

LIFE OF ST. PETER THOMAS, OF THE ORDER OF CARMELITES:

DEVOTED SERVANT OF MARY—TITULAR PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE—LEGATE
OF THE CRUSADE OF 1365.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF L'ABBE A. PARRAUD.

BY MISS S. X. BLAKELY.

CHAPTER IX.—(Continued.)



THE next morning a vast throng of fervent Catholics were present at the holy sacrifice—of whom three hundred were German warriors in the pay of Rascia. The hope of martyrdom had sprung up with passionate fervor in those hearts, awakened to self-sacrifice by the ardent love of a saint.

Stratimir, when he heard of it, was not able to control his fury. Despots deem it an outrage when their subjects dare to make any manifestation of moral courage. To place the voice of conscience above the ready connivance with their guilty caprices and the price offered for such base compliance, is in their eyes only a rebellion. Imbued with this view of the case, the King lost no time in summoning to his presence the German officers. The captain of this valiant band permitted the first outburst of rage and threats on the part of the tyrant to be spent, and then with true Christian dignity he spoke in the name of all. "We do not pretend to deny, your highness, that we were aware of the edict which you promulgated. If we did not obey, it was because according to the sacred writings in which you believe, as well as we, that it is better to please God than man.

We are Catholics, and are attached to our holy Church with every fibre of our hearts. Would it be possible for us to leave the legate sent by the Holy See—and *such* a legate, the well-beloved father of our souls, to celebrate the divine mysteries without being present on the occasion? Know, O! Prince that our religion is dearer far to each one of us than *the apple of his eye*. We are ready to sacrifice everything to defend it, to preserve it, and to diffuse throughout the splendid radiance of its glory."

At these spirited words and noble sentiments from those over whose heads he, as it were, held the sword suspended, the tyrant was utterly confounded. Thus in almost every instance does it happen with the enemies of the Church in the face of a vigorous yet prudent opposition.

Their vaunted courage is mere bravado and vain boasting, their encroachments are infinite when they perceive any evidence of weakness on the part of those whom they fancy to be in their power, but their arrogance vanishes when they meet with the noble courageous soul that dares their poor small natures to do their worst. Stratimir forced a smile and pretended to be satisfied with the captain's words. He gave utterance to some expressions