

Stories of Arabia and Islam

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Stories of Arabia and Islam

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Stories of Arabia and Islam

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The Story of Islam

by

Theodore Lunt

Preface

It has been strange indeed to revise this book in barracks, amid efforts to learn to fire big guns possibly against the Turks. And yet this necessity which lies upon us Englishmen to-day only emphasizes afresh the importance of our trying to understand the real problem of Islam.

When the war is over, Islam will remain. Whatever state of disorganization it may be in and whatever its centre, it will still tower up before us gaunt and shadowed as one of the most difficult problems of civilization and as the great reproach of the Christian Church.

We can do nothing to help Moslems, or to solve their problem, unless we know something of their story and have tried to understand the power and fascination of their rugged simple creed.

Those of us who are called to fight—for honourable necessity—have the lesser task though it be costly. The real opportunity will lie with those who come after—with those, in fact, who are at school to-day. Their task will be not to destroy but to build, to dream holy dreams of a great World Kingdom of Love and Gentleness and Truth and Purity and Honour, and to consecrate their lives to the One from Whom and through Whom alone these things can come.

THEO. R. W. LUNT.

'Youth and its Schooling'

'The boy is father of the man.'
'Islam was born in the desert.'
Edwin Arnold.

Close to the focus of three great continents, where East meets West and North meets South, Asia almost touching both Africa and Europe, lies the great unknown country of Arabia, the 'Land of the Desert.'

The long, low coast-line of its western shore is familiar enough to all who travel to the East. About seventy miles behind that coast lies a wild chain of desert mountains. Here, in a valley snuggling among massive peaks, is an Arab town, a kind of mountain fastness, lying in an amphitheatre of rugged hills.

It marks the spot, so the Arab legend runs, where long years ago Hagar the bondwoman laid her son, parched and dying of a desert thirst, while she drew away out of reach of his cries, and 'lifted up her voice and wept.' Here, too, is the well from which she filled her bottle and gave the lad to drink, reverenced to-day by all good Arabs as the sacred well of Zemzem.

In this town of Mecca there lived in the year 570 A.D. a young Arab widow mother. She had not been married long when her husband Abdallah joined a caravan on a long trading journey up to Syria. On his way back he sickened of some desert fever and died, and a son was born

to her after the father's death. The child's grandfather was a person of considerable importance, the patriarchal head of the ruling clan, the Koreish. He took the boy in his arms and went to the sacred temple of Mecca, and gave thanks to God. The child was named Mohammed.

His mother was poor, but she was of noble family; and so, according to the custom of Arab aristocracy, the child was not nursed at home but entrusted to the care of a woman of one of the wild wandering tribes of the desert for his first five years. The boy's earliest recollections must have been of wild Bedouin life, in which he grew strong and robust in frame, trained in the pure speech and free manners of the desert. For little more than a year he returned to his mother and his home, but at the age of seven his mother died, and he was left an orphan. He was old enough to feel her loss very deeply, and also the desolation of his orphan state. The shadow overcast his life and turned his thoughts to melancholy. His grandfather, Abd al Muttalib, was an old man now, and Mohammed was his favourite grandson. He took the lad to his own home and was more than ordinarily kind to him; yet Mohammed never forgot his mother, nor the sorrow of her death. No doubt it did much to make him the pensive, meditative man he afterwards became—anyhow it set him thinking.

When he was eight years old the boy's heart was again wounded by the death of his kind grandfather and guardian. With him he had lived in the proudest home in

Mecca, for Abd al Muttalib had been a kind of hereditary 'lord mayor' of the town, whose special duty it was to take charge of the Temple and the Holy Well, and to care for the many pilgrims that came to visit them. Now the 'clan' was left without its proper head, and Mohammed was given into the charge of his uncle, Abu Talib.

There was little ordinary schooling for the Arabs of those days, except for the favoured few, and Mohammed, fatherless, motherless, and now grandfatherless, was not among these. Probably he never even learned to write. His school was the schooling of the desert and the caravan; he was to become his uncle's 'handy-man,' and for the present the best thing he could do was to go and help in looking after the camels and sheep which his uncle kept on the slopes of Mount Arafat.

Who were these Arabs from whom Mohammed sprang and among whom he lived? They were cousins of another mighty race, the Jews, their neighbours, for both traced their descent from Abraham—the Jews through Isaac and Jacob, the Arabs through Ishmael, and also through Esau who married the daughter of Ishmael. In a marvellous way have the Arabs all through their history been fulfilling the old prophecy of the sons of Ishmael: 'He shall be as a wild ass among men: his hand shall be against every man and every man's hand against him, and he shall dwell in the presence of his brethren.' How better could we describe the Arab to-day? The description was equally true in the days of Mohammed. Customs and ways of men

change slowly in the East when they change at all, and the Arab all through history has clung to the wandering and warlike habits of his patriarch Ishmael, and follows the same rude, natural mode of life which existed in Arabia then.

The wild ass among men—independent, haughty, hater of towns, dweller in the wilderness, untameable; it is a description that stirs our blood. The Arab roves through boundless deserts in wild and unfettered freedom, despising a civilized life, scorning its comforts, proud and haughty in mien and character, the one untameable race of all the world.

In such a race was Mohammed born. True, the Arabs were not all Bedouins of the desert. Towns had sprung up where caravan routes crossed, or where rich wells and springs attracted a constant stream of shepherds and camel drivers, or more often around some spot consecrated by tradition as holy ground, and by custom as a place of pilgrimage.

Mohammed was a child of the town—a Hadesi—but he was a child of the desert too. For the town dwellers of Arabia were also her travelling merchants, and, as in Joseph's time, they were known in distant countries as men of merchandise and caravan. Like many a seer and patriarch of old he spent some years in shepherd life among the Bedouins who tended Abu Talib's camels and sheep on the slopes of Mount Arafat. It was a wild, open,

and lonely life, such as has developed the thoughtfulness and strong self-reliance of many another man. Long, hot days under the burning tropical sun, with the responsibility of valuable flocks to be protected and fed, could not but train his powers of observation. Long, still nights beneath the innumerable stars of a rainless sky would develop a deep wondering thoughtfulness in a boy already inclined to melancholy and meditation, and naturally taciturn.

When he was twelve years old there came to Mohammed the chance of visiting foreign places. Abu Talib proposed joining a caravan that was going to Syria where he had business to transact. As the caravan was about to start and Abu Talib was mounting his camel, Mohammed, overcome by the prospect of a long separation, clung to his uncle, begging to be allowed to join the party. For some months he served as his uncle's caravan boy. He had never before been far away from home, and the long journey through the desert northwards must have strongly impressed his mind. 'The imagination of the people had filled the solitudes, as has been the case in all lands, with supernatural inhabitants, monstrous and malignant, the genii or djinns of the *Arabian Nights*. The horror of loneliness, either in the night or in the equally silent noontide, found expression in mysterious tales and legends haunting every hill and vale of the regions through which he passed.'

The caravan bivouaced wherever there was water, preferably in any town or trading centre. Round the camp fire in the evening the boy would hear much that was strange and new. At Mecca he had heard but little of the Jews and their religion, and less of the Christians; but there were many Jewish settlements on this road up north, and at least a few out posts of the Christian Church. Christian preachers of the Syrian Church preached in the big centres, and we are told that Abu Talib's caravan was at one time entertained by Buhaira, a Christian monk.

In some of the places where the caravan encamped they found settled Christian communities with churches and crosses and pictures, and other symbols of the Faith. Mohammed would hear how these same rites were practised in the centre of world-power—his attention would be arrested by the fact that the great Emperor owed allegiance to the Gospel. He saw, too, how everywhere the Christians were respected as men of learning.

But what was the Christian teaching he would hear? Alas! the Church of Christ was rent by factions, and false teaching prevailed, at any rate in the East. The simplicity which had characterised the Church in the earlier days when Christians were oppressed and persecuted had passed away; as one of their own historians put it, 'the World had entered the Church.' Christ Jesus had no longer the pre-eminence; instead of a rich consciousness of His glory and beauty and power, the minds of Christians were full of theories about Him and of strange

and false ideas of God. The Talmud and the Apocryphal Gospels, with their crude, strange myths, were set beside the Bible, and truth and falsehood were dangerously intertwined. Many had ceased to believe in JESUS as indeed the Son of God. Some deified the Virgin Mary, giving her a place in the Trinity; to them Jehovah was no longer the God of the universe but of the Jews only.

'In all probability Mohammed never heard a word of the New Testament; the pages of the Korân bear silent testimony to the shameful fact that the only way in which the Christianity of that time and place reached Mohammed was through the false Gospels.'

Even in these early days Mohammed would ponder these things and sift them in his mind, and if at this time he had longings and aspirations for a purer and higher religion than the star worship and crude idolatry of his countrymen, it need not surprise us that such Christianity, overlaid with myths and fables, and confused by the worship of saints and images, failed to satisfy his longings or to fulfil his aspirations.

In later days, when Mohammed had become the founder of a new religion and the ruler of a mighty Empire, and was acclaimed the Prophet of God, Moslem writers began to weave strange and unworldly incidents and miraculous signs into the account of his journey—indeed, into all the stories of his boyhood. Angel wings sheltered him from the noontide heat, and withered trees were

clothed with leaves to give him shade, and a strange fire is said to have played about his head, marking him as the future Prophet of God. In reality the long journey seems to have been uneventful enough.

Yet on his return he would look on Mecca with opened eyes.

We can picture Mohammed going sadly back to the worship of the Kaaba and the religion of Arabia. The Kaaba was a small and simple building, almost a cube as the name implies, about 27 feet square and 34 feet high. Originally it had been the local sanctuary of the Koreish tribe and contained only one image, that of Hobal, their tribal god. Long before Mohammed's days, however, images of the local deities of other tribes had been set up beside Hobal, until it was a veritable pantheon, and was recognised as the religious centre of all Arabia.

The Kaaba's chief claim to this distinction lay in the famous 'Black Stone' of Mecca, which, encircled with a band of silver, was built into its outer wall four feet from the ground.

This stone is described as about six inches by eight inches in size, of a reddish-black colour, stained by sin, so the Arabs say, and dotted with coloured crystals. Its history is shrouded in mystery and myth, but Mohammed was taught to look upon it as one of the stones of Paradise brought to earth by the angel Gabriel. Probably it was an aerolite. Then, as now, it was regarded by all true Arabs as

man's most sacred possession, and was the object of pilgrimage to Arabs of all clans, and from even the most distant parts, that they might touch or kiss it.

The story of the Kaaba is no less mysterious and wonderful. Originally built to guard or mark a sacred spot connected in Arabian legend with the story of Ishmael, its true history has been enshrouded and obscured in a cloud of myths. According to the inventive genius of Arabian writers it was first constructed in heaven 2000 years before the creation of the world, and Adam erected a replica on earth exactly below the spot its perfect model occupies in heaven. At the Flood the sacred building was destroyed, and God is said to have instructed Abraham to journey from Syria to rebuild it with the help of Hagar and Ishmael.

How uncoutl1 and far behind the times it all seemed! The Jews had their Prophet and law-giver Moses, the Nazarenes looked to Jesus, the Persian magicians quoted Zoroaster, even Abyssinia was a homogeneous kingdom owning allegiance to the Gospel. Every nation had its revelation and its Book;—Arabia had none at all, no open vision, no Prophet, nothing certain. It was but a tangle of tribes and clans with hardly any cohesion at all. Each clan was a law to itself, a separate unit, in competition with all other clans, and the law of the blood-feud tyrannized everywhere. Such a social organization was calculated to ensure the maximum of confusion with the minimum of achievement. Mohammed could not but contrast it all

with the definiteness, strenuousness, and order of the political and social organizations which he had seen abroad. There could be no law, for there was no ruler; no justice, for there was no supreme authority; no progress, for there was no plan.

Early Manhood

'The future comes not from before to meet us,
but streams up from behind over our heads.'

Rahel Levin.

So the years passed on, and Mohammed grew from boyhood to youth, fair of character and of honourable bearing among his fellow citizens. Though he shunned the coarser sins and licentious practices of the city he could no longer as a young Meccan hold aloof from the civil and social life of his day. When he was about twenty he received his baptism of fire, and fought in his first battle. The Koreish were at war with a neighbouring tribe. The cause of the war was insignificant enough, but it is typical of the slight causes of the blood-feuds of that day.

At certain seasons of the year it was the custom of the tribes to gather at the larger towns for fairs. Of these the most important was the sacred Fair of Ukaz, a large market town not far from Mecca.

It was at one of these annual Ukaz fairs that the trouble arose. An arrogant Koreish poet had been boastfully vaunting the superiority of his tribe, and was struck by a zealot of the Hawazin tribe. A story got about that a Hawazin girl had been ill-treated by some Koreish maidens. A certain man of the Koreish was unable to pay a debt to a man of the Hawazin tribe. Arab blood boiled hot. The Hawazin creditor thereupon seated himself in a

conspicuous place in the market with a monkey by his side, and proclaimed to all who passed by, in the true Eastern language of figure of speech: 'If you will give me another such ape, I will give you in exchange my claim on...' naming the debtor, with his full pedigree, back to Kinana, an ancestor of the Koreish. This he kept vociferating to the intense annoyance of the Kinana, till one of them drew his sword and cut off the monkey's head. In an instant the whole Hawazin and Kinana tribes were embroiled in bloody strife.

The trouble was patched up at the time, but only to burst forth into a fiercer fury a few years later, when a spiteful murder supplied more serious cause of offence. Then the fierce fire of tribal hatred was unquenchable, and the whole country was embroiled in a war which lasted for four years, with short truces and respites, and ended at last in the Koreish agreeing to pay blood money in the shape of hostages for the Hawazins they had slain.

Into some, at least, of the battles of this war, Mohammed, then in his teens, accompanied his uncle. He seems to have played no conspicuous or glorious part, and even in later days, when he referred to it, it was without enthusiasm or pride. Perhaps he discharged some arrows at the enemy—more likely he acted as attendant to his uncle, collecting arrows and handing them to him to shoot. Indeed, neither then nor at any later period of his career was Mohammed distinguished for his physical courage or martial daring.

Let us now introduce ourselves to our hero himself. His face has taken the set features of manhood, and we may safely apply to him the picture left by his contemporaries of the man as they knew him, and as in later years they bowed beneath his influence and power. He was no Saul in stature, though perhaps above the average height; yet in his countenance there was much that we are accustomed to expect in a leader of men. A Napoleonic nose, a head too big for the body, flowing jet black locks, falling on either side of his face, intense, gleaming black eyes, slightly blood shot, an ample beard and moustache covering a rather sensuous mouth must have given him a striking and commanding appearance. His skin was slightly fairer than that of most Arabs, with a faint tinge of blue. Across his ample forehead ran a prominent vein, of which much is said, and which used to swell and throb when he was angry. Yet, withal, his face could have its gentler moods; he could be kindly when he would, and to the end he was a lover of children.

Such was his outward appearance; we have some records, too, of his manner of life among his fellow-citizens in Mecca—records which show no trace of the man that was to be; he was respected but undistinguished. From early manhood they named him Al Amin—'The Faithful,'—and he seems to have been regarded by his fellow-citizens as a solid, dependable, brotherly, genuine man. Passionate and unrestrained, yet a serious, sincere,

character, capable of real amiability, and with a good laugh in him withal.

Year by year would come fresh stimulus to his active mind. With his fellow-citizens he went regularly to the annual fair at Ukaz, probably on business as well as pleasure bent. This fair was indeed one of the few institutions of Arabia which could well be called national. Thither during two sacred months of truce the many scattered tribes gathered. It was the 'Olympia' of Arabia. The rivalry was not the rivalry of discus and javelin, but of poetry and eloquence. Ukaz was, indeed, the press, the stage, the pulpit, the parliament, and the 'Academie Française' of the Arab people. It was the focus of all the literature of Arabia. Thither resorted the poets of these rival clans and tribes, to a literary congress without formal judges but with unbounded influence. And because it was the centre of emulation for Arab poets, it was also a kind of annual review of Bedouin virtues and Arabian religion. For it was in poetry that the Arab—as indeed man all the world over—expressed his highest thoughts.

At these fairs a strange assortment of religious opinions would be found. There would be Christian preachers, probably of many rival factions, each not only proclaiming his 'gospel' but disclaiming all the others, Jews and Sabæans, Zoroastrians and Hanîfites, each with complete systems of religion. The orators of each Arab tribe, too, vied with one another in acclaiming the superior powers and merits of their own tribal gods, their

own sacred spot or relics, and their particular superstitious traditions.

Though the discords were so great and the causes of friction so numerous, these discordant notes were sounding a kind of harmony in the peaceful rivalries of a national fair. For in the long years of history it was seldom that the peace of the fairs was seriously broken, or the two months' truce for attending them violated, or the sacred spots of a tribe desecrated by bloodshed. How was this? There was no central government, no punitive authority other than that of the tribe which was in the ascendant at the time, or the strongest combination of clans allied for the moment by some common interest. It was not in the government that hope for the future lay.

Was it in religion? At the bottom of all mythologies, at the back of the rudest superstitions and crudest idolatries the whole world over, there are fragments of truth. And in Arabia, lying so close to the countries of God's earliest revelation to mankind, we should expect yet more than this. Long centuries before, the Book of Job had been written in Arabia; Moses spent forty years there, leading a Bedouin life in charge of the flocks of his father-in-law; and Jethro, high priest of Midian as he was, had prepared burnt-offerings and sacrifices for the one true God, confessing, 'Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods.' The Queen of Sheba journeying from the South to see the wisdom of Solomon may have taken back with her fragments of the truth.

The wonder is that these sparks of light had never burst into the flame of worship of the one true God. Instead they were all but extinguished; none but a thoughtful man would recognise behind the gross fetishism, and the thousand petty gods of the Arab tribes, acknowledgment of the ancient belief in one supreme Deity. Yet there it was, as history proves. And Mohammed saw it.

There were two other common elements which all Arabia shared: a common ancestry giving them very marked national characteristics and a strong Arabian sentiment or patriotism; and a common tongue spoken (with some variation of dialect) by Bedouin and Hadesi all through that vast land of desert. These were both assets of great value in Mohammed's future schemes. Whether as yet he recognized their possibilities we do not know. Anyhow he was no agitator. After all who was he? Only his uncle's dependent.

As a rule in the East men marry young, but Mohammed was an exception. At twenty-five marriage and love came to him rather than were sought by him, and they were the making of his life. For there is no doubt that his wife Khadîjah deserves to rank among the great women of history. During her lifetime her great and strong influence upon Mohammed kept him from stumbling where afterwards he fell, and as she was a woman of considerable wealth, marriage very greatly altered her husband's material and social position.

It happened in this wise. Abu Talib, finding his own family increasing faster than his ability to provide for them, bethought him of setting his nephew to earn a livelihood for himself, and addressed him in these words:

'I am, as thou knowest, a man of small substance, and truly the times deal hardly with me. Now there is a caravan of thine own tribe about to start for Syria, and Khadîjah needeth men of our tribe to send forth with her merchandise. If thou wert to offer thyself she would readily accept thy services.'

To which Mohammed very respectfully replied: 'Be it so as thou hast said.'

This sent Abu Talib off to visit Khadîjah.

'We hear that thou hast engaged such an one for two camels, and we should not be content that my nephew's hire were less than four.' To this she replied:

'Hadst thou asked this thing for one of a distant or alien tribe, I would have granted it: how much rather now that thou askest it for a near relative and friend?'

So the matter was settled, and Mohammed went in charge of the caravan. His sagacity and shrewdness carried him prosperously through the undertaking, and when with the caravan he retraced his steps it was with a balance of barter goods more than usually in his favour.

It is quite a pretty picture, this, of old-time romance, albeit Khadîjah was fifteen years the senior. She is sitting

on the roof surrounded by her maidens, on the watch for the earliest glimpse of the caravan, when a single camel is seen approaching, the rider of which is soon recognized as Mohammed, who has ridden ahead of the caravan to bear his news as quickly as possible. And so, travel-stained, yet flushed with his first success, he is conducted up to the presence of his mistress. She was delighted at all she heard: but there was a charm in the dark and pensive eyes, in the noble features, and the graceful form of her assiduous agent which pleased her even more than her good fortune. And when she had dismissed him with ample wages she did not forget him. Mohammed, too, was heart-whole no longer, and became melancholic and broody.

The ways of love are the same all the world over and in all times, but its etiquettes and customs vary. And in those days things in Arabia were not as they are with us to-day, nor as they are now in the East, where, by a strange irony, owing to the very system which Mohammed inaugurated, women are the mere chattels of men, and know no such liberty as that which brought him his best fortune in his young days.

For it was Khadîjah that played the first move in the game of courtship, and she played it with a woman's adroitness and discernment. Her sister was her accomplice.

'What is it, O Mohammed, which hindereth thee from marriage?'

'I have nothing in my hands wherewith I might marry,' was his very sensible reply.

'But if haply that difficulty were removed and thou wert invited to espouse a beautiful and wealthy lady of noble birth—wouldest thou not desire to have her?'

'And who might that be?' said Mohammed, warming to her questions.

'It is Khadîjah.'

'But how might I attain unto her?' asked Mohammed.

'Let that be my care,' was the reassuring answer.

That was sufficient for him, and the sister returned to Khadîjah, who then lost no time in sending an open message to Mohammed appointing a time when they should meet. Within the year they were married with Arab ceremony by Khadîjah's aged cousin, Warakah, who blessed the union in homely Bedouin language, declaring that Mohammed was 'a camel whose nose would not be struck.'

With Mohammed's marriage to Khadîjah, his opportunity, if he were looking for one, would seem to have come. Free from his uncle's patronage, freed, too, from the carping cares of straitened circumstances, or the necessity of working long hours at some small task to earn his daily bread, he had passed to a position of ease and

affluence. Henceforth he led no camels or he led his own. He was free to shape his life as he would, while his wealth and new position made him one of the leading men of Mecca.

Now, if he had great thoughts, was the time to make them known; now, if he felt disquieted about the gross idolatry of the people, was his chance to bear witness against it; now, if he wanted to revolutionize the old-world life of Mecca, he had his vantage ground from which to do so. But instead, during those fifteen years, from twenty-five to forty, so full and strenuous in the life of most men of action, Mohammed played no conspicuous part,—the years passed by, and on none did he write his name.

Of many incidents recovered by Mohammedan historians in later days from the scrap-heap of small provincial history, and filled by them with portent and meaning, one at least is worth recalling. It reveals a touch of that capacity for manipulating men and circumstances which contributed so largely to Mohammed's power in later days.

When he was in his thirty-fifth year, one of those sudden, sweeping floods to which all mountain districts are liable swept through Mecca, and struck the Kaaba, tearing a hole in the wall, damaging the contents, and imperilling the roof. To the superstitious Meccans it was a portentous omen, and they waited expectantly for some dread visitation of the wrath of the gods whose shrine had

been thus desecrated. As time passed and no calamity befell them, and less superstitious, or less reverent thieves took advantage of its insecure condition to pillage the shrine and plunder the sacred relics, the leading men of Mecca met in solemn conclave and decided that the Kaaba must be rebuilt. News reached them of a Grecian ship wrecked on the Red Sea shores not very far away. The timbers of the broken ship were bought, and her Greek captain, who had some reputation as an architect, was requisitioned to direct the building. The work was entered upon with great trepidation, but when once the ruined walls had been taken down without any visitation upon the workmen or the town, the work of rebuilding was eagerly begun, and the various clans of the Koreish vied with one another for what they began to think the gods might after all consider zeal of religion and not sacrilege.

The tribes of the Koreish were divided into four parties, to each of which one wall was assigned; stones of grey granite from the neighbouring hills were carried on the citizens' heads; soon the walls began to assume their old familiar shape, and all went harmoniously.

When the walls had grown to about four feet high, a new difficulty arose. They had reached the place where the sacred Black Stone must be masoned in, in its accustomed place, in the outside of the wall near the door. Who should have the honour of laying this heaven-given stone, reverenced from time immemorial by all true Arabs? It was a puzzling question and a contentious

question, too, where there was no king, nor even a prince with a special genius—as, of course, all princes have—for laying stones, nor was there any sacred order of priest or patriarch to whom appeal could be made—not even a cabinet minister!

It was settled thus. As they stood beside the wall disputing for the honour, the oldest citizen arose and said:

'O Koreish, hearken unto me! My advice is that the man who chanceth first to enter the court of the Kaaba by yonder gate, he shall be chosen either to decide the difference among you, or himself to place the stone.'

The proposal was readily passed by acclamation, and they waited the issue. Presently Mohammed was seen approaching, and all unknowing he entered the chosen door. Calm and self-possessed he rose to the occasion. Taking off his mantle, he spread it on the ground and placed the stone thereon.

'Now,' he said, 'let one from each of your four divisions come forward and raise a corner of this mantle.'

Four chiefs approached, and, holding each a corner, raised the stone to the proper level, and Mohammed with his own hand guided it to its place.

The difficulty was solved and the walls were soon completed, and the roof put on—'of fifteen rafters resting upon six central pillars.' The Kaaba was complete once more, though it is doubtful whether the same respect and veneration could ever again be commanded by gods who

had allowed a river to break up their sanctuary, and men to handle and restore it.

Beyond the confines of Arabia two mighty Empires were throbbing with the activities of strenuous life, and the back waters of quiet Mecca could not remain undisturbed.

A Meccan caravan expedition penetrated into the heart of Persia with record success; the spirit of enterprise was awake, and new-world thoughts came into the old-world city. The growth of a small but influential religious party called the Hanîfahs, led by the aged Warakah, Khadîjah's cousin, had struck at the roots of idolatry, and raised the cry of 'Back to Abraham and his simple worship of the one true God.' This told of a deepening thought and growing dissatisfaction with the gross idolatry and superstition which had hitherto done duty for religion in Mecca.

By these currents Mohammed's outward life was apparently as untouched as that of any other average citizen. Professor Davidson used to say that in youth men get their visions, and see the glory of the sun upon the distant mountains of life's horizon, and the rest of life is but a following—often through the darkness—towards the light seen in youth. If it were so with Mohammed he gave little evidence of all that was passing in his mind. He lived a domestic life with Khadîjah and a now growing family of children, of whom he was very fond. Every

evening he performed idolatrous rites in his home, and he named at any rate some of his children after heathen deities. He filled his place, no doubt, as a wealthy, and therefore leading citizen of Mecca, but beyond that he was known as a retiring, thoughtful man, who preferred the seclusion and quiet of home life to the rush and scramble of the market and the rostrum.

