

the bay of Patras with the isthmus of Corinth. At first victory seemed to smile on the Turks till Doria drove his ships at them, which encouraged a revived general attack. Of 200 galleys and 66 small ships the Turks had 18 sunk, 177 captured:¹ they lost some 25,000 killed and wounded and 5,000 prisoners, among them many governors of provinces: above all, 12,000 to 15,000 Christian galley slaves were freed. The Christian fleet, of about equal strength, lost 17 ships with 7,500 men (the history of Corfu cited gives the figure as 13,000). After the booty had been divided in Corfu roads, Don John, thenceforth the hero of Christendom, sailed for Messina, Colonna for Rome: no real effort was made to follow up this outstanding success, the attack being neither pressed home on the Turks in their own waters, nor in Cyprus by a relief of Famagusta or recapture of Nicosia from the Muslims: the Christians suffered from famine, the Turks remained with their conquests. After Lepanto both sides feverishly armed afresh: the Venetian commander, joined by 140 Papal galleys and some 34 other vessels, sailed out from Corfu, making for the island of Cerigo and searching for the Turkish admiral, who had as many ships under him. They came to skirmishes, but Foscarini avoided a general action and returned ingloriously to Corfu. At last, in September 1572, Don John of Austria reappeared, and with reinforcements from Venice sailed to meet the Turks at Navarino (Greece). The latter, however, would not come out of their shelters, and with the onset of the bad weather season the Christian fleet was compelled to return. Except that Turkish naval power never recovered from the defeat, Lepanto was wasted as an opportunity for united Christendom to pass from defence to a general attack on the Turkish hold in Europe: Venice, indeed, making an isolated peace gave up its claims to Cyprus.

Sultan Selim II dead, his son, Murad III, then aged 26 (12.12.1574 to 16.1.1595) was fully occupied in consolidating his power and had no mind to break the peace with anyone in Christendom. In the six months of 1576 that the plague decimated Venice it did, however, more damage to the republic than the Turks had done in 18 years. When Sultan Murad III died, his son Muhammad III (16.1.1595 to 22.12.1603) continued his father's policy of peace with Venice, but in June 1596 revived a flagging war with Austria by marching into Hungary and decisively defeating the Archduke Maximilian in a three-day battle. The next reign, Ahmad I's (22.12.1603 to 22.11.1617), saw a peace signed between Austria and Turkey, 1606, and the annual tribute by the former discontinued.

By the end of the sixteenth century the Turkish empire had attained the zenith of its power on land; but from 1640 onwards, right till the end of the 1600's (as will be read during the course of the narrative of the Carmelite mission) the threat to the heart of Christendom more than once became menacing and alarming.

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To that two hundred year long onward drive into the heart of Europe, at times rapid and overwhelming at others intermittent, but always eating like a canker into Christian lands, to that evidently imperialistic aim of concentrating at Constantinople all power in the hands of the Sultans, successors of the great Byzantine emperors, on the one hand, on the other to the zeal for setting up the Crescent and taking down the Cross from the houses of God, there was naturally a reaction in Europe: why it was relatively so weak and disorganized must now briefly be taken into account.

Driven from Rome in 1309 the (French) Pope Clement V set up his court in Avignon, then an enclave possessed by the Holy See in the midst of French territory, and there his successors remained till in 1377 Gregory XI returned to Rome, the first to make his regular residence the Vatican in place of the Lateran palace. When he died in 1378 and Urban VI, an Italian,

¹ Figures mentioned in an article of the *Osservatore Romano*, No. 69-23653 are: The Venetians had 114 ships, the Spaniards 77, there were 12 Papal vessels, 3 each of the Order of Malta, the Republic of Genoa and Duke of Tuscany: 130 Turkish vessels were captured, 107 sunk on that fateful day: 40,000 Turks estimated to have perished, 8,000 been taken prisoners.