

Chapter LX: The Fourth Crusade.--Part II.

When the six ambassadors of the French pilgrims arrived at Venice, they were hospitably entertained in the palace of St. Mark, by the reigning duke; his name was Henry Dandolo; [40] and he shone in the last period of human life as one of the most illustrious characters of the times.

Under the weight of years, and after the loss of his eyes, [41] Dandolo retained a sound understanding and a manly courage: the spirit of a hero, ambitious to signalize his reign by some memorable exploits; and the wisdom of a patriot, anxious to build his fame on the glory and advantage of his country. He praised the bold enthusiasm and liberal confidence of the barons and their deputies: in such a cause, and with such associates, he should aspire, were he a private man, to terminate his life; but he was the servant of the republic, and some delay was requisite to consult, on this arduous business, the judgment of his colleagues. The proposal of the French was first debated by the six sages who had been recently appointed to control the administration of the doge: it was next disclosed to the forty members of the council of state; and finally communicated to the legislative assembly of four hundred and fifty representatives, who were annually chosen in the six quarters of the city. In peace and war, the doge was still the chief of the republic; his legal authority was supported by the personal reputation of Dandolo: his arguments of public interest were balanced and approved; and he was authorized to inform the ambassadors of the following conditions of the treaty. [42] It was proposed that the crusaders should assemble at Venice, on the feast of St. John of the

ensuing year; that flat-bottomed vessels should be prepared for four thousand five hundred horses, and nine thousand squires, with a number of ships sufficient for the embarkation of four thousand five hundred knights, and twenty thousand foot; that during a term of nine months they should be supplied with provisions, and transported to whatsoever coast the service of God and Christendom should require; and that the republic should join the armament with a squadron of fifty galleys. It was required, that the pilgrims should pay, before their departure, a sum of eighty-five thousand marks of silver; and that all conquests, by sea and land, should be equally divided between the confederates. The terms were hard; but the emergency was pressing, and the French barons were not less profuse of money than of blood. A general assembly was convened to ratify the treaty: the stately chapel and place of St. Mark were filled with ten thousand citizens; and the noble deputies were taught a new lesson of humbling themselves before the majesty of the people. "Illustrious Venetians," said the marshal of Champagne, "we are sent by the greatest and most powerful barons of France to implore the aid of the masters of the sea for the deliverance of Jerusalem. They have enjoined us to fall prostrate at your feet; nor will we rise from the ground till you have promised to avenge with us the injuries of Christ." The eloquence of their words and tears, [43] their martial aspect, and suppliant attitude, were applauded by a universal shout; as it were, says Jeffrey, by the sound of an earthquake. The venerable doge ascended the pulpit to urge their request by those motives of honor and virtue, which alone can be offered to a popular assembly: the treaty was transcribed on parchment, attested with oaths and seals, mutually

accepted by the weeping and joyful representatives of France and Venice; and despatched to Rome for the approbation of Pope Innocent the Third. Two thousand marks were borrowed of the merchants for the first expenses of the armament. Of the six deputies, two repassed the Alps to announce their success, while their four companions made a fruitless trial of the zeal and emulation of the republics of Genoa and Pisa.

[Footnote 40: Henry Dandolo was eighty-four at his election, (A.D. 1192,) and ninety-seven at his death, (A.D. 1205.) See the Observations of Ducange sur Villehardouin, No. 204. But this extraordinary longevity is not observed by the original writers, nor does there exist another example of a hero near a hundred years of age. Theophrastus might afford an instance of a writer of ninety-nine; but instead of ennehkonta, (Prom. ad Character.,) I am much inclined to read ebdomhkonta, with his last editor Fischer, and the first thoughts of Casaubon. It is scarcely possible that the powers of the mind and body should support themselves till such a period of life.]

[Footnote 41: The modern Venetians (Laugier, tom. ii. p. 119) accuse the emperor Manuel; but the calumny is refuted by Villehardouin and the older writers, who suppose that Dandolo lost his eyes by a wound, (No. 31, and Ducange.) * Note: The accounts differ, both as to the extent and the cause of his blindness According to Villehardouin and others, the sight was totally lost; according to the Chronicle of Andrew Dandolo. (Murat. tom. xii. p. 322,) he was vise debilis. See Wilken, vol. v. p. 143.--M.]

