadores*.

Meanwhile information had reached Venice that Genoa was endeavouring to acquire by purchase from the Navarrese the port of Zonklon, the possession of which by her hereditary enemy would have entirely neutralised the value of her Peloponnesian outposts at Modon and Coron. She therefore hastened to outbid the rival republic by offering 4000 ducats for the transfer of the castle to herself. Before anything could be settled with Coccarelli, whom it behoved to weigh, cautiously the relative merits of the numerous advances which were being made to him, he died and the company without hesitation installed Pierre de San Superan as vicar in the principality. He rightly perceived the importance of securing the favour of Venice, without the assistance of whose maritime forces no claimant could reach Achaia, and his envoy negotiated a preliminary understanding with the republic, which was afterwards embodied in a definite agreement confirmed by the barons in parliament at Andrusa. Among the signatories the familiar names of Lenoir of Arkadia and Andronicus Asano Centurione appear, together with those of the new Navarrese feudatories. By this instrument the vicar and the notables undertook not to hand over Zonklon to any one, unless it were to the legitimate Prince of the land, and to accord Venice the right of pre-emption should they decide to abandon the country; an indemnity was to be paid for losses incurred by her during the invasion. Venice on the other hand promised the company her co-operation against all pretenders.

Heredia had not awaited a definite arrangement with the Navarrese before completing the purchase of Achaia from Marie de Bretagne. But the contract was no sooner signed than it was opposed by two new pretenders to the principality, the claims to which seemed to grow more numerous as the probability of their realisation decreased. The first was Louis, Duke of Bourbon-Clermont, as heir of the titular Empress Marie de Bourbon. The second was Amedeo VII of Savoy and Piedmont, whose title was based on his succession to the rights which Margaret of Savoy, the daughter of Isabella Villehardouin, had made over to her father Philip. The second marriage of Amedeo with a sister of Erard Lenoir of Arkadia had no doubt stimulated his interest in the long dormant rights of his family. In consequence of their protests Clement VII. issued a bull annulling the contract concluded with Heredia,1 and, realising that the external dangers which threatened the principality were only increased by the rivalry of so many pretenders with irreconcilable claims, he assumed the protectorate himself. He nominated as vicar-general and administrator Paolo Foscari, the archbishop of Patras, whom he instructed to take the Navarrese into his service, suffering them to retain all the territories they could recover from schismatic or infidel. The question of "Under which king?" was now complicated for San Superan by the still more difficult question of "Under which Pope?" Charles III of Naples, the only suzerain whom the company had hitherto in any way recognised since the death of Jacques de Baux, had been murdered in 1386, and San Superan displayed a diplomatic readiness to negotiate with each and all. Louis of Bourbon did not indeed press his claim with energy, although he twice sent an envoy to the Morea, and his pretensions received some support from Venice. He contented himself with the barren title of Prince of Achaia, which he continued to bear till his death. Heredia did not relax his efforts to regain control of the country, which he alone of the many competitors had seen and appreciated, and in 1389 he gave orders for the equipment of another expedition destined for the Morea. But his ambition to include his order in the roll of the great conquis-tadors was never realised, probably owing to the opposition of Avignon. On the other hand the nego-tiations opened with San Superan by Amedeo of Savoy, who had assured himself of the benevolent attitude of the Despot at Mistra, made such good progress that he applied to Venice for transport for a force of 250 horsemen and 600 foot. But it was precisely from this quarter that opposition now arose. Venice found pretexts for delaying to reply, which were perhaps not altogether unwelcome to San Superan, whose temporising policy had enabled him so far to dispense with any sovereign authority, and she finally made the supply of the necessary galleys contingent on a guarantee from Amedeo that he would co-operate with her against the Despot, who had seized Argos and the surrounding territory, acquired by the republic from Marie d'Enghien in 1388. This high-handed procedure on the part of Theodorus produced a very complicated situation in the Morea, and still further postponed a settlement of the vexed question of the succession to Achaia.

It was precisely the fear that Nauplia and Argos might fall into the hands of Nerio or of the Despot which had induced Venice to put pressure on the young widow, after the death of Pietro Comaro, to make over her inheritance to the protecting power. Before the republic could enter into possession, Theodorus boldly occupied Argolis and defended his aggression with the monstrous pretext that he was acting in virtue of instructions from the Sultan, to whom Constantinople was now tributary, without whose authority he could not withdraw. Nerio Acciajuoli, who did not appreciate the establishment of a Venetian outpost on his southern border, was rightly judged to be compromised by his son-in-law's action. Being in enjoyment of the privileges of Venetian citizenship and of the maritime protection of her sea-power, for which, however, he had failed to liqui-date his obligations,

