

## LOPEZ.

P. Joan Lopez, born 1780, a Franciscan and Missioner in Syria and Palestine, whence he returned to die as President of a convent at Vich in 1798. From his *Peregrinació a Jerusalem*, pp. 124—126, published in 1900 from a Catalan MS. in the public library of Barcelona, I translate his *Breu Descripció de la Insula de Xipre*.

The island of Cyprus is the nearest to the Holy Land, and as I read in an old book it was at one time a continent, joined to Sidon, Beirut and Tyre and the rest of the land of Syria, and a terrible earthquake made it an island. On the side which looks towards Cilicia or Carmania it is very near the mainland, so that the people on the other shore can be seen; but on the side towards Syria and Africa there is much water between it and the mainland. The island is three or four days' journey in length, and two in breadth. It has in its midst a fair city called Nicosia, which is the capital of the kingdom, well walled, with its fine gates, which are three, to wit the gate of Paffo, of Famagusta, and Cirina. That of Famagusta is most beautiful, and in my judgment the city of Barceloua has none to match it. In the middle of the city is the cathedral, a magnificent building, made into a mosque for the Turks. The island has other cities such as Famagusta, Cirina, Llimasso, and although l'Arnica is no city yet it is better known than the other cities, because the consuls live there and other European merchants. The most famous mountains are those of Paffo towards the south, those of the goddess Venus towards the north, the rest are not very high. The towns and villages are many, those which I visited were the villages of Azomatos, Carpasia, Cornegiti and Citrea, the last is the most delightful and pleasant of all, full of trees and streams which come from two sources: the volume of each is equal to the girth of two men. These villages belong to Maronite Christians. Venice held the island for a long time, then the Grand Turk seized it, and still you may see cannons on the walls with the arms of Venice. The greater part of the inhabitants of this island are schismatic Greek Christians, a few Armenians, and the remaining Christians are Catholic Maronites. The rest are Mohammedans. The island abounds in all things, especially wine. The soil is fertile, and if it were not that the Turks oppress the poor people with so many exactions, victuals would be almost given away. It abounds too in serpents, particularly asps, whose bite is incurable: they are like snakes of three palms in length, and move very little. On this account the natives always wear very stout boots throughout the year, and at reaping time they put bells on their sickles, for the sound scares away every venomous beast.

The natives of Cyprus, particularly the Christians, live and fare very much as in Europe in their dress and general habits, and they enjoy as much liberty as in a Christian country, without molestation from the Turks or others. They use also carts or wains, and the Europeans calèches and coaches. The Holy Land has here two convents of the Greek-speaking Mission, these are l'Arnica, a seaport, and Nicosia, the capital. In this last I lived a year, from the beginning of October, 1770, until September, 1771. The heat of the island is excessive, and during the summer by day one can travel neither on foot nor on horseback, but by night only. The languages of the natives are Greek and Turkish, the Maronites know Arabic as well. Throughout the island one never meets a Greek Christian who is a Catholic, except only the Maronites, so it may be said that the Holy Land sent this mission here "in testimonium fidei." The Hospice at Nicosia is fair and pleasant, with a good garden near