OLD FAMAGUSTA, THE SEA-PORT CITY OF OTHELLO: MEDIEVAL MONUMENTS OF CYPRUS, IN URGENT NEED OF REPAIR.

By DOUGLAS HAMILTON.

The Cyprus Committee was formed in December 1933, under the chairmanship of Lord Mersey, to assist the Colonial Office and the Cyprus Government in the preservation, maintenance, discovery, and examination of the antiquities of the island, and to collect funds for that purpose. The Committee recently issued its first report, describing the work that has so far been done and repeating the appeal made at the inauguration. Contributions, marked "Cyprus Monuments Fund," should be sent to Lloyds Bank, 6, Pall Mall, S.W.1, or to the Ottoman Bank or the Ionian Bank, Nicosia. We commend this appeal to our readers, as we have done in the past; and we again draw their attention—by means of Mr. Hamilton's extremely interesting article on this page and the photographs given here and on the two preceding pages—to the extraordinary archaeological riches of Cyprus and to the urgent need of so many of its monuments for immediate work of preservation. Already the Committee has accomplished much, but much more remains to be done. We may add that a special exhibition of excellent photographs, the majority of them taken by Mr. C. J. F. Care, was recently opened to the public at the Victoria and Albert Museum. These photographs show what ENLIGHTENMENT the Cyprus Committee has undertaken and still to undertake.

So this is Old Famagusta, scene of "Othello"! The ship rounds a reef and enters the new half-million harbour, set in a lagoon of burnished silver. The sea-gate with its bastioned Guard Rooms is shut. You enter the medieval town by an archway in the Curtain Wall. Old Famagusta has little to do with modern Greek and Turkish Cyprus. It is a city of intruders. All around rise the carved chancels of crumbling Gothic churches. Above them soar the decapitated towers and pinnacles rich with the echoes of past splendour. But who worshipped the Saracens. So this romantic French dynasty was installed in these churches now so pathetically empty? Who were the tenants of the castle by the sea?

Coeur de Lion, on a crusade, conquered Cyprus for his wife, Berengaria, whom he wedded on the island. He was granted fiefs all over the island. Western arms sur­passed the tenants of the castle by the sea.

The ancient buildings break on. Under a flight of steps descends a scented orange-grove. A light patch is a rocky plateau. A cave-dweller rounds a quarry, and poked their heads through exquisite trefoil embrasures, run down into the bowels of the bastion. A flight of steps descends into the sea-embraced distance. And how incongruous appears the modern steaks and a canakin clinking in the mouth of the curtain wall!...