[Footnote 42: See the original treaty in the Chronicle of Andrew Dandolo, p. 323--326.]

[Footnote 43: A reader of Villehardouin must observe the frequent tears of the marshal and his brother knights. Sachiez que la ot mainte lerne plorée de pitié, (No. 17;) mult plorant, (ibid. ;) mainte lerne plorée, (No. 34;) si orent mult pitié et plorerent mult durement, (No. 60;) i ot mainte lerne plorée de pitié, (No. 202.) They weep on every occasion of grief, joy, or devotion.]

The execution of the treaty was still opposed by unforeseen difficulties and delays. The marshal, on his return to Troyes, was embraced and approved by Thibaut count of Champagne, who had been unanimously chosen general of the confederates. But the health of that valiant youth already declined, and soon became hopeless; and he deplored the untimely fate, which condemned him to expire, not in a field of battle, but on a bed of sickness. To his brave and numerous vassals, the dying prince distributed his treasures: they swore in his presence to accomplish his vow and their own; but some there were, says the marshal, who accepted his gifts and forfeited their words. The more resolute champions of the cross held a parliament at Soissons for the election of a new general; but such was the incapacity, or jealousy, or reluctance, of the princes of France, that none could be found both able and willing to assume the conduct of the enterprise. They acquiesced in the choice of a stranger, of Boniface marquis of Montferrat, descended of a race of heroes, and

himself of conspicuous fame in the wars and negotiations of the times; [44] nor could the piety or ambition of the Italian chief decline this honorable invitation. After visiting the French court, where he was received as a friend and kinsman, the marquis, in the church of Soissons, was invested with the cross of a pilgrim and the staff of a general; and immediately repassed the Alps, to prepare for the distant expedition of the East. About the festival of the Pentecost he displayed his banner, and marched towards Venice at the head of the Italians: he was preceded or followed by the counts of Flanders and Blois, and the most respectable barons of France; and their numbers were swelled by the pilgrims of Germany, [45] whose object and motives were similar to their own. The Venetians had fulfilled, and even surpassed, their engagements: stables were constructed for the horses, and barracks for the troops: the magazines were abundantly replenished with forage and provisions; and the fleet of transports, ships, and galleys, was ready to hoist sail as soon as the republic had received the price of the freight and armament. But that price far exceeded the wealth of the crusaders who were assembled at Venice. The Flemings, whose obedience to their count was voluntary and precarious, had embarked in their vessels for the long navigation of the ocean and Mediterranean; and many of the French and Italians had preferred a cheaper and more convenient passage from Marseilles and Apulia to the Holy Land. Each pilgrim might complain, that after he had furnished his own contribution, he was made responsible for the deficiency of his absent brethren: the gold and silver plate of the chiefs, which they freely delivered to the treasury of St. Marks, was a generous but inadequate sacrifice; and after all

their efforts, thirty-four thousand marks were still wanting to complete the stipulated sum. The obstacle was removed by the policy and patriotism of the doge, who proposed to the barons, that if they would join their arms in reducing some revolted cities of Dalmatia, he would expose his person in the holy war, and obtain from the republic a long indulgence, till some wealthy conquest should afford the means of satisfying the debt. After much scruple and hesitation, they chose rather to accept the offer than to relinquish the enterprise; and the first hostilities of the fleet and army were directed against Zara, [46] a strong city of the Sclavonian coast, which had renounced its allegiance to Venice, and implored the protection of the king of Hungary. [47] The crusaders burst the chain or boom of the harbor; landed their horses, troops, and military engines; and compelled the inhabitants, after a defence of five days, to surrender at discretion: their lives were spared, but the revolt was punished by the pillage of their houses and the demolition of their walls. The season was far advanced; the French and Venetians resolved to pass the winter in a secure harbor and plentiful country; but their repose was disturbed by national and tumultuous quarrels of the soldiers and mariners. The conquest of Zara had scattered the seeds of discord and scandal: the arms of the allies had been stained in their outset with the blood, not of infidels, but of Christians: the king of Hungary and his new subjects were themselves enlisted under the banner of the cross; and the scruples of the devout were magnified by the fear of lassitude of the reluctant pilgrims. The pope had excommunicated the false crusaders who had pillaged and massacred their brethren, [48] and only the marquis Boniface

and Simon of Montfort [481] escaped these spiritual thunders; the one by his absence from the siege, the other by his final departure from the camp. Innocent might absolve the simple and submissive penitents of France; but he was provoked by the stubborn reason of the Venetians, who refused to confess their guilt, to accept their pardon, or to allow, in their temporal concerns, the interposition of a priest.