Who would have thought that this man would mightily affect the destiny and history of the whole human race, that he would be the founder of an Empire which within a hundred years would hold sway from Cadiz to Bokhara, would annihilate the Empire of Persia and lay siege to Byzantium?

Who would have thought that twelve hundred years after, this man's name, coupled with that of the Almighty, would be invoked in prayer by just over two hundred millions of mankind, and proclaimed from ten thousand minarets: *'There is no God but God: Mohammed is the Apostle of God'*?

How was it? Why was it?

The Prophet of Arabia

'We must be as courteous to a man as to a picture, which we are willing to give the advantage of a good light.'—Emerson.

We come now to the event in Mohammed's life about which there has been both the keenest investigation and bitterest controversy. Scholars have elaborated very different theories about the 'method' of Mohammed's inspiration, partly because of its true importance as the crisis and turning-point of his life, and partly because men used to think that the understanding of it was the key to the reading of Mohammed's character. Without troubling ourselves with the various conflicting theories, we shall confine ourselves to what is sufficiently difficult—brushing aside all fancies and excrescences with which the records are garnished, we shall tell as nearly as possible what happened, or at any rate give Mohammed's account of it.

It was Mohammed's custom—one not uncommon in Arabia at that time—to retire for a fixed season each year to the seclusion of the rocks and ravines which encircled Mecca. One of these in particular, a cave in Mount Hira, was a favourite resort—a wild, bleak, barren spot, in harmony with troubled heart and wounded spirit. And some suras (i.e. chapters) of the Korân, almost certainly composed at this time, reveal an intensity of anguish and

also a growing sense of the reality of God—the following for example:

> *'By the rushing panting steeds,*
> *Striking fire with flashing hoof,*
> *That scour the land at early morn;*
> *And, darkening it with dust,*
> *Cleave thereby the enemy:*
>
> *Verily man is to his Lord ungrateful,*
> *And he himself is witness of it:*
> *Verily he is keen after this world's good.*
> *Ah! witteth he not that when what is in the graves*
> *shall be brought forth,*
> *And that which is in men's breasts laid bare:—*
> *Verily in that day shall the Lord be well informed of*
> *them.'*

To this cave Mohammed had come with his trusted wife, in his fortieth year, to spend the month Ramadân in undisturbed meditation; in wrestling, we may believe, with his own heart, and in contemplating the eternal problem of the world's sin and sorrow. There, in the midst of prayers and supplications, the light of revelation seemed suddenly to burst upon him.

It was midnight in the cave when a glorious angel appeared first in the sky, then approached within two bowshots' length, holding a silken cloth written all over. The angel roused him from sleep and bade him 'Read.'

'But I am not a reader,' Mohammed replied. Thrice was the injunction repeated, the third time in these words:

'Read, in the name of the Lord who created,
Created man from a clot of blood.
Read, for the Lord is the most beneficent,
He hath taught the use of the pen;
He hath taught man that which he knoweth not.'

Then Mohammed repeated the words to himself, and they were 'written upon his heart.' Then, we are told, he went to the door of the cave, and remained standing there till again there appeared his heavenly visitant, 'in the form of a man, with wings, and with his feet upon the horizon,' and saluted him: 'Mohammed, thou art the Prophet of God, and I am Gabriel.'

Trembling and overstrung, Mohammed returned to Khadîjah, and nestling close beside her like a frightened child related what had passed.

'Cover me, cover me,' he said. 'I fear for my soul.' She covered him with a mantle and comforted him, saying:

'Rejoice: God will not put you to shame; thou art so kind to thy relations, sincere in thy words, afraid of no trouble to serve thy neighbour, supporting the poor, given to hospitality, and defending the truth.'

The visitations occurred several times, and each time they were accompanied by violent physical effects upon Mohammed. 'He was angry if anyone looked upon him:

his face was covered with foam, his eyes were closed and sometimes he roared like a camel.'

Even the faithful Khadîjah began to have her fears. Demon possession is a common idea in the East. 'Could it be that her exemplary husband was the victim of the wrath of some genius of evil?' She consulted her cousin, Warakah, the sage and *savant*. His answer was wholly satisfactory, for he exclaimed:

'Holy! holy! by Him in Whose hand Warakah's soul is, if thou has told me the truth, then the Greatest Namus (nomos=law) has come to him which also appeared to Moses, and he is the Prophet of this nation. Tell him to be content.'

Still her fears were not allayed, and a test was proposed. She reasoned thus: 'If it is an evil spirit which visits my husband, it will not be ashamed in the presence of an unveiled woman, but if the spirit is good he will surely be too modest to remain.' So with elaborate ritual the test was laid. Mohammed was to summon her when next his visitant appeared, and she was to take off her veil; should the spirit depart, she would know him for a good spirit. The visitant fully vindicated himself, disappearing from Mohammed's sight at the appearance of an unveiled woman; he never was visible to Khadîjah. From that day onwards, through storm, and shine, darkness and light, contumely ridicule, and persecution, Khadîjah never

doubted, never wavered in complete confidence in her husband and his message.

For Mohammed there were yet many searchings of heart. He found himself unable to summon his visitor, or to command hours of inspiration at his will. Three years, it is said, he waited for another revelation, staggering in uncertainty and doubt and darkness, driven sometimes to the brink of despair, saved from suicide once at least only by the intervention of his wife. Light seemed to struggle with darkness in his soul, but gradually certain grand verities stood out clear. 'God, the sole Creator, Ruler, Judge of men and angels; the hopeless wretchedness of his people sunk in darkness and idolatry; Heaven and hell, the Resurrection, Judgment, the Recompense of good and evil in the World to come.' We can gather something of the sombre realities he saw, and something of the conviction with which they came to him from some of the suras written at the time:

'That which striketh! What is it which striketh?
And what shall certify thee what the striking is?
The day on which mankind shall be like moths
scattered abroad,
And the mountains like wool of divers colours
carded;
Then, as for him whose balances are heavy, he
shall enter into bliss;
And as for him whose balances are light, the pit
shall be his dwelling-place.

And what shall certify thee what is the pit?
A raging fire!

One great eternal truth alone stood out before him, 'Lâ ilāha illâ 'llâhu.' 'There is no God but God.' Surely the discovering of this great truth raised him high above all Arabia. 'There is no God but God'—he had discovered it, it had been revealed to him—surely, surely he was the favoured one, the Prophet of God; yes, *The Prophet of God*. It all seemed to stand together, and he set it in one sentence, 'Lâ ilāha illâ 'llâhu; Muhammadur rasûlu 'llâh.' *'There is no God but God: Mohammed is the Apostle of God,'* and so it stood for his creed, and the creed he taught, and it stands to-day as the creed of 200,000,000 of our fellow-men.

There was another, too, besides Khadîjah who from the first followed Mohammed's fortunes with unwavering faith, a man who is truly said to have saved Islam twice. He was a personal friend of Mohammed's, a popular but unimportant fellow-citizen of Mecca, by name Abu Bakr. Through these early trying years he was the propagandist of the new creed, and won to his friend's side the first little circle of Islam's converts. Years afterwards it was he who, as the first Caliph, took the white banner from his dying master's hands, raised it aloft again, and rallied fortunes that seemed shattered by the master's death.

With these two we must group another—a man of different type and a very different story—Zaid, a slave

whom Khadîjah had bought some years before and presented to Mohammed, this man proved himself a faithful friend in darker days.

The little group was but a poor token of the mighty armies Mohammed would ere long lead. Yet unquestionably a conviction grows infinitely the moment another believes in it; and these three did believe with all their hearts. Progress was slow at first; Mohammed wished to keep the matter as dark as possible, and those who knew of this teacher and his little band of disciples regarded them as a small secret society, more or less harmless—after all, there were other secret societies in Arabia at that time.

In the first three years there were not more than forty converts, won chiefly by Abu Bakr's assiduous work. It is much easier to persuade people to believe in someone else than to persuade them to believe in yourself. Abu Bakr saw this, and right loyally did he play his part. These forty were mostly from the lower ranks of society, including slaves and outcasts, who found here something of a brotherhood and a fraternal generosity, if not a community of goods. As in another small society in a Grecian city five hundred years before, 'not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble' were called in those days.

Meanwhile the seasons of 'revelation' had returned, and as time went on Mohammed was able to summon them at will. Each time the visitation was accompanied, as

before, by mysterious physical symptoms and weird bodily contortions. 'His countenance was troubled; he would turn deadly pale or glowing red. He would cover himself with a blanket. He fell to the ground like one intoxicated; foam would appear at his mouth; on the coldest day the perspiration would pour from his forehead. Sometimes he would hear the coming of the revelation like the ringing of a bell.' Sometimes the inspiration would come in true dreams or 'suggestions of the heart'; more often it was Gabriel, once even it was said to be God Himself speaking to him from behind a curtain. But when it was over he spoke his 'suras' which his hearers laid to heart, and afterwards noted down, and so the Korân (or Recitation) was compiled. As a modern Asian quaintly puts it: 'The heart of Mohammed was the Sinai where he received the revelation, and his tablets of stone were the hearts of true believers.'

But as Mohammed claimed that these physical seizures which he underwent in times of revelation were evidences of the reality of his divine commission, it was natural that men's thoughts should stray in search of other explanations thereof. His friends remembered that as a boy he had some sort of fit; others recollected seizures of the kind; and men of science and learning since, unwilling to ascribe the origin of the Korân to fits of epilepsy, have shown how in such constitutions there do lie rich but dangerous strains of high emotion, and how a hysterical disposition is not inconsistent with strength of will and a

high and lofty purpose. It is an obvious danger for such a nature possessing great thoughts to become possessed by them and be carried beyond the depth where man may walk with sure and certain tread.

After three years of these intermittent revelations, and quiet work and conference with his secret society, Mohammed felt prepared to take the big step of his life,—to come out and openly declare himself the Prophet of Arabia and preach his doctrines. He was the less afraid, perhaps, to do so because he held that, except for the all-important claim of his own Prophetship, he taught no new doctrine at all. Historians and scholars since have abundantly shown that all he taught was there before, hidden, indeed, and scattered, without coherence or cohesion, but there nevertheless. Covered with fable and distorted by superstition, it was part of Arabia's sub-consciousness.

Tradition tells how the Prophet took his stand on Al Safa, a hill outside Mecca, and summoned the Koreish. They were followed by the Meccan mob, and to the whole assembly Mohammed preached his first public sermon. The truths, indeed, awoke an echo in their hearts; they could not gainsay them. But this was not truth as a cold cinder raked out from the past and from their national consciousness, but truth living, burning,—truth on fire. They had heard of Allah before. Here was a man to whom Allah was a reality, so great a reality that there could be no other god but Him. They would not have denied that

there was a life beyond the grave. Here was a man to whom God's universe was an awful fact; who, as he poured forth his invective, seemed to have himself gazed upon the flaming fires of hell; to him there was a world of difference between heaven and hell and the paths that lead to each. Then, like some unexpected cataract, he would burst into tumultuous rhapsodies charged with thrilling words of conviction and fervid aspiration, insisting again on the realities of life, the certainty of the Judgment, the peril of the soul,—the soul of one believer outweighs all earthly kingdoms. They could no more ignore this preaching than ignore the pealing of the thunder.

Mecca was stirred to its depths. What! Was this man who had grown up among them indeed sent by God to overthrow their sacred Kaaba, to tell them that the gods they worshipped were no gods at all, but wood and stone? Their ancestors had worshipped these same gods for centuries before them. Had not they themselves prayed to Uzza and to Lât, and had they not instances of answers to their prayers?

Besides, if idolatry were a crime, what became of the prestige of Mecca? Where, indeed, was their own livelihood? Like the silver-smiths of Ephesus they saw the axe laid at the root of their prosperity. Mecca owed its pre-eminence above all the cities of Arabia to its guardianship of the sacred shrine. For that reason, too, it was the one city which no Arab dared attack: its people reaped a great benefit from its central mart and a rich harvest from the

pilgrims, besides a heavy tribute from the tribes. It was no wonder, then, that the Prophet's denunciations of their idols, his exposures of the grossness of their worship, lashed the Koreish into fury.

Abu Talib, now the head of the clan, expostulated, and sought to bring Mohammed to reason, and begged him to renounce the task he had undertaken, but he was obdurate. 'O, my uncle, if they placed the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left, to force me to renounce my work, verily I would not desist therefrom until God made manifest His Cause, or I perished in the attempt.' There was no persuading a man like that, although it is recorded that in the course of the interview he burst into tears.

Something had happened in Mecca which Mecca could not hide.

Life in Mecca

'We would know the world—not to censure, not to boast ourselves, but that sympathy may be wider and wider.'—Lynch.

Mohammed had now crossed the Rubicon. He had taken the decisive step of his career. To turn back was impossible. Islam was no longer a secret society. The issues at stake were clear both to Mohammed and to the men of Mecca, and they opposed his attack upon their shrine with a bitterness reinforced by a kind of patriotism. Mohammed himself was inviolable through the protection of Abu Talib, but an incessant petty persecution was maintained against his converts. As the opposition increased so did Mohammed's teaching grow in positiveness, and his violent vituperations increase in fury. 'Whoso obeyeth not God and His Prophet, to him verily is the fire of hell.' Mohammed was never meek, and when assailed and contradicted his cheeks blazed fury, while his lips poured forth a torrent of curses upon his enemies.

The advantage of secrecy during the first few years had been great; it had saved the cause from being crushed at the outset. Ridicule and contempt can more easily be borne where some hundred persons are involved. Mohammed made his public *début* not in the *rôle* of an eccentric sage but as the leader of a party, a force to be

reckoned with; and soon his fame spread along every caravan route of Arabia.

Mohammed now set up with some state and dignity in a central position in the 'House of Al Arkam,' still famous throughout the Moslem world as 'The House of Islam.' The house was put at his disposal by one of his richer early converts. Here the Prophet held meetings of his followers, received enquirers, and held audiences of pilgrims and others who pressed upon him. At these audiences Mohammed played the Prophet's part to perfection; he wore a veil, and assumed a benign and patriarchal manner. When he shook hands he would not withdraw his first, nor would he remove his searching gaze till the other turned away. His toilet, according to all accounts, was very elaborate; every night he painted his eyebrows, and he was strongly scented with perfume. Arab-like, he allowed his hair to grow long till it fell upon his shoulders, and when it began to turn grey he dyed it. He possessed the power of winning confidence at slight acquaintance, though it is said that new converts returned often from their first audience not only with a feeling of awe and chill, but of dislike. The stories of these meetings and interviews show us the kind of rugged earnestness of the man, and at the same time the motives to which he appealed in winning men's allegiance.

One day, as he sat with the men of Mecca in the common meeting-place around the Kaaba, a certain Utba,

whose younger brother had recently joined the new Faith, sat down beside him and said:

'O son of my friend, you are a man eminent both for your great qualities and for your noble birth. Although you have thrown the country into turmoil, created strife among families, outraged our gods, and taxed our forefathers and wise men with impiety and error, yet would we deal kindly with you. Listen to the offers I have to make to you, and consider whether it would not be well for you to accept them.'

Mohammed bade him speak on, and he said:

'Son of my friend, if it is wealth you seek, we will join together to give you greater riches than any man of the Koreish has possessed. If ambition move you, we will make you our chief, and do nothing save by your command. If you are under the power of an evil spirit which seems to haunt and dominate you so that you cannot shake off its yoke, then we will call in skilful physicians, and give them much gold that they may cure you.'

'Have you said all?' said Mohammed; and then, hearing that all had been said, he poured forth on his amazed listener the 41st chapter of the Korân:

'This is a revelation from the most Merciful: a book whereof the verses are distinctly explained, an Arabic Korân, for the instruction of people who understand....It is revealed unto me that your God is one God....This is the

disposition of the mighty, the wise God. If the Meccans withdraw from these instructions, say, I denounce unto you a sudden destruction....The unbelievers say, Hearken not unto this Korân; but use vain discourse during the reading thereof, that ye may overcome the voice of the reader by your scoffs and laughter. Wherefore we will surely cause the unbelievers to taste a grievous punishment....This shall be the reward of the enemies of God, namely, hell fire; therein is prepared for them an everlasting abode, as a reward for that they have wittingly rejected our signs....Say, what think ye? If the Korân be from God, and ye believe not therein, who will lie under a greater error than he who dissenteth widely therefrom?...Is it not sufficient for thee that thy Lord is witness of all things?'

Another time we hear him preaching publicly in a different strain: 'I know no man in the land of Arabia who can lay before his kinsfolk a more excellent offer than that which I now make to you. I offer you the happiness of this world, and of that which is to come. God Almighty hath commanded me to call mankind unto Him. Who, therefore, among you will second me in that work, and thereby become my brother, my vice-regent, my Khalifa (successor)?'

In the audience that day was his young cousin, Ali, Abu Talib's son, whom Mohammed had adopted shortly after his marriage with Kadîjah, and this sermon is said to have been the cause of his conversion.

'I, O Apostle of God, will be thy minister,' he exclaimed; 'I will knock out the teeth, tear out the eyes, rip up the bellies, and cut off the legs of all who shall dare to oppose thee.' Then in the presence of all the assembly the prophet embraced him, exclaiming, 'This is my brother, my deputy, my Khalifa: hear him and obey him.' In such manner did this Peter of Islam receive his commission.

There is one other story of this time which must be told. Its central figure is that of the man who later on succeeded Abu Bakr as second Caliph, who captured Jerusalem and Alexandria and conquered Persia, and ruled an Empire as wide as that of Rome. He left for ever the stamp of his dauntless spirit upon Islam.

He was one of Mohammed's bitterest opponents and was engaged in elaborating a plot upon the Prophet's life, when he heard that his own brother-in-law and sister were secret converts. His wrath was aroused and he proceeded at once to their house. As he drew near he heard the low murmur of reading.

'What sound was that I heard just now?' he demanded in his rage.

'Nothing,' they replied, as many have done before and since.

'Nay,' he said with an oath, 'I hear that ye are renegades.'

'But, Omar, may there not be truth in another religion than thine?' The argument ended in a free fight in which

the woman was injured. Then at last Omar showed some signs of manhood; shamed by her bleeding head, he suggested by way of compensation that he would read the paper.

The sister persisted: 'None but the pure may touch it.'

Then Omar arose and washed himself and took the paper; it was the twentieth sura, and he read it. His mood completely changed, and when he had finished its perusal he said:

'How excellent are these words and gracious.' The brother-in-law was not slow to follow up the opportunity.

'O Omar, I trust that the Lord hath verily set thee apart for himself in answer to his Prophet; it was but yesterday I heard him praying thus: "Strengthen Islam, God, by Abu Jahl or by Omar."' That completed the work of conversion, and Omar proceeded boldly to the house of Al Arkam and greeted Mohammed with these words:

'Verily I testify thou art the Prophet of God.'

Filled with delight the Prophet cried aloud, 'Allah Akbar,' God is most great. Henceforth Omar was a staunch follower, of whom Mohammed one day said: 'If Satan were to meet Omar, Satan would get out of his way.'

So there were added to the converts men of very varying types, not outcasts only now, but men of wealth, of learning, and of social position. As Mohammed grew stronger, opposition to him increased. At one time a price

was set upon his head, and those of his followers who were not protected by influential patrons were persecuted and boycotted in the town.

Mohammed was by no means without consideration for his followers. The persecution and violence, which befell especially the slave portion of his adherents, pressed upon him heavily. In the fifth year of his teaching he advised a large party of them to seek refuge with the Christian King of Abyssinia: 'Yonder,' pointing to the west, 'lieth a country wherein no one is wronged—a land of righteousness. Depart thither and remain until it pleaseth the Lord to open your way before you.' A strange step, it seems to us, when we reflect upon the usage he and his successors meted out to Christians in a few years time. It reads not unlike a story of Huguenot refugees of later days. The Koreish sent their envoys to beg the King not to harbour the enemies of their country, who had forsaken the religion of their fathers, and were preaching another 'different alike from ours and from that of the King.' The Moslem representatives refused to prostrate themselves, as the custom was, saying boldly: 'By our Prophet's command we prostrate ourselves only before the one true God.'

The Koreish set forth their case. Then, with that most convincing rhetoric of simple, personal narration, the Moslems declared how they had once been idolaters till it pleased Allah to send them his message through his apostle, 'a man of noble birth and blameless life, who has

shown us by infallible signs proof of his mission, and has taught us to cast away idols, and to worship the only true God. He has commanded us to abstain from all sin, to keep faith, to observe the times of fasting and prayer...to follow after virtue. Therefore do our enemies persecute us, and therefore have we, by our Prophet's command, sought refuge and protection in the King's country.' We are told that the King and his bishops were melted to tears. They offered the exiles a safe asylum.

In spite of the growth in the number of his followers, Mohammed was much exercised just at this time by the failure of his mission: the fate of Islam seemed to be hanging in the balance, and once at least he allowed himself to be betrayed into the path of compromise. He was preaching one day in his accustomed place before the Kaaba, and he recited the fifty-third sura:

'By the star when it falleth your companion erreth not, neither is he misled, nor speaketh he from lust....One taught him who is mighty in power. Have ye considered Al Lât and Al Uzza and Manât, the third with them? These are the exalted maidens, and verily their intercession may be hoped for.'

The Koreish were as much delighted as astonished. This was *their* doctrine. When he ended his sura with: 'Wherefore bow down before God and serve Him,' the whole assembly obeyed. The new popularity, however, disquieted him, and he was man enough to see there could

be no sound building upon such a compromise. Besides, too, the very heart of his message—the unity of God—was gone. Accordingly, a few days later he publicly retracted the verse, ascribing the words to Satan. Afterwards Mohammed dubbed Uzza and Lât 'names invented by your fathers, for which Allah has given no authority.' It was the first time, but not the last, that he went back upon revelations which in the most solemn words he had ascribed to God Himself. But in the circumstances his recantation was the act of a strong man, and a brave one, for he knew that the storm would break out with greater fury than before. Surely, unless Mohammed found some hope in his own heart through these long years of struggle, his courage must have failed.

In the tenth year of his mission the Prophet suffered two grievous losses in the death of his faithful wife Khadîjah, and his life-long protector Abu Talib. Mohammed is said to have tried unsuccessfully to get his dying uncle to pronounce the Islamic confession. He, therefore, was doomed to hell, and the utmost that his nephew could procure for him was that while others would be in a lake of fire, he should be only in a pool! The Prophet assured Khadîjah, on her death-bed, that she, with the Virgin Mary, Potiphar's wife, and 'Kulthum, Moses' sister,' should be with him in Paradise.

When men recover quickly from a loss, unworthy souls are all too quick to say that they don't feel it. And yet one cannot suppress an exclamation of surprise and

shame when we find that within two or three months of the death of the noble Khadîjah, the wife, friend, and adviser of Mohammed, he was married to another widow, by name Saudah, and had betrothed himself also to Ayesha, the seven-year-old child of Abu Bakr. Yet in these two months of pain and darkness and apparent hopelessness Mohammed had set forth upon an expedition which, for sheer pluck and determination, is hardly rivalled in the story of his life. A solitary man, despised and rejected in his own city, he went forth to try to plant his teaching in another. As it turned out, his choice was an unhappy one, for he was quickly mobbed and driven forth, and Taif proved in future years the last city of Arabia to hold out against the new Faith.

For six years or nearly seven Mohammed had been patiently seeking to make an impression on Mecca. A very mixed band of about a hundred converts of no particular influence was the result. There was no turn of public opinion in his favour. The outlook was dark, when a gleam of hope shot across his path.

It was the time of the yearly pilgrimage: Mohammed happened on a group of men more open-eared than those of Mecca.

He asked the city whence they came.

'We come from Yathreb,' they said.

'Ah,' said he, 'the city of the Jews. Why not sit ye down a little with me and I will speak with you?'

In the conversation which ensued Mohammed was both learner and teacher; expounding his doctrines, he at the same time sounded the possibilities of Yathreb for his cause. The Jews, as all men knew, looked for a prophet to come; the Arab population of Yathreb were not bigoted idolaters. 'What a different reception they would give my teaching,' thought Mohammed, and further inquiries only strengthened his belief. 'This man, if he could rule our quarrelling tribes, might bring us peace and wealth once more,' so thought the men of Yathreb. For Yathreb, although it was in one of the richest valleys, and a veritable garden of Arabia, was torn with civil strife, and was plunged in poverty and distress. They were as much pleased as Mohammed. There seemed possibilities here, but there was need of caution.

A year of uncertainty and doubt followed for Mohammed. But when at the ensuing pilgrimage he sought the spot appointed for secret conclave with his Yathreb friends, a narrow, sheltered glen not far from Mecca, his fears vanished. Twelve citizens of note and influence in Yathreb were ready there to pledge their faith to Mohammed thus:

'We will not worship any but one God: we will not steal, neither will we commit adultery, nor kill our children; we will not slander in any wise, nor will we disobey the Prophet in anything that is right.'

It was a mild pledge by the side of what Mohammed demanded later, and because there was no mention of the sword it was afterwards styled 'The Pledge of Women.' But it served for the present, and Mohammed assured them:

'If ye fulfil the pledge, Paradise shall be your reward.'

With statesmanlike restraint Mohammed was content to wait another anxious year.

The twelve were now committed to his cause; he could count on their zeal to propagate the new teaching and prepare Yathreb for his coming.

A year later, at the time of the next pilgrimage, Mohammed, without attendant, stands at the appointed trysting-place. It is midnight, for the utmost secrecy is necessary, and they assemble 'waking not the sleeper nor tarrying for the absent'; not twelve but seventy men prepared to pledge their troth this time in no doubtful words. Yathreb, they report, is honeycombed with the new teaching; a royal welcome awaits the Prophet; they were prepared to see it through.

'Our resolution is unshaken. Our lives are at the Prophet's service. Stretch out thy hand, O Prophet.' And one by one, with solemn Eastern ritual, the seventy struck their hands thereon in token of their pledge.

It only remained now to remove the faithful in small parties to Yathreb, and then for the Prophet and Abu Bakr to follow with as much secrecy and as little disturbance as

possible. For in the eyes of the men of Mecca this was not merely a change of residence but a transfer of allegiance—they might even call it sedition.

Abu Bakr was eager to set off, but still the Prophet lingered, waiting, perhaps, till his followers were all gone; perhaps for some favourable omen (for he was superstitious to the last); perhaps dreading the long, toilsome, dangerous journey, or, as he said, waiting till it was revealed that the time was come. Two swift camels were bought and kept on high feed in readiness; money in portable form was prepared; a guide, accustomed to the devious tracks of the desert, was hired.

