

**A DESCRIPTION OF SOME  
IMPORTANT  
THEATRES AND  
OTHER REMAINS IN CRETE**

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A Description of Some Important Theatres and Other Remains in Crete by Edward Falkener

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**EDWARD FALKENER**

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A DESCRIPTION  
OF SOME IMPORTANT  
THEATRES AND OTHER REMAINS  
IN  
CRETE,

FROM A MS. HISTORY OF CANDIA BY ONORIO BELLI  
IN 1586.

BEING A

**Supplement**

TO THE

“MUSEUM OF CLASSICAL ANTIQUITIES.”

BY

EDWARD FALKENER.



IVANOR.

LONDON:  
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MDCCLIV.

## ABBREVIATIONS.

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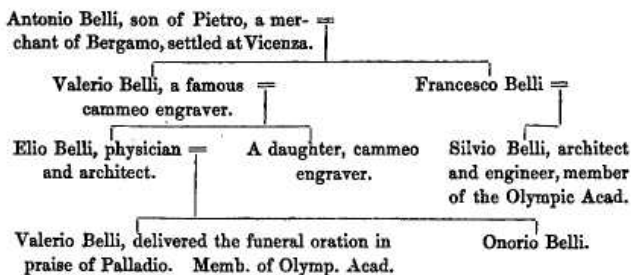
- (Lett. I.) A Letter from Onorio Belli to his Uncle, (Valerio Barbarano?) dated 24 April 1586. (Old style.)
- (Lett. II.) A Letter from Onorio Belli to his Uncle, dated 11 Oct. 1586. (Old style.)
- These letters are now preserved in the Ambrosian Library at Milan.
- (A. Z.) . Abstract of Honorio Belli's History of Candia, written by Apostolo Zeno, (1608-1750,) and now preserved in St. Mark's Library at Venice, among the secret Codices.
- (M.) . . Extract from Belli's History, published by Maffei in his History of Verona.
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Two copies of the Plans are in the Ambrosiana, and a copy of the Inscriptions exists in the Ambrosiana, (Cod. D. 199,) and another is contained in Apostolo Zeno's Abstract, in the Marciana. Most of them have been already published by Boeckh, in his *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*, from the copies forwarded by Belli to Pigafetta. (See p. 273.) The copies in the Ambrosiana are, however, more exact.



P. 70/777

IN a former article on the antiquities of Crete,\* I published a translation from an Italian MS. of the sixteenth century, entitled "La Descrizione dell' Isola di Candia," containing a general description of the antiquities of the island; accompanied with a table of the ancient Itineraries, and a map of Crete, constructed from these authorities, and corrected from the hydrographical survey taken by order of the Admiralty. I now propose to lay before the reader extracts from another MS. of the sixteenth century, written by Onorio Belli, which treats more particularly of some of the best preserved and more important antiquities. The author of the MS., extracts from which are here translated, *Onorio Belli*, was descended from a family of artists, many of the members of which are also distinguished in the annals of literature.



\* *Museum of Classical Antiquities*, No. VII. 8vo. Richards, Sept., 1852. The coins in the title-page and tail-piece should have appeared in that number, but were omitted unintentionally.

Onorio Belli exercised, for many years, in his native city, the profession of his father. In 1579 he was elected a member of the Olympic Academy. In the following year he was entrusted by that body with an interlude, in the representation, at the Olympic theatre, of the *Œdipus* of Sophocles.\* On the new theatre being completed shortly afterwards, a statue to his honour was placed among the other ornaments of the scene. In 1583 he was appointed physician to the Proveditor General of Candia, Luigi di Antonio Grimani dei Servi, and left Vicenza on the 31st day of March. Grimani finding the country in a state of great disorder, determined to re-establish it, if possible, by making a personal tour of the whole island; and Belli had thus an ample opportunity to write a particular description of the whole province, and to investigate its antiquities. He even persuaded Grimani to undertake excavations among the ruins of the principal cities, and the success which attended them amply compensated their labours; for not only did they find statues, but many inscriptions were dug up, several of which indicated the names of ancient cities, the sites of which were previously unknown. Grimani, having re-established order, returned to Venice, leaving Belli behind him, at the urgent request of the inhabitants of Canèa, as physician to that city. In this capacity, and in the enjoyment of a handsome salary, he continued for some years, during the leisure of which time he prosecuted his work; but owing to constant occupations "it was not till last summer (1596)—when I had a little respite—that I was enabled to bring to completion that which I had commenced so long before: in doing which I have been obliged, by various causes, to set aside the general design, and many particulars connected with the island, leaving out the subdivision of territory, with the boundaries of the different districts and castles, and some other points which I considered necessary

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\* Angiolgabriello di Santa Maria, *Bibl. e Stor. dei scrittori di Vicenza*. 4to. Vic., 1778.



to be known relative to the chorography of the island; all of which I had been anxious to treat of in order to render the subject more complete. But, having no assistance, I have finished the work as well as I could, under the circumstances."

(A. Z.)

But Belli not only distinguished himself as a physician and an antiquary; he was celebrated also as a botanist. Several of his letters on this subject are extant, most of which relate to the isle of Candia, and some of them are published. His industry and perseverance are shown by the motto which he selected as his device. It was a puzzle-lock, with the words "Sorte aut Labore," intimating that he was determined to succeed, if not by genius at least by study and assiduity.\*

How long he remained in the island is uncertain, Cæsar Campana, in a letter to Giuseppe Aquila, says ten years, but we know him to have been still living at Canèa in 1596. His death took place in 1604.