[Footnote 44: By a victory (A.D. 1191) over the citizens of Asti, by a crusade to Palestine, and by an embassy from the pope to the German princes, (Muratori, *Annali d'Italia*, tom. x. p. 163, 202.)]

[Footnote 45: See the crusade of the Germans in the *Historia C. P.* of Gunther, (*Canisii Antiq. Lect.* tom. iv. p. v.--viii.) who celebrates the pilgrimage of his abbot Martin, one of the preaching rivals of Fulk of Neuilly. His monastery, of the Cistercian order, was situate in the diocese of Basil.]

[Footnote 46: Jadera, now Zara, was a Roman colony, which acknowledged Augustus for its parent. It is now only two miles round, and contains five or six thousand inhabitants; but the fortifications are strong, and it is joined to the main land by a bridge. See the travels of the two companions, Spon and Wheeler, (*Voyage de Dalmatie, de Grèce, &c.*, tom. i. p. 64--70. *Journey into Greece*, p. 8--14;) the last of whom, by mistaking Sestertia for Sestertii, values an arch with statues and columns at twelve pounds. If, in his time, there were no trees near Zara, the cherry-trees were not yet planted which produce our

incomparable marasquin.]

[Footnote 47: Katona (*Hist. Critica Reg. Hungariæ, Stirpis Arpad. tom. iv. p. 536--558*) collects all the facts and testimonies most adverse to the conquerors of Zara.]

[Footnote 48: See the whole transaction, and the sentiments of the pope, in the *Epistles of Innocent III. Gesta, c. 86, 87, 88.*]

[Footnote 481: Montfort protested against the siege. Guido, the abbot of Vaux de Sernay, in the name of the pope, interdicted the attack on a Christian city; and the immediate surrender of the town was thus delayed for five days of fruitless resistance. *Wilken, vol. v. p. 167.* See likewise, at length, the history of the interdict issued by the pope. *Ibid.--M.*]

The assembly of such formidable powers by sea and land had revived the hopes of young [49] Alexius; and both at Venice and Zara, he solicited the arms of the crusaders, for his own restoration and his father's [50] deliverance. The royal youth was recommended by Philip king of Germany: his prayers and presence excited the compassion of the camp; and his cause was embraced and pleaded by the marquis of Montferrat and the doge of Venice. A double alliance, and the dignity of Cæsar, had connected with the Imperial family the two elder brothers of Boniface: [51] he expected to derive a kingdom from the important service; and the more generous ambition of Dandolo was eager to secure the inestimable

benefits of trade and dominion that might accrue to his country. [52] Their influence procured a favorable audience for the ambassadors of Alexius; and if the magnitude of his offers excited some suspicion, the motives and rewards which he displayed might justify the delay and diversion of those forces which had been consecrated to the deliverance of Jerusalem. He promised in his own and his father's name, that as soon as they should be seated on the throne of Constantinople, they would terminate the long schism of the Greeks, and submit themselves and their people to the lawful supremacy of the Roman church. He engaged to recompense the labors and merits of the crusaders, by the immediate payment of two hundred thousand marks of silver; to accompany them in person to Egypt; or, if it should be judged more advantageous, to maintain, during a year, ten thousand men, and, during his life, five hundred knights, for the service of the Holy Land. These tempting conditions were accepted by the republic of Venice; and the eloquence of the doge and marquis persuaded the counts of Flanders, Blois, and St. Pol, with eight barons of France, to join in the glorious enterprise. A treaty of offensive and defensive alliance was confirmed by their oaths and seals; and each individual, according to his situation and character, was swayed by the hope of public or private advantage; by the honor of restoring an exiled monarch; or by the sincere and probable opinion, that their efforts in Palestine would be fruitless and unavailing, and that the acquisition of Constantinople must precede and prepare the recovery of Jerusalem. But they were the chiefs or equals of a valiant band of freemen and volunteers, who thought and acted for themselves: the soldiers and clergy were divided; and, if a large

