

1373. request of the Abbot, he would mount quickly and secretly, with all or a part of his brigade: "in fact it is needful as you know, that this should be kept secret and performed with rapidity." \*

The Abbot had bribed several of the nobles of the district of Piacenza against Bernabò — they talked of occupying the forts and ruling them for the Church. The Pontifical instructions were precisely followed out in spite of very bad weather, and although the Pope did not pay the stipends either punctually or in full.

Some little money was sent from Avignon — we have a curious document respecting it — the order of the Papal treasurer to pay to Issarmida the Jew the small sum due "pro certa tela empta per eam et pro cotone ad faciendum garnichones per portandum pecunias necessarias pro stipendiariis Domini Papæ ad guerram Romanæ Ecclesiæ per partes Italiæ."

Hawkwood therefore remained creditor for a large sum, but he resigned himself, well knowing that means would not be wanting wherewith to reimburse himself on the States of the Church, as we shall see.

## XI.

### A BATTLE REGAINED.

#### CORRESPONDENCE WITH GREGORY XI.

[Letter of Bernabò Visconti to Lodovico Gonzaga in the Milanese diplomatic documents published by LUIGI OSIO — Vatican archives, *Regesti di Gregorio XI and Introitus et expensæ Camera apostolicæ 1373* — MATTEO DE GRIFONI, *Memoriale storico* — FROISSART, *Chronicles* — *Chronicon placentinum*, *Chronicon rhexiense*, *Chronicon estense* — GHIRARDACCI, *Storie bolognesi* in MURATORI [R. I. S.] — GUICHENON, *Histoire généalogique de la maison de Savoie* — *Annales mediolanenses* in MURATORI [R. I. S.]]

To ensure the success of the Guelphic League, a French corps led by the Lord of Coucy was added to their forces,

\* See Documents IX and X.

Bernabò Visconti however did not lose courage, on the contrary he borrowed some troops from his brother Galeazzo, and disposed himself to "requite in good earnest the Lord of Cossi" (*Coucy*) and Sir John Hawkwood, as well as the Count of Savoy.

1373.

April 20.

The Conte Verde was just at that time rashly employed in throwing a bridge across the Adda at Brivio; it was of great importance to the league to disengage their ally; consequently, at the solicitation of the Papal Legate and the Pope's letters,\* Hawkwood, Coucy, and Aymer de Pomerio, captains for the Church, left Ferrara and crossed the Po by the bridge of Stellata. Visconti's army marched against them led by the Conte di Virtù and Annechin Bon garden, and the opposing ranks confronted each other on the river Chiese.

May 7.

The ranks of the Visconti numbered a thousand five hundred lances chiefly Germans and Hungarians, and four thousand foot. Hawkwood and de Coucy only had six hundred lances and seven hundred archers besides the *provisionati*\*\* infantry, and some civic volunteers under a certain Malatesta; nevertheless Coucy with his French impetuosity did not hesitate to make the attack, and Hawkwood was constrained to support him; indeed if we may believe Froissart, he willingly did so "because Coucy had married a daughter of the King of England." After a short conflict of an hour, the army of the league being discomfited began to flee, and that of the Visconti, stipendiaries and plunderers, dedicated their attention to spoil. Hawkwood, taking refuge on the heights of Montechiaro, saw that they might make an attempt to retrieve their defeat and though he only had the *provisionati*, the volunteers, and very few mercenaries under his standard, he reorganized

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\* See Document XL.

\*\* The *provisionati* were peasant infantry recruited in haste, and poorly paid.

1873.

them, and with Malatesta fell unexpectedly on the enemy while they were intent on spoil. His quick glance and resolution changed defeat into victory. Bongarden's Germans gave themselves to flight on the instant; the Lombards made a long and useless resistance.