In addition to the accompanying extracts of his work on Candia, the following writings are preserved in the *Ambrosiana* :

I. *Epistolæ aliquot ad Carolum Clusium de variis stirpibus agentes.* These are published in the

"*Historia Plantarum*" of Clusius, fol., Ant., 1601, and referred to by Vander Linden, and by James in the Bodleiana. Some of the more remarkable of these plants have been published by Francesco Pona in his "*Descriptione delle Pianta di Monte Baldo*," Basle, 1608; and by John Ray in his "*Sylloge stirpium Europearum*," Lond., 1694.

II. *Two Letters to his Uncle* (Valerio Barbarano?), describing the antiquities of the island, and dated 24 April and 11 Oct. 1586, (old style.) The principal contents of these letters are given in the present article, and distinguished by the references (Lett. I. and II.) They have been printed at length by Magrini, *Scritture inedite in Materia di Architettura*, 8vo., Pad., 1847, in accordance with a very pretty custom in Italy, of printing an edition of a poet, or some other valuable work, in commemoration of a marriage or other festal occasion. In the present instance the pamphlet is printed "Per le nozze Antonio Dr. Zanella e Laura Turra." The original letters are preserved in Cod. Q. 122; the

\* Ferro, *Teatro d'Imprese*, ii. 456.

- plans referred to are in S. 84; other copies of the drawings are in D. 138, pt. inf., formerly D. 321, which were sent by Belli to G. V. Pinelli. The inscriptions are contained in D. 199, pte. inf.
- III. A letter, *De Græcorum Miseria*, addressed to Jacopo Zuingero. (Cod. Q. 115.)
- IV. Letter to the *Collegio di Medici di Vicenza*.  
V. Letter to Alfonso Ragona on a *Tremuoto seguito nell Isola di Candia*. (Cod. R. 122.)
- VI. Letter on the Efficacy of certain medicinal herbs. (R. 99.)
- VII. Letters written in 1596, *De Absynthio et Phalangis: de Theriaca, fructu Abaco, Ossar, Sofera, Nardo Crestica herba, Cicorea spinosa*, etc. (Q. 122.)
- VIII. Letter to Carlo Clusio, dated 15 Feb. 1596, *De Fructibus, Plantis, ac Seminibus quibusdam peregrinis*. (R. 94.)
- IX. *A table of longitudes and latitudes of the island*, with a comparison of those of Ptolemy; with the ancient and modern names. (D. 195.) And
- X. The following *Letter on the climate, etc., of Candia*. (Cod. D. 195.)

*“Al M. Mag<sup>no</sup> et Rev<sup>mo</sup> Monsignor Paulo Gualdo,  
mio Sig<sup>o</sup> osservandissimo.*

“I have not been able to reply earlier to the letter of *Vost. Sig. Rev.*, dated 26th of June, in consequence of having received it only in September, and no sailing packets having left here since then.

“I am delighted to hear that some of the plants I sent you have struck, nor should you be surprised at their not doing so, the temperature of this country being very different from that of Vicenza: for here, from the end of March till the middle of October, it never rains, excepting occasionally in the month of August, in which case the vines are ruined by the intense heat which follows. In the winter, on the contrary, there is heavy rain, with thunder-storms.\* The snow never lies on the plains, though it covers the mountains continuously; neither is there any ice, nor indeed do the people know what it is. It is never cold, unless there is a north wind, which generally lasts eight or ten days, after which it becomes warm again. The fields are green throughout the winter, and covered with spring roses and other flowers in great profusion. In summer the sun is hot, but within doors one does not feel it, there being continual breezes from the west, north-west, and north, which refresh the land wonderfully. The nights are very cool, and one sleeps tranquilly, without being annoyed by the intense heat as in Vicenza. But if by chance the south wind

\* These rains frequently cause inundations, particularly on the western part of the island, the waters being shut in on every side by the mountains. (Cod. vi. in the preceding essay.)

blows, it ruins everything, for it burns like fire, and one is obliged to remain at home with the shutters closed; and since I have been in the island, I have felt it more than once in a manner of which you can form no conception. When this wind blows it is as hot in winter as in summer, as was the case last January, when we had a July-heat for fifteen days and nights continuously; so that it is no wonder that plants indigenous to this island cannot live in Vicenza, where there is such a diversity of climate. Nevertheless I send to my uncle, *Messer Valerio*,\* many seeds, of which *Vost. Sig. Rev.* may take your share; and you will do me a kindness in letting me know what plants strike, and what do not. I have not yet found any bulbous roots, except of well known species, but *Messer Silverio* and I intend to take a tour among these rugged mountains, and if we find anything remarkable, as I hope we shall, I will not fail to acquaint *V. S. R.*, to whom I earnestly recommend myself, and pray you to salute (*bacciar lo mano*) in my name, the *Rev. Sig.* your uncle, and your excellent brother.

“Canea, 9 Oct. 1586 (*old style*)

*di Vos. Sig. Rev.*

most affectionate servant,

HONORIO DE BELLI.”

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### *History of Candia.*

The title of Belli's work is recorded by Calvus, *Bibl. et Stor. Vicent.*, tom. iv., the translation of which, in Latin, is as follows:

HONORII BELLI MEDICI VICENTINI RERUM  
CRETICARUM OBSERVATIONES VARIE,  
CONTINENTES DIVERSOS ACTUS, ÆDIFICIA,  
INSCRIPTIONES, etc.

The *Dedicatory Epistle* was addressed to Alfonso Ragona, “nobile Vicentino, e con-Academico Olympico,” and was dated Canea, 1 October 1596.†

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\* Valerio Barbarano: a list of the seeds received by whom exists in the same codex.

† Though the work was not finally completed till 1596, the portion relating to the antiquities of the island was written in 1586, as is evident by the letters in the *Ambrosiana*, and by the plans of the same date; and in his first letter he writes,—“though from my divers occupations I have not been able to finish the work, I trust that I shall be enabled to do so during the idle hours of this summer.”