

dressed as follows:—"My brethren, as you know, Jerusalem has fallen. A barbarous, but formidable power, has forced us, inch by inch, to abandon Palestine. For the last century we have had to sustain as many engagements as we have occupied fortresses. St. Jean D'Acre has just witnessed our final struggle, and we have left the greater part of our brethren buried beneath its ruins. It is for you to replace them; from your valour we hope for our return to the Holy Land; and you hold in your hands the lives and liberties of your brethren, and above all of the many Christians who groan in the prisons of the infidels." Such an appeal met with but one response from both young and old, and all declared themselves ready to share the perils and the fate of their companions. The place of their establishment was next to be settled. The King of Cyprus had assigned Limisso as their residence—a small and ill defended town. This however they fortified, and soon numerous vessels began to issue therefrom, to protect pilgrims who might be crossing the seas, from the attacks of the infidel corsairs, and formed the nucleus of that famous marine, which, shortly afterwards, became the terror of the Turkish power.

The Knights were soon dissatisfied with their enforced dependence upon the King of Cyprus, and sought for a spot where their power might be re-established without any interference. They fixed upon the neighbouring and fertile island of Rhodes, which possessed a good harbour, and was admirably fitted to form an advanced bulwark against the assaults of the Moslems. It nominally belonged to the Byzantine Emperor, but was really under the control of several independent Siegneurs, who had introduced a mixed population of Turks and Saracens, and afforded shelter to the infidel corsairs, when pursued by Christian ships.

Fulk De Villaret, (who had been elected Grand Master on the death of his brother, William,) went to France shortly after his election, with his principal Knights, and with great secrecy laid before the Pope and the French King, his plans for the capture of Rhodes. They promised him all the support in their power, and proclaimed a general crusade. The Grand Master assembled the fleet and army at Brindisi, whence they sailed for Rhodes, in the year 1310. The Mussulman and Greek population, assisted by the forces of the Emperor Andronicus, maintained an obstinate defence against the Knights for four years, but, at length were defeated and the city and island were surrendered. After this glorious achievement, the voice of Europe proclaimed the order of Hospitallers, as *Knights of Rhodes*; and the letters F. E. R. T., were added to the Banner of the Grand Master, (*Fortitudo Ejus Rhodium Tenit.*)

Under the sway of the Knights, this beautiful island soon became famous throughout Europe. They held it for over two hundred years,