majority subscribed to the alliance, the numbers and arguments of the dissidents were strong and respectable. [53] The boldest hearts were appalled by the report of the naval power and impregnable strength of Constantinople; and their apprehensions were disguised to the world, and perhaps to themselves, by the more decent objections of religion and duty. They alleged the sanctity of a vow, which had drawn them from their families and homes to the rescue of the holy sepulchre; nor should the dark and crooked counsels of human policy divert them from a pursuit, the event of which was in the hands of the Almighty. Their first offence, the attack of Zara, had been severely punished by the reproach of their conscience and the censures of the pope; nor would they again imbrue their hands in the blood of their fellow-Christians. The apostle of Rome had pronounced; nor would they usurp the right of avenging with the sword the schism of the Greeks and the doubtful usurpation of the Byzantine monarch. On these principles or pretences, many pilgrims, the most distinguished for their valor and piety, withdrew from the camp; and their retreat was less pernicious than the open or secret opposition of a discontented party, that labored, on every occasion, to separate the army and disappoint the enterprise.

[Footnote 49: A modern reader is surprised to hear of the valet de Constantinople, as applied to young Alexius, on account of his youth, like the infants of Spain, and the nobilissimus puer of the Romans. The pages and valets of the knights were as noble as themselves, (Villehardouin and Ducange, No. 36.)]

[Footnote 50: The emperor Isaac is styled by Villehardouin, Sursac, (No. 35, &c.,) which may be derived from the French Sire, or the Greek Kur (kurioV?) melted into his proper name; the further corruptions of Tursac and Conserac will instruct us what license may have been used in the old dynasties of Assyria and Egypt.]

[Footnote 51: Reinier and Conrad: the former married Maria, daughter of the emperor Manuel Comnenus; the latter was the husband of Theodora Angela, sister of the emperors Isaac and Alexius. Conrad abandoned the Greek court and princess for the glory of defending Tyre against Saladin, (Ducange, Fam. Byzant. p. 187, 203.)]

[Footnote 52: Nicetas (in Alexio Comneno, l. iii. c. 9) accuses the doge and Venetians as the first authors of the war against Constantinople, and considers only as a kuma epi kumati, the arrival and shameful offers of the royal exile. * Note: He admits, however, that the Angeli had committed depredations on the Venetian trade, and the emperor himself had refused the payment of part of the stipulated compensation for the seizure of the Venetian merchandise by the emperor Manuel. Nicetas, in loc.--M.]

[Footnote 53: Villehardouin and Gunther represent the sentiments of the two parties. The abbot Martin left the army at Zara, proceeded to Palestine, was sent ambassador to Constantinople, and became a reluctant witness of the second siege.]

Notwithstanding this defection, the departure of the fleet and army was vigorously pressed by the Venetians, whose zeal for the service of the royal youth concealed a just resentment to his nation and family. They were mortified by the recent preference which had been given to Pisa, the rival of their trade; they had a long arrear of debt and injury to liquidate with the Byzantine court; and Dandolo might not discourage the popular tale, that he had been deprived of his eyes by the emperor Manuel, who perfidiously violated the sanctity of an ambassador. A similar armament, for ages, had not rode the Adriatic: it was composed of one hundred and twenty flat-bottomed vessels or palanders for the horses; two hundred and forty transports filled with men and arms; seventy store-ships laden with provisions; and fifty stout galleys, well prepared for the encounter of an enemy. [54] While the wind was favorable, the sky serene, and the water smooth, every eye was fixed with wonder and delight on the scene of military and naval pomp which overspread the sea. [541] The shields of the knights and squires, at once an ornament and a defence, were arranged on either side of the ships; the banners of the nations and families were displayed from the stern; our modern artillery was supplied by three hundred engines for casting stones and darts: the fatigues of the way were cheered with the sound of music; and the spirits of the adventurers were raised by the mutual assurance, that forty thousand Christian heroes were equal to the conquest of the world. [55] In the navigation [56] from Venice and Zara, the fleet was successfully steered by the skill and experience of the Venetian pilots: at Durazzo, the confederates first landed on the territories of the Greek empire: the Isle of Corfu afforded a station