he was reminded of his obvious duty to uphold her lawful cause and, when urgent representations had led to no result, a commercial blockade was declared against his dominions. The Navarrese vicar proved himself a better if a somewhat unscrupulous ally to the republic. In the summer of 1389 Nerio was invited by San Superan to a personal conference on pending questions, and three days afterwards he was arrested and detained as a prisoner by Asano Zaccaria the constable. This more than questionable proceeding was of course invaluable to Venice. In vain the Despot and Tocco of Cephalonia called upon her to effect the release of their father-in-law, while his brothers, Donato the gonfalonier, and Angelo the cardinal-archbishop of Florence, moved the Signoria to vehement protestation against the unjustifiable imprisonment of their fellow-citizen, and offered hostages and ample guarantees for his good conduct. Venice refused to be moved by argument or entreaty until the retrocession of Argolis should have become an accomplished fact, and for more than a year the indignant lord of Athens remained in custody.

Theodorus at length prepared to march with all the forces of which he could dispose against San Superan, and Genoese privateers began to patrol the waters of Morea, an ominous reminder that Tocco had recently acquired Genoese citizenship. Venice therefore realised that it was time to treat. Negotiations were opened at Vostitza, to which Nerio was conducted in person by his gaoler to meet the plenipotentiaries of the Doge. The terms which he was compelled to accept were hard ones. His daughter Francesca was to be detained in Euboea as the hostage of Venice for a year, unless Argos should be earlier surrendered and all his obligations to the Navarrese fulfilled. If the latter condition had not then been satisfied she was to be passed on to their custody. As a still further guarantee for his loyalty with regard to Argos Venice was to hold the fortress of Megara, which Nerio undertook to hand over as soon as he was liberated if his wife should refuse to do so, as well as all his accumulated wealth in Corinth. Once free, he was to require the surrender of Argos from the Despot, and in the event of a refusal to co-operate in enforcing it by arms. His own personal property there would be respected by Venice. A large ransom was to be paid to the Navarrese. Commercial intercourse between his dominions and the Venetian stations would be resumed as soon as the treaty had been executed. The reluctance of Agnes Saracino to hand over the keys of Megara delayed his liberation, and it was not till the end of 1390 that the obdurate Zaccaria released his prisoner. His ware-houses at Corinth were sealed, and to provide ready money for his ransom he laid hands on ecclesiastical property and stripped the massive silver door-plates from the church in the Parthenon, a sacrilege for which he subsequently atoned by making provision in his will for their replacement. In spite of all these sacrifices the Despot ignored his urgent reprementations, and the surrender of Argolis was as far from realisation as ever.

This complicated situation greatly increased the difficulties of Amedeo of Savoy. No sooner had he conciliated one opposing interest than another for the moment more influential factor confronted him. The support of the Despot seemed assured; San Superan and the notables had declared themselves ready to treat with him; Venice only postponed her decision until Argolis should be restored to her, and Nerio, whose relations with the republic were now assuming a favourable turn, while asking her protection in the event of Amedeo's becoming Prince, declared himself ready to do the latter homage. Suddenly the young King Ladislas of Naples, the son of Charles III and thus the representative of the Angevine supremacy, asserted his claims to the overlordship, and in May 1391 he

appointed Nerio his bailie for Achaia and Lepanto. Nerio himself did not indeed take any advantage of this nomination, but he had to be con-sidered in the general adjustment. At length in June 1391 a definite agreement was signed by Amedeo with the Navarrese,1 in accordance with which all the fiefs held by San Superan and his associates with the exception of the princely domain were confirmed to them, but a right of pre-emption was accorded to the Prince in case they should desire to leave the country: the company was to receive a sum of 25,000 ducats; a general amnesty was to be proclaimed, and Nerio was to be confirmed in the possession of Corinth. Amedeo was to despatch 150 horse and 400 foot to Achaia at once and follow himself as soon as possible. Almost simultaneously the supple Nerio had secretly negotiated a compact with the Count of Savoy by which he bound himself to assist the future Prince with all the resources he could command to get rid of the Navarrese and all other usurpers. He further gave a guarantee that the Despot would supply a, contingent for the same purpose. In return restitution was to be made to him of Vostitza and all the domain which the grand seneschal had owned. A stipulation was added for what it was worth that this compact was not to prejudice the interests of Venice. But the vigilant council in the lagoons had probably obtained through secret agents some cognisance of Amedeo's treaty of counter insurance. For at the moment when all seemed settled and the long-matured, project was about to be realised, it was from Venice that impediments arose which finally compelled him to abandon his ambition. San Superan had lately incurred the displeasure of the Signoria by concluding a peace with the Despot, but the long-sighted statesmen of the republic preferred the Navarrese, who had been loyal to their engagements, as masters in the Morea to a tripartite coalition between Amedeo, Nerio, and the Despot, which might encourage the latter to recede from the determination they had reason to believe he had now formed of surrendering Argolis on more or less acceptable terms. Amedeo never saw the Morea, but he remained for some years, to come a useful figurehead to whom inconvenient protests could be referred. A very interesting document containing a table of the princely fiefs and domains in the Morea, prepared for him in the year 1391, with the number of houses attached to each centre, is preserved in the archives of Turin. The appended list of the barons from whom homage was due—which includes the Duke of Athens, the Duke of the Archipelago, the Duke of Leucadia, the Marquis of Bodonitza, the Count of Cephalonia, the Countess of Salona, the lord of Arkadia, the lord of Chalandritza, and contains an impersonal reference to the barony of Patras and the island of Euboea—would seem to have been drafted as a council of perfection with little regard for the conditions actually prevailing.

