

CHAPTER IX.

DEPARTURE FROM CERINES, AND DESCRIPTION OF THE CONVENT OF LAPASIS.

THE road from Cerines to the monastery of Lapis runs eastwards. You travel for five miles over the most beautiful plain in Cyprus, so well is it cultivated, so many the trees, both fruit and forest trees, and so green the little hills, which never lack water and keep their verdure all the year round. The same charms adorn all this northern coast.

By this pleasant path you reach the convent, lying under the mountains. It was an abbey of the "Umiliati," called Lapis, now written corruptly Belapais, and by Italians Belpaese. Its natural position has well earned the name. On the slope of a hill, it enjoys the most exquisite view of mounds covered with groves and young trees, and a fair plain, stretching down to the sea. It has the same kind of view on the east and the west, covering also the Caramanian Sea and the shore of the mainland.

The abbey was built by Hugues III de Lusignan, who gave it sundry privileges, this the chief: that the Superior besides the robes of a mitred abbot, might wear in riding a sword, and the gilt spurs of a knight of the kingdom.

In the days of Jacques the bastard it was made a *Commenda*, and after the surrender of the fort of Cerines the abbey was demolished. There still remain the melancholy ruins of a vast building. You enter a glorious cloister surrounded by 18 pillars, or rather pilasters, with Corinthian capitals; on the