

for the brothers that he would have them nowhere but in his castle. This building is guarded by very stout and high walls: a stone bridge built archwise gives access to both the castle and the convent, and the torrent is led round the outer circuit of the walls. But when the kingdom was in divers manners stricken and laid waste, as we have said before, the interior of the castle was thrown down and burnt, yet through the exertions of the monks the convent remained intact, and the wall surrounding it, with the bridge, survived that great fire and is still standing. But of the habitable portion of the castle nothing remained except the lofty walls which the flames could not hurt. So it is that our convent stands to-day inclosed by those walls, and no one is allowed to build anything therein, but the monks own the whole site of the castle. The conventual church is right royally adorned, and in it is the burial place of the kings of Cyprus. It has two cloisters with marble pillars throughout their circuit, and all the offices of the monks are very good and convenient. Above are well-lighted dormitories, paved with marble. One day when I was strolling alone through the dormitory I found a cell open, and seeing it empty and uninhabited I went in to look at it. There was a recess in the wall, with a wooden door without a lock but closed by a small iron bolt. Out of curiosity I went up to the cupboard, drew the bolt and opened it. Immediately there burst upon me an infinite swarm of angry bees, flying round me and buzzing, the cell was full of them. I escaped with great difficulty from the cell, but they followed me all through the dormitory. There was a little hole in the wall by which they entered from the garden into the cupboard, and there they swarmed: for the convent has beautiful gardens all round it, and is altogether a delightful place. What kind of monks they are, how many, how zealous in the monastic life, how learned and diligent in the performance of divine service, how hospitable and charitable, I little know, and what I do know I should blush to write. But small wonder is it if there is little religion in these remote places, which are never visited by the superiors of the Order, where the monks are not corrected for their excesses, and are led astray by the evil example of the Greek priests. Whereas all should be different. For they are sent as mendicants to those countries to edify the Greeks by their words and works, and bring them into the obedience of the Roman Church. All the brethren of this convent are bearded like the Greeks, and they have a secular agent who gives every month to each monk eight *marcelli*, with which each buys what pleases him; the convent has no other funds.

The Friars Minor have a fair convent in this city. And the brethren of the Hermits of S. Augustine have a convent in the sugar cane gardens, and in their church on the left hand is a stately and gilded tomb, in which lies the body of a certain German noble called John Montfort, whom the Cypriots hold to be a saint. And pilgrims visit his shrine and ask his prayers. The body lies whole, but the flesh, muscles and skin are shrivelled: in one arm you see the bone stripped of flesh and skin as though a bit had been torn away by the teeth. It happened, they say, thus. There was a certain noble lady of Germany, a kinswoman of the said John of Montfort, who after visiting the holy places at Jerusalem sailed to Cyprus, and came to Nicosia to see the tomb of her friend, the blessed John. They opened the tomb for her, and removed the grating, and she lay down on his body putting her mouth to his shoulder as though she would kiss it long and fervently, but secretly she fixed her teeth in the flesh of the corpse and bit it, tearing away a piece which she hid in her bosom, desiring to carry it to her country as a relic. Wonderful to relate! when she had taken ship and was far out at sea they lost each favouring breeze, and while other vessels sailed gaily on her ship made no way at all. But the sailors saw in this something miraculous, and began to search the cabins, bags, wallets and chests of each passenger, as is their wont when any