After the death of Sultan Murad in 1389 his son Bayazid or Bajazet continued his father's career of victorious extension. Murad had made the Greek Emperor his tributary and had finally crushed the Servians in the bloody battle of Rossovo where the respective sovereigns lost their lives. Bajazet endeavoured to consolidate his strength in Asia by the conquest of Philadelphia, the last of the Greek possessions, against which the Emperor's son Manuel, a hostage in his camp, was compelled to lead a contingent, and he confirmed the ascendency of the Ottoman over the Seljuk. In the meantime his veteran lieutenant, the Ghazi Evrenus, reduced the Wallachs to vassalage, entered Bosnia and came into conflict with the Magyars, while his son took Tirnovo by storm and annihilated the political existence of the Bulgarians. Turkish fleets plundered the islands and menaced Euboea, and Evrenus Bey next descended upon Thessaly and entered Attica. The orthodox ecclesiastics of the duchy in their hatred of the Latin clergy seem to have been more influenced by their partisan jealousies than the general cause of Christendom, and the archbishop Dorotheus, who was accused of having called in the Turks, was summarily

expelled from Athens. Nerio, however, shared the common fate and became the Sultan's tributary.

In their desperate situation the Frankish dynasts, instead of composing their feuds, inclined like the Greek ecclesiastics rather to the fatal course of enlisting the support of the Turks in their intestine quarrels. San Superan, whose truce with the Despot was short-lived, appeared in 1393 at the court of Bajazet. This drove Nerio, who had no desire to become the vassal of the Navarrese captain if he should succeed in obtaining recognition as a tributary Prince of Achaia, into closer relations with the young King Ladislas, whose claim of suzerainty over the Frankish states was based on legitimate grounds. An envoy whom he had despatched to Rome to urge the Pope to proclaim a new crusade, went on to Naples and submitted his plea for a dissolution of the old feudal nexus with Achaia, which the Angevines had definitely imposed upon the duchy. Ladislas had little difficulty in complying with a request which was in itself a recognition of his overlordship and, by a rescript dated the 11th of January 1394, in which he alluded to his satisfaction at the recovery by Nerio of Athens as a portion of his principality of Achaia which was still in the hands of his enemies, he confirmed him in all his possessions with the title of Duke, making him feudatory directly and only to the crown of Naples. As Nerio had no legitimate son, the King assigned the reversion to his brother Donato. It was manifestly inconvenient under these circumstances that the Duke of Athens should remain his nominal bailie for Achaia, and Ladislas transferred that office to his brother Angelo by a rescript dated three days later. The rich archiepiscopal barony of Patras which soon afterwards fell vacant was also conferred upon Angelo. About the same time the Venetian Signoria, to whom the archon Mamonas, paramount at Monemvasia and always at feud with the Despot, had offered to hand over the control of that important fortress and trading station, was thus enabled to bring pressure to bear on Theodorus which finally compelled him to come to terms. He had recourse to the Venetian, Francesco Crispo, who on the extinction of the house of Sanudo had been chosen by the notables of the Archipelago to be their Duke, as his intermediary to notify his readiness to surrender Argolis, of which the republic now at length took possession. The Venetian garrison was then immediately withdrawn from Megara. Unity and goodwill was once more established between three of the most important factors in Romania, and though the long feud between the Despot and the Navarrese remained unaffected by the settlement, Nerio's position now seemed well assured.

But the enterprising Florentine who had risen from a private station, not as other dynasts had done by the sword of conquest, but through the resourceful application of his business instincts, to become a sovereign prince in the land of strange vicissitudes, did not long survive the issue of this weary dispute, and died in November of the same year, 1394. He had directed that his body should be laid in the cathedral of our Lady in the Parthenon, where twenty priests were to pray continually for his soul, in a will in which he assigned all the revenues of the city of Athens to that church, and placed it under the protection of Venice. From his extensive possessions he assigned large legacies to his family and liberal bequests to pious foundations, setting aside his property in Argos to found an asylum for the poor. To his illegitimate son Antonio he left Thebes and Livadia. His daughter Bartolommea was to have the 9700 ducats which Venice had held in guarantee, and which by the recent composition with her husband the Despot were to be handed over to him to restore to Nerio's estate. His second daughter Francesca, the wife of Carlo Tocco, was made his residuary legatee. The fortress of Megara and Basilicata (Sicyon) were to go to

her with 30,000 hyperpers in money and jewels, as well as all the rest of his domain, immediately if at the time of his decease she had children, and if not after an interval of three years. As regards Corinth she was to come to terms with the grand seneschal and, if he wished to take it back, the captanate was to be surrendered on repayment of the sum for which it had been mortgaged. Finally he recommended his country to the protection of the Venetian Signoria, who were invited to see that the provisions of his will were duly executed.

