

may sometimes be traced through the thin veil of Odoric's Latin.

The native district of Odoric was Pordenone, in that richer part of the Friulian plain which lies towards the river Livenza. Pordenone itself, called in Latin, I know not of what antiquity, Portus Naonis, is a quaint but thriving little city of some seven thousand inhabitants, standing on the banks of the Nonicello, a tributary of the Livenza, and by which boats ascend from the sea to the town. The beautiful gardens which environ it, and the very fine campanile which rises beside the cathedral, group into a singularly pleasing picture, even as seen by a railway traveller.

Odoric is said to have sprung from one of the garrison established in this district by Ottokar, King of Bohemia, to whom the territory had passed from his cousin Udalric, Duke of Carinthia and Lord of Pordenone.<sup>1</sup> A curious confirmation of this tradition is found in the manuscript from which we print the Latin text of his travels, for in it he is designated "*Frater Odericus Boemus*." The name of his family is alleged to have been Mattiussi,<sup>2</sup> and the place of his birth was Villa Nuova, a hamlet of cottages dispersed among vineyards and mulberry trees, about a mile and a half from the town.

A substantial two-storied cottage is still shown at Villa Nuova as the house in which Odoric was born; and in the half-open arcade which forms a part of the lower story, a rude old fresco, representing the friar holding forth the crucifix, much defaced by the contact of firewood and farming gear, is evidence at least

<sup>1</sup> "*De reliquiis seminis eorum quos olim Rex Otakerus apud Portum Naonis ad custodiam deputavit.*" This is quoted from an anonymous chronicler of Laybach, in *Monumenta Ecclesiæ Aquilejensis*, etc., Argentinæ, 1740, p. 866. Ottokar succeeded to the throne of Bohemia in 1254; Rudolf of Hapsburgh was chosen emperor in 1262; their wars about the Austrian provinces held by Ottokar, including part of Friuli, terminated in 1279 in the rout and death of Ottokar. See also *Venni*, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> This name does not seem to appear in print before the work of Gabelli in 1639. Zeno quotes as authority for it a MS. work on the Patriarchs of Aquileia by Jac. Valvasone (*Dissertaz. Vossiane*, 1751, ii, 297). It is also given by Asquini in his *Life of Odoric*, on the authority of a MS. of Lugrezio Treo, author of *Sacra Monumenta Prov. Forojulii*, 1724.