and repose; they doubled, without accident, the perilous cape of Malea, the southern point of Peloponnesus or the Morea; made a descent in the islands of Negropont and Andros; and cast anchor at Abydus on the Asiatic side of the Hellespont. These preludes of conquest were easy and bloodless: the Greeks of the provinces, without patriotism or courage, were crushed by an irresistible force: the presence of the lawful heir might justify their obedience; and it was rewarded by the modesty and discipline of the Latins. As they penetrated through the Hellespont, the magnitude of their navy was compressed in a narrow channel, and the face of the waters was darkened with innumerable sails. They again expanded in the basin of the Propontis, and traversed that placid sea, till they approached the European shore, at the abbey of St. Stephen, three leagues to the west of Constantinople. The prudent doge dissuaded them from dispersing themselves in a populous and hostile land; and, as their stock of provisions was reduced, it was resolved, in the season of harvest, to replenish their store-ships in the fertile islands of the Propontis. With this resolution, they directed their course: but a strong gale, and their own impatience, drove them to the eastward; and so near did they run to the shore and the city, that some volleys of stones and darts were exchanged between the ships and the rampart. As they passed along, they gazed with admiration on the capital of the East, or, as it should seem, of the earth; rising from her seven hills, and towering over the continents of Europe and Asia. The swelling domes and lofty spires of five hundred palaces and churches were gilded by the sun and reflected in the waters: the walls were crowded with soldiers and spectators, whose numbers they beheld, of whose temper they were

ignorant; and each heart was chilled by the reflection, that, since the beginning of the world, such an enterprise had never been undertaken by such a handful of warriors. But the momentary apprehension was dispelled by hope and valor; and every man, says the marshal of Champagne, glanced his eye on the sword or lance which he must speedily use in the glorious conflict. [57] The Latins cast anchor before Chalcedon; the mariners only were left in the vessels: the soldiers, horses, and arms, were safely landed; and, in the luxury of an Imperial palace, the barons tasted the first fruits of their success. On the third day, the fleet and army moved towards Scutari, the Asiatic suburb of Constantinople: a detachment of five hundred Greek horse was surprised and defeated by fourscore French knights; and in a halt of nine days, the camp was plentifully supplied with forage and provisions.

[Footnote 54: The birth and dignity of Andrew Dandolo gave him the motive and the means of searching in the archives of Venice the memorable story of his ancestor. His brevity seems to accuse the copious and more recent narratives of Sanudo, (in Muratori, *Script. Rerum Italicarum*, tom. xxii.,) Blondus, Sabellicus, and Rhamnusius.]

[Footnote 541: This description rather belongs to the first setting sail of the expedition from Venice, before the siege of Zara. The armament did not return to Venice.--M.]

[Footnote 55: Villehardouin, No. 62. His feelings and expressions are original: he often weeps, but he rejoices in the glories and perils of

war with a spirit unknown to a sedentary writer.]

[Footnote 56: In this voyage, almost all the geographical names are corrupted by the Latins. The modern appellation of Chalcis, and all Euba, is derived from its Euripus, Evripo, Negri-po, Negropont, which dishonors our maps, (D'Anville, Géographie Ancienne, tom. i. p. 263.)]

[Footnote 57: Et sachiez que il ni ot si hardi cui le cuer ne fremist, (c. 66).. Chascuns regardoit ses armes.... que par tems en arons mestier, (c. 67.) Such is the honesty of courage.]

In relating the invasion of a great empire, it may seem strange that I have not described the obstacles which should have checked the progress of the strangers. The Greeks, in truth, were an unwarlike people; but they were rich, industrious, and subject to the will of a single man: had that man been capable of fear, when his enemies were at a distance, or of courage, when they approached his person. The first rumor of his nephew's alliance with the French and Venetians was despised by the usurper Alexius: his flatterers persuaded him, that in this contempt he was bold and sincere; and each evening, in the close of the banquet, he thrice discomfited the Barbarians of the West. These Barbarians had been justly terrified by the report of his naval power; and the sixteen hundred fishing boats of Constantinople [58] could have manned a fleet, to sink them in the Adriatic, or stop their entrance in the mouth of the Hellespont. But all force may be annihilated by the negligence of the

