

mark its course, and sometimes it is full and violent, but we found it dry from the heat. This royal city was conquered in the year of Christ 1423 by the Cairene Sultans, who imposed a yearly tribute of twelve thousand sequins, and bestowed it on the Lusignan kings. Then it enjoyed fifty years or more of peace, until Jacques the natural son of King Jean drove out his sister Carulota, the rightful heir to the realm, who had married the Duke of Savoy, and with the armed help of the Sultan of Egypt took it by force. He died not long after, having married Catharina, a Venetian lady of the noble family of the Corneli, whom the Venetian Senate had adopted into the family and wardship of S. Mark with a dowry from the public funds of one hundred thousand ducats. His wife brought forth a posthumous son who lived barely a year, and at the instance of her family she made over her kingdom to the Republic. Cyprus thus became a possession of Venice and remained under her rule until 1571, in which year the Ottoman Emperor Selim II., claiming to have succeeded to the rights of the Egyptian Sultans, declared war against Venice for its recovery. During forty days it endured many and fierce attacks, but the greatness of the enemy's host, which is said to have numbered eighty thousand soldiers, prevailed, the island was taken and ravaged, its nobility extirpated, its magistrates, captains and guards slain, and the rest of the inhabitants enslaved. So it fell under the rule of the barbarians, its royal state and lustre and old magnificence vanishing under Turkish tyranny. In the hands of savages regal glory and high renown sink and fall, while the authority, pomp and wealth of dependencies concentrate themselves at the seat of Empire.

A like fate befell Famagusta. After the capture of Leucosia, the Turks rapidly moved their camp and hastened to the siege of Famagusta. They took it, but not with the same ease, and only after a year's siege, in which they lost seventy thousand of their men. Want and hunger drove the inhabitants to surrender, after they had first bargained with the Turkish general Mustafa for the lives of all. But when Marcantonio Bragadino and Astorre Baglione the generals, with a following of many captains and nobles went forth from the city to his camp to present the keys of the gates and to ask (as had been agreed) for leave to depart, he caused them at first to be brought to his tent, received them kindly, and praised their courage and their zeal in defending for their Prince so noble a city. Then a sudden fit of rage seized the cruel savage, and in violation of his plighted word and of the common law of nations he not only ordered Astorre Baglione, a man of noble birth and a distinguished soldier, and other leaders to be beheaded, while their followers were attacked and massacred by the arms of his guards and the spears of the janissaries, but caused Marcantonio Bragadino, the general in command of the city, a man illustrious among the nobles of Venice for his passion for arms and singular courage, after his ears were cut off, to be brutally flayed alive by a Jewish hangman—a spectacle of hideous and unparalleled barbarity. In the sight of the whole city, amidst the sharpest torments, his courage and constancy, and the calmness of his bearing and look shone so fairly forth that he seemed rather to rejoice than suffer. But the barbarian monster was still unsatisfied, and bade them stuff his skin with straw, and hang it on a mast, and so bear it to Constantinople. After many years had passed, his brother and sons bought it for a great price, carried it to Venice, and saw it laid in a marble urn in the church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo, with this inscription to the memory of a most fond father, and a leader of undying fame.