The position of the city of Athens under Nerio's will was somewhat ill-defined, and a dispute on the subject at once arose between the republic and the Duke of Leucadia, who regarded his wife as the legal reversionary of the duchy. Making use of his brother-in-law's Albanians, Tocco raided Argolis and took possession of Corinth, which he handed over to his brother Leonardo, who again transferred it to the Despot. The raid on Argolis, for which the latter was held responsible, was punished by Venice with the sequestration of Nerio's deposit which had not yet been refunded while Tocco, whose influence to the south of the Adriatic made an attitude of conciliation appear politic, was only called upon to pay a small indemnity. The subsequent fortunes of the duchy, where Antonio, Nerio's illegitimate son, eventually secured a precarious throne, the adventurous career of Nerio II, and the brilliant pages in the romance of decadence which illustrate its latter history until its final absorption by the Turks, cannot be dealt with here.

The policy pursued by Nerio in his last years, the recognition of his independence by Ladislas, and the restoration of friendly relations with Venice confirmed by the surrender of Argolis had driven the Navarrese into the arms of the Ottomans, for whose support they appealed against the Duke and the Despot. A great part of Thessaly had after the expulsion of its Servian Prince been constituted a Pashalik and conferred on the victorious Evrenus, who had thus established a permanent base on the borders of Hellas. In the spring of 1395 he marched into the Morea and united his forces with those of San Superan, after occupying Leondari, the new fortified town which had taken the place of the old Veligosti in the plain, as well as Mistra, which the Greeks evacuated on his approach. Together they stormed and took the fortress of Akova, which the Franks had lost to the Greeks in 1320. Another Turkish army at the same time penetrated into the lower town of Athens, invited, it would appear, by the new orthodox archbishop Makarios, who availed himself of the ambiguous situation prevailing there, and of the absence of any ordered government, to secure a renegade triumph over the Latins. The occupation was, however, a brief one. The Acropolis had continued to hold out, and the notables now invited Venice through her bailie in Euboea to protect the city. The republic accepted the offer with alacrity, and sent Albano Contarini as its representative and captain, with a subvention of 1000 ducats. The once wealthy land had grown too poor to support the cost of its defence.

In the Morea San Superan had no sooner been left to his own resources, on the withdrawal of Evrenus, than he was surprised with a small following near Leondari by the Despot and taken prisoner. The intervention of Venice and a guarantee extracted from him that he would keep the peace in future procured his liberation on payment of a heavy ransom. For a brief period there appeared to be some prospect of a coalition against the Turks, and San Superan, having perforce abandoned the idea of constituting himself Prince of Achaia under Ottoman vassalage, now endeavoured to obtain from Ladislas a recog-nition which would enable him to assume the coveted title, and would confer upon him a dignity not less than that which had given lustre to his rival at Athens. Ladislas,

always in need of money and ready to accept small subventions where large ones were not forthcoming, declared his readiness to meet his wishes in return for a payment of 3000 ducats. To avoid giving umbrage to the haughty Toccos he first removed Cephalonia, as he had done Athens, from the vassal roll of Achaia, and in 1396 created Pierre de San Superan Prince, with reversion to his heirs.