At last the night arrived. Stealing through a back window, they escaped unobserved through a southern suburb in the opposite direction to Yathreb, and after some hours wandering, took refuge in a cave near the summit of Mount Tûr.

They lay in hiding while Mecca raised the hue and cry.

Miracles and legends cluster around that cave and hide its Prophet. Branches sprouted in the night and hemmed it in on every side, and wild pigeons lodged upon them. A spider wove its web across the entrance. Once again Islam hung in the balance. Glancing upwards at a crevice through, which the morning light began to break, Abu Bakr whispered:

'What if one were to look through the chink and see us underneath his feet?'

'Think not thus, Abu Bakr,' the Prophet replied; 'we are two, but God is in the midst, a third.'

Meanwhile scouts had been sent in every direction; but at last, opining that Mohammed had escaped towards Yathreb by the fleetness of his camel, they desisted. Then the fugitives came forth, and set out for their desert journey of four hundred miles.

They were not quite 'out of the wood' yet. They met a scout returning from the search. A Bedouin encampment where they sought food held elements of danger. But at length they reached the garden outskirts of Yathreb, to be known henceforth as El Medina—'The City'—'The City of the Prophet.' For several days the town had been in eager and excited expectation of its illustrious visitor. Still, with his unrivalled restraint, Mohammed waited for four days to recover from the effects of his journey. On a Friday he made his state entry amid the cheers of the populace, preached them a sermon of religious exhortation and eulogy of the new Faith, and in the midst of a circle of one hundred believers, conducted before all the people the first great Mohammedan 'Friday Service.' It was in the year of our era 622 Anno Domini, henceforth the 'First year of Islam,' the year of the 'Hegira,' or 'departure,' the Flight of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina.

Ten years of brave struggle, lonely leadership, and self-restraint do not diminish dignity: Mohammed rode into

Medina in all things fulfilling the highest Oriental idea of the true king.

The Unsheathing of the Sword

'Too oft religion has the mother been,
Of impious act and criminal.'

Lucretius.

As Al Caswa, the favourite camel, swung slowly with loose rein through the streets of Medina, allowed by her master to choose the place where he should alight, she bore him not only to a new home but to new circumstances, and to a new act in the drama of his life.

There is nothing to show that Mohammed was ever a man of great foresight, or that he saw in the distance a clear, guiding star towards which he shaped his course. Indeed, the constantly changing and contradicting suras of the Korân show how his views were altered and modified from time to time. He was pre-eminently a man of the present, who understood how to deal with present circumstances and make them serve his ends. How would he act now that his chance had come? He had claimed to be a Prophet, nay *The Prophet* of God. In Mecca he had been a preacher and a warner only. Was that all it meant? The new opportunities of Medina made him face the claim.

He had started with a two-clause creed, 'There is no God but God: Mohammed is the Prophet of God.' But he lost the emphasis on God, and with that he lost his balance. 'Mohammed is the Prophet of God'—that was

the clause men resisted most. That was what drove him to persecute the Jews—when he no longer needed their friendship—more harshly than he persecuted others.

Moreover, what did this claim involve? What did it mean in Medina this city without a visible head or any central authority—to be *the Prophet* of God? What was its meaning for Mecca, where he had defied the many idols of the Kaaba? What was his relation to Arabia? What was Arabia's relation to him? Obviously 'the man who determined the fate of the Kaaba must *ipso facto* be the chief of the nation and remodel its entire structure.' Who would gainsay the Prophet of God?

Meanwhile he must not go too fast, and so Mohammed 'with the stolid patience which in Europe belongs only to the greatest, and in Asia to everybody,' waited the year in peace—he spent it, in fact, making his own domestic arrangements, strengthening his own position, organizing the practice of the Faith. The empty plot of ground at which Al Caswa halted was bought, and upon it arose the first Mohammedan mosque. Beside it were built two cottages, one for Saudah, the wife whom he had married within a few weeks of Khadîjah's death, and the other for Ayesha, the child of Abu Bakr, only nine years of age, whom he now took as a second wife.

The mosque was the first visible centre of Islam. As it rose he built, too, the pillars of Mohammedan religious practice, on which Islam has rested ever since. Friday was

established as the day of assembly when he preached himself to the people of Medina from a pulpit built of tamarisk trees, by the outside wall of the mosque. The duty of ceremonial washing (lustration as it was called) as a preliminary to prayer was enjoined, and most typical of Mohammedanism in every century and in every clime, the observance of prayer at five stated times in the day. The prayers, accompanied by a series of four genuflections, were to be said facing originally towards Jerusalem and later towards Mecca. These prayers soon became the habit of 'the faithful.' To-day they are said in all the great mosques of the East. They are recited along every trade route of the Sahara and Soudan where the Arab drives his lonely caravan; they are used by saint and ascetic, brigand and slave-dealer alike—wherever men call themselves after the name of the Prophet.

But none of these provisions so well illustrate Mohammed's judgment and his æsthetic sense as his institution of the call to prayer by the human voice, and not by Jewish trumpet or Christian bell. It is said that the suggestion came from Omar. He communicated it to the Prophet, who cleverly replied that a special revelation to that effect had just been given him. Anyhow, the negro slave, Bilâl, was soon shouting the call from the highest turret in Medina, and the weird music of the muezzin's voice from myriads of minarets still floats across the air from Cape Verde to Muscat, from Suez to Nankin, summoning one out of every seven of the entire human

race to worship five times a day. *'God is most great! I witness that there is no God but God, and Mohammed is the Apostle of God! Come to prayer! Gome to salvation! God is most great! There is no God but God!'* At dawn is added the very human reminder, *'Prayer is better than sleep!'*

Such were the religious observances of Islam, together with legal almsgiving, the duty of the jihâd, or holy war, the reconsecrating of the old Arab fasting month of Ramadân, and a few solemn feasts. Mohammed added nothing in later years except that most meritorious of acts—a pilgrimage to Mecca.

By these religious enactments the Prophet drew the faithful closer to him, and separated them from the 'unbelievers' and the 'disaffected' of Medina. Their enthusiasm for him knew no bounds. Converts struggled for the honour of washing in the water which the Prophet had used for his ablutions, and then drank it up. It was bottled and sent to new adherents as precious liquid, after the style of the relics of saints. His barber was surrounded by a crowd of eager Moslems who scrambled for Mohammed's hair and nail parings, which they preserved as charms and relics. They accepted every word of his, as he affirmed they should, as the veritable words of God. So much for the inner circle, the 'believers' in Medina.

The great majority of the people, if not actively opposed, were far from being his allies. With great astuteness and cleverness Mohammed sought to gain first

one party, then another. He instituted a new kind of brotherhood, binding, with oaths of the most complete mutual allegiance, a Medinese to one of the followers who had joined him from Mecca. The tie was to supersede even the ties of kindred; one man was even to inherit from the other. The system did not last long, but it did its work by tiding over many of the difficulties of the first twelve months.

The Jews, as we have said, formed a large colony in Medina, all the more influential because they were—as they have ever been—homogeneous. One of Mohammed's first steps was to make overtures to them.

They worshipped the same God, he said, and it was 'quite simple for a Jew to obey the law of Moses and yet owe his allegiance to Mohammed!' So he poured forth suras in their favour, quoted—or misquoted—the Old Testament in his sermons, and even adopted some of their ceremonial. He finally made a formal treaty with them, declaring common cause against idolaters, and, in particular, against the Koreish of Mecca, permitting to the Jews their own religion, but insisting 'None shall go forth but with the permission of Mohammed.'

The treaty was short-lived. It was soon plain that Judaism and Islam could not go hand in hand. The Prophet rested his claims on the predictions of the Jewish Scriptures: yet he did not profess to be the Messiah;—the Messiah, he held, had already appeared in the person of

Jesus, and had been rejected. He was himself another and a greater prophet also foretold in their Book. The Jews, he said, knew this; they recognized in him the promised Prophet 'as they recognized their own sons,' yet, out of jealousy and spite, from wilful blindness, they rejected him, as they had rejected their own Messiah. This was the position which Mohammed held. How could the Jews accept it? In a body, with but few exceptions, they rejected it. Henceforth, Islam and Judaism were no more allies. The suras suddenly changed their tone; each new revelation poured forth fresh invectives upon Israel. Jewish customs were discarded, and 'the faithful' were bidden to turn no longer to Jerusalem but to Mecca for their prayers. The rupture was a severe blow to Mohammed at the time; but he consoled himself, inasmuch as the Jews had always been a stubborn race, given to rejecting their prophets.

The first impetus had begun to expend itself. Progress was slow, though in Medina converts were still many. Indifference dulled the mass of the people; rival chieftains asserted their claims over the clans. Mohammed and his followers were often in want. Mecca, too, had settled down to its life without a regret for the one man singled out as the chosen of God. The position was not consistent with the dignity of the Prophet of God. Circumstances converged to show that in force lay the only remedy. Mecca must be punished, and Medina should learn that the hand of God is with His Prophet.

The commerce of Mecca depended very largely upon the caravan expeditions which travelled twice a year to Syria, passing on their way along the Red Sea shore, not far from Medina. To break up and plunder the caravan was not a difficult and certainly was an effective way of punishing Mecca, and, incidentally, of replenishing the dwindling resources of the 'brother-hood' of believers. Some of them did, indeed, revolt against such a step, remembering how they had been taught more merciful practices at Mecca, but Mohammed was ready for them with a new revelation, reminding them that to punish those who had driven out God's Prophet was to defend the honour of God.

The earlier marauding expeditions came back with empty bags. The first found the Meccans too carefully and strongly guarded. The second, though stronger in numbers, shot one arrow and turned tail. The third was to catch a caravan at a place where the roads from Syria and Egypt meet, five days from Medina; it arrived a day too late. Mohammed decided to lead the fourth himself, but again the Meccans, knowing no doubt by this time what to expect, gave them the slip. Mohammed, however, succeeded in forming an alliance with a heathen tribe not disinclined to similar enterprise, and through whose territory the caravan route ran.

A month later news reached Mohammed that along this road would pass a very rich burden, laden on 2,500 camels, and protected by 100 armed men. This time he

summoned the Medinese to his white standard, and marched forth at the head of 200 followers. But the safety of a desert caravan lies not so much in numbers as in cunning, and even this huge unwieldy caravan outwitted the highwaymen and passed on its way in safety.

It was not an encouraging beginning for Moslem arms, but it brought men under the magnetic sway of Mohammed's leadership; it established Mohammed's right to drill and command the believers, and it whetted their Arabian appetites for blood and plunder.

When a man has once justified himself for highway robbery—and this was not hard for one who claimed to be the Prophet of God in Arabia in the seventh century—it was easy for him to justify worse methods. Mohammed's followers had failed before armed troops—there was still another way.

During the month Rejeb, all Arabia acknowledged a sacred truce, so fully recognized that caravans travelled unarmed. One of Mohammed's followers, Abdallah, was known as a desperate fanatic, who was said to have prayed that he might die fighting and be mutilated. Mohammed put this man in charge of a small force, and sent him forth during the month of Rejeb with sealed orders. These were to take no men who shrank from such a job, but with the others to lie in ambush in the gorge of Nakhla for a small, unprotected caravan of rich merchandise which was travelling without escort under cover of the sacred month.

On reaching Nakhla they had not long to wait. In a short time a caravan, richly laden with wine, raisins, and leather, came through the defile. It was driven by four men of the Koreish, who grew alarmed and halted at the sight of armed strangers. To disperse their fears, one of Abdallah's followers shaved his head in token that they were peaceful travellers returning from a pilgrimage. The men of the caravan, at once reassured, unloaded their camels and began to prepare their evening meal. While they were doing so, Abdallah and his five stalwarts set upon them. Of those in charge of the caravan one was killed, two taken prisoners, and the fourth, leaping on his horse, escaped to Mecca. Abdallah returned with the two captives and the loot to Mohammed, who at first professed reluctance at accepting booty won by such a sacrilegious act, but soon got over his own scruples and satisfied those of the believers by distributing the booty and by giving forth a fresh revelation declaring 'it is less evil to break the sacred truce than to expel God's Prophet.'

It was a desperate business indeed, for it was a violation of the conscience of all Arabia, but it was successful. It was sanctioned by Mohammed, and it set the example and kindled the 'fire' of Islam all down the centuries. If the truce held sacred from time immemorial by all Arabia might be violated in the name of the Prophet of God, and be so obviously successful, what might not be done? Moreover, Mohammed promptly poured forth fresh suras, promising Paradise to all who fell in war 'for

God and His Prophet,' and declaring war against the infidel a main duty of the faithful. The rich spoil and splendid future were too much for the men of Medina; open opposition disappeared, the Medinese were Mohammed's followers.

The war-dogs of Islam were unloosed.

The Sword of Islam

'The sword of Mohammed and the Korân are the most stubborn opponents of civilization, liberty, and truth the world has ever known.'

Sir William Muir.

It is a small step from 'robbery under arms' to civil war. The logical consequence of a small expedition, if it is successful, is a larger one. Mohammed soon had a chance, which it was not in him to refuse. He heard that the large caravan which had eluded him in the autumn was returning in the spring, crawling down the sea route on its way to Mecca, heavily laden with goods, to the value of 500,000 francs. Its leader was Abu Sufyan, the chief of the Koreish, and, as usual, every Meccan who could afford it had a stake in the venture. Mohammed appealed to the men of Medina, 'Here is a caravan of the Koreish in which they have embarked much wealth. Come! perchance the Lord will enrich you with the same.' The appeal was not in vain. With an army of 305 men and 70 camels he marched to meet it at Badr, still a halting-place on the pilgrim road from Syria to Mecca. Meanwhile, through spies or traitors, the news reached Abu Sufyan, who sent to Mecca for help. The men of Mecca, not without misgivings at making war upon their relatives, turned out for battle nearly a thousand strong. This was more than Mohammed had reckoned on, but he was not dismayed. He could count on

the fiery courage of his followers, the fanaticism of his 'refugees' had destroyed all their remembrance of the ties of kindred; he reckoned, too, no doubt, on hesitation and divided councils among his foes. He was cheered in the night with visions of success, and with stern confidence he ordered the battle himself.

The field of battle was a valley between the two most western spurs of a range of mountains which here drop into the plain which protects them from the sea. A rivulet, rising in the inland mountains, runs through the valley, and in its course a number of cisterns had been dug for the use of travellers. Mohammed ordered all of these to be filled up, except the one nearest to the enemy, and this one he made his base of operations. He was quite aware that 'the general should not risk his life,' and, accordingly, a temporary hut was built for the Prophet beside the well, and fleet camels were picketed ready for his flight in case of sudden need.

The battle began, like many another in those parts, by single contests of the champions of either army. In these the Moslems won all along the line. It was an ominous beginning for the Koreish, and their spirits sank. It was a wild, stormy, winter day, and the rain poured in the face of the Meccan archers, as upon the hapless French at Agincourt. To Mohammed the fierce blasts that swept the valley were a legion of angels under Gabriel and Michael fighting for the believers—as the 'Great Twin Brethren' had fought for Rome at Lake Regillus. The Moslems

fought, it seems, in a sort of threefold phalanx formation, and at first stood on the defensive. The Koreish were without commander, without order, or discipline, or any concerted plan, though they were three to one.

The battle raged fiercely: at last the fiery valour of the Moslems prevailed. As the foe wavered Mohammed stooped, threw a handful of pebbles towards them, and cried: 'Confusion seize their faces.' Wavering turned into defeat, defeat into rout. The Koreish cast away their arms and fled, abandoning their camp and baggage and beasts of burden. Eagerly the Moslems followed them, slaying and taking captive all who came within reach. Forty-nine were killed, and about the same number taken prisoners. Mohammed lost only fourteen, of whom six were refugees from Medina. Many of the principal men of the Koreish were slain, among them one of Mohammed's bitterest opponents, Abu Jahl. As he lay wounded on the field Mohammed's servant ran upon him and cut off his head and carried it to his master.

'The head of the enemy of God,' exclaimed Mohammed.

'God, there is none other but He,' responded the servant, as he cast the gory head at the Prophet's feet.

'It is more acceptable to me than the choicest camel in Arabia.'

Six of the prisoners were executed as avowed enemies of Mohammed's creed. The remainder were treated with

kindness, and most embraced the faith. A trench was dug upon the field into which the bodies of the slain were cast, and before it was filled in, Mohammed himself addressed them in the presence of his followers: 'Have you not found the promise of your Lord to come true? Woe to you who rejected me your Prophet. Verily, my Lord's promise to me hath been made good.' The spoil was very rich; it was thrown into one great heap, of which Mohammed retained a fifth, and divided the rest among his followers. Two camels fell to the lot of every man in the army.

The battle of Badr was to Moslem history all, and more than all, that Hastings means in the history of England. To Mohammed, and to every man who fought under him, it was the seal of the Almighty upon the Cause. Obviously for purposes of war one Moslem was worth ten unbelievers! A course of plundering so favoured by God Himself was not to be desisted from—each fresh marauding expedition added to the wealth of Medina and the reputation of the Prophet.

Once, twice, indeed, the life of Mohammed and the cause of Islam yet hung in the balance. The Koreish, as we might guess, had not taken the defeat of Badr easily, and were resolved on revenge. A year later, with an army of 3,000 men, they marched on Medina, and so narrowly was Islam saved that we are told Mohammed was himself struck down during a panic of his followers. Two years later, summoning all their allies, the Koreish marched upon Medina and be sieged it with an army 10,000 strong.

But finding earthworks and trenches barring their way, and plot and stratagem met by counter-plot, their provisions ran out and they were forced to beat an ignominious retreat. Even temporary set-backs hurt little the reputation of the Prophet. He was the unquestioned master of Medina now, and each succeeding month brought fresh tribes within his suzerainty; his reputation extended wherever Arab orators contended for eloquence. But as yet he was only a local notability. Arabia still looked to Mecca as the pivot of the country; the men of Arabia still returned to Mecca and the Kaaba for their yearly pilgrimage. Clearly, if Mohammed would rule Arabia, he must rule from Mecca. Under truce he visited his old haunts, the home of his youth and the sacred 'cube,' but he was only there on sufferance. The visit intensified the burning desire, and the urgent necessity for the Prophet of God to be Master of Mecca.

So, passing over several years studded with incident and adventure, we must follow our hero with his organized and disciplined army of 10,000 men as he marches upon Mecca. Such an army Araby has never known and the Koreish make but small show of resistance. A few fanatics keep up a running and ineffectual fight, and Mohammed stands lord of the city from which eight years before he had fled a hunted fugitive. It is still full of enemies. But the greatness of his triumph has softened his heart, and by his moderation he wins theirs. The men of

Mecca give in their adhesion, and become 'believers' in a body.

The first act of the Conqueror was one of clemency. What was the second? Remounting his old favourite Al Caswa he rode to the Kaaba—the pictures had been removed, and Mohammed now ordered the idols to be hewn down. Uzza and Lât fell with a terrible crash, and with them crashed down the whole fabric of Arab idolatry, which has never been restored.

Mohammed was an old man now, and as he contemplated the work of destruction, he must have felt that the labour of twenty years had not been in vain.

To him, however, the destruction of the idols was not so much the end of the old as the beginning of the new. The Kaaba itself was left untouched, and was consecrated to be the new centre of the new faith, and from its roof Bilâl sounded the call to prayer. The keys were returned to their old keeper, and the right of attending the pilgrims was entrusted again to Mohammed's uncle Abbas.

Mecca should still be the pivot of Arabia, its sacred shrine the centre of its religion, the Koreish its guardians, but not henceforth, as in the 'days of ignorance,' a house of helpless idols, but the centre of the new religion—'God and His Prophet.'

It was the stroke of a master statesman, as well as of a religious enthusiast. It silenced the scruples of the Koreish lest Mecca should lose its position and they their chance

of livelihood. It was the crowning act of Mohammed's achievement. Verily the hand of God must be with the Prophet when he could conquer Mecca and defy with impunity the ancient deities of Arabia!

So the fire of Islam was kindled in Arabia. A few more fierce stubborn contests yet remained, a guerilla fight with the powerful and bellicose Arab clan, the Beni Hawazin, the blockade of Taif, a powerful hostile city, and the subjugation of the Jews, and all Arabia was aflame. From Yaman and Hadramaut and Oman, from the borders of Syria and Persia, envoys poured in, bringing the allegiance of the tribes, flocking to the white standard of the Prophet. Within a year Mohammed, at the head of such an army as no Arab had ever dreamt of, consisting of 10,000 horse and 20,000 foot-men, marched northwards to the borders of Syria, and subduing the Christian and semi-Christian tribes of the north, carried the fire of Islam beyond the borders.

Busy and occupied with fighting as those last years of Mohammed's life were, his work as religious prophet was not neglected. He poured forth fresh suras as each new occasion demanded. True, they seem to have lost their old rugged earnestness now, and much of their sense of God, but he declares them still to be the revelation of the Almighty, and to have existed in heaven from the beginning of eternity. Many suras are concerned with the most trivial and unimportant matters treated in the most commonplace way. Some show his unrivalled skill in

getting out of difficult personal or political situations. Some are to give 'divine authority' for his own violations of his own law, or for those actions of his which outraged even the primitive conscience of Arabia. One instance of this should be given. Within a year of his reaching Medina the Prophet greatly admired Zainab, the wife of his foster-son Zaid, and coveted her for his wife. Marriage to one who was reckoned a daughter-in-law was utterly abhorrent to the conscience of the Arabs, but he justified this by obtaining a divine commission—a divine blessing forsooth—for the act. We have more than once seen how the Prophet fell into the very convenient habit of retracting or 'abrogating' any previous suras which he found it convenient to alter. One would have thought this would have shaken the faith of the 'believers' in the revelations, but Mohammed waved their scruples aside with a high hand, and they soon grew accustomed to such vagaries.

Interspersed among these very minor matters was much advice as to the conduct of the faith, the obligations of Moslem brotherhood, the relation of the faithful to unbelievers, to women and to slaves. Many Arabian customs were commended for adoption. There were disquisitions on criminal and civil law and punishments, on political economy and tax-collecting, and florid descriptions of the believers' Paradise and the fires of the unbelievers' Hell.

A man's age is not reckoned by his years, but by the life he has lived. The last twenty-three years of Mohammed's life had been enough to shatter the strongest of constitutions. Privation, persecution, struggle, anxiety, fear, and still more, the lust, excitement, and excesses of victory, and, as he said, 'the toil of inspiration and the striking' had streaked his hair with grey, and made him old when he was sixty-three. But he was game to the end, and fought his fever inch by inch. When it was sore upon him he struggled to the mosque to lead the Friday service. Throughout Sunday he was unconscious. On the Monday he rallied so far as to be able to walk feebly into the mosque next door, where Abu Bakr led the prayers at his request. He returned exhausted by the effort, and quietly sank to rest in Ayesha's loving arms, muttering a few broken prayers for forgiveness 'for the former and the latter sins,' and exclaiming 'The blessed companionship on high!' Around him were gathered his wives and those who had been his closest friends and comrades through good report and ill—Abu Bakr, Omar, and Zaid.

We may, in fancy, stand with that little company and gaze deep into that quiet face, for thereon is written not only a life that is past, but a forecast of a history that is yet to be. Yes, Mohammed, the story of thy life is there, a story unique in glory and in shame; in glory because, rising above thy fellows and realizing God, thou didst preach Him to men; in shame, because, being greater than thy fellows, thou didst think thyself almost a god. And in the

pages of world-history thy life is written large across the nations, for, as is the prophet so are the people, and where the shepherd leads the sheep follow. And so thy life, its glory and its shame, its moral earnestness, its sordid ambitions; its rugged sincerity, its obvious self-deception; its high moral teaching, its gross sensual sins; its gentleness, its cruelty; its faithfulness, its broken oaths; its daring, its cowardice; its saintliness and its brigandage; will live again in the lives of thy followers wherever men call themselves Mohammedans.

With the passing of the Prophet, Moslem revelation is for ever closed, the last word has been said, no more is possible. At his death there can be no successor to his office as mediator and Prophet. The two assets upon which the huge and complex structure of Islam have been built are the historical records of *the Prophet's life* and *the Korân*, and it is important that we grasp the meaning of this fact. Zwemer has described the magic of the Prophet's influence.

'He is at once the sealer and abrogator of all former prophets and revelations. They have not only been succeeded, but also supplanted by Mohammed. No Moslem prays to him, but every Moslem daily prays for him in endless repetition. He is the only powerful intercessor in the Day of Judgment. Every detail of his early life is attributed to divine permission or command, and so the very faults of his character are his endless glory and his sign of superiority. God favoured him above all creatures. He dwells in the highest heaven, and is

several degrees above Jesus in honour and station. His name is never uttered or written without the addition of a prayer. "Ya Mohammed" is the open sesame to every door of difficulty—temporal or spiritual. One hears that name in the bazaar and in the street, in the mosque and from the minaret. Sailors sing it while hoisting their sails; hammals groan it to raise a burden; the beggar howls it to obtain alms; it is the Bedouin's cry in attacking a caravan; it hushes babes to sleep, as a cradle-song; it is the pillow of the sick, and the last word of the dying; it is written on the door posts and in their hearts, as well as, since eternity, on the throne of God; it is to the devout Moslem the name above every name; grammarians can tell you how its four letters are representative of all the sciences and mysteries by their wonderful combination. The name of Mohammed is the best to give a child, and the best to swear by for an end of all dispute in a close bargain....Mohammed holds the keys of heaven and hell. No Moslem, however bad his character, will perish finally; no unbeliever, how ever good his life, can be saved except through Mohammed.'

Then there was the book, the Korân. At the time of Mohammed's death the suras had never been gathered together, and no book of them existed. Many had been written down by those who heard them, some the faithful knew by heart. Soon after the Prophet's death Abu Bakr gave orders that all these should be gathered together. Zaid therefore collected all that could be found on parchment, leather, palm leaves, shoulder-blades of

mutton, stones, and other materials, and with those suras which could be repeated from memory he completed the collection of Mohammed's suras in the Korân. Every word within the covers of that book was, and always has been, regarded by all Moslems as the veritable word of God, 'eternal and uncreate,' brought down from heaven by Gabriel and delivered to Mohammed. 'The whole of the contents of the Korân, from the sublimest doctrine down to the most trivial command abrogated perhaps a week or two after it was revealed; from the passage describing the ineffableness of God down to the passage authorizing Mohammed's marriage with the divorced wife of his adopted son—all is equally, in kind and in degree, inspired, eternal, and divine.' The word of God to man was, in fact, a book,—this book. This book was the word of God.