prince and the venality of his ministers. The great duke, or admiral, made a scandalous, almost a public, auction of the sails, the masts, and the rigging: the royal forests were reserved for the more important purpose of the chase; and the trees, says Nicetas, were guarded by the eunuchs, like the groves of religious worship. [59] From his dream of pride, Alexius was awakened by the siege of Zara, and the rapid advances of the Latins; as soon as he saw the danger was real, he thought it inevitable, and his vain presumption was lost in abject despondency and despair. He suffered these contemptible Barbarians to pitch their camp in the sight of the palace; and his apprehensions were thinly disguised by the pomp and menace of a suppliant embassy. The sovereign of the Romans was astonished (his ambassadors were instructed to say) at the hostile appearance of the strangers. If these pilgrims were sincere in their vow for the deliverance of Jerusalem, his voice must applaud, and his treasures should assist, their pious design but should they dare to invade the sanctuary of empire, their numbers, were they ten times more considerable, should not protect them from his just resentment. The answer of the doge and barons was simple and magnanimous. "In the cause of honor and justice," they said, "we despise the usurper of Greece, his threats, and his offers. Our friendship and his allegiance are due to the lawful heir, to the young prince, who is seated among us, and to his father, the emperor Isaac, who has been deprived of his sceptre, his freedom, and his eyes, by the crime of an ungrateful brother. Let that brother confess his guilt, and implore forgiveness, and we ourselves will intercede, that he may be permitted to live in affluence and security. But let him not insult us by a second message; our reply will

be made in arms, in the palace of Constantinople."

[Footnote 58: Eandem urbem plus in solis navibus piscatorum abundare, quam illos in toto navigio. Habebat enim mille et sexcentas piscatorias naves..... Bellicas autem sive mercatorias habebant infinitæ multitudinis et portum tutissimum. Gunther, Hist. C. P. c. 8, p. 10.]

[Footnote 59: Kaqaper iervn alsewn, eipein de kai Jeojutewtn paradeiswn ejeid?onto toutwni. Nicetas in Alex. Comneno, l. iii. c. 9, p. 348.]

On the tenth day of their encampment at Scutari, the crusaders prepared themselves, as soldiers and as Catholics, for the passage of the Bosphorus. Perilous indeed was the adventure; the stream was broad and rapid: in a calm the current of the Euxine might drive down the liquid and unextinguishable fires of the Greeks; and the opposite shores of Europe were defended by seventy thousand horse and foot in formidable array. On this memorable day, which happened to be bright and pleasant, the Latins were distributed in six battles or divisions; the first, or vanguard, was led by the count of Flanders, one of the most powerful of the Christian princes in the skill and number of his crossbows. The four successive battles of the French were commanded by his brother Henry, the counts of St. Pol and Blois, and Matthew of Montmorency; the last of whom was honored by the voluntary service of the marshal and nobles of Champagne. The sixth division, the rear-guard and reserve of the army, was conducted by the marquis of Montferrat, at the head of the Germans and Lombards. The chargers, saddled, with their long comparisons

dragging on the ground, were embarked in the flat palanders; [60] and the knights stood by the side of their horses, in complete armor, their helmets laced, and their lances in their hands. The numerous train of sergeants [61] and archers occupied the transports; and each transport was towed by the strength and swiftness of a galley. The six divisions traversed the Bosphorus, without encountering an enemy or an obstacle: to land the foremost was the wish, to conquer or die was the resolution, of every division and of every soldier. Jealous of the preeminence of danger, the knights in their heavy armor leaped into the sea, when it rose as high as their girdle; the sergeants and archers were animated by their valor; and the squires, letting down the draw-bridges of the palanders, led the horses to the shore. Before their squadrons could mount, and form, and couch their Lances, the seventy thousand Greeks had vanished from their sight: the timid Alexius gave the example to his troops; and it was only by the plunder of his rich pavilions that the Latins were informed that they had fought against an emperor. In the first consternation of the flying enemy, they resolved, by a double attack, to open the entrance of the harbor. The tower of Galata, [62] in the suburb of Pera, was attacked and stormed by the French, while the Venetians assumed the more difficult task of forcing the boom or chain that was stretched from that tower to the Byzantine shore. After some fruitless attempts, their intrepid perseverance prevailed: twenty ships of war, the relics of the Grecian navy, were either sunk or taken: the enormous and massy links of iron were cut asunder by the shears, or broken by the weight, of the galleys; [63] and the Venetian fleet, safe and triumphant, rode at anchor in the port of Constantinople. By these

daring achievements, a remnant of twenty thousand Latins solicited the license of besieging a capital which contained above four hundred thousand inhabitants, [64] able, though not willing, to bear arms in defence of their country. Such an account would indeed suppose a population of near two millions; but whatever abatement may be required in the numbers of the Greeks, the belief of those numbers will equally exalt the fearless spirit of their assailants.