Not only the camp remained in the English possession, but two hundred prisoners besides, amongst whom were Francesco d' Este, Gabriotto di Canossa, Francesco di Sasuolo, and about thirty of the best nobility of Lombardy who had to disburse great ransoms. The Conte di Virtù left his helmet and lance, he was thrown to the ground, and he too would have been in the enemy's hands, if a good many of his faithful followers had not defended him and found him another horse. The maternal presentiments of Donna Bianca were thus fulfilled.

Hawkwood however was not intoxicated with success; he, coolly considering the superior forces of which the Visconti could yet dispose, the many dead and wounded which the battle had cost the conquerors, the difficulty of finding provisions, and the hostility of the peasants, feared he might be cut off from his base of operations if he advanced. He thought it would be rash to attempt to join Conte Verde, though that would have been the total ruin of the Visconti; so riding day and night he retreated to Bologna to recover his strength and dragged to prison there all the captives who had been unable to pay their ransoms. He justly considered that the effect of the defeat would be enough to prevent the Visconti from attacking the Count of Savoy who was able to rejoin Hawkwood at Bologna, and concert a plan to lay siege to Piacenza, which was not carried out, solely because the Conte Verde fell ill.

The knowledge of these successes did not reach Avignon very rapidly: a certain Francesco, messenger of the Lord of Mantua, was the first who carried the news of victory,

June 2.

XII, ...  
 ...  
 May 22

and he got a present of twenty five florins. Then there came the official report, brought by the noble *donzello* Pietro di Murles, who had been sent to the camp with a letter from the Pope to exhort Hawkwood to join Conte Verde.\* Being an employé of the court and of noble birth, Murles had a present of thirty florins; and Hawkwood received an eloquent Papal letter which exalted the triumph "of the few over the many, of the invaded over the invaders" (?).

The Pope also added that he had heard of the retreat to Bologna, but he limited himself to expressing his opinion that it would have been better to continue the onward march, and besought Hawkwood that he would effect as soon as possible the junction with Amedeo Count of Savoy, captain general of the war, on the upper Milanese territory; so as "not to give the defeated enemy time to take breath."

He sent no money for the arrears of pay; he promised however to provide against these, as well as other arrears, assuring Hawkwood that he and the Cardinal legate were engaged on the subject and he recommended the English meanwhile to have filial patience\*\* (*figliale pazienza*). He could hope for little while paying nothing, — besides the victory of the Chiese had cost Hawkwood's Company very dear, and therefore in a successive letter, while expressing his astonishment that "Bernabò, that son of Belial, should have lost neither city, fortress or town of any sort," the Pope enlarged into most tender expressions towards the English condottiere: "We have in our own heart to regard with serene countenance and to anticipate at all times with our best favors your most amiable person, who rests nearest to our heart."\*\*\*

This last letter served as a letter of recommendation to the noble Ugo di Rupe, cavalier and master of the

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\* See Document XI.

\*\*\* See Document XIII.

\*\* See Document XII.

1873. *sacro ospizio* (knights hospitaller) who was sent to Hawkwood with verbal instructions, and then the campaign was recommenced.

July 17. Bernabò wrote to Gonzaga: "We have heard that Hawkwood and his brigade are reformed and all united together." In fact the English provided for the defence of the territory of Piacenza, and entered into the lower Milanese province thus rendering possible a rebellion of peasants in the Bergamasco, which cost Ambrogiuolo Visconti his life.

1874.  
January. It cannot be said that Hawkwood failed in his duty; for, as in the preceding winter, he repeated an incursion in which Castel San Giovanni was taken for the Cardinal legate, and finding that the Visconti, profiting by his withdrawal, had marched to menace Bologna, he rapidly retraced his steps falling on the flank of the invaders. They attempted to fly, but having found a broken bridge, they were constrained to fight with the English, and with the populace who had emerged from Bologna, and thus being taken in the midst they sustained a complete defeat.