Mahomet.

Far away in the south-western part of Asia, lies a strange and peculiar country called Arabia. It is bounded on the north by Syria, on the east by the Persian Gulf, on the south by the Indian Ocean, and on the west by the Red Sea, and comprises more than a million of square miles, or about twelve times the area of Utah.

This vast region possesses a diversified landscape. In some places vast sandy deserts stretch away farther than the eye can reach; in others, immense piles of dark volcanic rock rear aloft their barren peaks, around whose base the dry, hot winds have drifted the sands of the desert for untold centuries. However, in the secluded valleys of the mountains, and along the base of the great mountain chains, may be found many fertile tracts, where, watered by pure and never-failing mountain streams, and warmed by the rays of a tropical sun, the earth produces in abundance nearly every kind of grain, vegetable, fruit, flower and aromatic shrub that can conduce to the happiness of man. Indeed, some portions are so wonderfully productive, that in ancient as well as modern times it has received the significant title of "Araby the blest."

Most of the inhabitants of this country are generally considered to be the descendants of Ishmael, the son of Abraham. Many of them lead a wild, nomadic life,

supported by their flocks and herds and the spontaneous productions of the soil, and retain among their laws and customs, many of the usages that prevailed in the primitive, patriarchal times of their great ancestor.

Others live in towns and cities and engage in commerce, either with foreign countries or with distant parts of their own land.

The usual method of transporting their merchandise is on the backs of camels, and sometimes several hundred or even a thousand of these animals, accompanied by their drivers, may be seen slowly wending their way across the desert, carrying with them the coffee of Mocha and spices of Muscat to the distant cities of Bagdad and Damascus.

As among the Jews the ruling priests were chosen from the tribe of Levi and family of Aaron, so, among the ancient Arabs, the guardians of the sacred things of their worship were chosen from the tribe of Koreish and family of Haschem.

Abd-Al-Mutallib was the ruling priest in Mecca, the sacred city of Arabia, at the time that his grandson, Mahomet, was born, which event occurred at Mecca, in the year 570 of the Christian era.

Of Mahomet's parents, but little is recorded, except that his father, Abdallah, was remarkable for his commanding presence and great personal beauty. He died when his future illustrious son was only two months old.

Amina, his mother, who is said to have been of Jewish descent, also died when Mahomet was only six years old.

The early life of Mahomet was spent in the house of his Uncle, Abou Taleb, who had become the principal guardian of the Ca-aba, or great temple, of ancient Arabian worship.

The ceremonies and devotions connected with this temple-worship may have given an early bias to Mahomet's mind, and inclined it to those speculations and ideas in which it afterwards became engrossed. His education in childhood seems to have been neglected; for he was not taught either to read or write. But he was a thoughtful child, quick to observe, prone to meditate on all that he had observed, and possessed of an imagination fertile, daring and expansive.

At the age of twelve years, Mahomet solicited the privilege of accompanying his uncle, Abou Taleb, to Syria, whither he was about to conduct a caravan. Their route lay through regions fertile in fables and traditions, which it is the delight of the Arabs to recount in the evening halts of the caravan.

With an attentive ear, the youthful Mahomet listened to those tales of enchantment and wonderful events which happened in days of old, and doubtless imbibed ideas that had a powerful influence on him in his after life. In this journey also he listened to the conversation of many of those exiles from the Christian sects, who, in fleeing from

persecution had taken refuge in the wilds of Northern Arabia. Thus he learned many facts concerning the Christian religion.

Having arrived at the city of Bozrah, which was situated on the confines of Syria, about seventy miles south of Damascus, Mahomet was entertained at a Nestorian convent. One of the monks named Bahira, was very much interested by the spirit of inquiry and intelligence which the youth manifested, especially on religious subjects, and gave him all possible information.

Mahomet returned to Mecca, his imagination teeming with the wild tales and traditions picked up in the desert, and his mind deeply impressed with the teachings he had received among the Nestorians.

In order that we may understand the nature of the teachings which Mahomet received on this and subsequent journeys to Syria, an enumeration of the leading dogmas of the jarring sects of oriental Christians will be necessary:

The most numerous of these sects were the Arians, so called from Arius, a great religious teacher of Alexandria. They claimed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, the Father; that His existence commenced at His advent in this world; that He was created for a special mission, but was subject to the influences of virtue and vice like common mortals.

The followers of Nestorius, the great bishop of Constantinople, were also very numerous; and Mahomet, in his subsequent journeys to Syria, frequently came in contact with them. They claimed that Christ had two distinct natures, human and divine; that Jesus was a man; that Mary was only His mother according to the flesh, and that it was an abomination to style her "Mary the mother of God," as was and still is the custom of the Catholic church.

Another sect was the Marianites, or worshipers of Mary. They regarded the trinity as consisting of God, the eternal Father, Mary, the eternal mother, and Christ, their Son.

The Valentinians were another sect, who taught that Jesus Christ was only a wise and virtuous mortal, selected by God to reform and instruct mankind. Their creed is still professed by some of the Unitarian sects of the present day.

The Nazarenes were a sect of Jewish Christians, who considered Christ as the promised Messiah, but conformed in all other respects to the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law.

Many other sects might be enumerated who took their names from learned and zealous leaders, and who were subdivided into various and opposing parties of fanatical enthusiasts.

A glance at these dissentions which convulsed society at this period is sufficient to acquit Mahomet of any charge of conscious blasphemy in the opinions he taught concerning the nature and mission of our Savior.

The principal doctrines taught by Mahomet were drawn from the writings of the Old and New Testaments. He recognized in all about three hundred prophets. This number included all the ancient worthies of the Old Testament, as well as the Savior and the apostles, evangelists and martyrs mentioned in the New. However, four persons were considered as greater prophets than the rest, and were reverenced as the founders of four distinct dispensations. These were Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Mahomet.

The book containing the writings and revelations of Mahomet is commonly called the Koran. However, Mahomet should not be held responsible for all that the Koran contains, as there is abundant evidence that it has been changed and corrupted in many places since his death.

Prayer, fasting and acts of charity are inculcated by it. Merchants were especially commanded to perform acts of charity, as they were the class who were most liable to the sins of deception and extortion. The creed which all were required to believe, was simply, "There is one God, and Mahomet is His prophet."

But little is known of Mahomet's history between his twelfth and twenty-fifth year. He seems to have been engaged principally in conducting caravans across the desert. He thereby gained much practical knowledge, and became known as a young man of ability and integrity, pleasing appearance, and engaging manners.

At the age of twenty-five, he became the steward or business agent of a certain wealthy widow, named Cadijah; and a few years later she married him and faithfully followed him till her death, through all the vicissitudes of his strange and eventful life.

When Mahomet, in his fortieth year, proclaimed himself the prophet of God, Cadijah replied, "I will be thy first believer." They knelt down in prayer together.

Twelve centuries have passed since then, and nine thousand millions of human beings have followed her example.

We are told that as Mahomet lay wrapped in his mantle, in the silent watches of the night, he heard a voice calling upon him. Uncovering his head, a flood of light burst upon him of such intolerable splendor that he swooned away.

On regaining his senses, he beheld an angel, who, approaching him from a distance, displayed a scroll, covered with written characters. "Read," said the angel.

"I know not how to read," replied Mahomet.

"Read," repeated the angel, "in the name of God, who has created all things."

Upon this, Mahomet instantly felt his understanding illumined, and read what was written. These words were afterwards promulgated in the Koran, which also contains many of the doctrines taught in the New Testament.

When he had finished reading, the heavenly messenger announced, "O, Mahomet, verily thou art a prophet of God, and I am His angel Gabriel."

Mahomet, we are told, came trembling and agitated to Cadijah in the morning, and told her what he had seen and heard. She saw everything with the eye of faith, and embraced those teachings with the devotion of an affectionate woman.

"Joyful tidings dost thou bring!" exclaimed she. "By Him in whose hand is the soul of Cadijah, I henceforth regard thee as the prophet of our nation. Rejoice! rejoice! Allah will not suffer thee to come to shame. Hast thou not been loving to thy kindred, kind to thy neighbors, charitable to the poor, hospitable to the stranger, faithful to thy word, and ever a defender of the truth?"

The announcement of Mahomet's message provoked bitter opposition among his kindred. Only one of them, his cousin Ali, became his disciple. Those who had known him from his infancy, who had seen him a boy about the streets of Mecca, and afterwards engaged in the ordinary concerns of life, scoffed at the idea of his assuming the

prophetic character. When he walked the streets he was subjected to jeers and insults. If he attempted to preach, his voice was drowned by discordant noises and ribald songs. As gradually his followers increased, so did the opposition in bitterness and intensity.

At length he was obliged to flee from his native city and take refuge in Medina, a city of north-western Arabia.

Space will not permit a recital of the numerous intrigues of his enemies, or his various successes. Suffice it to say that, in a few years he became the leader of a powerful, constantly-increasing and enthusiastic people.

The time had at length arrived when the wild, wandering and discordant tribes of Arabia were to be marshalled under one banner, united in one creed and animated by one cause; when a mighty genius had arisen, who should bring together those scattered remnants, inspire them with his own religious zeal and daring spirit, and send them forth an invincible host, to shake and overturn the empires of the earth.

Mahomet survived the most of his children, and died in the sixty-third year of his age.

In his last illness, he gave his followers three parting commands: "Expel all idolaters from Arabia; allow every believer equal privileges with yourselves; devote yourselves to prayer and the propagation of the faith."

When the hour of death approached he feared it not, but, gazing upwards with unmoving eyelids, he exclaimed,

"O, Allah! be it so, forever with the glorious associates in paradise."

Thus passed away the man who gave embodiment to a faith that is still adhered to by more than 130,000,000 of the human family; and who founded an empire that was the most extensive the world has ever seen.

In appearance, he was of the middle stature. His head was capacious, and well set on a neck that rose like a pillar from his ample chest. He had an oval face, dark eyes, long, wavy hair and a full beard. His deportment was calm and dignified, and he is said to have possessed a smile of captivating sweetness. His complexion was fairer than Arabs usually are, and in his enthusiastic moments there was a glow and radiance to his countenance. He was extremely cleanly in his person, abstemious in his diet, and simple and unaffected in his dress and manners. He seemed to have an intuitive knowledge of human nature, and an innate power to counsel, command, reprove and inspire his followers with his own ardent nature. Take him all in all, the race has seldom seen a teacher more kind, more noble or more sincere.

The Hand of Providence

by

J.H. Ward

The Saracenic Conquest.

After the death of Mahomet, his followers assumed the name of Saracens, by which title they were afterwards generally known. This term, it is said, is derived from two Arabic words which signify eastern, or oriental, and conquerors.

Scarcely was Mahomet buried, when it was found necessary to form a civil and political constitution and code of laws, by which his followers were to be governed. This government was called the Caliphate.

Mahometanism, even during the life of its founder, gave unmistakable indications of overpassing the bounds of Arabia.

A few years later it entered upon a system of conquest unparalleled in the history of the world.

One cause of this phenomenon is to be found in the moral and social condition of the world. The influence of religion had long before ceased. Christianity was completely paganized. Her popes were busy denouncing and excommunicating each other, in their rivalry for earthly power; or bribing royal females and courtesans to influence the decision of councils, that were supposed by the masses to speak with the voice of God. Her bishops no longer sought to feed their flocks with the bread of life. On the other hand they were concerned in assassinations,

poisonings, adulteries, riots, treason and civil war. The religious teachers of those days never raised their voices in the sacred cause of liberty, or spoke in defense of the outraged rights of man.

No wonder then that, in the midst of the wrangling of sects, and unintelligible jargon of Arians, Augustinians, Nestorians and Marianites, society stood in breathless awe, when it heard the terrible Arabian battle cry, "There is but one God, and Mahomet is His prophet!" enforced as it was by the tempest of Saracen armies. These warriors, armed with lances and cimeters, and mounted on fleet Arabian steeds, passed swiftly from city to city, and frequently found the masses of the people so crushed by tyranny, so worn out by wrangling and civil wars, that they welcomed the Saracens as deliverers.

Mahomet's life had been almost entirely occupied in the conquest or conversion of his native country. It is true, in the latter part of his career he felt himself strong enough to threaten Persia for the aid she had given his enemies; and he even declared war against the Roman Empire for the same reason. But failing health frustrated his designs. He had made no provision for the perpetuation of his own power. Hence, a struggle ensued before a successor was appointed. At length, Abou Beker, the father of his wife Ayesha, was selected. He was proclaimed the first Caliph, and immediately attacked both the Romans and the Persians.

The reknowned general, Khaled, commonly called by Saracen historians, "the sword of God," was despatched into Syria. His name struck terror into the hearts of the inhabitants. The fortified town of Bozrah fell into his hands without a struggle. This was the same town where fifty years previous the youthful Mahomet had been entertained at the Nestorian convent. Marching northward seventy miles, to Damascus, Khaled laid siege to the Syrian capital. A decisive battle took place on the plain of Aiznadin. The Roman army was overthrown and dispersed. A few days later Damascus surrendered to the Saracens.

Guarded on the right by the beautiful river Orontes, and on the left by the snow-clad peaks of Lebanon, they still continued their march northward. To resist their further progress, the Roman emperor, Heraclius, collected an army of one hundred and forty thousand men. A great battle took place on the plains of Yermuck. At the first onset the Saracens were repulsed; but driven back to the field by the heroism of their women, who also aided them, they ended the conflict by the complete overthrow of the Roman army.

The whole of Syria now fell into the hands of the Saracens.

They then turned south and laid siege to the city of Jerusalem. After a defense of four months the patriarch, Sophronius, appeared on the wall and asked the terms of

capitulation. It was stipulated that the surrender should take place in the presence of the Caliph himself. Accordingly, he came all the way from Medina for that purpose. At that time such were the customs among the Saracens, that it is said the ambassador found the Caliph Omar asleep under the shadow of a mosque. It is also said that he journeyed alone on a red camel, carrying with him a bag of dates for his own food and one of corn for his camel, a wooden dish and a leathern water bottle.

After receiving the surrender of the city, Omar returned to Medina as quietly as he had come.

Thus fell the Roman power in Syria and Palestine, after having ruled those countries nearly eight hundred years. Thus was transferred without tumult or outrage the religious capital of the professedly Christian world into the hands of the Caliph Omar. Thus, Jerusalem, so long considered the birthplace of Christianity, the scene of its most sacred and tragic memories, passed into the hands of the Mahometans. Considerably more than a thousand years have elapsed since then, and it is still under their dominion. The mosque of Omar now rears its lofty minarets where once stood the temple of Solomon.

Heraclius, the Roman emperor, struggled valiantly to retain his possessions. He plainly saw that the corruptions of Christianity were among the causes of Saracenic triumphs. He made a heroic attempt to rouse the clergy to their duties, but it was then too late. Heraclius himself was

obliged to seek safety in flight. From the deck of the little vessel that bore him homeward, he gazed intently on the receding hills, and in bitterness of anguish exclaimed, "Farewell, Syria, forever farewell!"

The remaining details of the Saracen conquest we need not here relate. The naming of their victories is sufficient to indicate the greatness of their triumphs.

The great cities of Tyre and Cæsarea were captured. With the cedars of Lebanon and sailors of Tyre they equipped a fleet that drove the Roman navy into the Hellespont. Thus they gained undisturbed control of the Mediterranean, and conquered or colonized the islands of Cyprus, Candia, Rhodes, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica and many others. A Saracen naval expedition even appeared before the walls of Rome, and after threatening the imperial city, carried away the altar of silver from St. Peter's church, and gathered other relics from the tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul.

One of the Saracen armies turned eastward, and on the battlefield of Cadesia the fate of Persia was decided. After the battle of Neha-vend the treasury and royal arms of Persia fell into the hands of the Saracens.

After this battle the eastern army divided into two divisions. One marched northward to the Caspian Sea and took possession of the neighboring countries; another, southward to Persepolis, from whence the king of Persia fled for his life across the dreary deserts of Khorassan. The

name of Saracen terrified the wild tribes of independent Tartary, and they hastened to pay tribute and accept the faith of their conquerors.

The emperor of China, in his palace at Peking, heard of their exploits, and sent ambassadors to them, craving their friendship. The kingdoms now included in Afghanistan and Beloochistan surrendered at their approach, and the Mahometan standard of the crescent waved on the banks of the Indus.

Meanwhile important events were transpiring in the west. A large proportion of the Egyptian people welcomed the Saracens. The Arabs of the desert loitered in the palaces of the ancient Pharaohs. Alexandria, aided by Roman troops, alone held out. After a siege of fourteen months it also fell, and with it Egypt and Abyssinia were added to the dominions of the Caliphs.

The most powerful religious empire that the world has ever seen had suddenly sprung into existence. It stretched from the Great Wall of China to the burning sands of Tripoli, and from the Caspian Sea on the north to Abyssinia on the south. Yet this was but little more than half the territory that it soon afterwards controlled. One of its armies advanced on Constantinople. It did not fall then, but afterwards became the capital of the Mahometan power in Europe. Another took possession of the whole north of Africa, and, having consolidated its power there, under the command of their general, Tarik,

they crossed the straits that separate Africa from Spain, and landing on the rocky cliff of Gib-el-Tarik, or mountain of Tarik (now called Gibraltar), unfurled their green banner with golden crescent for the first time on the soil of Europe.

Tarik was soon followed into Spain by his superior officer, the emir Musa. They took possession of the whole southern portion of Spain and Portugal, which in their own picturesque language, they named Andalusia, or the region of the evening.

It was soon found that the whole peninsula was ripe for revolution. The Jews comprised a large proportion of the Spanish people. They were, to a great extent, the cultivators of the soil, which pursuit well repaid their labors. They were then, as now, famous as merchants and money-lenders, and many of them held high positions in the government, while thousands of them were scattered in every city, town and village, as the physicians and teachers of the people.

Their wrongs had been accumulating for centuries. Bigotry, envy and avarice had conspired to point them out as objects of persecution. Laws were passed which were never intended to be executed. It was expected that they would purchase a remission of the penalties by pouring their hard-earned treasures into the lap of Rome. No doubt the Jews exulted as the tide of Saracen conquest swept onward. They did not deplore a change of masters

for those who would leave them in possession of civil and religious liberty.

Before long the whole Iberian peninsula fell into the hands of the Mahometans. Not content with this, they crossed the Pyrenees, and took possession of that portion of France that lies to the south of the river Loire. All Central France was overrun. Castles, churches and monasteries were despoiled. For a time they held undisturbed dominion. The empire of the Saracens was then at its greatest extent. It reached from the confines of China to the Atlantic ocean, and comprised within its limits forty degrees of latitude and nearly one hundred and twenty of longitude. In Western Europe alone it stretched in an unbroken line more than a thousand miles northward from the cliffs of Gibraltar. More than thirty-six thousand cities paid tribute to the successors of Mahomet in the city of Medina.

In attempting to extend their conquests northward the Saracens were met by an army under Charles Martel, king of France, A. D. 732. Between Tours and Poictiers a terrible battle was fought, which lasted seven days. The Franks and Goths lost so many that it was impossible to tell the number of the slain. But these losses were more than counterbalanced by the losses of the Saracens whose great general, Abderahman, was found among the slain. Their previous successes had filled them with pride. They looked with contempt upon their enemies. For example, when the Roman emperor, Nicephorous, had sent a

threatening letter to the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid, the latter replied, "In the name of the most merciful God, Haroun-al-Raschid, commander of the faithful, to Nicephorous, the Roman dog! I have read thy letter, thou son of an unbelieving mother! Thou shalt not hear my words; thou shalt behold my reply!" A few weeks later it was written in letters of blood on the plains of Phrygia.

Although the Saracen empire had reached the zenith of its power, in one sense Mahometanism had not reached its culmination. The day was to come, when under the name of Ottoman Turks, it would expel the descendants of the Cæsars from their capital, hold the classic land of Greece in subjection, and under the very walls of Vienna dispute the empire of Europe in the center of that continent; and in Africa extend its dogmas and faith across burning deserts and pestilential forests far south of the equinoctial line.

It is a mistaken idea that the progress of the Saracens depended on the sword alone. The causes of their success were many and various. One of these, the paganization of Christianity, has already been noticed. The long and desolating wars of the Romans had thrown the whole oriental and African trade into the hands of the Arabs. Hence a commercial interest and sympathy had grown up between these peoples. Another reason was the mildness of the Saracen government in comparison with that of the Romans. The only taxation was a single annual tribute, amounting to less than one-half the various taxes by the

Romans. Another feature was complete religious toleration except to idolaters. The only creed required was simply, "There is but one God, and Mahomet is His prophet." Still, another cause of Saracen success was the effective plan adopted for the consolidation of their power. In battle they were simply terrible, and the destruction of human life was in some instances without a parallel; yet the widows and children of their fallen foes were universally treated with kindness. As a consequence, the children became ardent disciples of Mahometanism, and the widows often married their former conquerors. This was all the more frequent as polygamy was an established custom. The children of these unions gloried in their descent from their conquering fathers.

No wonder then, that in a little more than a single generation Abderahman wrote to the Caliph that in North Africa and Andalusia all tribute must cease, as all the children born in those regions were Mahometans, and Arabic had become the language of the country.

But above all these causes, the careful student of history will perceive the hand of Providence. Though Christianity was paganized, and the priesthood and divine authority were taken from the earth, God had put forth His hand, and through agencies the most diverse was disciplining the minds of men for the reception of truth, and preparing a place and a people for the coming of the Son of Man.

Achievements of the Saracens.

The civilized world is dotted over with theological seminaries, the teachers in which are considered to be men well educated in the learning of ancient and modern times. The avowed purpose of these institutions is to teach the facts, philosophy and history of the so-called Christian religion, yet not a teacher in these institutions can be found who dares to assert the stupendous fact that from the time of the apostles to the ninth century science, literature and philosophy were well nigh extinct. During all this time, with the exception of Jewish and Saracen writers, scarcely a work can be found of sufficient merit to rescue the name of the author from oblivion. Let the skeptic answer this question: Why was it that when the voice of inspiration was hushed and the gospel and its ordinances taken from the earth, there fell upon it an intellectual stagnation, an invisible atmosphere of oppression, ready to crush down morally and physically whatever provoked its weight? Thus the dreary and weary centuries rolled on, until a nation, hitherto considered barbarous, yet of the seed of Abraham, and heirs of the promises made to Ishmael and Esau, aroused society from the hideous fanaticism, ignorance and superstition into which apostasy had plunged it.

If it be true that the Saracens burned the Alexandrian library, it must be considered that this was the act of an

uneducated general and the vengeance of the soldiery after a terrible siege, rather than the deliberate policy of the government. Within twenty-five years from the death of Mahomet the Caliphs had become famous for their patronage of learning. Ali, the fourth Caliph and son-in-law of Mahomet, used to say, "The world is sustained by four things only: the prayers of the good, the learning of the wise, the justice of the great, and the valor of the brave." This sentiment was echoed and re-echoed until it became an honored maxim in the minds of millions.

Under the influence of Jewish, Nestorian and Saracen teachers the manners of the Saracens became more polished and their thoughts more elevated. They made conquests in the realms of science, literature and the arts as quickly as in the provinces of the Roman empire.

For example, Almansor, who reigned as Caliph from A. D. 753 to 775, established the University of Bagdad, and endowed it with two hundred thousand pieces of gold, and an annual revenue of fifteen thousand dinars, equal in commercial value to one hundred and twenty thousand dollars of our money. He invited thither learned men from every land, irrespective of their religious opinions. By these men were founded celebrated schools of mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, medicine, law and languages.

His grand-son, Haroun-al-Raschid, ordered in A. D. 786, that a public school should be attached to every

mosque in his dominions. This was more than seven hundred years before the establishment of the famous parish schools of Scotland.

The Caliph-al-Mamun, in A. D. 813, founded the great medical college of Cairo, which required students to pass a rigid examination before receiving authority to enter on the practice of their profession. At this college we have the first account of dissecting human bodies for the purpose of ascertaining the nature and locality of diseases, and the first circulating library for students. These books were bound according to the modern form, which then began to be used among the Saracens in place of the ancient form of the scroll.

By the means just mentioned, the ancient sciences were greatly extended and new ones introduced. To the Saracens we are indebted for our present system of arithmetical notation. If, for example, we wish to multiply 1882 by 125 and then attempt it by the ancient method MDCCCLXXXII., multiplied by CXXV., we shall soon perceive the vast superiority of the Arabic system over that formerly in use. No wonder, then that under the ancient system those who were engaged in solving difficult mathematical problems were frequently styled "sweating calculators."

In this case as in many others the Arab has left his impress on this science. For instance, our word cipher, and kindred words, such as decipher, ciphering, etc., are

derived from the word *tsaphara*, or *ciphra,* the name for the 0 in the Arabic language.

In experimental sciences, they originated chemistry and discovered the nature and properties of sulphuric acid, nitric acid, alcohol and many other chemical agents. From their schools of medicine may be traced such words as julep, syrup, elixir, alchemy, etc. To them we are indebted for algebra, or universal arithmetic, and in astronomy they made such advances that many constellations and stars of the first magnitude still retain the Arabic names.

In geography, the Saracens made important discoveries. Hitherto mankind had been taught that the earth was a vast plain, surmounted by an immense vault commonly called the sky. They were the first to prove that the earth is a vast globe, or ball; and in order to determine its size, they first ascertained on the level shore of the Red sea the exact position of the North Star. Then traveling directly north until it had attained another degree of elevation, they measured the distance between these points, and multiplying the result by three hundred and sixty (the number of degrees in a circle), they found the earth to be nearly twenty-five thousand miles in circumference. So accurate were their observations and measurements that the best calculators of recent times differ from them less than one-third of a mile.

Five hundred years later the Roman pontiffs were excommunicating and torturing those who taught the rotundity of the earth. While Catholic monks were teaching, in all its absurdity, the flatness of the earth, and how it rested on a vast rock, and that rock on another and so on all the way down to the bottom (?), the Saracens were teaching geography from globes in their common schools. It cost a long struggle through several centuries, "with spiritual wickedness in high places," before the truth finally triumphed.

European historians have generally given great credit to Pope Gregory for the invention and adoption of the Gregorian calendar and a more accurate method of measuring the exact length of the civil year. Yet, Gregory only adopted what had been discovered and taught by Thebit-Ben-Corrah, the Saracen astronomer, more than five hundred years before, and what Gregory himself had learned in youth while attending a Saracen university.