[Footnote 60: From the version of Vignere I adopt the well-sounding word palander, which is still used, I believe, in the Mediterranean.

But had I written in French, I should have preserved the original and expressive denomination of vessiers or huissiers, from the huis or door which was let down as a draw-bridge; but which, at sea, was closed into the side of the ship, (see Ducange au Villehardouin, No. 14, and Joinville. p. 27, 28, edit. du Louvre.)]

[Footnote 61: To avoid the vague expressions of followers, &c., I use, after Villehardouin, the word sergeants for all horsemen who were not knights. There were sergeants at arms, and sergeants at law; and if we visit the parade and Westminster Hall, we may observe the strange result of the distinction, (Ducange, Glossar. Latin, Servientes, &c., tom. vi. p. 226--231.)]

[Footnote 62: It is needless to observe, that on the subject of Galata, the chain, &c., Ducange is accurate and full. Consult likewise the proper chapters of the C. P. Christiana of the same author. The

inhabitants of Galata were so vain and ignorant, that they applied to themselves St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians.]

[Footnote 63: The vessel that broke the chain was named the Eagle, Aquila, (Dandolo, Chronicon, p. 322,) which Blondus (de Gestis Venet.) has changed into Aquilo, the north wind. Ducange (Observations, No. 83) maintains the latter reading; but he had not seen the respectable text of Dandolo, nor did he enough consider the topography of the harbor. The south-east would have been a more effectual wind. (Note to Wilken, vol. v. p. 215.)]

[Footnote 64: Quatre cens mil homes ou plus, (Villehardouin, No. 134,) must be understood of men of a military age. Le Beau (Hist. du. Bas Empire, tom. xx. p. 417) allows Constantinople a million of inhabitants, of whom 60,000 horse, and an infinite number of foot-soldiers. In its present decay, the capital of the Ottoman empire may contain 400,000 souls, (Bell's Travels, vol. ii. p. 401, 402;) but as the Turks keep no registers, and as circumstances are fallacious, it is impossible to ascertain (Niebuhr, Voyage en Arabie, tom. i. p. 18, 19) the real populousness of their cities.]

In the choice of the attack, the French and Venetians were divided by their habits of life and warfare. The former affirmed with truth, that Constantinople was most accessible on the side of the sea and the harbor. The latter might assert with honor, that they had long enough trusted their lives and fortunes to a frail bark and a precarious

element, and loudly demanded a trial of knighthood, a firm ground, and a close onset, either on foot or on horseback. After a prudent compromise, of employing the two nations by sea and land, in the service best suited to their character, the fleet covering the army, they both proceeded from the entrance to the extremity of the harbor: the stone bridge of the river was hastily repaired; and the six battles of the French formed their encampment against the front of the capital, the basis of the triangle which runs about four miles from the port to the Propontis. [65] On the edge of a broad ditch, at the foot of a lofty rampart, they had leisure to contemplate the difficulties of their enterprise. The gates to the right and left of their narrow camp poured forth frequent sallies of cavalry and light-infantry, which cut off their stragglers, swept the country of provisions, sounded the alarm five or six times in the course of each day, and compelled them to plant a palisade, and sink an intrenchment, for their immediate safety. In the supplies and convoys the Venetians had been too sparing, or the Franks too voracious: the usual complaints of hunger and scarcity were heard, and perhaps felt their stock of flour would be exhausted in three weeks; and their disgust of salt meat tempted them to taste the flesh of their horses. The trembling usurper was supported by Theodore Lascaris, his son-in-law, a valiant youth, who aspired to save and to rule his country; the Greeks, regardless of that country, were awakened to the defence of their religion; but their firmest hope was in the strength and spirit of the Varangian guards, of the Danes and English, as they are named in the writers of the times. [66] After ten days' incessant labor, the ground was levelled, the ditch filled, the approaches of

