

more than a penniless well-born adventurer, having gained and lost one kingdom, here established another, which took root and flourished for 300 years. Of all dynasties known to European history, the career and the position of this is incomparably the most romantic. It represented more than a mere vanishing conquest. In it the chivalry of the West was rapidly acclimatised to the East, and took, like some transplanted flower, new and unknown colours from it. Its counts and its barons, of French and of English ancestry, settled down over the length and breadth of the island, and kept their feudal state amongst spice-gardens and silken luxury. The peasantry never were displaced, nor was the Greek religion interfered with; but side by side with the plain Greek basilicas rose Gothic churches with windows of elaborate tracery. Marvellous abbeys like Fountains, Bolton, or Kirkstall, in distant nooks hid themselves amongst oleanders; and castles like Alnwick or like Bamborough reared their clustering towers on the mountain-tops. But civilisation there was not merely at home in fortresses. The nobles, like those of Italy, inhabited the towns also; and Nicosia in particular became a city of palaces. Coats of arms familiar to Western heraldry surmounted the street doors, and covered the monuments in the cathedral. The streets in the fourteenth century were alive with gorgeous retinues—with ladies on horses, whose housings glanced with jewels, and knights in velvet bonnets, and mantles clasped