The mariner's compass was well known to the Arabs, who probably brought it from China and introduced it to the nations of Europe. From this we may correctly infer that they were a maritime people. In fact, long before the time of Mahomet, Arabian merchants were acquainted with the Indies, and even China and the eastern coast of Africa as far south as Madagascar.

Alhazin, who wrote about A. D. 1080, made the great discovery of atmospheric refraction—that a ray of light

when it touches the atmosphere is bent from a straight line; and consequently we see the sun before it rises and after it sets, in the same manner that an object lying at the bottom of a bucket filled with water appears in quite a different position from that in which it really is. He was the first to give that beautiful and scientific explanation of twilight, viz., the refraction of light, which is still regarded by modern scientists as the true one. He even attempted to ascertain the height of the atmosphere, which he estimated to be about fifty-eight and a half miles. This philosopher also wrote a treatise on weights and measures, and introduced that excellent system of weighing by means of a small, movable weight attached to the longer arm of a lever, as in our modern scales or steelyards. The Arabian astronomer, Ebn-Junis, was the first who made use of the pendulum in the machinery of clocks for the accurate measurement of the hours.

In the golden age of the Saracen empire, there were colleges in every part of its vast dominions. So numerous were these institutions, that more than six thousand students received instructions in them annually. In the far east were the college and astronomical observatory of Samercand; while in the western province of Andalusia were the famous school and observatory of Giralda.

The first medical college established in Europe was that founded by the Saracens at Salerno, in Italy; the first famous school of mathematics and astronomy was that established by them at Seville, in Spain.

Among them, learning was not confined to the rich, but every class received its benefits. The teachers of their colleges were paid liberal salaries for their services, and an allowance was made for indigent scholars, so that the son of the mechanic could graduate from the same class as the heirs of the Caliphs.

At first glance it seems remarkable that the wild ferocity of the Arabs should so suddenly change into a passion for intellectual pursuits; yet it should not be forgotten that this ferocity was to a great extent caused by religious enthusiasm. Thus, when the General Akbah had conquered his way from Egypt to the Atlantic ocean, opposite the Canary Islands, he rode his horse into the sea and drew his sword, exclaiming, "Great Allah! if my course were not stopped by this sea, I would still go on to the unknown regions of the West, preaching the unity of thy holy name, and putting to the sword the rebellious nations who worship any other gods than thee."

Again, when we consider that a large majority of their teachers and philosophers were of the Jewish nation, we see a beautiful Providence in all this. The remnants of God's chosen people, though exiles and wanderers, despised and down-trodden by the Gentiles, were yet the instruments in God's hands for the execution of His purposes and the elevation of the race.

Surely there is a broader, higher, grander meaning in the promise given to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the

nations of the earth be blessed," than many are willing to admit! And this is all the more remarkable, that, at the very time when mankind so much needed instruction, should occur what Milman so aptly terms, "The golden age of Judaism." Not an age of royal pomp and political power that passed away with David and Solomon but an age of intellectual culture, scientific research and practical discovery.

Strange it would appear to the casual student, if upon further research he should find that all great religious teachers have been of Israelitish origin, as well as a large proportion of those who have achieved distinction in the arts and sciences. But it was in Spain, southern France and Sicily that the Saracens attained their greatest power and influence; for there they came in contact with the nations of western Europe, and so influenced European manners, customs and modes of thought that through them that influence has been transmitted to our times.

To the ingenuity of the Saracens we are indebted for the origin of many articles of clothing and personal comfort. Their religion taught them to be clean in person. They did not therefore clothe themselves, according to prevailing customs in that age, in an under-garment made from the skins of wild beasts—a garment which remained unwashed and unchanged until it dropped to pieces of itself, a loathsome mass of vermin, stench and rags. They taught us the use of that often-changed and often-washed

garment commonly called a shirt, which still is known among the ladies under its old Arabic name, *chemise.*

To them we are indebted for some of our most valuable fruits, such as the apricot and peach.

Remembering the cooling effects of water in their own hot climate, they spared no pains in constructing artificial lakes and fountains and streams for the irrigation of their gardens.

Andalusia became the paradise of the world. The capital was Cordova, which they greatly embellished as well as the rival cities Toledo, Seville and Granada. A person might walk for miles through their cities after nightfall by the light of their public lamps. Seven hundred years afterwards, not a single public lamp could be found in the city of London. The streets of these cities were solidly paved, through which rolled magnificent carriages, drawn by horses, the fame of which has descended to our times. Five hundred years later the sovereigns of Great Britain and Germany were still traveling in uncouth wagons, drawn by oxen, goaded on by pedestrian drivers.

The sidewalks of Cordova, Toledo, Seville and Granada were paved with flagstones; while at a corresponding period the inhabitant of London or Paris who ventured beyond his threshold on a rainy day sank ankle-deep in filth and mud. Their residences were frequently in the midst of orchards or embosomed in shady groves. They had cool and spacious porches for rest

in the heat of the day. Often these porches had roofs of stained glass, on which fell in soothing cadences the glittering pearl-drops of water from elevated fountains.

Their houses were usually built of brick or stone, and contained many apartments, such as sleeping rooms, baths, libraries, parlors and dining halls. In the best class of dwellings, the ceilings were frescoed and the walls covered with paintings, representing scenes of paradise, groves and fruits, lawns and fountains. Yet, delineations of the human form, either nude or partly so, were religiously forbidden, as it was considered that such representations were promotive of licentiousness.

Some of these apartments were furnished with musical instruments, where the young of both sexes were wont to join in mirth and festivity, and dancing to the music of the lute and mandolin. In others, the sedate and reflecting, could engage in scientific research or philosophical discussion. The dwellings of the rich were carpeted, and sometimes warmed by furnaces in winter and cooled in summer with perfumed air, brought by under-ground pipes from distant flower gardens. The use of wine was prohibited. The feasts of the Saracens were marked with sobriety, and furnished a pleasing contrast to the drunken revelries of their northern neighbors.

The enchanting moonlight evenings of Andalusia were frequently spent by the devout in sequestered gardens, consoling themselves for the disappointments of

this life by the hope of immortality, and reconciling themselves to their daily toil by the expectation of the joys of paradise, where flowers never fade nor fruits decay, where sickness, and sorrow, and death are known no more.

Under Saracen government, religious persecution was unknown. Students from Great Britain, Ireland, France and Germany came to study at Saracen universities. There, among distinguished characters, whose names and influence have descended to our times, was Frederick, afterwards Frederick II., king of Italy; Gerbert, afterwards famous as Pope Sylvester II.; Peter the Venerable, Abelard, the poet, and Arnold of Brescia.

No wonder then that the Saracens looked with contempt upon the barbarism of the native races of Europe, who could scarcely be said to have emerged from the savage state—unclean in person, benighted in mind, inhabiting huts in which it was a mark of wealth if there were bulrushes on the floor and straw mats against the wall; subsisting on barley, beans, cabbages, herbs and even the bark of trees; clothed in rudely-tanned skins of wild animals, which were famous indeed for durability, but not very conducive to personal cleanliness.

But the arts, sciences and general culture were not confined to the Saracen men alone. Among the women there were many who, like Valada, Ayesha, Labana and Algasania, achieved a national reputation. Some of these

were daughters of Caliphs, who considered it not beneath their dignity to devote their lives to science and the elevation of their sex. Where shall we find their equals at that time in so-called Christian countries? Albucasis, a celebrated physician of Cordova, in his medical works, makes mention of several female physicians, and recommends the employment of such in certain cases. No doubt the condition of women was superior and their duties and position better understood among polygamous Saracens than in monogamous Christendom.

The foregoing will indicate to some extent the condition of Saracen society in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Shall we compare it with the contemporary barbarism of the other portions of Europe?

Were we to pursue this subject further it would not be difficult to show that Venice owed her commercial greatness to Saracen fleets and Jewish merchants; that Marco Polo only traveled over countries already well delineated on maps, and well described by Abulfeda and other Arabian geographers; that Columbus himself first received scientific proof of the rotundity of the earth while corresponding with Torricelli, the great Florentine astronomer, who in turn had received his education at the Saracen university of Seville, and modelled his globes, maps and charts from those in its possession.

The careful student of history must deplore the attempts made by many historians to ignore our

indebtedness to the Saracens, who in the providence of God have left their impress on the religions, arts and sciences of the world. Surely prejudice founded on national conceit and sectarian bigotry cannot last forever.

Jerusalem and The Crusades

by

Estelle Blyth

Jerusalem and the Crusades
The City and the Land

"Those holy fields
Over whose acres walked those blessed Feet,
Which, fourteen hundred years ago, were nailed
For our advantage on the bitter Cross."

Shakespeare.

Far away from England, in the small, narrow land of Palestine, which is part of the Turkish Empire, there is an ancient walled-in city called Jerusalem. Of course we all know about Jerusalem, because we have read about it in the Bible; but then the Bible does not bring us very far down in the history of the world, and the story of Jerusalem does not end with the Bible story by any means. Some of the strangest and most exciting chapters of her history are those that have happened afterwards; and this book is about one of those periods—perhaps one of the most wonderful of them all.

But before we can begin to build our story, we must have a little patience to gather first all the stones we want, so that they lie ready to our hand; and the first thing to do is to get some idea of how the Holy Land lies with regard to the rest of the world. We know that Palestine is part of the peninsula of Arabia, a narrow strip lying at the top of the bell-shaped peninsula, and stretching down towards Egypt, which is, of course, in Africa. The coast-line is

washed by the Mediterranean, and if you run your finger along that blue sea, past Italy, through the Straits of Gibraltar, and up north, leaving Spain and France on your right, to the British Isles, you will see one way of coming to Palestine.

The Holy Land itself is like a road, long and narrow, and that is one reason that, while it has been fairly easy to conquer Palestine, it has been so very hard to keep it. It has long chains of mountains, none of the peaks being very high except Hermon, which wears a beautiful, sparkling crown of snow, and on whose lower slopes nice brown bears are hunted still. Palestine is a very beautiful land indeed, the skies are so blue, and the flowers in spring are so many and so bright. Though it is covered with rocks and stones, the rich red earth between is very good, so that corn and vines and flowers and fruit and vegetables of many kinds grow quite easily, and are generally much larger than in England, where the sun is not always to be seen. It is a very hot land, too, and in some parts of it the heat in summer is so great that the people can hardly bear it; that is in the low-lying places like Jericho and Tiberias. But up in the mountains and highlands, or by the sea, it is never too hot to be borne. From Christmas time to the middle of February it is generally very cold, with sharp, cutting winds and heavy rain; and snow falls, but not every year. Then from February onwards it grows brighter and warmer every day, until in the summer months—May, June, July, and August, and so on—it is really very hot

indeed, and the stone walls become so hot on the outside that they feel quite burning under your hand if you touch them. The air is very clear, and the stars burn like great lamps at night, even when there is a moon; and as for the moon, when it is full the light is so strong that you can read by it. There are no damp, cold fogs. After a few hours of rain, the sun will burst through the angry clouds, turning the silver-green olives into fairy trees hung in diamonds fallen straight out of the rainbow. And there is nothing more lovely than a snowy day, when the ground is all white, with a cloudless blue sky overhead, and sunshine everywhere. There is not a single day, summer or winter, on which the sun does not shine for at least a part of it. In every way it is a most lovely land—there are no words to say how beautiful.

There is not much water in Palestine in the way of rivers and lakes, but there are many springs; and the rain-water is stored up in great, deep cisterns cut out of the rock. Sometimes we use the old cisterns that the Romans made, hundreds of years ago, when they ruled in Palestine: that was long before the Crusaders' days, of course.

In the days of the Crusaders there were many more forests and many more trees than there are now, and wild beasts were common. There are still some—bears, leopards, wolves, jackals, cheetahs, hyenas, and foxes, and so on—but they are not really common. There are also some poisonous snakes, and insects that sting, such as

scorpions and centipedes; but the land was so much better covered in the old days that all these things were far more common, and the Crusaders often suffered a good deal from their poisonous stings, not knowing what they were.

Jerusalem itself, the Holy City for whose possession the Crusaders and Saracens fought so fiercely for so many years, is a little walled-in city. It stands upon hills, with valleys running round it 0n three sides like a very deep moat, and a sharp little valley cuts right through the City from north to south, so that one end of it is much higher than the other. It is surrounded by low, gently-rising hills on all sides, the Mount of Olives being on the due east. In the easternmost corner of the city is the Dome of the Rock, which is now the Mosque (or place of worship) of the Moslems, who look upon it as one of their greatest treasures. The Rock is the threshing-floor that David bought from Ornan the Jebusite, and on which he offered a sacrifice after the plague was stayed in Jerusalem; and over it Solomon, great David's son, built his wonderful Temple afterwards, and put the Altar of Sacrifice on the Rock. You can still see the holes in the Rock which were made for the feet of the Altar to rest in.

When the Crusaders had Jerusalem, the great Temple Church of the Knights Templars stood here, on this ground, and three of the murderers of Thomas à Becket are buried here, one of them being that Reginald Fitz-Urse who was the chief, and who came to Jerusalem afterwards as a pilgrim because he was so sorry for his wicked deed.

In the middle of the City is a wonderful church—the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which is built over the place which many people have believed for centuries to be the real Tomb of Christ. It was to take this Holy Sepulchre that the Crusaders came, and came again, because they thought that no one ought to have it except Christians. Just outside the great door, on the right hand as you go in, is buried an English Crusader, Sir Philip d'Aubigny; his name can still be read on the flat stone covering his grave, though the letters are getting a little faint under the tread of the many feet that pass over it. Sir Philip d'Aubigny was one of the Barons who signed Magna Charta, and he suffered for it at the hands of the angry King John afterwards. Later on he was for a time tutor to the little King, Henry III, and when he was no longer wanted there, he became a Crusader, and spent fourteen years in the Holy Land, where at last he died, and where he now lies buried.

On the higher ground at the west of the City is the Citadel, called also the Tower of David; and near it is the Upper Room where Christ ate the Last Supper with His disciples, and where, after His Resurrection, the Holy Spirit came upon the twelve Apostles. Under this room is the spot where King David is buried, and a story is still told in Jerusalem of his grave which the Crusaders were told in their day, and which they thoroughly believed. It is that David keeps watch over his own tomb, in which is buried also all his treasure, and if anyone tries to break in to steal,

or even to look, such a strong and awful wind beats upon him that he is driven back, terrified almost to death. And David, an old man with long white beard and calm but terrible eyes, sits there in his crown, guarding his treasure until it is wanted not for any greedy person or nation, but for the good of Jerusalem herself.

And now I shall not have to keep you any longer from the beginning of our story—for a story it is, all about kings, and knights, and ladies, of sieges and battles, and brave deeds, of towns lost and won—just like any old tale or romance, only much better because it is quite true. Perhaps this will show you (if you have not already found it out for yourself), that history is as good as any tale of romance or faery that ever was written. You will see, too, the many links between our own England with that lovely, far-off land where Christ our Lord once dwelt.

The Pilgrims

"With naked foot and sackcloth vest,
And arms enfolded on his breast,
Did every pilgrim go."

Scott.

In the eleventh century after Christ, Jerusalem was in the hands of Mohammedan rulers, to whom also it was a Holy City. There were Christians living in the City, of course, and they had churches and houses, but they had no power at all, and were often badly treated. These Mohammedan governors of Jerusalem and of Palestine were Arabs at one time; that is to say, they were the natives of Arabia, whose ancestors had been the first to follow the Prophet Mohammed, after whom they were called Mohammedans: the word Moslem means the same thing. The Arabs were great warriors, and at first they conquered wherever they went, not only in Syria, but in Spain, in North Africa, and in China, India, and Persia. They were a fine people, generous and not unjust to the Christians over whom they ruled; they were brave, too, and learned in many things. They were great law-givers, men of science, poets, geographers, doctors, astronomers, and builders. Some of the most beautiful buildings in the world were the work of their clever hands; and the names they gave to some of the stars have never been changed. The Arabs sometimes called themselves Sharkeyan, or

Men of the East; but we have changed the name into Saracens, which means exactly the same thing. We must remember this word, for we shall come across it over and over again as we get further into our story.

About two hundred years before the First Crusade there were two great rulers in the world, one in the East and one in the West. Charlemagne in the West ruled over nearly the whole of Europe, and he would have liked to add in Constantinople also, which was part of the great Greek Empire, but he did not succeed in getting so far east. In the East the ruler was that great Haroun al Rasheed, the Khalif of Bagdad, whose name we know so well because he was the Khalif of the *Arabian Nights*. His great kingdom stretched from the borders of India right down to Egypt. He traded with China and with Europe, the chief traders being the Jews of Palestine, who took their rich robes and spices to Spain, while the Venetians and the Genoese in their turn carried their treasures east. Haroun al Rasheed encouraged all kinds of learning in his kingdom, and he loved the companionship of wise and clever men; he was also brave and just and generous, so that his reign was really a Golden Age for all his great dominions. He sent the keys of Jerusalem to Charlemagne, and invited him to come and rebuild the Christian Churches in Palestine (798), but Charlemagne, though he would have dearly loved to do so, could not leave his own kingdom. These two great men, like a balance, kept the peace of East and West by their

friendship for each other: but Haroun al Rasheed died in 809 and Charlemagne in 814, and with their deaths this peace was broken. Charlemagne's people buried him sitting upright in his chair, the Book of the Gospels in his hand, just as Patriarchs are buried still in the East, because they could not bear to lay him down as if his work were done and he had quite gone away from them in an unending sleep.

With the passing of years the Arabs became weaker, and began to lose their hold of the lands they had taken. A young and strong people were rising up, who pushed the Arabs back and back in all directions. These conquerors of the Arabs were a Tartar tribe from the north of Europe, called Turcomans or Turks; they were also Moslems. They were brave fighters as the Arabs were, but they were also a cruel, wild, and restless people. They did not care at all for what are called the gentle arts, architecture, painting, poetry, and music, because they were such a restless race, always wanting to be up and doing. They were a people who lived in tents, which they could move easily from place to place, and so of course they did not care for building beautiful houses, and they were far too fond of fighting to care for any quieter pursuits. Neither did learning or trade please them. They cared only for what they could get by conquest, and they despised any life but that of fighting. The Turks overcame the Arab Saracens in Syria, and having gained many battles in Asia Minor, they invaded the Greek Empire. Then they began

to draw very near indeed to the borders of the Christian lands in the East, and so to Europe itself. Even the sea did not stop them, for Turkish pirates terrified the coasts of the Mediterranean, and ravaged Asia. And in 1065 they captured Jerusalem from the Egyptian Saracens, who held it at the time.

The new governors of Jerusalem were not as just and kind as the late rulers had been, on the whole; they oppressed the Christians who lived under them, and they were especially unkind to the pilgrims.

Who were the pilgrims?

From all parts of the world people came to visit the holy places in and near Jerusalem, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, believed to be the place where Christ's Tomb was, the Church built over the Manger at Bethlehem, where He was born, the Mount of Olives from which He ascended to heaven, and many more besides these, all very sacred because of their connection with Him, and also with the patriarchs and kings and prophets of old. These travellers were called pilgrims (the word means travellers through strange lands), and they came in a long, never-ending stream to visit the Holy Land, but especially Jerusalem. They were a great mixture, and many a strange life-story was hidden under the rough pilgrim dress. For men of all countries and of all classes met here in a common fellowship of purpose. Rich men who had left all that this world could give; strong men coming to pray for

the life of wife or child, dearer to them than their own; earnest priests burning with their desire to see the places Christ had seen; brave Knights, perhaps seeking forgiveness for past wrongs done; monks; poor pilgrims who had begged their way out—all these, and many more, pressed eastwards, each with his own burden of sin or sorrow or care to lay down in the Holy City. It was a long and hard journey they had to take, if by sea, in little rocking ships which were the mere toys of the great waters they had to cross, sailing ever in fear of the cruel pirates or sea-robbers, who roamed the seas like wolves in search of prey. Or if they went across the continent it was no more easy or safe, for the parts we now call Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Balkan States, were then for the most part just wild tracts of land, dark with forests, and torn by great rushing rivers and waterfalls, while the mountains were peopled by fierce, savage men, every bit as cruel and as pitiless as the wild beasts who roared through the great forests.

Pilgrims who had made the journey brought back the most wonderful stories of the dangers and adventures they had passed through. They always tried to travel only during the summer months, "for in November, December, and January no vessel can cross the sea because of storms." "Such storms, too!" said the pilgrims, in which there was "no stone or sand at the bottom of the sea that was not moved when the sea raged and raved thus." Then there were perils from great fish, especially

one called *Troya Marina*, which would attack small ships, and even big ones if it were very hungry. This monster could sometimes be sent away after it had been well fed with bread, or it might even be frightened off by "a man's angry and terrible face." But if it saw that you were afraid, it just snapped you up in a moment. There was also a fish called a melar, which drove its long, sharp tooth into a ship from below, and shook it as if it had run upon a rock; and a "very truthful sailor" said that there were fish in the sea a mile long. The wonderful stories which the pilgrims told were believed by every one, and no doubt they frightened a good many people from taking such a terrible journey. But even without these large and hungry and bad-tempered fish, the pirates and the storms were enough to face, so that it really needed plenty of courage and perseverance to be a pilgrim.

And even when they reached Jerusalem, the pilgrims' troubles were not over; for the Saracen governors would not allow any one to enter unless he paid the sum of thirty bezants first, which was a very large sum of money in those days. If a pilgrim could pay, he was allowed to enter by a small gate on the east side of the City called St. Lazarus's Postern (a postern is a small gate), from which he went straight to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, all round which was the Christian quarter. The Saracens would not let the pilgrims enter by any of the chief gates of the City, nor pass through the crowded markets where its business was carried on, for they did not want the pilgrims, who

were foreigners, to see and know too much of what was going on in the Holy City.

Now many of the pilgrims had spent all their money on the long journey; others, always poor, had begged their way from place to place. These now stood without the walls, and had nothing to give for their entrance. How cruelly hard for them to have come all this way, through so many dangers, so many hardships, and all for nothing! They could not get in. Sometimes a pilgrim-knight, or a priest from within the city, filled with pity for their trouble, would pay the thirty bezants, and so some poor pilgrim would get in after all; but, of course, there were many and many who found no one to pay for them, and these unfortunate people had no choice but to stay outside, or even sadly to turn homewards again. It sometimes happened that pilgrims died there, outside the walls, and the bodies of these were thrown out to the jackals, or else carelessly buried in a big common grave in a place called the Potter's Field. The pilgrims liked to die in Jerusalem, and they did not seem to mind the wretched way in which their bodies might be treated afterwards. Many of them used to pray that they might die when they had seen the holy places. "Thou Who hast died for us," they prayed, "and Who art buried in this sacred place, take pity on our misery, and take us from this vale of tears." There is a nice story told of one of the Dukes of Normandy, the father of William the Conqueror, who came to Jerusalem as a pilgrim. He was so sorry for the pilgrims whom he saw

waiting outside the walls, and who could not pay to get in, that he gave a large sum of money to the Turkish governor to allow some of them to enter. The Turkish governor was just as generous on his part, for he returned the money to the Duke, and allowed the pilgrims to enter free.

Of course the pilgrims' tales were not all full of horrors and adventures, or very few indeed who heard them would have had the courage or the wish to take the same journey. They described as well the wonderful cities they had seen on the way, the riches of the East, the holy places, and the beauty of the Holy Land itself. "Now you must know that, as a matter of fact, the whole of the Holy Land was, and is at this day, the best of all lands," wrote a monk who lived upon Mount Zion; and the pilgrims would tell, as this monk did, of the "wild boars, roes, harts, partridges, and quails which were so plentiful that it was a wonder to see them...the lions and bears, and different wild beasts, the camels and the dromedaries, stags, gazelles, and buffaloes. In short, there are all the good things in the world, and the land flows with milk and honey." There was this side of the picture to tempt others out to Palestine, as well as the terrible tales of the sufferings the pilgrims had to undergo, and with which they tried to rouse the people of Europe to avenge them, and to put a stop to the many cruel things that were done in Palestine.

But Europe was much too busy with its own wars and other affairs, and for a long time it paid no attention to these complaints. It seemed as if things would go on for

ever like this, only getting worse, for no one would listen or help, and the pilgrims, as we have seen, were quite unable to help themselves. But it is always darkest before dawn, and already the clouds were beginning to break, and the light of coming help to shine through.

The First Crusade, 1096-1099

"The burning eye, the swarthy beard,
The glittering arms with gems inlaid,
The starry swords the Paynims feared,
The glory of the first crusade."

John Davidson.

"These were the great who triumphed easily,
In thought and glance, in word and deed
supreme."

John Davidson.

Among the pilgrims who returned to tell the story of his trials and hardships and adventures was one, Peter the Hermit, whose great work it was to make Europe listen to the cry of Jerusalem.

Peter was a Frenchman, of a noble family of Picardy, and had been a Knight, but because he had done some bad deed, he put off his armour and became a hermit. He was a small, mean-looking man, but he had keen, wonderful eyes, and a great gift of words, so that men could not help listening to him. Peter went to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage in the year 1093. It seemed to him that there was nothing but trouble everywhere—trouble amongst the Christians who lived in Jerusalem, and trouble also for the men who were his fellow-pilgrims; and he learnt a good deal more from the aged Patriarch of Jerusalem, Simeon. The Patriarch told him all of the wrongs done to the

Christians, and their sufferings and fears, and how they were not able to help themselves. Simeon, who was old and very sad, wept much as he told Peter all these things. "It may be," he said, "that when the cup of our sufferings is full, God will move the hearts of our fellow-Christians in the West to help His Holy City."

"Write," said Peter, burning with indignation at what he heard, "write to the Kings of the West! Tell them these things. I myself will take the letters, and will pray the people of Europe to draw sword and free Jerusalem!"

The stories he heard, and the things he saw, weighed upon Peter the Hermit's mind, and gave him no rest by day or night. And while he was praying at the shrines and altars and visiting the holy places, he saw visions of saints and angels, and heard voices calling to him out of heaven, which told him that he was chosen to be the deliverer of his fellow-Christians at Jerusalem. Once, as he was praying at the Holy Sepulchre itself, he thought he heard the voice of Christ Himself say, "Arise, Peter, hasten to announce the sorrows of My people. It is time that My servants were helped, and My holy places delivered."

Straightway Peter arose: the time for prayer was past, the time for work had come. Was he not called to this great task? Strong in this belief Peter made haste back to Europe, where he went first to Rome to beg for the Pope's support. The Pope listened to him, and promised to help him. He gave Peter his blessing, and said that he would

help in every way he could the work which had been given to Peter by the Lord Himself.