Theodorus of Mistra seized the opportune and rare moment at which the various factors in the Morea were at peace among themselves to moot a plan for the reconstruction of the great wall which had in ancient times been drawn across the isthmus of Corinth, and invited the co-operation of Achaia and of Venice, whose policy it had hitherto been to refrain from any avowed hostility to the Turks, though she was ready to take part in a scheme of defensive assurance. This union of forces did not escape the vigilance of the Sultan, who, so long as internal dissensions divided its rulers, had been content to leave the Morea to the natural process of slow disintegration. There were still, however, portions of Thessaly and Northern Greece which had not yet been incorporated in the Turkish zone, and Bajazet proposed to deal with these on his march south. Once more the Greek bishops welcomed the advance of the crescent. Trikkala, Pharsalos, Zeitoun, Neo-Patras, Dhomoko were occupied, and then it became the turn of Salona, where the widow of Louis Fadrique and her daughter Maria had been able to maintain their independence, after Nerio had expelled the Catalans from the duchy. The rule of the Countess Helena had long been a notorious scandal in Romania, and all the real power was delegated to the hands of her paramour, a renegade priest of the name of Strates, who had not even the virtue of fidelity to the mistress he dishonoured, but disgraced his cloth by seduction, murder, and spoliation. His latest adventure in gallantry had been the abduction and concealment in the castle of a beautiful girl belonging to the family of the bishop Seraphim, and the latter no longer hesitated to call in the Turks, whose dominion seemed to involve a lesser evil than the tyranny of this human monster. The unfortunate victim of his lust was murdered and buried in haste in order that no evidence of his guilt should be forthcoming, but the seducer himself was killed by an indignant citizen, who sent the head to the camp of Bajazet. Salona surrendered without any attempt at resistance on his approach, and the Countess gained eternal infamy by appearing before the Sultan, and proposing her young daughter's entry to his harem as the price of her own immunity. The grim Bajazet accepted the proffered maiden, but did not restore Salona to her mother, who was ignominiously driven from his presence. The only Frankish barony which now escaped the storm was Bodonitza, where Jacopo Giorgio as a Venetian citizen was for the present unmolested.

The approach of a great crusading army on the Danube delayed for a while the progress of the Turks. But after the crushing defeat of the Hungarian king Sigismund at Nicopolis, the veteran Evrenus was sent in 1397 to the Peloponnesus to deal with the Despot and his neighbours. The new fortifications rising on the isthmus did not for a moment arrest the progress of his 50,000 men. From Argolis alone 14,000 souls were carried off into slavery. The Greeks were once more defeated at Leondari, the scene of many a desperate struggle, and both the Despot and the Prince of Achaia were reduced to the condition of tributary vassals. But the Turks did not as yet contemplate settlement in the harassed land. Constantinople had still to be reduced, and the disquieting westward thrust of the Mongol hordes of Timour, overflowing into the Asiatic provinces, demanded the transfer to other regions of all the fighting-men who could be spared from less acutely menaced borders of the new Ottoman realm. Theodoras, who could expect no help from the tottering empire and found Venice disposed to adhere to her policy of non-provocation

and chiefly concerned to improve her own defences in Argos and Navplia, now sought the assistance of the knights of St. John, who played an honourable part in these disastrous years in upholding the cause of the Christian against the Moslem, and entrusted to them the defences of the isthmus. By so doing he excited the apprehensions of San Superan, who saw in the Order only a rival claimant to Achaia, and renewing his ancient feud with the despotate, once more made common cause with the universal enemy, and even joined a band of Turkish raiders in invading the Venetian area. But the days of the Navarrese condottiere were numbered, and he died in the year 1402, after having maintained his precarious authority for some twenty years in a desolate land, where the sparse inhabitants crouched in their humble tenements under the shadow of frowning castles held by alien mercenaries, a land which had no longer any story to record but that of the raids and forays which laid it waste, or of the eternal corsair hungrily watching the half-deserted havens of its once populous shores.

He had married Maria, the sister of the constable Andronicus Asano Zaccaria, a descendant of the famous Genoese house which had given lords to Phocaea, Chios, and Samos, and had absorbed by matrimonial alliances the Moreote baronies of Chalandritza, Veligosti-Damala, and more recently Arkadia by the marriage of Asano himself to the heiress of Erard Lenoir, who died in 1388. The powerful and wealthy constable had, however, passed away the year before his brother-in-law, and Maria, who now as-sumed the regency on behalf of the infant children of the Prince, to her misfortune appointed as her bailie his son Centurione Zaccaria II, who was as unscrupulous as he was ambitious. It was only natural that, as the last of the ancient nobility of Romania, he should have regarded his uncle in the light of an upstart adventurer, whose claims to para-mountcy among the Franks could not be compared with those of his own house. But the shabby trick by which the last Prince of Achaia succeeded in ousting the children of San Superan, whose interests were entrusted to his defence, can only be compared with the sharp practice which tradition attributed to the first Prince in dispossessing the inheritors of Champlitte. Several dormant claims of titular pretenders to the principality seemed likely to be revived by the death of San Superan, and Venice was not unjustly suspected of contemplating its annexation. Centurione anticipated any conflict by sending a secret envoy to Ladislas, who was instructed to represent to the King that the heirs of the late Prince were not in a position to pay the still unliquidated sum of 3000 ducats for which the title had been conceded to his house, but that his principal was prepared to pay off the debt due at once on the condition of his being himself recognised as Prince. The avaricious Ladislas did not scruple to accept this unworthy proposal, and the monstrous plea was advanced that the heirs of San Superan had failed to renew the oath of fidelity, and had thus incurred the penalty of dispossession. Thus in 1404 Centurione Zaccaria became the last Prince of Achaia.