The Pope on the other hand continued to pay the English with fine words. Hawkwood therefore first sent the noble knight Sir John Brise, then he wrote, and not receiving anything but vague promises\* by message or letter he sent his secretary, with instructions to propose some formal agreement. Amongst other things he demanded that the number of lances should be augmented, which would only have served to increase the amount of arrears. Perhaps this was exactly what he would have liked, hoping to get himself paid in landed possessions, but it was denied. On the other point we only know that the secretary had to give him verbal answers conveying the

\* See Documents XIV and XV.

good intentions of the Pontiff.\* We may believe that these were sufficiently satisfactory, as Hawkwood continued in his service.

A little while after the Pope sent his *donzello* (usher) Giovanni de Canis with ample letters of recommendation and orders to follow out the commissions which this gentleman should communicate either verbally or in writing.\*\*

Meanwhile the Visconti had laid siege to Vercelli: every day the besieging forces increased, and the city suffered greatly from famine. On this account the Pope, who had at first commissioned Hawkwood to keep in the vicinity of Parma and Piacenza, finding that the enemies in those parts had withdrawn, begged him to fly to the succour of the besieged town, leaving a sufficient garrison at Bologna, in agreement with Cardinal Sant'Angelo, vicar general; and he assured him that "the prince of the apostles in person would accompany him in his march."\*\*\* The Pope wrote a separate letter in the same tenor to John Thornbury marshal, praying him to exhort Hawkwood to the enterprise, he recommended his *donzello* De Canis to Thornbury as well as to Hawkwood. He had given Pietro de Murles recommendations to several of the other marshals,—Brise for example; and he had written letters like the one to Hawkwood, to both the above, as well as to Cook, constable, and *Thomelino de Bellomonte* marshal and Guglielmo *Martedonis* (?) captain, to beg them to be patient in regard to pay, which serves to show that in the English Company, the authority of the captain general was tempered by the counsel and consent of the officers. The march to Vercelli was not effected after all. Hawkwood continued to encamp near Piacenza and the lower Parmese territory, spoiling the land "so that the corn could not be sown in the fields, which proved a great injury for the follow-

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\* See Document XVI.

\*\* See Document XVII.

\*\*\* See Document XVIII.

1374. ing year." Then, having nothing to do when a truce was concluded between the Church and the Visconti, he passed into Tuscany.

## XII.

### THE EXHORTATION OF SAINT CATHERINE.

#### THE HOLY COMPANY.

[*Letters of SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA*, TOMMASEO'S edition, v. II — D. M. MANNI, *Biografia dell' Acuto* in MURATORI [*R. I. S.*], v. II of the Appendix — PADRE GAZZATA, *Cronica* in MURATORI [*R. I. S.*] — GRAZIANI, *Perugian chronicle* — ALESSANDRO GHERARDI, *La guerra degli otto santi* (The war of the eight saints), *Archivio storico italiano* — RANIERI SARDO, *Pisan chronicle* — *Ottave* (poem in lines of eight) inserted in the *Chronicle* of the ANONYMOUS FLORENTINE in MURATORI [*R. I. S.*]

And here at length the long account of the incessant wars with which the foreign mercenaries outraged Italy is interrupted by a few words of peace. She who pronounces them is a humble nun, but a worthy woman both in mind and heart, — Catherine of Siena.

Gregory XI had inherited from his predecessor the idea of liberating the peninsula and the ultramontane countries from the adventurers, by inducing them to go across the sea to fight for the Holy Sepulchre. He thus deemed that in any case, whether they were victorious there, or better still were destroyed by the Turks, Christianity would thereby derive either great benefit, or a great relief. For this object he sent a brief to the Dominican and Franciscan provincials, and especially to Fra Raimondo of Capua, in order that they should prepare the ground for the Crusade. The influence of the monks was at that time immense, both with the nobles and the populace. Raimondo of Capua enjoyed an universal reputation, and was not less appreciated for his preaching than Catherine of Siena was for her writings. The nun and the monk often worked together for the Church and for