

In the morning the Signora Loretti, an old dame with a very long waist, entered the court of the hovel where I resided; and dismounting from her mule, observed that she was come to carry me to her country-house, where I could remain until her husband returned from Kelindri. I accepted, with gratitude, her kind invitation; and promising to be at her house in the evening, she departed, saying that she would go and make preparations for my reception.

Ibrahim, who had never perfectly recovered from the effects of the Latakia fever, was once more taken ill, and in the course of a few days, reduced to extreme weakness. I left him under the care of the Zabit, and set out with a guide to look at the old and magnificent monastery of Bella Païsa, situated on the declivity of the mountains, about four miles S.E. of Cerinia; from the town to the monastery, which was founded by a princess of the house of Lusignan, I passed under the shade of olive, myrtle, and orange trees. A Greek priest stood at the gate to shew me the ruins. Several cows were grazing in the outer court, from which we passed into a decayed cloister, and thence into the chapel; which, for the lightness and elegance of its architecture, might be compared to the cathedral of Salisbury: it has six windows facing the north, and commanding a delightful prospect of the adjacent country, sea, and coast of Caramania: it is forty-three paces in length, and fourteen in breadth; but of all its ornaments a stone pulpit alone remains. On the E. side of the cloister, the ceilings of two Gothic chambers have fallen in; and immediately above there appears to have been a hall of the same length as the chapel, decorated with six handsome pilasters on either side and two noble Gothic windows opening towards the sea: there are several other apartments in ruins; and on the south side of the cloister, another Gothic hall has been converted into a Greek chapel. Above are the cells of the monks, and beneath the monastery is a prodigious subterraneous cavern, completely arched, and now used as a cowhouse and stable. The ground, for some distance round the monastery, is covered with the remains of other buildings, appendages no doubt to the former establishment, which has more the appearance of a prince's palace than a place of religious retirement. It is difficult to imagine a situation more convenient or delightful; lofty mountains and hanging cliffs, clothed with wood and verdure, rise immediately behind, and continue to extend in successive ridges both to the E. and W. A fertile plain spreads to the channel, formerly called Anlon Cilicius, which is bounded by the rocks of Mount Taurus, mantled with snow. I quitted this pleasing spot with regret; and bending my course along the foot of the mountains, reached, at four in the evening, the habitation of Signora Loretti, a neat little cottage, standing on an eminence about three miles to the S.W. of Cerina. The old lady was ready to receive me at the door, and conducted me to my apartment, which was distinct from the other part of the cottage, and stood in the middle of the garden. Captain Loretti had purchased this estate, consisting of several hundred acres of excellent land, for twenty piastres, or about a pound sterling, and had amused himself in improving it, by planting olive trees, which yield a large profit in a short time.

The town, or rather village, of Cerina, the ancient Cerinia, was formerly defended by a strong wall; but the greater part of it has fallen down, and the port has been nearly filled up by the ruins. On the east side of the harbour stands the castle, a fortress erected, it is said, by the Venetians; it is of a square form flanked at each corner with round towers, washed on the N. and E. by the sea, and defended on the S. and W. by a deep ditch: the walls are lofty, and built of an excellent kind of stone; it has one gate in the west face and there are, I believe, four small brass swivels mounted in the works. The harbour, which is small, is exposed to the north wind, and cannot admit a vessel of more than a hundred tons burthen; but the trade is inconsiderable, there not being above fifteen families in the place.