Meanwhile an event of momentous importance had shaken the eastern world to its foundations and had unexpectedly given the fallen empire and the feeble Frankish states a new brief lease of life. While Bajazet was contemplating the final reduction of the imperial city and Manuel, who had succeeded his father Johannes V as sole Emperor in 1391, leaving the semblance of authority which remained to him in the hands of his once disloyal but now submissive nephew Johannes VII, was travelling round the western courts in quest of assistance, the Sultan was called away to Asia to stem the irresistible onset of the Tartar hordes who, under the terrible Timour, were sweeping away barrier after barrier in his Asiatic do-minions. Uniting all his available forces he marched to meet

his savage foes, and at the battle of Angora in July 1402 he was overwhelmingly defeated and became the prisoner of the triumphant Mongol, in whose captivity he died. Asia Minor lay at the mercy of a merciless conqueror, and the power of the Ottomans seemed irremediably broken. Manuel, who received the news in France, returned to Constantinople and acknowledged himself the vassal of Timour until the death of the latter in 1405. This unexpected catastrophe and the dissensions which divided the heirs of Bajazet enabled him partially and temporarily to reconstitute the fortunes of his ruined realm.

The usurper Centurione had little peace in his ill-gotten principality, though the defeat of the Ottomans spared the Morea a renewal of invasion. The Despot refused to recognise him, and raided the south-western province, even penetrating into the Venetian zone to plunder. The Toccos of Cephalonia were avowedly hostile to him, and his own brother Stefano Zaccaria, the archbishop of Patras, discountenanced his unjustifiable elevation. Theodorus indeed died in 1407 and, as he left no legitimate children, the Emperor Manuel, to whom the despotate reverted, appointed his second son, another Theodorus, in his place. With the death of the old and implacable enemy of Achaia peace ensued. But the dismemberment of the diminished principality began in the same year with the seizure of Clarenza by Leonardo Tocco, the Count of Zante. Venice, in reply to Centurione's appeal, boldly demanded the cession of Zonk-Ion as the price of her intervention. The archbishop of Patras, anxious to withdraw from this unquiet land into the securer calm of ecclesiastical study at Bologna, gave the republic a lease of his barony in return for an annual payment of 1000 ducats. She had already by a payment of 30,000 to the impecunious Ladislas finally regulated her position in Corfu, and in 1407 she successfully negotiated for the cession of Lepanto from its Albanian prince. The keys of the Gulf and the Adriatic were in her hands, and in 1411 proposals were made to Centurione for what was practically an assignation of the remainder of his petty estate to Venice. A conclusion was deferred in consequence of his serious illness. After his unexpected recovery he succeeded with the support of the Moreote Albanians in regaining possession of Clarenza, and Venice, to whom the Toccos in turn appealed, offering to hoist the banner of St. Mark on all their fortresses, had no desire to increase her responsibilities at that moment and merely insisted on a suspension of hostilities for three years.

By this time the Ottoman power, still in the full vitality of youth, had in a great measure recovered from the disaster of Angora and the intestine troubles which followed on the death of Bajazet. Suliman, who had just established himself at Adrianople, had been overthrown and killed by his brother Musa, and he in turn was defeated and slain by another brother Mohammed, who in 1413 definitely succeeded to the Ottoman throne. Mohammed had not the restless fever for conquest which had signalised his father and grandfather, but after he had set his house in order he designed to punish the petty dynasts who had thrown off their tributary estate, especially those who enjoyed the protection of Venice, in whom he realised his most formidable antagonist. Bodonitza, which Musa's troops had burned in 1410, after Jacopo Giorgio had been betrayed into their hands by a faithless servant, had been rebuilt by his brother Niccolo. The town was now finally reduced to a smouldering heap of ruins and all the population were carried off to the horrors of slavery. Athens was once more subjected to a ruinous visitation. Euboea and the Venetian islands were plundered. But the great sea-captain Pietro Loredano exacted a sanguinary vengeance, destroyed the Turkish fleet at Gallipoli, and compelled the Sultan to conclude a peace which lasted till his death in 1321.

The Emperor Manuel, in whom Mohammed had found a partisan during his strife with his brothers, remained on good terms with the Sultan and had succeeded during the crisis in Ottoman history in restoring some order in his own dominions. In the year 1415 he paid a visit to the Morea, where the despotate now represented one of the most important assets remaining to the diminished empire. He endeavoured to place the government of his weak and morbid son on a sounder basis of security. He compelled Centurione to pay homage and laid the whole Peloponnese under contribution, in money or labour, for the completion of the defences of the Isthmus. In an incredibly short space of time the wall traced across its narrowest section, something over 7000 yards in length, was reconstituted with 150 towers, and a strong castle at either end. He remained for nearly a year at the court of his son, regulating the incidence of taxation, repressing the tyranny of the local archons, and studying the projects of reform put forward by the latter-day philosopher, Gemistus Plethon, whose ardent Platonism and Greek nationality procured for him a somewhat exaggerated reputation among the enthusiasts of the Italian renascence. Before taking his departure he pronounced a funeral oration at the grave of his brother and eulogized the policy he had adopted in repopulating the land with a vigorous stock of colonists. If the demoralisation of the intriguing and self-seeking archons rendered the regeneration of the Morea a task beyond any hope of permanent success, his energetic labours at any rate infused so much vigour into the local populations that a brief epoch of Greek ascendency in the Morea once more became possible.