the besiegers were regularly made, and two hundred and fifty engines of assault exercised their various powers to clear the rampart, to batter the walls, and to sap the foundations. On the first appearance of a breach, the scaling-ladders were applied: the numbers that defended the vantage ground repulsed and oppressed the adventurous Latins; but they admired the resolution of fifteen knights and sergeants, who had gained the ascent, and maintained their perilous station till they were precipitated or made prisoners by the Imperial guards. On the side of the harbor the naval attack was more successfully conducted by the Venetians; and that industrious people employed every resource that was known and practiced before the invention of gunpowder. A double line, three bow-shots in front, was formed by the galleys and ships; and the swift motion of the former was supported by the weight and loftiness of the latter, whose decks, and poops, and turret, were the platforms of military engines, that discharged their shot over the heads of the first line. The soldiers, who leaped from the galleys on shore, immediately planted and ascended their scaling-ladders, while the large ships, advancing more slowly into the intervals, and lowering a draw-bridge, opened a way through the air from their masts to the rampart. In the midst of the conflict, the doge, a venerable and conspicuous form, stood aloft in complete armor on the prow of his galley. The great standard of St. Mark was displayed before him; his threats, promises, and exhortations, urged the diligence of the rowers; his vessel was the first that struck; and Dandolo was the first warrior on the shore. The nations admired the magnanimity of the blind old man, without reflecting that his age and infirmities diminished the price of life, and enhanced

the value of immortal glory. On a sudden, by an invisible hand, (for the standard-bearer was probably slain,) the banner of the republic was fixed on the rampart: twenty-five towers were rapidly occupied; and, by the cruel expedient of fire, the Greeks were driven from the adjacent quarter. The doge had despatched the intelligence of his success, when he was checked by the danger of his confederates. Nobly declaring that he would rather die with the pilgrims than gain a victory by their destruction, Dandolo relinquished his advantage, recalled his troops, and hastened to the scene of action. He found the six weary diminutive battles of the French encompassed by sixty squadrons of the Greek cavalry, the least of which was more numerous than the largest of their divisions. Shame and despair had provoked Alexius to the last effort of a general sally; but he was awed by the firm order and manly aspect of the Latins; and, after skirmishing at a distance, withdrew his troops in the close of the evening. The silence or tumult of the night exasperated his fears; and the timid usurper, collecting a treasure of ten thousand pounds of gold, basely deserted his wife, his people, and his fortune; threw himself into a bark; stole through the Bosphorus; and landed in shameful safety in an obscure harbor of Thrace. As soon as they were apprised of his flight, the Greek nobles sought pardon and peace in the dungeon where the blind Isaac expected each hour the visit of the executioner. Again saved and exalted by the vicissitudes of fortune, the captive in his Imperial robes was replace on the throne, and surrounded with prostrate slaves, whose real terror and affected joy he was incapable of discerning. At the dawn of day, hostilities were suspended, and the Latin chiefs were surprised by a message from the lawful and

reigning emperor, who was impatient to embrace his son, and to reward his generous deliverers. [67]

[Footnote 65: On the most correct plans of Constantinople, I know not how to measure more than 4000 paces. Yet Villehardouin computes the space at three leagues, (No. 86.) If his eye were not deceived, he must reckon by the old Gallic league of 1500 paces, which might still be used in Champagne.]

[Footnote 66: The guards, the Varangi, are styled by Villehardouin, (No. 89, 95) Englois et Danois avec leurs haches. Whatever had been their origin, a French pilgrim could not be mistaken in the nations of which they were at that time composed.]

[Footnote 67: For the first siege and conquest of Constantinople, we may read the original letter of the crusaders to Innocent III., Gesta, c. 91, p. 533, 534. Villehardouin, No. 75--99. Nicetas, in Alexio Comnen. l. iii. c. 10, p. 349--352. Dandolo, in Chron. p. 322. Gunther, and his abbot Martin, were not yet returned from their obstinate pilgrim age to Jerusalem, or St. John d'Acre, where the greatest part of the company had died of the plague.]