

bring their lives into peril), this Pasha, both from the favour he bore to the Venetians, and his eagerness to get the usual *bakhahish*, sent secret intelligence to the Bailo, hinting that the matter would be forwarded by a present, and as the Bailo made no sign, Mehmed came over at last to the opinion that Cyprus should be annexed, to condemn and punish, as he said, his ingratitude: for he hoped that the present Bailo would do as Bragadino had done. To him also Mehmed had sent to say that two Cypriots had arrived with letters, which expressed the desire of many peasants of the *parici* class to be ruled by the Grand Turk, pleading that they were sore burdened: upon which Bragadino, with magnificent gifts, won over the Pasha, who sent back to him these two messengers and their letters, without presenting them to the Sultan. They were never seen again.

Before despatching the Chawush to Venice, the Pasha sent to the Bailo to say that the Sultan being a new Sovereign had conceived, as new princes often have strange fancies, a desire to possess that rock called Cyprus; and as it was a place of no consequence it would be well that they should offer it to his Majesty, who would always be their devoted friend. He begged the Bailo to write to Venice that this fancy of the Sultan's ought certainly to be gratified. It was now, and not before (for all that they may say in Constantinople), that the Bailo was satisfied that an expedition was being armed against the Venetians: this was greatly to our detriment, for had he believed it earlier, and given us warning, an easier and quicker remedy might have been found. For even in the year before the war seventy Turkish galleys were taking soundings in the roadsteads of Famagosta, Saline and Linnisso, and soldiers were already assembling in Caramania. Mehmed Pasha, who took the expedition into his special charge, was collecting troops in the Archipelago, and providing stores and horses. One hundred and sixty galleys of different sizes were fitted out, sixty boats with low freeboard (*fuste*), eight lighters, six vessels, one galleon, forty horseboats, thirty of the kind called *caramussali*, three mortar boats (*palandre*), forty frigates—three hundred and forty-eight in all, although the fleet was said to be of four hundred sail—but two hundred and twenty were manned with rowers. On January 13 the Turks detained two Venetian vessels, the "Bonalda" and "Balba." The Sultan went in person to the Topkhane, or gun-foundry, and to the arsenal, and ordered the channels to be blocked, and all Venetian ships to be impounded.

On February 11 Cubat Chawush was despatched as ambassador to Venice. He carried letters, and, accompanied by Luigi Bon Rizzo, Secretary to the Bailo, arrived at Venice at the beginning of April. The Signory gave him a most spirited answer, and dismissed him, as was meet. For his master was a perjured usurper, who threatened Christian lands; which placed all their trust in the true Lion of the tribe of Judah, King of kings and Lord of lords, the Tamer of hosts: and in the holiness and zeal of Pope Pius V., the enemy of heretics and infidels, the lover of peace, the stay of Christendom. Venice entered keenly into the war thus unjustly sprung upon her, and despatched with all speed Signor Hieronimo Martinengo with three thousand men; but the general died off Corfu, and less than that number arrived in Cyprus. They were intended to garrison Famagosta, and carried with them the body of Martinengo. The whole capital went forth to receive it, and with bitter wailings bore it to the church of S. Sophia. They waited a little to rest the foot soldiers, and then marched to Famagosta, carrying with them in a coffin their general's remains.

Very little before this the Government of the island received letters from the Bailo at Constantinople, and also from the Signory of Venice. Their Excellencies announced that war was declared, offered comfort to all, exhorted all to be brave and loyal, and assured them that every effort would be made for their defence, for the Signory was determined sooner to