To the haughty Centurione the surrender of his principality to one of the western powers seemed a preferable alternative to remaining the humble vassal of the empire, notwithstanding the obligations of his family to the house of Palaeologus. His inclinations leaned towards his mother city. But Genoa proved a broken reed and his intrigues with her rival only exasperated Venice, who waited her opportunity. In 1417 Manuel's eldest son and co-regent, Johannes VIII, appeared in the peninsula to support his brother in the eternal feud with the Franks. He took possession of Andrusa and a great part of Messenia, scoured the north-western plains of Achaia and allowed his Albanian supporters who, once removed from the scene of their hereditary feuds, were beginning to develop some spirit of national cohesion, to raid the Venetian area. Venice was compelled to come to the assistance of Centurione's rapidly dwindling principality, and she exacted the transfer of Zonklon as her price. She also now demanded the definite surrender of Patras from Stefano Zaccaria, who had been acting as her envoy to his brother. The Roman curia however, which had consistently claimed the sovereignty and disposal of the barony as well as the see, vehemently opposed this transaction, which Venice was compelled to renounce. On the other hand the republic was more than compensated by the acquisition of Monemvasia, the impregnable Gibraltar of the Peloponnese, and since the decline of Clarenza its most important commercial harbour, which under the predominant family of Mamonas had been constantly hostile to the Despot, and was now left as a legacy by the last of that house or offered by the notables to the republic. About the same time Clarenza was once more torn away from Centurione by a piratical adventurer, Oliviero Franco, probably a Genoese by nationality. The harassed Prince saved appearances by marrying his daughter to the buccaneer and assigning Clarenza to her as a dowry. But he was not able to prevent him from selling it soon afterwards to Carlo Tocco, whose recovery of a great part of Epirus had made him the most considerable of the petty dynasts of Romania.

During the latter years of Sultan Mohammed the Greeks and the Franks enjoyed a brief period of respite from hostilities, but after Mohammed's death and the succession of

Murad II, the Byzantine spirit of intrigue was re-aroused by the appearance of a pretender in Asia who claimed to be the young Sultan's uncle, and raised a rebellion which Johannes VIII persuaded his father to countenance. Murad therefore determined once for all to transfer his capital to Constantinople and annex the scanty remains of the empire. So strong however were still the venerable city's admirable defences, and such new spirit had the energies of Manuel inspired into its guards and into a populace which, having witnessed the fate of other fallen cities, now fought with the courage of despair, that Murad's hosts were driven off with heavy loss and the Sultan, having his hands full with the rebellion in Asia, did not renew the siege but directed his European armies against Thessalonica, the appanage of Manuel's fourth son Andronicus. But the empire remained his tributary and Manuel died a few days after the withdrawal of the besieging force.

The notables of Thessalonica, with the consent of Andronicus, who was dying of a mortal disease, offered to make over their city to Venice, and a bargain was actually concluded in 1423 by which it passed into the hands of the republic for a sum of 50,000 ducats. She held it until 1430, when it was carried by storm, and after an orgy of unparalleled outrages became and remained a Turkish settlement. Contenting himself for the present with a systematic investment, Murad's general, the savage Turachan, led the bulk of his army towards the southern provinces of Romania where Venice, anticipating the coining storm, had united the lesser dynasts in a coalition of resistance. Tocco was compelled to open the gates of his fortresses and Turachan, crumpling up the famous defences of the Isthmus, led 25,000 men by roads marked by fire and desolation through the heart of the Morea, reduced the Despot once more to the position of a tributary, piled up hideous pyramids of the heads of the slaughtered Albanians in Arcadia, and returned with 6000 slaves.