Thus encouraged, Peter started to go through Europe, preaching a holy war. He preached all through Germany, France, and Belgium, but not in Spain. The reason for this was that the Saracens had a strong kingdom in Spain, and the Spanish Christians had enough fighting to do at home to protect themselves from these Saracens, or Moors as they were called, without travelling all the way to Palestine to fight them there. Peter preached boldly and fervently. His words came straight from a heart on fire with the earnestness of his faith. He told of the perils of the journey, the sufferings of the pilgrims when they arrived at Jerusalem, and the hardships of the daily life of the Christian dwellers in the City. He also described the Holy Land, the beautiful City of Jerusalem, the wonders of the holy places, the Sepulchre of the Lord Christ. "Is it right," cried Peter, "that those blessed places which have been made holy by Christ's own Presence—on which the very Feet of Christ stood—should belong to the enemies of Christ?" (For so, in their narrowness and hate, the Christians of that day called all who were not Christians.) "Up, brothers," he cried, "and win back the City of the Lord for Himself!"

With a mighty shout the listening crowds replied, "Dieu le veult!"—(God wills it).

In every city, town, and village where he preached, hundreds of people swore to follow Peter to this holy war. And to each one who made this promise a red cross was given, to be worn on the shoulder; this was called taking the cross, and from this the wearers came to be called Crusaders, or soldiers of the Cross. At first these crosses were all red, and the English kept theirs always so. But Richard I himself used a white one in the Third Crusade, and in the later Crusades the soldiers of different nations wore their crosses in different colours to mark them out. The White Ensign, which is the naval flag of England to-day, is just the red cross of the early Crusades on the white ground, as they wore it on a white over-garment, called a surcoat.

And now the Knights of Europe came forward and took counsel together, and many of them made up their minds to join the Crusade also. They, too, were stirred to the heart by the Hermit's preaching, and longed to strike a good blow for the Sepulchre of Christ. But they could see further than Peter the Hermit and his excited followers, and they knew well the great danger that Europe was in. For the fierce pirates on the Mediterranean coasts were slowly drawing nearer and threatening Europe; while if Constantinople fell, and with it the Greek Empire, the chief defence of Europe against the wild tribes of the East would be gone. Likewise men and good soldiers, the Knights began steadily to prepare for the great task which they had taken upon them.

Peter the Hermit, however, became impatient. He was longing to be afoot and away; he saw no use in all these preparations; he expected miracles to be worked for them in the coming warfare. He refused to wait till the great army was ready, and started off himself, leading a strange crowd of half-armed peasants, men and women of all ages, who had gathered round him as he preached in the different countries of Europe. A German knight, called Walter the Penniless, went with him as joint commander.

In this mad way did Peter the Hermit start on his crusade.

Eager and ready were the unfortunate crowds who followed him, but they were rough, ignorant people, who had no idea what lay before them—the length of the journey, its perils, its hardships. Every walled city they came to they would cry out that here was Jerusalem already. The fate of these poor peasants was only to be expected; without proper food, without arms, they starved, and fell sick, and died in numbers every day. The wild mountain tribes in the heart of Europe swept down upon them as they trudged along, and killed them like sheep, robbing their few poor valuables as they lay dying or dead. There was no sort of order or discipline amongst the crowd. Peter, for all his fiery words, was no commander of men, and his rough and ignorant followers simply would not obey him. Of all the thousands who had set out in such glad hope, Peter himself was the only one who got even so far as Constantinople. Here, in remorse

and shame, he had to wait long for the coming of the regular army.

The Knights of Europe were following with a large and well-armed force. They had the Pope's blessing, and his promise of heaven to all who fell in this most holy war. The chief leader was Godfrey de Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine, a Belgian Knight. Brave yet gentle, pure of heart, and true in all his dealings, wise yet very humble, the name of Godfrey shines with a clear and steady light in the dark ages in which he lived. He was the first soldier of his day, and had won for himself a great name while he was quite a youth by killing with his own hand the Emperor Rudolph of Suabia, the rival of the Emperor Henry IV, whose standard-bearer Godfrey then was. Again, he had been the first to scale the walls of Rome at its capture by the Emperor Henry—as he was the first to enter the City of Jerusalem later on. No other Crusader has left so famous a name in arms as Godfrey, except our English Richard. Good man and true soldier, he holds the admiration and honour of us all to-day.

With Godfrey were other Knights, men also famous in their different ways. There was Hugh, Count of Vermandois, a brother of the King of France; and another French Knight, Raymond, Count of Toulouse, surnamed the Wise; and Stephen, Count of Blois, who had married Adela of England, the daughter of William the Conqueror, and was the father of Stephen, who was afterwards King; Tancred of Sicily, called the Perfect Knight, about whom

you will read later on in Tasso's great poem "Jerusalem Delivered"; and Boemond the Cunning (or Wise), Prince of Tarentum, also from Sicily, who was the tallest man in the army. We must remember their names, for we shall meet with them often enough as we go on. And there was Robert, Duke of Normandy, the generous, unlucky, shiftless elder son of William the Conqueror; and Edgar the Atheling, who was the last of the old Saxon royal line of England: these two were fellow-soldiers of the Cross, though sworn foes each of the other's House at home. Many Bishops and other men of note also took the Cross; but of the Kings of Europe not one. There was good reason for this. The Kings of France and Germany were quarrelling with the Pope, who had excommunicated them; this means that the Pope would not allow them to go to any services until they were at peace with himself again, and if they died while they were still excommunicated, no priest would dare to bury them for fear of the Pope's curse. William Rufus of England was a bad and selfish man, who believed in nothing, and cared for nothing but himself and his own ends. Both he and the French King were very well pleased to send each a brother to the Holy War, instead of taking that long, hard journey themselves.

During the six months of preparation no work of any kind was done in Europe, save the forging of weapons and armour. Knights sold their lands at half their value to raise money for men, arms, and horses. Poor men left their

work and their shops. The churches were crowded day and night with Crusaders, confessing their sins, and praying for God's blessing on the great adventure. No bad deeds were done—no robberies, no murders—during all those six months of preparation, and when we think what lawless and bloodthirsty days those were, we can understand a little better how real was the feeling that stirred the hearts and changed the lives of these men of the First Crusade. In none of the later Crusades was there this earnestness and purity and faith.

So passed the winter of 1095-96.

The First Crusade started in the spring of 1096. It was drawn from nineteen different nations. Men who knew not each other's language marched cheerfully side by side, the one great end in view; there were ten thousand Knights and seventy thousand men-at-arms. They went overland through Germany, Hungary, Servia, Bulgaria, and the Greek Empire, choosing the longer way by land because they were not sure of the sea route. At Constantinople the Greek Emperor, Alexius Comnenus, refused to ferry the Crusaders over the Hellespont, unless they first swore fealty to him for the lands they were going to win. Some of the Knights did actually consent to this impertinent request, and Boemond of Sicily was the chief of these; he did it for love of those wonderful treasures which he saw in the Treasure Chamber of Alexius, who had slily ordered the door to be left a little open as Boemond was passing by, that he might see and be

tempted. But Godfrey and the nobler ones all refused. The army spent the winter at Constantinople, and the men from the colder northern lands were full of wonder at the rich luxurious life led by the pleasure-loving Greeks. Some sort of agreement was made at last between Godfrey and the Emperor, that the latter should help the Crusaders with guides and extra troops for the war. Alexius solemnly promised all this, but in the end he gave neither guides nor soldiers. Perhaps his childish pride was satisfied by having teased an empty form of homage out of some of the Crusaders, and he wanted nothing more to do with them. As he had broken his part of the agreement, the Crusaders did not think themselves bound to keep theirs, and so the matter ended.

At Nicea, in Asia Minor—the wonderful city with three hundred and seventy towers and three mighty gates—the Crusaders had their first meeting with the Saracens; they defeated them after long and severe fighting, and took the town (June 24, 1097). After Nicea came a long and weary march, through such great heat that the war-horses failed and gave out, and the falcons dropped dead from the wrists of their masters. But at last they came before Antioch; and this great city fell before the Crusaders' eager attack, as Nicea had fallen, but only after a long and terrible siege, and with the loss of more men than the little Christian army could well afford. If you look at Antioch on the map you will see that from its position it is one of the gates into Syria, and it was really

necessary that the Christians should hold it, so that though all this fighting on the way to Jerusalem delayed the Crusaders very much, and cost them many lives that would be wanted badly later on, they were only doing what they had to do if they meant to take and keep the Holy City.

Before Antioch was taken, the Crusaders received a frantic appeal from Thores, Prince of Edessa, who sent Christian Armenian messengers to ask their help against the Turks, who were pressing upon him and his people, from Mosul. Godfrey saw that it would be a great help to the Christians to hold Edessa, as that would enable them to keep off the wild Turkish hordes. So he sent his brother Baldwin with a small force—all that could be spared—to take and hold Edessa, which he did with great success. Antioch was a great city, strong and well defended; and it seemed as if it could never be taken, with its thick walls, and citadel standing high up on the south, from whence it overlooked everything. It had many great gates, one called after St. George, and another after St. Paul; while there were also the Dog Gate and the Iron Gate, each one of which was strongly defended. Boemond and Tancred, the two Knights of Sicily, lay before the Gate of St. Paul, and the rest of the army was divided into camps, so that the whole city was encircled by the Christian host. When the Crusaders arrived it was late in the autumn, and for a time all went well, for their spirit was high after the taking of Edessa, and there was plenty of food to be gathered in the

rich country all around. But when the winter closed in upon them, and food gave out, so that the men ate thankfully roots, and dead dogs, and horses, and, in fact, anything they could find, while the bitter storms of rain and hail and snow froze their hands to their swords, and their hearts within them—then, indeed, it was a very different thing. Godfrey was wounded, and his men fell into all kinds of bad ways, so that some had even to be put to death in order to frighten others from doing bad deeds. Some of the Knights actually deserted; and once Peter the Hermit, in a fit of madness and despair, ran away, and had to be searched for and brought back. But still the Crusaders held on; and when Godfrey was about again things became better.

The coming of spring brought better weather, and with it fresh hope to the Crusaders; but it brought also the ill news that a large Saracen force was advancing to the relief of Antioch. By the end of May 1098 this army was only seven days' march from the city, and the Princes of the Crusade prepared themselves for a tremendous struggle.

Now there was an Armenian called Firuz, the son of an armourer in Antioch, who had charge of three towers on the south-west of the city. Firuz had become a Moslem, but when he saw the brave way in which the Christians were fighting, he felt stirred to help the men of his old faith. He went secretly to the Crusaders, and offered to let them into the city by night. Godfrey and the other Princes

had hoped all along to take Antioch openly and gallantly, by force of arms; but now, with this great new army so close at hand, they dared delay no longer, and they agreed with Firuz for a certain night and hour, though this secret way of doing things was very unwelcome to them all.

On the night of June 2, 1098, Boemond led a party to the foot of the tower agreed upon. Firuz was ready on his side, and a rope-ladder was quickly fixed to the wall. Up went Boemond, the first by right of leadership as he was first in courage; and after him sixty valiant men climbed silently up. But their weight broke the ladder, and another had to be let down, up which the rest swarmed; and then, while some seized the tower and killed the guards, others made haste to open a small gate below by which their companions outside could enter. A furious fight followed, in which the garrison of Antioch had very much the worst of it; and when the sun arose, the Crusading Princes and the host, anxiously watching from their camps, saw the banner of Boemond of Tarentum floating out bravely on the walls, from which the Saracen flag had waved till then, mocking all their efforts during the long winter of siege.

So Antioch was won.

Three days later the Saracen army appeared; and for three weeks the newcomers besieged the city in their fury at being too late to save it from the Christians. The Crusaders' hearts began to fail—and they really had gone through a great deal already—but a wonderful thing

happened about this time, which they all said was a miracle, and which cheered them up as nothing else could have done.

A monk named Peter Bartholomew went to one of the Bishops in the camp, and said that he had seen the Apostle St. Andrew in a vision by night, who led him to a Church in Antioch, where, under the altar, was lying buried and forgotten the Lance-head with which the Side of Christ was pierced. Peter Bartholomew told the Bishop that he had seen this vision before the fall of Antioch, but that he had been afraid to tell of it lest he should be laughed at; but now the vision had come again, and he dared not keep it to himself any longer. And this time, added the monk, trembling with fear and excitement, he had seen two Men in shining robes, One of whom was the Lord Christ Himself; and the other, who was St. Andrew, had rebuked him for his want of faith.

The Bishop did not believe the story of Peter Bartholomew; but others did, and twelve men were sent into the Church with the monk to dig under the altar in the place he showed them. From morning till nightfall the twelve dug and dug in vain; and now they began to grumble and mutter, and to point at Peter Bartholomew, as one who dreamed mad dreams, perhaps, but who saw no blessed visions. Then Peter Bartholomew leapt into the hole himself, calling upon Heaven to make true the vision, and in a moment he held up an ancient spear-head, all thick and brown with rust. Shouts of joy hailed the

sight. Peter Bartholomew was honoured of all men now; the unbelieving Bishop took back his words; and the whole army was refreshed and made strong again by what they called a wonderful miracle.

But Boemond, the conqueror of Antioch, vowed that it was all some trick of Peter Bartholomew; and a few months later he brought up the story again, and had an inquiry made as to the truth of it. Many were found to swear on this side and on that, and at last Peter Bartholomew boldly said that he would go through the Ordeal by Fire in order to prove the truth of his vision and his discovery. In those days, when men could not be sure which of two sides was the right one, they would often put it to the Ordeal, or trial, by Fire, or by Water, or by Arms. In the Ordeal by Fire the person who was accused had to walk barefoot over burning coals or wood, or red-hot iron; if he escaped unhurt, he was said to be innocent; if he was burnt, he was guilty. So now Peter Bartholomew offered of his own free will to go through the Ordeal by Fire, and all the army crowded out to see him do it.

First of all they made a large pile of olive-wood, which burns very quickly and fiercely; and when the dry wood began to crackle, and the flames to spurt out, a priest said in a loud voice, "If the Lord Himself has spoken with this man face to face—if the Blessed Andrew has shown him the Lance that pierced the Lord, let him pass through the Fire without receiving any hurt. Or, if not, let him be burnt with the Lance which he carries in his hand." All that great

crowd fell upon their knees, and answered "Amen!" Then Peter Bartholomew stood forth, and called God and all the Saints to witness that he had spoken the very truth, and taking the Lance-head in his hand, he passed through the Fire, "and then came out by the Grace of God."

The eager crowd pressed in upon him to make sure that he was indeed unhurt, and they pressed in so close that they threw poor Peter Bartholomew down upon the ground, and "trampled him under their feet, cut off pieces of his flesh, broke his backbone, and broke his ribs." Poor Peter Bartholomew, this was very hard indeed, when he had just come safely through the Ordeal by Fire! He was only saved from being killed by a Knight, who called some soldiers, and took him away. While they were dressing his wounds, the monk told them that our Lord had appeared to him again in the Fire, and had spoken to him there. He had some bad burns upon his legs, as well as all the broken bones; and he died the next day.

"He has died of the Ordeal by Fire!" said Boemond; and he still refused to believe. But all the army was quite certain that Peter Bartholomew was a very holy man, now that he was dead.

Poor Peter Bartholomew, and his hurts, and his story, however, were soon forgotten. What really mattered was that Antioch was won; and Boemond, who had taken it, was left to hold "the Gate." So now two of the most

valuable of the Crusading princes were left behind, and lost to the army advancing upon Jerusalem.

It was now three years since the Crusaders had started, and the hardest part of the task had yet to be done. In the spring of 1099 they began their march down through Syria, following the coast-line west of the wooded mountains of Lebanon. The country is at its best in the spring, and its beauty and richness made the Crusaders all the more eager to possess it, and to see Jerusalem. They were war-worn; they had been three years upon the way; but their spirit was as high as on the day they started. They passed through Sidon, Tyre, Acre, Carmel, Cæsarea, Lydda (where St. George of England was beheaded, and where his grave can still be seen), and Ramleh. They were drawing very near to Jerusalem now. At Lydda Godfrey divided his army into three parts, so as to come upon the enemy on the north, south, and west; and then began the last part of the march, through the Plain of Sharon and up the Mountains of Judea to Jerusalem. Godfrey and his division came up straight from the coast. Tancred with a hundred Knights marched south by Bethlehem, taking that little town amongst the olives on his way, as its Christian inhabitants had begged him to do.

In spite of the longer round, Tancred was the first of the Crusaders to see Jerusalem.

It was a hot day in June; the blue sky was not dimmed by even the shadow of a cloud, and the sun beat down

fiercely upon the bare, brown, rounded hills of Judea, and upon the daring little force that marched so steadily upon its way. Tancred and his hundred knights made a long round so as to escape being seen from the City, and rode up the western slope of Olivet, and then, suddenly, the full beauty of the Holy City broke upon their eager eyes—the City with its battlemented walls, its towers and minarets and domes, resting like a crown upon the hills on which it is built, and in the clear air seeming almost within a stone's throw. With one consent the toil-worn soldiers from the North fell upon their knees, and there were tears on many faces as they vowed again never to rest or cease from war until they put off their armour within those sacred walls.

As they looked and wondered, an old hermit—one of those who lived alone in the caves upon the Mount of Olives ventured out of his cell, and offered to point out to them the different places in the City. That noble dome was the Temple; further back to the right rose the Tower of David—the citadel in 1099 as it is in 1913—and there—ah! there at last! was the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, to free which these hardy soldiers had come all this long and difficult way. The hermit's words fired afresh the longings and the hopes of his hearers. Laying mail-clad hands on their long cross-handled swords, the Crusaders cried out aloud, demanding to be led at once against the foe. They had waited too long already!

Godfrey came next, having passed through the Plain of Sharon and the Land of the Philistines on his way up

from Jaffa. Out of the army of seventy thousand who had started so joyfully and so proudly three years before, only twenty thousand were left now. They had reached the City, indeed, but the hardest part of the task was still to come—a siege of forty days.

The Siege of Jerusalem

"A mighty troop around,
With their trampling shook the ground:
Waving each a bloody sword,
For the service of their Lord."

Shelley.

The month of June is a hot and heavy time of year in the Holy Land, and greatly did the Crusaders suffer. The City was surrounded by brushwood, stubborn and hindering to the feet, but there were hardly any trees to give them shelter from the burning sun. Water, too, was short, for the Saracens had been careful to choke or poison all the wells and cisterns round about the City, so that the Crusaders were afraid to use them. They were therefore obliged to bring their water from that well at Bethlehem from which three of David's mighty men of war brought him water, having first broken through the whole host of the Philistines to get it: it is still called David's Well. But Bethlehem is about five and a half miles distant from Jerusalem, and the Pools of Solomon, another place from which they had to fetch water, is further still, on the way to Hebron; and often the parties sent out were attacked or even cut off by the enemy. Near to Jerusalem the only water to be had was from the Pool of Siloam, and that was not much use, for the water was bad, and there was very

little of it either at this time of year. The flow also was not regular.

The City being protected on the east, south, and west sides by valleys, Godfrey pitched his camp on the north-east, where the ground is flat up to the walls. His lines were nearest to the City, in the most dangerous position, as befitted the leader. Next came the camp of the Flemings; the Normans and English were opposite to the Damascus Gate, almost due north, Tancred and his Italians being on their further side. Beyond these again, on the north-west, was the French camp. It was necessary to divide these soldiers of many languages and races, for in spite of the common aim which bound them all together, old jealousies and quarrels would ever and again break out, and cause trouble, and perhaps bloodshed, in the Crusading camp.

Godfrey set about building the great towers of assault for the siege. These were high wooden towers, covered with skins to make them armour-proof, and mounted upon platforms on wheels, so that they could be moved easily from one place to another as they were wanted. The soldiers who manned them were able in this way to draw nearer to the City, and, protected themselves, to hurl against the walls the huge stones which tore holes, or breaches, even in their great thickness, by which to enter. The wood for these towers was brought from Mizpah, and at a great cost of time and labour. Sickness and fever were

abroad in the camp, and the cattle died in numbers for want of food and water.

As the siege became closer, the Saracens began to be afraid that their own supplies would fall short. They therefore turned out all the Christians who lived in the City—men, women, and children, old and young together, without difference, and without pity. These, to the number of some thousands, were thus thrown upon the care of Godfrey, who was already troubled enough to feed and keep his own army without all these extra, and for the most part helpless, people. The Christians also brought with them the terrible news that the Saracens were threatening to destroy the Church of the Holy Sepulchre itself, if the Crusaders continued to press the siege. This report, however, only stirred up the Crusaders to real fury, and so to fresh and greater efforts, though their ranks were now much thinned by sickness and death.

The heat was unusually great, even for July, and the Crusaders, in their heavy armour and close helmets, felt it cruelly; sometimes they would tear up large pieces of earth, and lay them against their skin, in the vain hope of cooling themselves a little. The supply of water got lower and lower, and was becoming so bad that even the horses refused to touch it. But Godfrey never lost hope, never slackened in his efforts, nor loosed his grip on the City; and the forty thousand Saracens within the walls began to feel the pressure of his hand. They sent messengers to Egypt, asking for help, but these were captured by the

Crusaders, who were very much encouraged by this proof of the fear within the City. More wood still was wanted for the siege towers, which were often destroyed in the fighting, but a good store of timber had been hidden by the Saracens, before the siege began, in a cave, which the Crusaders found by a lucky chance; and one of the Syrian Christians who had been turned out of the City guided them to a little wood five or six miles north of Jerusalem, from which they could cut as much as they wanted.

At this darkest time came the Genoese fleet to Jaffa, with arms, wood, and food; and thus strengthened and helped, Godfrey made up his mind to try one last fierce assault upon the City. It was better, he said, that his men should fall by the sword before those holy walls than that they should die slowly, without honour, done to death by the hot sun and by their hardships. A three days' fast was ordered, solemn services were held day and night, and a procession of armed soldiers, and priests bearing crosses and chanting as they went, walked slowly round the walls. The Saracens watched them from the battlements above, and mocked them as they went. Peter the Hermit preached in the Christian camps, encouraging the soldiers by his fiery words, promising heaven to those who fell in this holy war. Eagerly the men drank in his wonderful promises, dull eyes brightened, rough hands grasped sword-hilts more firmly, pious hearts prayed for success. These were men ready to dare and do all.

The first attack was made upon Thursday, July 14, 1099. It was not successful, and the Crusaders, a good deal disheartened, drew off. The next day, however, they repeated it. Crusaders and Saracens alike fought bravely and desperately, both seeming to feel that this was the final effort of this long and weary siege. Over and over again it seemed as though the Crusaders must be beaten back after all. But, so say the old stories of this tremendous day, at the very moment when all seemed lost, the good Knight St. George—Patron of soldiers and of Christian Palestine, and afterwards of England, too—rode down from the Mount of Olives, and with flashing lance led the Crusaders on to victory. Certain it is that they made a last fierce attack, and the City was won.

Over the broken walls rushed the Crusaders, dodging falling stones, hitting, cutting, right and left, sparing no one who came in their way. The Saracens fought bravely enough, but at last their hearts failed them, and they fled. Down the narrow streets, all slippery with blood, the Crusaders followed them, shouting, killing, drunk with slaughter. The City rang with the clash of steel, the shouts of the victors, the yells of the hunted and the dying; wounded men were trodden under foot, women and children pricked out at the point of sword or lance from the dark corners where they had hidden, trembling and afraid. The Jews fled to their synagogue, and the Crusaders surrounded them with shouts, and burnt them in it. "These are Jews—they sold Christ to death!" they

said. "They, too, are the enemies of God. Let them perish!" Blood—blood, everywhere: there is no deed of mercy or of kindness to tell about this day. "We have mingled our blood with our tears," wrote a Moslem poet, very truly. Poor Jerusalem, so deeply stained with blood, so full of darkness and fear and cruelty that July day.

The glory of the day was drowned in the streams of blood that followed on the victory. The Crusaders, maddened by complete success after defeat, by fulfilment after waiting, were neither to have nor to hold; they cut down all they met, men, women, and children, young and old. The Princes of the Crusade had no hold over their men; they might promise quarter, but they could not prevail on their men to give it. The unhappy Saracens fled to the Mosque (the old Temple of Solomon), and they were cut down there, without regard to age or sex, or to the sacredness of the place. "If you desire to know what was done with the enemy," wrote a Crusader after the battle, "know that in Solomon's Porch and in his Temple our men rode in the blood of the Saracens up to the knees of their horses." Tancred tried to hide a few Saracens on the roof of the Temple, hoping thus to save their lives. They were seen, hounded down, and cut to pieces with the rest. Out of all the City only three hundred Saracens were saved, by Raymond de St. Gilles. This good Knight shut them up in the Tower of David for some days, and then sent them under safe guard to Ascalon.

The Crusaders seemed to have forgotten all the high and noble purpose with which they had started on their journey, and to care now for the plunder only. It was a time of terror and of cruel things done and suffered, and it has left an everlasting stain upon the taking of Jerusalem.

Towards nightfall the work of blood slackened a little, and the Christians of the city (who had been hiding in terror of their bloodthirsty deliverers, who seemed no less to be feared than their old Saracen oppressors), began to peep timidly out of their safe places, and to welcome the victors. The cry of all now was for Peter the Hermit—Peter, whom not all the hardships, dangers, and difficulties of his way had been able to turn back—Peter, whose stirring words had persuaded Europe to send out this army of rescue. With heart and voice the people hailed Peter as the fount from which had flowed the stream of their deliverance, and for that short hour the poor hermit was the chief man in the City. The rest of his story is quickly told. He left Jerusalem not many days after, and carried the wonderful story of its capture back to Europe. There he entered a monastery, and died some fourteen years later, forgotten by those whom he had stirred and led to such great deeds.

But where was Godfrey while the deeds of horror and cruelty and bloodshed were torturing the City? He—perhaps despairing of controlling his unruly men—had gone on foot to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and there was found in prayer. The soldiers, beginning to get

tired of their horrid work, followed him there, and throwing down their dripping swords upon the sacred stones, they wept and praised God for what He had done by them. For they thought in their ignorance that even the many cruel deeds they had done that day were well pleasing in His sight. A night of solemn services in the Church followed, and so the new day drew slowly on.

