

CHAPTER I.

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE ISLAND AND KINGDOM OF CYPRUS.

CYPRUS, an island in the Mediterranean Sea, and dependency of Turkey in Asia, lies in long. $52^{\circ} 45'$ and lat. $35^{\circ} 30'$, between the coast of Syria and that of Cilicia now called Caramania. It has had various names. Pliny, v. 31, calls it *Acamantis*, *Cerastis*, *Aspelia*, *Amathusia*, *Macaria*, *Cryptos* and *Colinia*. In other historians it bears the names of *Chetinia*, *Aerosa*, *Paphos*, *Salamina*; and in the poets *Cythera*, from the goddess *Venus* who, they say playfully, was there nursed and brought up, and to whom were erected there several temples, of which the most conspicuous were in the cities of *Paphos*, *Cythera* and *Amathus*. Cyprus once comprised nine kingdoms—"quondam novem regnorum sedem" says Pliny, afterwards the Kings of Egypt reigned there, and then the Romans. From the Empire of the West it passed to that of the Greek Emperors of Constantinople, from whom it was wrested by the Arabs in the days of *Heraclius*. The Emperors soon recovered their sovereignty, but *Isaac*, a prince of the family of the *Comneni*, who ruled the island with the title of *Duke*, usurped the supreme power, and through the weakness of the Empire remained in absolute and peaceful possession, until in 1191 *Richard I*, King of England, took his throne and his life, and sold the kingdom to the *Knights Templars*. These, owing to their harsh behaviour towards the natives who followed the Greek rite, saw that they could not