The Despot Theodorus II, who had little of the energy of his family, weary of his unquiet throne, of the eternal quarrel with the Franks, the interference of Venice and the perpetual menace of the Turkish terror, now contemplated exchanging the ungrateful task of government for the peace of the cloister, and announced his intention to his brother. Johannes VIII accordingly came to the Morea in 1427 with his favourite brother and eventual successor, Constantine, whom he designed to invest with the despotate. Constantine brought with him his friend Georgius Phrantzes, the distinguished diplomatist and states-man, whose picturesque and entertaining narrative invests with a personal interest his record of the last years of Byzantine rule. By the time they arrived the unstable Theodorus had reconsidered his decision. The Emperor therefore endeavoured to find compensation elsewhere in the peninsula for Constantine, a prince of no little courage and capacity, whose char-acter gains by contrast with that of his treacherous and unprincipled brother Thomas, the evil genius of the decline of the house of Palaeologus. The Toccos were approached with a view to the cession of their Moreote territories, and some compulsion was exercised by a movement of troops on Clarenza, which led to a composition. A marriage was then arranged between Constantine and Maddalena Tocco, who received the city and its appurtenances as her dower, and other domains were found for him in the north and south of the peninsula. Theodorus assigned Calavryta to his brother Thomas, and thus a kind of Greek triarchate was established in the Peloponnese. In 1430 Constantine succeeded after several unsuccessful attempts in surprising Patras, during the absence of the archbishop Pandolfo Malatesta, disregarding the prohibition of the Sultan, to whom he pleaded as an excuse his fear that the Catalans employed by the curia for its defence might make themselves masters there, and in spite of the protests of

Venice, now too busily occupied with the defence of Thessalonica to actively interfere. The appearance of the Catalan galleys at Clarenza, which they held up for ransom, suggested to Constantine the advisability of dismantling the fortifications of a port so open to seizure by a naval power, which might thence dominate the plain of Elis, and he transferred the garrison to Clairmont, which now became the seat of the new despotate.

During the attack on Patras, Thomas had made a demonstration against Centurione Zaccaria, and had so closely invested the castle of Chalandritza in which he had shut himself up, that the "Prince", fearing to lose everything, was glad to agree to any terms. He had no legitimate son, and he now gave his daughter and heiress Catherine to the sinister Thomas with all that was left of Achaia for her dowry. On their marriage in 1430, Thomas also received the title of Despot from his brother. Centurione retained a life-interest in the revenues of such territories as represented the scanty remainder of the once flourishing principality until his death two years later. With him perished the last Frank whose name is known to history, and with the exception of the ports that were held by Venice, the peninsula was once more in the hands of the Greeks and divided between the three Despots. Doubtless in many of the rock-built fastnesses which crown every available site of vantage in the mountain land, some minor nobles in whose veins still flowed the blood of the old conquistadors continued to maintain a precarious existence through the brief concluding period of the Byzantine restoration and, when the final tide of Moslem occupation swept from sea to sea, held their isolated castles to the last and perished unrecorded in the great catastrophe. Some reminiscences of such forgotten tragedies in battles long ago survive in popular tradition and in the songs of the solitary shepherd folk. But the record of Frankish history in the Morea closes with the re-establishment of the house of Palaeologus.

If the magnificent gallantry of the first crusading adventurers and the halo of romance which glorifies their achievements cannot blind us to the absence of all justification for the Frankish conquest, it may at least be said that the first years of their administration were probably far happier for the subject populations than those which had preceded them. The restricted number of the conquerors made it impossible for them to oppress with impunity the peasantry, to whom they proclaimed themselves liberators, and an honest attempt was made to govern in a spirit of toleration and justice. But the rivalries of the Churches and the identification of these alien lords with the paramount claims of Rome made it impossible for them to take root in the popular affection. Feudalism remained a foreign graft. From the first the Frankish nobles looked to the French King as the supreme fount of honour and the protector of their institutions. Although they adopted the customs and the language of the Greeks, they sought their wives from the west, and the intermarriage of the humbler class was stigmatised by the name which was given to their progeny. A fusion of races never took place. The subjection of the principality to Naples made such a possibility still more remote. The ambition of the Angevines and the administration by their bailies of a country which they only regarded as a source of revenue and a stepping stone to ulterior conquests, hastened the undoing of a romantic experiment. The barons, instead of fulfilling their duties as an essential portion of the administrative machine, became absorbed in the partisan quarrels of rival claimants, and finally looked only to the defence of their own individual interests and the erection of their domains into independent and mutually hostile centres. The institutions of the west, transplanted to an uncongenial soil, displayed in the end even less power of resistance to the new and vital force of Islam than the effete Byzantine organisation.

Nevertheless it may be said with truth that this occupation of a martial race and the mode of life and thought which they introduced was not without its effect upon the subject peoples. It infused new vigour into an enervated stock, and in some measure contributed to its ultimate regeneration. As one of their own historians has remarked,1 it taught the Greeks a lesson which they learned to put into practice with energy through the ensuing centuries, when time after time the national spirit rose superior to overwhelming odds in the perpetual struggle to shake off the Turkish domination. Independently, however, of such considerations, the story of the Frankish barons of Morea, who for two hundred years divided a fair inheritance, extending from Acrocorinth to Ithome, presents a striking and in many ways a brilliant page in human annals, which acquires an added lustre from the fact that its scene is laid in places which are indissolubly associated with the sentiment and aspirations of mankind.