But with the new day the soldiers' repentance died, as their vigour returned after food and rest, and the old cruel thirst for blood awoke in them once more. They set again upon the unhappy Saracen inhabitants of the conquered City, and for seven days this went on. It is said that not one Saracen escaped, except the three hundred whom Raymond de St. Gilles had saved on the first day. It seems strange that such brave and noble Knights as the Princes of the First Crusade certainly were should have allowed this slaughter, but they did nothing to stop it. "My soldiers," said Tancred, "are my glory and my riches! Let them have the spoil, and let me have for my share trouble, danger, and weariness, rain and hail." This was, of course, very unselfish and high-minded of Tancred, whom men called the Perfect Knight, but on the other hand it left his men entirely free to kill and rob and torture as they pleased. Perhaps one reason why the Princes did not interfere was that they wished to clear the City utterly of all its old inhabitants and ways, and thought that this was the quickest as well as the surest plan. Every Crusader was allowed to keep the house he took. Here, then, was at once

a reason and an excuse for them to kill and rob! At the end of that week of blood the City was cleared of all its former inhabitants. It was in every way a new City, with new citizens, a new language, under a new rule and new conditions.

The Knights

"A true Knight,
Nor yet mature, yet matchless; firm of word,
Speaking in deeds, and deedless in his tongue,
Not soon provoked; nor, being provoked,
soon calmed;
His heart and hand both open, and both free."

Shakespeare.

"The firmest bulwark of Jerusalem was founded on the Knights of the Hospital and of the Temple."—Gibbon.

We must break off here for a few pages to look at two great Orders of Knighthood which come again and again into this Story of the Crusades, for if we know a little about them first it will be easier for us to keep the whole story straight and clear in our minds as we go on.

First of all, what was a Knight?

He was a soldier, generally a man of good birth, whose life was sworn to the threefold service of God, his King, and his lady. In the very olden days, even before the times of the Crusades, when the law was weak, and no man was safe unless he was strong enough to defend himself and to make others afraid of him, the poor and the weak, women and old people were at the mercy of any who were stronger than they. And so, arising out of this great need of the weak for protection, there came the service of the Knights of old. We know how King Arthur and his Knights

of the Round Table cleared the land of Britain of enemies, put down wrong-doing and violence and lawlessness with a heavy hand wherever they found it, and helped women and all who were weaker than themselves. That was the true ideal, or purpose, of Knighthood. There were also Knights-errant, or wandering Knights—men who had, perhaps, no lands or duties to tie them to one place, or who, to keep some vow made in a time of sickness or danger, wandered through the world for a certain number of years; not going to any special place, but to many lands, just as they found they could be of service to any. As the laws became stronger, however, and so made the different countries safer, the need for these Knights errant gradually passed away.

The making of a Knight was no easy matter. It began at a very early age, the boy, who was a child of noble, or at least gentle, birth, being sent when he was about seven years old to the household of some famous Knight, to be taught there all that was necessary to make him, in his turn, a good and worthy Knight. Here he learned to do any work that was required of him, no matter how lowly it might seem,—for the first idea of Knighthood was service. Thus we see Gawaine, though he was a King's son, thinking it no shame to serve in King Arthur's kitchen. The boy had also to wait upon his master the Knight as his attendant or squire, and to learn the care and training of horses, and all the noble art of war; besides singing and the making of verses, so that at a great feast he could add his

share to the pleasure of it. And as he grew up he learned to be brave and yet gentle; to be just as much at home in the saddle as in the presence of ladies; to fear none; to reverence all women; to train horses; and to handle men; he learnt also the lighter but hardly less favoured pursuits of hawking and hunting, or venerie.

Before he received his Knighthood, the young squire had to watch all the night before in prayer in church, kneeling in front of the high altar on whose steps his yet untried armour was laid. This was called keeping his vigil, or watch. Early in the new day, at a solemn service, his sword was buckled round him, the spurs were fastened to his heels, and some noble Knight, or perhaps the King, struck him on the shoulder with the flat of his sword as he knelt before him and made his solemn promise to be pure and brave; to be courteous to all women; to defend all who were weaker than himself, or who suffered any wrong, and to be true to his King; to keep from all wrong-doing and from violence. Sometimes he would be struck lightly upon the cheek with the words, "Remember that the Saviour of the world was buffeted and scorned": or, "Receive this blow, but never any other."

"The monarch he lifted a Damascene blade
O'er the kneeling count's brow on high;
A blow on his shoulder full gently he laid,
And by that little action a knight he is made,
Baptized into chivalry.

'Bear thou this blow,' said the King to the Knight,
'But never bear blow again;
For thy sword is to keep thine honour white,
And thine honour must keep thy good sword bright,
And both must be free from stain.'"

It was natural enough that, as the numbers of Knights increased in every war, and for other reasons, they should band themselves together, forming small companies here and there of men who had sworn to keep the same rules. In this way began the great Orders of Knighthood which played such a fine part in the history of the Middle Ages. With two of these Orders the story of the Crusades has very much to do.

When Jerusalem was in the hands of the Sultans of Egypt, the Christian pilgrims, though they suffered a good deal in some ways, were yet encouraged rather than not, as their coming brought a certain amount of money into the City. The Native Christians in Jerusalem were allowed to live within the City because they were subjects, but to the pilgrims and to such Christians from the West who visited Jerusalem, or who had settled there for any purpose, no such favour was given. Some Italian merchants from Amalfi, however, gave large presents to the Sultan of Egypt and to his chief courtiers, by means of which they received permission to build a Hospice or hospital near the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, at which Western pilgrims and other travellers could be lodged.

This Hospice was dedicated in later days to St. John the Baptist, and to it was added in time a convent, a Church (also of St. John), and a Hospice for women, named after St. Mary Magdalene. The Brothers and Sisters who served in these Hospices lived in a very simple way, and their work was to look after the sick and wounded. In 1065 the Seljuk Turks took Jerusalem, but they left the Church of the Holy Sepulchre because they could get money from the pilgrims who came to visit it, and for some reason they left also the Hospices near it. After the taking of the City by Godfrey, the Hospitallers (as the members of the Order were called) did good work in nursing the wounded. Many Crusaders of gentle birth laid aside their arms and joined the Order; others gave money and lands, Godfrey being especially generous and free in his gifts.

In time the Order became more and more a military one. The habit or dress was black, with a large eight-pointed cross of white upon the breast or arm, the eight points meaning the Eight Beatitudes or Blessings spoken by our Lord. This cross is now often called the Maltese Cross, because later on the Order settled in Malta, and the Knights are sometimes called the Knights of Malta. With its growing riches the Order of St. John built larger Hospitals and other buildings, and a fine Church at Jerusalem.

There was always fighting going on in and round Jerusalem, and the Chancellor of the Order proposed to the Brethren that they should become a fighting Order,

and help to support and to defend the Kingdom. "He gave back to the Brethren the arms which they had quitted," or given up. But some of the Brethren did not like the idea at all, for they thought that fighting was against the object of their Order, which was to heal. However the Patriarch of Jerusalem approved of the idea, and new rules were drawn up, and the Order was divided into three parts—the Knights of noble birth who were to fight; the clergy who were to serve the Churches of the Order, to visit the Hospitals, and to follow the army to battle; and the serving Brethren, who were men of lowly birth, and who served the Knights, and worked in the Hospitals. The Hospitallers fought on the left wing in battle, and the Templars on the right. The Knights of St. John won great honour in all the wars in Palestine; the Order grew in wealth and in fame, and began to set up Houses in Europe as well as in Palestine.

The Hospitallers did not lose their name for kindness and the care of the suffering and the sick; and a little story (which may or may not be true) is told which shows how they put the care of the poor before all other things. Saladin (so runs the tale) had heard many stories of the goodness of the Knights Hospitallers, and he wished to see for himself if what was said was true. So he disguised himself and went to the Hospitallers' House in Acre, pretending to be a poor pilgrim. He was kindly received by the Knights, given free lodging, and food was set before him. But Saladin said he could not eat the food, good as it

was, for there was a strange fancy upon him which prevented him from eating any but one thing. The Serving Brethren pressed him to tell them what it was, and at last the pretended pilgrim confessed that he wanted the right fore-hoof of the Grand Master's charger. The Serving Brethren, who thought the pilgrim must be mad, repeated his words to the Grand Master, who at once ordered the noble war-horse to be brought from the stable. Then he himself blindfolded it, and with grief in his heart, but with a steady hand, he took an axe and lifted it up to strike the blow. Then Saladin stood forward, and confessed that his only thought in making such a strange request was his wish to prove the truth of all that he heard of the goodness of the Order to all strangers and the poor. He did not tell them his name, but every year he sent a large present of money to the Hospitallers' House at Acre. It is a nice story because it ends well, and the horse was not hurt after all!

When Saladin captured Jerusalem, he spared the Church and other buildings of the Knights Hospitallers, and gave them to the Mosque as an endowment. Some ruins of these beautiful buildings, which are more than seven hundred years old, can still be seen—a beautiful entrance gateway of the old Hospital, decorated with carvings of the Signs of the Zodiac, and part of the old cloisters round a courtyard at the back of the big new Church which the Germans (to whom this place was given some years ago) have built where the Hospital of the Knights of St. John once stood.

The Order of the Temple was the other great Order which played just as large a part in the history of Christian Jerusalem. The Order had a small beginning. In the year 1117, Sir Hugh de Payens (or de Paganis), a French Knight, with eight other Knights of noble birth, called themselves "The Poor of the Holy City," and swore to protect the Passes that led up to Jerusalem from the Plains of Sharon on the west, and the Roads of the Jordan Valley on the east. Baldwin II gave the valiant nine a house near the Temple, from which they then took their name; and rules were drawn up for the new Order, which quickly grew in honour and in strength. The Templars were always a military Order, and they lived under far stricter rules than the Hospitallers. They were to keep nothing for their own use; neither gold nor silver was allowed; their food and clothing were of the plainest. The great Seal of the Order showed their poverty, for it was two Knights riding on one horse. They were also called the Poor Knights of Christ. One of the Knights, when he was taken prisoner and was told to pay a large ransom, said, "I have no goods but a knife and a girdle. The duty of a Templar is to conquer or die." Their habit was of white, to which a long red cross was afterwards added, to show that they were ready to shed their blood in the service of Christ.

When he was knighted the Templar made a very solemn vow, or promise. "I swear to give my speech, my strength, and my life to defend the belief in the Unity of God and the mysteries of the faith. When the Saracens

invade the lands of the Christians, I will pass over the sea to deliver my Brethren. I will give the succour (help) of my arm to the Church and the King against the infidel princes. So long as my enemies shall be only three to one against me, I will fight them, and will never take flight: alone I will combat them if they are unbelievers."

The rules of the Order of the Temple laid down that all things were to be done in three, as that number would always remind them of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity. Three times a week the Knights gave money to the poor; three times a week they heard Mass, and were allowed to eat meat; three times a year the whole number of the Order was called over. A Knight who had done wrong was called a recreant Knight, and his punishment was ordered to be given "in open Chapter," that is, before all the Brethren of his House, to add to his shame. The Banner of the Order, called Beauséant, was seen in the forefront of every fight, with its motto, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name be the glory!" The Banner was half white and half black, to show that the Templars "were fair and favourable to the friends of Christ, but black and terrible to His enemies."

Men of the highest birth, and of princely houses, joined the Order, whose valour in battle was known to all the world. They were "lions in war, and gentle as lambs at home. When they were called to arms they did not ask how many of the enemy there were, but where they were." "When the conflict has begun," St. Bernard said of them,

"they throw aside their former gentleness, exclaiming, 'Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate Thee!'" and in going into battle they were the first, as in returning they were the last. When the trumpet sounded the advance, they sang first the Psalm, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us," and then made a "most terrible attack" in silence. If a Templar turned his back upon the enemy, or even saved his life on a stricken field, or fought against Christians, he was considered to have behaved shamefully, and his punishment was a heavy one. His white mantle with the blood-red cross, which was the sign of his Knighthood, was taken away from him; he was not allowed to mix with any of the Brethren, but had to eat his meals on the ground, and was not allowed to use a napkin for a whole year; he was not even allowed to drive away the dogs if they came prowling round and stole his food. At the end of the year, if the Grand Master and the Brethren thought that he had been punished enough, he was received again into the full life of the Order.

There are many instances of the way in which the Templars ever proved their valour, both as men, and as an Order; as at the capture of Ascalon by the Saracens in the year 1153, when two hundred Templars, and their standard-bearer, an English Knight, Sir Reginald de Argentine, refused as one man to surrender, and were cut down. But I think there is no instance known to history of a Templar who turned his back upon a right. If they had

been as unselfish as they were brave, nothing on earth could have stood against them.

The Order of the Temple became rich and admired quite suddenly. New Houses sprang up, first in different parts of the Holy Land—Safed, Gaza, Athlit, Jaffa, Acre, Beyrout—as well as the great mother-house at Jerusalem—and then in England, as well as all over the continent. The Knights paid no taxes, so their riches grew most comfortably. Some of the old Houses of the Order can still be traced in England, and Templar Churches, too, built in round shape like the Temple in Jerusalem.

These two great Orders—the Hospitallers and the Templars—were closely bound up with the history of the Christian Kingdom, and of the Crusades. The fall of the Kingdom broke their greatness. The story of their later years we shall take up in its place.

There is one special Saint, who is the Patron of soldiers, of Palestine, and of England, whose story we may look at here; and that is Saint George. So many stories are told about him, that we have not, perhaps, a very clear idea of him in our minds, beyond the fact that he killed the dragon; but the Crusaders believed in him so firmly, and said that he came to their help so many times when they were in danger or in trouble, that we shall find his name appearing time after time in the story of the Crusaders.

St. George lived in the reign of Diocletian, who was one of the most cruel of all the Roman Emperors. His

father was put to death for being a Christian, and, after this, St. George and his mother went to live at Lydda, a small town in the Holy Land, near Jaffa. His mother died when he was only seventeen, and St. George became a soldier, and a very brave and clever one, so that he was marked out even among such brave and splendid soldiers as the Romans were. He was known, too, for his kindness to all who were weak and unhappy or helpless, and for his love of giving. His beautiful looks, his courage, and the praises of his many friends made Diocletian take notice of him; and he became very fond of him, and made him a Tribune, though he was so young. The Emperor did not know that St. George was a Christian, for in those days of long ago, when the Christians were so often put to death just because they were Christians, they were forbidden to speak openly of their faith to the heathen people among whom they lived, but were only to confess it if they were asked the direct question, "Are you a Christian?"

So Diocletian became fonder and fonder of St. George, and grew to trust him more and more until he began his cruel persecution of the Christians. Then St. George's blood was fired by the sight of the sufferings of his fellow-Christians, and the awful ways in which they were put to death—by the sword, and the rack, by burning, and by being torn to pieces by wild beasts which had been kept hungry for days before, so that they might be all the more fierce. St. George went boldly to the Emperor, and spoke out all that was in his mind.

Diocletian was filled with anger, and threw him into prison.

The Roman guards laid St. George upon the floor of the cell, placed his feet in a wooden case called stocks, and laid a great stone upon his breast, so heavy that it almost crushed him; but in the midst of his pain the Soldier Saint only prayed to God. The next day they bound him to a great wheel, all set round with sharp spikes that tore and cut his body as they spun it round, but still the Saint uttered no cry; and there came a voice from heaven that said, "George, fear thou nothing, for I am with thee." Looking up, he saw One clad all in white, from Whose Face and garments there shone out a bright and wonderful light, and Who held out His Hand to him, saying, "Be thou strong and brave, and suffer all that is done to thee, for the sake of Christ thy Lord." Two of the guards who were standing there saw the wonderful vision, and they became Christians, and were put to death at once.

Once more Diocletian commanded St. George to give up his faith; but all his promises and threats were nothing to the Saint. Then the Emperor, in anger, gave the word that he should be beheaded; and he was led out to die, and very gladly he laid down his life for his faith.

The people of the Holy Land have always held St. George in great honour; and to this day the picture of him slaying the dragon is found in every Church. It was from them that we English learned to honour him, too, for the

Crusaders took him as their Patron, or Chief Saint of England, and "St. George for England!" became the battle-cry with which English soldiers charged to victory again and again.

St. George lies buried at Lydda, where his grave can still be seen. All the old pilgrims went to visit it, and a great feast was held there every year, the Feast of St. George, and it is kept up to this day.

At one time Edward the Confessor was the Patron Saint of England; but King Richard, our great English Crusader, altered that. It was well done; for certainly St. George the Soldier is a better Patron of a fighting race than the meek and silent Confessor. And because he belonged first, and still belongs to Palestine, our having him for our Patron is another little link in the golden chain that joins the history of our England with that of the Holy Land.

The Beginning of the Kingdom Godfrey, the First King of Jerusalem, 1099-1100

"Here on earth
Shall splendour sit upon thy name for ever."
Robert Browning.

"Sans peur et sans reproche."

On the eighth day of the young Kingdom the Princes of the Crusade held a solemn council to choose a King. It was not at all easy to pick out the best from a band of men, each of whom was so famous all through Europe for his princely rank, his valour, and his noble deeds. In the middle of the discussion Robert of Flanders rose up and said, "Noble Knights and Princes, we know all that a leader must be chosen from amongst us who are here assembled one whose fame, whose birth, and whose valour fits him for the crown of the City where Christ died for us. Let us then put aside all selfish thoughts, and the pride that makes us want the Kingship for ourselves, and let each one honestly and faithfully give his voice to choose him who is the best. For my part, whosoever he be that is chosen, him will I faithfully serve and follow."

There could be no manner of doubt, after this, as to which of the Princes was the most worthy to be King in Jerusalem; but first, as a matter of form and of courtesy, the crown was offered to Duke Robert of Normandy,

brother of William II, King of England, as being the highest in rank amongst them. He would not hear of it.

"Nay," he said, "though I came here for God's service, I have not let my Dukedom go from me so fully as to be at the service of my vow; and I desire, if it please God, to return to my own people."

So he refused it, and it was well that he did so for the Kingdom; for though brave and generous to a fault, he was lazy and selfish. Unable to rule himself, how could he have kept in hand the proud Knights and Barons who made the Kingdom? Soon afterwards he returned to Normandy; and his unhappy, restless life ended with twenty-eight years of captivity in Carnarvon Castle, as the prisoner of his youngest brother.

All choices then fell upon Godfrey. Humble as he was brave, Godfrey at first refused; but when it was pressed upon him as the Will of God, he gave in, and allowed them to lead him to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, there to be crowned King of Jerusalem. But when they tried to put the crown upon his head, he would not suffer them to do so.

"It is not fitting," he said, "that I should wear a crown of gold in the City where my Lord Christ, the true King of Jerusalem, once wore for me and for my sins the Crown of Thorns."

He would use neither the crown nor the title of King, but would only call himself "Baron of the Holy

Sepulchre," in which Church he hung up the golden crown of Jerusalem.

Godfrey de Bouillon was forty years old when he was crowned at Jerusalem. In appearance he was very tall and broad, with brown hair and blue eyes. His face was very handsome, and of a stern expression, but he could also look gentle and kind. He was one of the most famous soldiers of his day; he was brave and wise, just and true, without a shadow of selfishness or of meanness to stain his name. When he was elected King of Jerusalem a careful inquiry was held to find out if he had ever done anything which would make him unworthy to rule in the Holy City. But the worst charge that could be brought against him was that of his squires, who said that their master would often pray for such a long time that he forgot the hours of his meals, and so the food was spoilt. Poor hungry squires! So Godfrey de Bouillon has come down to us of the twentieth century as a pure and upright man, a just and true Knight "without fear and without reproach," and a wise and fearless soldier. "If all honour should fail out of the land," said a Saracen chief, "yet is Duke Godfrey alone enough to restore it, and bring it to light."

As to his strength and his brave deeds there was only one voice—that he was second to no Knight in Europe. There are one or two stories told of him which show how strong his arm was and how true his aim. An Arab camel-driver came to him one day, saying that he had heard many wonderful tales of Godfrey's mighty deeds, but that

he wished to see for himself if all that was said of him could really be true. Godfrey, without more ado, pulled out his sword, and with a single blow cut off the head of one of the man's camels.

"Ah!" said the Arab, "but there is magic in your sword; it is that, and not your own strength which enables you to strike such a blow."

"Lend me your own sword, then," answered Godfrey; and taking the camel-driver's sword, he repeated his feat on another of the unfortunate camels. The Arab was quite convinced of Godfrey's great strength, and he went away with his camels, not wishing to lose any more of them by asking for further proof.

Another story tells how once, in the heat of battle, Godfrey with one sweeping stroke of his sword cut a Saracen rider right through the middle of his body, so that the horse galloped on with the legs and part of the body still in the saddle, while the upper half fell to the ground. On another occasion he cut a Saracen right through from the head downward, so that one arm and shoulder fell to the ground. These stories, and many others, were told round camp-fires by Crusading or Saracen soldiers, and we may be sure that they lost nothing in the telling.

One of Godfrey's first acts as King—for King he really was, though he would not use the name—was to divide the new Kingdom into fiefs, or counties, each of which he put under one of the Princes of the Crusade. Boemond of

Sicily, as we know, was Prince of Antioch. Raymond of Toulouse had Tripoli of Syria and the Lebanon. To Tancred, the Perfect Knight, fell Galilee; while Baldwin de Bouillon, Godfrey's brother, had Edessa. A good part of these lands were not yet won, and to the new rulers fell the task of conquering before they could possess them. The rest of the Crusaders returned home, except a hundred Knights who preferred to stay on with Godfrey, seeing that though Jerusalem was won, the work was not yet finished by any means. At no time did Godfrey's army number more than twenty thousand men.

Godfrey's sword was not allowed to rest in its sheath for any length of time. Word was brought to him that a large Saracen army was coming up from Egypt. It was composed of fierce and tried warriors from that land, and from Damascus and Bagdad, and it was led by Afdhal, an Armenian renegade; that is, he had once been a Christian, but had become a Moslem for the sake of gain. Without delay Godfrey marched to Gaza to meet these Saracens, taking with him all the men of his army who could be spared from the defence of Jerusalem. He brought with him a large number of cattle for the use of the army, and these herds, following behind, raised a great cloud of dust, which the Saracens believed to be a second large Christian host. Godfrey, with five thousand men, placed himself so as to prevent the Saracens in Ascalon—a strong city not far off—from getting out to help the attacking force. Raymond of Toulouse and his men were between the

Saracens and their fleet; Tancred, Count Robert of Flanders, and Robert of Normandy led the attack from the centre.

Fierce was the fighting on both sides, and the little Crusading army seemed likely to be swallowed up by the great numbers of the Saracens; but when these latter began to get tired, and to feel their losses, which were heavy, they could get no help from Ascalon, or Gaza, or their own ships, for Godfrey had closed up every way by which their friends could have come to them. When Robert of Normandy captured the sword and banner of Afdhal, a panic arose among the Saracens, and they flung down their arms, and sought safety in flight. But Godfrey and Raymond of Toulouse lay between them and escape, and falling upon the hurrying Saracens, they slew numbers of them. Afdhal, however, managed somehow to reach Ascalon, where he hastened on board one of his ships, and set sail for Egypt at once. As the ship sailed rapidly away, Afdhal looked back at the Land he had been so certain of taking, and he contrasted in his mind his proud coming with his present wretched state—a general without an army, a soldier without a sword, a man covered with dishonour. Flinging up his arms with a very bitter cry, he exclaimed aloud, "O Nazarene, Thou hast conquered!"

No sooner were the Crusaders free from the danger of the Saracens than they fell into another which was almost worse. Quarrels broke out amongst themselves, and no man would give way to another for the sake of peace.

Godfrey laid siege to Ascalon, an important Saracen seaport, which was very strongly fortified. Raymond of Toulouse wished to have it for his own, as a reward for his share of the work. Godfrey's answer was that it must always be a part of the Kingdom, as it was far too valuable to be given up to any one man. Raymond of Toulouse then went off in hot anger, taking all his men with him, and by doing this he weakened Godfrey's army so much that he had to raise the siege. Raymond marched in haste to Arsuf, and tried to take it, but he was unsuccessful; and in his anger he determined that Godfrey, coming after him, should not succeed where he, Raymond, had failed. He therefore said to the Saracens of Arsuf, "When Godfrey the King comes, have no fear of him, for his army is so small and weak that he cannot take your town, nor do you any harm."

Having by this mean act stained his name for all time with the blackness of horrible treachery, Raymond of Toulouse marched away in haste from Arsuf, not caring to meet Godfrey too soon afterwards.

Godfrey was not far behind him. He arrived to find that the Saracen governor of Arsuf knew exactly all his weakness, and the mocking of the Saracens upon the walls was very hard indeed to bear. Moreover, they captured one of his best Knights, Sir Gerard d'Avesnes, and thrust him out upon the city walls, bound to a wooden cross, while they threatened first to torture and then kill him if Godfrey persisted in trying to take Arsuf.

"Take no thought for me!" cried Gerard aloud from his cross. "It is but one life against the Kingdom's good. Heed it not at all!"

But Godfrey raised the siege, partly to save Gerard d'Avesnes, whose brave arm he could little spare in these days of difficulty and treachery and danger, and partly because he dared not risk his small army in the attempt. By and bye Gerard was released, and returned to his friends in safety, though with many hurts; and Godfrey rewarded him by making him Sieur, or Lord, of St. Abraham—as the Crusaders called Hebron.

But Godfrey's anger was hot against Raymond of Toulouse for his mean and wicked deed. He wished to fight a duel with him, but the other Princes of the Crusade prevented this.

"Shame would fall upon us all," they said, "if you, the King, and such a famous Knight as Count Raymond, should fight in the sight of all men, to the confusion of ourselves and the triumph of our enemies."

Godfrey listened and gave way; his life was his own no longer; he must use it only in the service of the Kingdom. So peace was made between him and Raymond, and the army returned in triumph to Jerusalem. The sword and banner of Afdhal were hung up in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where all might see these signs of the first victory of the Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem. Raymond of Toulouse, who was still greedy of power, and not at all

content with what he had already, stayed only a little while longer in Jerusalem, and then went to Constantinople, where the Emperor Alexius gave him Laodicea.

Many of the Crusaders had fallen in the siege of Jerusalem, and in the fighting later, and the new fiefs kept those great Knights who owned them fully occupied. But soon a new danger faced the victors. The Land had been won, partly by the hot haste of the Crusaders, against whose fury nothing could stand for long, and partly through the fear of the people of the country themselves of these armed men from the far West. But now, in times of quiet, the latter saw how small was the force that had mastered them, and they were determined to turn the Christians out. The Moslem peasantry refused to plant and sow, hoping in this way to starve out the Crusaders, and there was no safety in travel, except well-armed and in numbers.

