

Leaving Salines we came to Ycossia, the capital of Cyprus, where there are two monasteries of S. Francis. One is outside the city, called S. Jehan du Montfort, in which reposes the body of a venerable pilgrim, who in life was Count of Montfort near Paris, through which our Lord works in this place many miracles. And in the principal church, called S. Sophia, is one of the hydriai in which our Lord turned the water into wine.

Leaving Nycossia we went on to the mountain of the Holy Cross, on the summit whereof is a convent of Greek monks. Here is the cross of the good thief; and we saw as far as the pier of Minesse where our vessel lay. And from Minesson we journeyed along the seashore to the port of Basphe, for our ship was going there to load sugar and cotton. At this port, as is told in the thirteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, S. Paul converted Sergius Paulus, and you still see a prison in which he was for some time confined: on it had been built in old days a very fine convent of S. Francis. But on account of the unhealthiness of the place the monks have abandoned it, for the air is so poisonous and tainted that no one can live there but a native of the country. Here too is shown the cave of the seven sleepers, in which is a fair fountain, and seven niches round the cave. We waited in this place about eighteen days until our vessel was loaded to our great loss and sorrow, for the first day we went on board we all fell ill, from the tainted and poisonous air, and the fruits and other unwholesome things we had eaten there. [*Six of the pilgrims died between Paphos and Parenca.*]

LILIO.

What "every schoolboy" in the sixteenth century might be expected to know about Cyprus can be gathered from an Italian Manual of Geography, published at Venice, by Gabriel Giolito de' Ferrari, in 1551, under the title *Breve descrizione del mondo, di Zacharia Lillo Vicentino, tradotta per M. Francesco Baldelli*. See page 28.

Cyprus is an island sacred to Venus, situated between Cilicia and Syria, the most famous of all the islands in the world, abounding in wealth, and much given to sports and pleasures. Its most highly adorned and famous cities are Salamina, Paphos and Cithera, from which Venus herself was called Citherean. Pliny, in his ninth Book, writes that here was the seat and residence of nine kingdoms. There is great store of wine and oil, a sufficiency of grain and veins of metal, from which are produced vitriol, and a metallic rust of much use in medicine. In Cyprus is found much sugar-cane, in which sugar is secreted. Besides they make cloth of goats' hair, which in our day is called camlet. Many things are exported from the island and carried to other countries, whence are derived no small gains. But it is true that the air is not very wholesome. The island teems with delicacies; the women are very lustful, and so we read in Justin that Cypriot girls, before they marry, are wont to lend themselves to the unholy pleasures of foreigners who touch there in ships, so that our ancestors were not without reason in saying that the island was sacred to Venus.