The ranks of the Crusaders were swelled from time to time by fresh arrivals of pilgrims, who hastened out from Europe, some to rejoice in the victory of the Christian arms, others hoping to get some share of the spoils. At Christmas, Boemond of Antioch and Baldwin of Edessa came to Jerusalem, together with Daimbert, Bishop of Pisa in Italy, who afterwards became Patriarch at Jerusalem. Their journey was a very hard one, and they suffered a good deal both from cold and from the enemy; but Tancred, now Prince of Galilee, helped them as they

passed through his lands, and they spent the winter at Jerusalem, assisting Godfrey to settle the new Kingdom.

Godfrey was not only a great soldier, but a great law-giver, as was only to be expected from one who was descended from Charlemagne; and now, in the short times of peace that came every now and then, he made wise laws, modelled on those of the West. To the Church he was always a good friend, and he gave to the Canons of the Holy Sepulchre the rich vine-lands north of Jerusalem, and two villages (Bireh, the Beeroth of the Bible, and Ain Senia)—all which is still some of the richest and most fruitful land in Palestine. He made three Courts of Justice: the First sat under the King direct, to settle any troubles between the great lords, who were always quarrelling amongst themselves; the Second was composed of men of note and of good name, to keep the law amongst the people of the towns and the lesser gentry; the Third was for the native Christians, under native Christian judges. Slaves were allowed, whose only protection was the kindness of each one's master. The value set upon a slave was not very high; one slave was counted equal to a falcon, two slaves to a war-horse. Godfrey also gave gifts of lands to the lesser Knights who had remained with him, partly as a reward for all that they had done, and partly to persuade them to stay on in the Country; for if they were all to leave Palestine in search of riches or adventures in other places, he could not hope to keep the Land they had so hardly won. He made Baronies of the chief districts—

Jaffa, Nablus, Acre, Beyrout, Galilee, Sidon, Haifa, and Kerak; and it is strange that to this very day these parts, under the Turkish Government, follow almost the same lines as those which were mapped out by Godfrey more than nine hundred years ago. These Barons, of course, had each one his own following of Knights, squires, and men-at-arms, and when the Christian Kingdom was at its greatest it could gather three thousand seven hundred and twenty-nine Knights to the battle. Godfrey's laws were all written out by hand and richly illuminated, each sheet being sealed with the Seal of the Kingdom, and they were kept in a special casket or box in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, from which they came to be called "The Letters of the Holy Sepulchre."

Having ordered things at home as far as he was able to, the great Godfrey turned his thoughts to making strong friendships abroad, which would be of help to the Kingdom in times of trouble. Such friendships between nations and governments are called alliances, and Godfrey made a very wise alliance with the Venetians, who were then a great sea-going and trading people. A Venetian fleet came in the spring of 1100 to open up trade with the new Kingdom, and Godfrey agreed with the Venetians that if they would help him for three months they should have the third part of every town that was taken, a church and a market as well, and free shelter in any town along the coast for all shipwrecked crews.

In the spring Godfrey took the field once more, and went up north to help Tancred to subdue Galilee, which has always been a very restless and difficult country. Marching in the hot sun, fighting continually, camping by swamps and marches that were humming with poisonous mosquitoes, (for the country was new to him, and he did not know his way about it clearly yet), Godfrey fell ill of Syrian fever. He struggled against it with no thought of himself at all, but the sickness was stronger than his courage or his will, and Godfrey died at Jaffa, on his way back to Jerusalem, on July 18, 1100. In sorrow and mourning the soldiers brought the body of their great leader up to Jerusalem, and buried him in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, under the Place of Calvary, and within a few feet of the Holy Tomb itself. His sword and spurs, and the Cross of the Kingdom, (worn also by the Kings who came after him), were hung up in the Church. They are shown to travellers to this day in the Franciscan Vestry of the Church. The sword is the straight cross-handled weapon of the Crusaders; the spurs are of some dull yellow metal, with star-shaped rowels very much bent; and the cross is of gold with a deep red carbuncle glowing in the midst of it. It is the Jerusalem Cross which the Crusaders invented; a big cross in the centre surrounded by four smaller ones, and they gave it two beautiful meanings; one was to remind them of the Five Wounds of Christ—in His Hands, His Feet, and His Side: the other was the Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem, the big

cross being the Holy City itself, and the small ones the four chief Principalities belonging to it—Antioch, Edessa, Galilee, and Aleppo, or, as some say, Kerak. The Jerusalem Cross is a most beautiful one in shape; and it is wonderful to feel, as you hold this one in your hand, that Godfrey once wore it in Jerusalem. Over Godfrey's grave his people wrote in Latin the simple words:

"Here lies Duke Godfrey de Bouillon
Who won all this Land to the faith of Christ:
His soul reigns with Christ.
Amen."

The Settling of the Kingdom
Baldwin I, 1100-1118

"Red gleamed the Cross and waned the Crescent pale."—Byron.

No sooner was the great Godfrey laid to rest under Calvary, than bitter quarrels broke out once more amongst the Crusaders as to who was to succeed him. Each Knight wanted to be King, and the Patriarch Diambert was too proud and greedy a man himself to do anything but make these quarrels worse. Sir Garnier de Gray, a cousin of Godfrey's, but a Knight of little fame, seized the Tower of David, one of the strong places of the City, which commanded nearly the whole of it from its high position at the western end, and which he declared that Godfrey had promised to give him for his own. Godfrey's brother, Baldwin, was away at the time with Boemond of Antioch, fighting in Armenia; but as soon as he heard of Godfrey's death he gave over his own new Principality of Edessa to his cousin Baldwin du Bourg, and started for Jerusalem in hot haste, with a small force of one thousand men and four hundred Knights. He was attacked on the way at the Dog River, near Beyrout, by a large Saracen force, but he defeated it, and reached Jerusalem in safety. At his coming the quarrels all died away, for it was so plain that he had not only the chief right to succeed Godfrey as King, but that he was by far the best

man to do so. So Baldwin I was crowned on Christmas Day 1100, in the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, because he, like his great brother, would not receive the golden crown in Jerusalem.

Baldwin was a man of great strength of body, and he was also upright, just, and wise. He was a man of few words, who kept his thoughts to himself, so that men were afraid of him, for they could not guess what was in his mind. He was quick to see what should be done, as well as firm and strong in all he did. He thought more of his royal state than Godfrey had done, and he never forgot that he was a King; neither would he allow that freedom and friendship between his Knights and himself that Godfrey had encouraged. His people were proud of their tall and noble-looking King, and if they feared him much they also trusted him. And in Baldwin the greedy and cunning Patriarch found a hard master, who saw through his smooth words, and trusted him not at all.

A story has come down to us about Baldwin which shows us what kind of man he was. He was clearing the country between Jerusalem and Ascalon of Saracens as far as he was able, and at one place, hearing of a large band of Saracen robbers who made all that part doubly unsafe, he went after them. The robbers hid in one of the great caves which are found all over Palestine. Baldwin lit fires at the entrance of the cave, meaning to smoke them out, and after a while two of the robbers crept out to make terms with him. Baldwin received them well, put a rich robe

upon one of them, and sent him back to bring out his fellows. As soon as he had disappeared within the dark cavern, Baldwin killed the one who had remained with him. After a while the first robber came out again, followed by ten others. Again Baldwin sent back one, and killed the ten. This time the messenger brought out thirty. One was sent back and the thirty beheaded. At last all the robbers came out, to the number of over two hundred—wild, fierce men, savage and cruel; and Baldwin had them all put to death. Then, piling up the fires to a greater heat, he waited till the wives and children of the robbers were forced to come out. Some were able to pay large sums of money for their lives; the rest, who could not pay, were put to death. Baldwin then left this scene of blood, and marched east to Jordan; but the terror of his name was such that all men trembled before him, and simply dared not do wrong, for fear of the strong King's anger and his heavy hand.

Baldwin made an alliance with the Genoese fleet as Godfrey had done with the Venetian; and having won Cæsarea, an important seaport, with their help, he made them gifts of streets, churches, and markets in different cities. The Christian armies of Palestine were never very large, and as they were always at war, they were always wanting to be made up again. A good many English and German soldiers came out from Europe, and with their help Baldwin tried to take the forest-covered country between Jerusalem and its seaport of Jaffa. But at Ramleh,

a few miles out of Jaffa, the Saracens made a sudden attack upon him, and he only escaped being captured through the help of a Saracen Emir, or Prince, whose wife Baldwin had once saved when she was in danger.

Now, the Patriarch Daimbert had never liked Baldwin, against whose strong rule he dared not openly rebel. Outwardly the two were friends, but Baldwin rightly distrusted the Patriarch, and Daimbert feared and hated the King. At last it came to an open quarrel between them, and of course the cause was money. The pilgrims, who came to Jerusalem in crowds now that it was so safe as a Christian City, brought in a great deal of money which should have gone, as most of it was meant to go, in keeping up the Christian Kingdom. But Daimbert took for himself all that he could lay hands upon; he lived richly and luxuriously, kept a great household like a King, and did not care about the Kingdom one little bit. All this made Baldwin very angry, for he did not know where to turn for money, and often could hardly pay his own Knights and soldiers. He sent time after time to Daimbert to say that the money must be given over to him, to be used in the proper way in the service of the Kingdom. At first Daimbert said he had none to give; then, when Baldwin's anger became uncomfortably hot, he sent him two hundred marks, and said that that was all he had. But Arnold the Chancellor of the Holy Sepulchre went secretly to the King, and told him that the Treasury of the Church was full, but that the Patriarch wished to keep it

all for his own use. Baldwin was furious. He forced his way into the Patriarch's private room, and found him eating off gold and silver plate. Truly, Baldwin's rage was awful to behold.

"By heaven!" he cried, "you feast and we fast: you eat the money given by the faithful! By what right dare you take to yourself the gifts made at Christ's Sepulchre by the pilgrims, while we—whose very blood has bought the City—we suffer toil and weariness and hunger! Share with us the cup of bitterness which we now drink, or, by heaven! you shall drink no other, neither touch any more the money of the Church!"

Daimbert's guest, an Italian Cardinal, shrank away affrighted from the King as he towered over the Patriarch in his righteous wrath, but the Patriarch sullenly replied, "It is written in the Word of God that they who serve the altar shall live by the altar."

"Say you so!" thundered Baldwin. "But, by heaven! if you help me not to keep the Kingdom I will help myself!"

It was a stormy scene. Baldwin went on furiously demanding that all the contents of the Treasury should at once be given up to him, while Daimbert would only sullenly deny that he had anything to give up. At last, however, an empty peace was made between them, on the Patriarch's promising to provide thirty Knights for the service of the Kingdom, and with this Baldwin had to be content. But after a while Daimbert fell back into his old

greedy, grasping ways, and at last he was openly accused of stealing, and had to fly to Antioch; and not long after his old secret enemy, Arnold the Chancellor, became Patriarch in his place.

And now sad days came upon the Crusaders, for the great leaders of the First Crusade were laying down their arms for ever. Boemond of Antioch was besieged by the Greeks and Saracens together, and only just managed to escape by being carried through the enemy's ranks in a coffin. He went to Italy to get help, but on his way back he was taken ill, and died at Tarento, his old home (1104). Raymond of Toulouse was killed a very few months later, in February 1105, whilst besieging Tripoli. He was also Lord of St. Gilles in Palestine, a place which is now called Sinjil. Sad indeed was King Baldwin at the loss of these great men, his old friends and tried brothers-in-arms; and the loss to the Kingdom was great. Their courage had dared the First Crusade, their swords had won the Kingdom, and their wisdom had kept it in the face of many difficulties. But now, their work completed, one by one the Princes of the First Crusade laid down their arms in death.

Baldwin the King had work to do yet. He led his victorious army in turn against Tripoli, Tyre, Sidon, Beyrout, and Acre—all of them important coast-towns—and captured them all with the help of the Italian fleets. Tripoli was well given to Bertram de St. Gilles, son of that Raymond who had died in trying to take it, and it became

the capital of one of the chief Principalities of the Kingdom. Baldwin also strengthened the Kingdom within itself by making great Seignories, or Baronies, under Knights who were able to hold the strong places of the Kingdom; and he built several fine castles, whose ruins still remain. He tried always to be a wise and just ruler, and his people admired and trusted him.

Encouraged by the success of his arms in Palestine, Baldwin bethought him of conquering Egypt also; for as Egypt is the southern boundary of Palestine, it was always a gateway by which an enemy could attack the Christian Kingdom. But fever weakened the Christian army, and Baldwin, sick unto death himself, sadly gave the order to turn back. This order filled the army with grief and despair, for they knew well that nothing but a sickness to death would have persuaded Baldwin to turn his back upon a fight. Crowding into the sick King's tent, they burst into loud and selfish lamentations: "For," said they all, "if the King lead us not thither, we may have no hope of seeing Jerusalem and our friends again."

Baldwin raised himself in bed and spoke to them sternly.

"Brothers-in-arms," he said, "shall the death of one man weaken your hearts and your swords in the midst of our enemies? Remember, in God's Name, that there are yet many with you whose strength and skill are greater than mine. Quit you like men, and, sword in hand, uphold

our Kingdom of Jerusalem—as indeed ye have sworn to do." After receiving their promises, which they now gave readily, being ashamed of their unmanly fears, the King continued, "Lay not my body, I beseech you, in this strange part, but carry it to Jerusalem, and lay me there by my brother Godfrey's side."

So the army began its sad march homeward, and on the third day the King died at El Arish, a town near Gaza, on the borders of Egypt, and which is now the boundary between the Holy Land and Egypt. It is a hot and sandy part, bare and desolate, and it is little wonder that Baldwin did not wish to lie there, so far away from the City which was to every Crusader the goal of all his hopes. The soldiers preserved the body of Baldwin, and carried it back to Jerusalem, as Godfrey had been carried back, just eighteen years ago. They reached Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, and the people of the City, coming out with joy to meet, as they thought, the victorious army, were met instead by the dead body of their King (1118). Baldwin was buried near Godfrey in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and on his tomb the hand of some admirer wrote that he was the "Hope of his Country and the Strength of the Church." Though he had been three times married, Baldwin I left no children.

The Kingdom at its Height Baldwin II, 1118-1131; Fulke, 1131-1144

"See a disenchanted nation
Springs like day from desolation;
To Truth its state is dedicate,
And Freedom leads it forth, her mate."

Shelley.

Baldwin I left the crown in his will to his brother Eustace. But Eustace was in France, and the Barons of the Kingdom were really afraid to wait all the long time till he could arrive, so they chose the dead King's cousin, Baldwin de Burgh, who had succeeded him as Count of Edessa when he took the crown of Jerusalem. Eustace, who was as unselfish as his two brothers, though not so great in other ways, raised no trouble at losing a Kingdom, as he very well might have done, but allowed the choice made to pass unquestioned, for the sake of the Kingdom.

The new King Baldwin was not a young man, but he was as brave and vigorous in character as he was tall and strong in body. He had married an Armenian wife, and unfortunately this brought great trouble in after years upon the Kingdom. For his two daughters, Milicent and Alice, though they were beautiful women and very clever, were bad and ambitious, and they cared for nothing in life but to be rich and powerful and feared. Baldwin II was

crowned at Bethlehem, and for the first two years of the new reign the Kingdom enjoyed great peace and prosperity.

About four years after Baldwin's accession, the Saracen Emir, or Prince, of Aleppo, invaded the Kingdom with a large army. He took prisoner Jocelyn of Edessa, the King's nephew, and eighty Knights; and when Baldwin set out to recover Edessa, the Emir managed to capture him also, and sent him loaded with chains to a strongly fortified city of the Saracens. When the ill news became known, fifty Armenians disguised themselves as monks, and bravely ventured into the city to try and rescue the King, who had always been kind to all Armenians for the sake of his wife. They failed, however, and Baldwin remained a prisoner for more than a year; and the fifty brave Armenians were put to a cruel death by the Saracens. Baldwin was set free at last by Jocelyn of Edessa, who killed the Emir, and sent his head to encourage the Christian army, which was having a good deal of hard fighting at the time all round Antioch, Aleppo, and Tyre. After this there came a long and much-needed peace, which Baldwin used for the strengthening of the Kingdom in every way that he could think of. It was in his reign, we must remember, that the Order of the Knights Templars was founded, or begun, and the Hospitallers became a real fighting Order.

Baldwin's great trouble was that he had no son to succeed him, and his two daughters were such proud and

greedy women that no one could have borne their rule for any length of time, and he knew that it was of no use to hope that the Barons would allow either of them to reign after him. So it seemed to Baldwin that the best thing he could do for the Kingdom would be to marry one of his daughters to a strong and good Knight, who should succeed him on the throne and rule the Kingdom well. Alice, the elder daughter, married Boemond of Antioch, the son of the Boemond of the First Crusade. Though he was so young, Boemond gave promise of being as great as his father, but unfortunately he died soon after, leaving one little daughter, Constance, to succeed him as Lady of the great, unrestful Principality. By the law of the Kingdom the little Constance was the ward, or charge, of the King her grandfather until she came of age, which the Letters of the Holy Sepulchre had fixed at twelve years old for a woman if she married at that age, but if she did not, she was considered to be under age until she was sixty! But Alice made up her mind to be the real ruler of Antioch herself, for she was greedy of power and jealous even of her own child. She therefore made a secret treaty, or agreement, with Zanghi the Saracen, who was Sultan of Egypt, to help her against her own father. Luckily the people of Antioch refused to join her in her rebellion, and so her evil tricks were found out and stopped in time. Baldwin the King was so angry at the whole thing that it is said to have shortened his life, and he died rather suddenly at Jerusalem in the winter of 1131, soon after his return

from Antioch, where he had been to settle matters after Alice's treachery was found out.

Baldwin's other daughter, Milicent, he had married to Fulke, Count of Anjou, who had come out to the Holy Land as a pilgrim, and had stayed on at Jerusalem. Fulke was about forty years old when he married Milicent. He had been married before, and had one son, that Geoffrey Plantagenet who married the Empress Matilda, daughter of Henry I of England, some years before Fulke came out to Jerusalem. The son of Geoffrey Plantagenet and Matilda was afterwards our Henry II, who was the father of Richard I, the Lion-Heart, England's great Crusader. So here the history of England begins to touch the history of the Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem: and perhaps it was from his great-grandfather Fulke that Richard Cœur-de-Lion inherited the love and desire for Jerusalem that made him take the Cross and fight so sturdily for her.

When Baldwin II died, Fulke the Pilgrim succeeded him as King of Jerusalem, as had been the wish of Baldwin. Unlike the first three Kings, who had all been big men, Fulke of Anjou was small and slight, with red hair and blue eyes; but like them he was brave and wise, generous as well as just. He had but one fault, said his people who loved him, and that was that he had such a bad memory! He never remembered either a face or a name, and so he would receive a man one day with all honour and friendship, and make him many fair promises which he really meant to keep, and the next day pass him by without

even remembering his face. No wonder that, as a writer of his own time complained, "men who counted on their friendship with the King fell into confusion" when they found themselves quite overlooked and forgotten. But in spite of this fault—and it was a very trying one for a King to have—Fulke was a good and clever King, who really did his best for the people; and under him the Kingdom rose to its fullest glory, and at his death it began to die. For Fulke had the mind of the first Kings in that he set the honour and the good of the Kingdom above his own; and after him came Kings who were foolish and weak and often selfish as well. Unfortunately his wife, Milicent, was not a good woman, and her bad deeds troubled the King and the Kingdom for some years, and in the end brought shame upon both.

Fulke had not been King many years before the Sultan Zanghi of Egypt and the Greek Emperor joined together to attack Antioch; and though Fulke fought bravely, he had to give up one of his best fortresses to the enemy—a loss he felt most bitterly. However five years later he joined with the Damascenes (the people of Damascus, which some say is the oldest city in the world), and recovered another very valuable stronghold from Zanghi, who did not venture to attack Fulke again.

Being left at peace, Fulke was able to turn his thoughts to the enriching of the Kingdom, which the first Kings had had no time to do. He built three strong castles on the southern frontier, which stopped the Egyptian Saracens

from invading the Kingdom from that side, and two on the east. The ruins of some of these castles can still be seen. He was not by any means as great a soldier or King as the three men who had worn the crown of Jerusalem before him, but he was brave and wise, and he knew well how to keep and to increase what they had gained. Under Fulke the Kingdom was richer than it was at any other time, either before his day or after it. The streets of Jerusalem ran, broad and clean, between noble and stately buildings with richly-carved fronts and doorways—Churches, convents, hospices, and the private houses of Knights and Barons. Here moved the busy crowds, prosperous and gaily dressed. Moslem peasants in their bright and picturesque dress brought in their fruit and vegetables from the country on camel or on donkey-back, as they do to-day. Sleek merchants from all parts of the world, easy and secure under the good rule of Fulke, drove hard bargains in the wares of many lands—in furs from Siberia, and horses from Syria and Cyprus; in china and silks from China; in vases of painted marble from far off Mecca; in slaves from Russia and Armenia; in pearls from the Persian Gulf; in glass from Hebron (they make glass to-day in Hebron, as they did in the twelfth century); in ostrich feathers from the burning deserts; in rich enamels and tiles from Damascus, Antioch, and Tripoli; such tiles as still adorn the Mosque of Omar and the Armenian Church at Jerusalem. Knights and nobles and soldiers, shining in armour, or dressed in the rich robes that

showed their high estate, passed through the crowded streets; high-born ladies, walking with dainty feet over the hard stone pavings; every race and every language was at home in Jerusalem in the reign of Fulke.

There were fifteen Latin Churches in the City, and nine on the Mount of Olives, not counting those of other nations, but the centre of the life of the City was the noble old Church of the Holy Sepulchre, to save which the Crusaders had come, and which they loved and guarded with such jealous care. Within it arose by day and night the sweet smell of incense, the chanting of priest and choir, and the prayers of pilgrims and of strangers. The Church was rich with pictures and decorations, and stained-glass windows that gleamed like jewels set high in the thick walls; silver lamps shone like clusters of stars in its dark corners and recesses; and the clang of armed feet was never silent as Knights and men-at-arms passed in and out. The memory of the Crusaders, their prayers and deeds, still seems to cling to this wonderful old Church, telling us how much they loved it in their day. Under the Place of Calvary were buried the three first Kings, Godfrey being in the middle; their graves were an ever-present reminder to the worshippers of the great dead who had won the City. In fact Godfrey was never forgotten while the Kingdom lasted, and every year the anniversary of his death (July 18th) was kept solemnly in Jerusalem, "with plenteous giving of alms in the great Church" (of the Holy Sepulchre) "as himself had arranged while yet alive." The

day of the taking of Jerusalem (July 15th) was also kept, but with rejoicings and thanksgivings. Some lines were written or carved over the door of the Church about this great anniversary:

"One thousand and one hundred years save one
Since Blessed Mary bore her glorious Son;
When rose upon July its fifteenth sun
By Frankish might Jerusalem was won."

The pictures of the three Kings in glass and mosaic, with those of many saints and prophets of the Bible, were put up in the Church, though coloured glass was very rare even in European Churches in those days. The epitaph, or writing, on the tomb of Baldwin I praised him as a "second Judas Maccabeus, and his Country's hope, the Church's pride and strength."

All around the Church there were then, as there are now, the busiest streets of the City; the Markets for spices, silver, and silks, for herbs, and meat and grain; the street called Malquisnat, where the pilgrims' food was cooked, and they themselves were obliged to wash before going on to the Church; and in one street, not far from the Church, called Patriarch's Street, was the Palace of the Kings. It is now the house of the Greek Patriarch, and is built on both sides of the street, whose narrow breadth is crossed by an arch having a room on top. Even now the house is very large; but when the Kings lived there a hundred men could be put up without any difficulty. In the shady corners of

the Markets there were fortune-tellers and conjurers, wild, strange-looking men from the deserts of Egypt or the far Sudan, who shook out little heaps of sand upon a flat stone, and drew in it curious signs and figures with their finger-tips. They could read in the sand the fortunes of the people, who asked them, half-laughing, yet half-believing, too; or see the future in some dark liquid like ink, held in the hollow of the hand—just as to-day in Jerusalem fortunes are read in sand and in ink. And in the back streets of the City, which were so dark and narrow and mysterious-looking, lived regular old witches, who sold love-potions and charms, and medicines made from mandrakes, and roots, and herbs, and powdered pearls, all of which things were said to work real wonders, and for which those who believed in them paid very highly indeed, we may be sure. Then, to the thin exciting note of the Syrian bagpipes and reed flutes, a brown bear, torn when a cub from his home on Mount Hermon of the snows, would slowly and heavily rise on his hind legs and dance for the amusement of the passersby, poked at with long sticks by some, perhaps, and laughed at, for certain, by all. And animals—all animals, but especially wild ones—do so hate being laughed at, quite as much as we do.

Through these bright and busy streets the King would often ride, his small, slight figure mounted on the swift Syrian horses he loved and rode on to his death, and his bright-red hair marking him out amongst his train, his

keen eyes glancing here and there, seeing every face and yet remembering so few; while his quick brain was busy all the time with the cares of this strange Kingdom, which seemed so strong and so great. And the people loved and trusted him as not even Godfrey the hero and the conqueror had been trusted. Godfrey was too high and good a man for the rough soldiers he had led ever to really understand; but Fulke, with his merry ways, his wise head, and quick strong hand, was one whom all could follow and admire, and he shared the life of his people as the first Kings had never done. The mistrustful Saracen trader, the wild Bedouin from the desert, came without fear to Jerusalem, and knew that under Fulke their ways were safe to come and go, and their lives, too, in the City of the Christians.

Not only in Jerusalem was there richness and comfort and peace. All through the Land noble castles and churches had sprung up. In Acre, Antioch, Tyre, and Sidon the Crusaders built real palaces and roofed them inside with costly cedar of Lebanon. Through the streets, which were shaded from the hot sun by coloured awnings, walked the proud lords and barons in almost royal state, with golden coronets upon their heads, each of them like a King with his following of soldiers and Knights and servants; even their war-horses were gay with trappings of gold and silver. Floors of marble and mosaic, ceilings painted in bright colours, rich carpets from Persia, and curtains and pillows of silk from Damascus, made their

castles lovely within, though from outside they might look grim enough to frighten away any attack; and on the flat stone roofs and battlements the ladies walked in gowns of many wonderful colours, rich with jewels and with gold. In the middle of the castles were courtyards, which were kept cool and fresh by fountains and shaded by vines trained over trellises, and by lemon and pomegranate and cypress trees; while here and there in the City were gardens, full of the wonderful flowers and trees of Palestine. "The Holy Land flourished like a garden of delight," wrote a pilgrim, full of praise and wonder at what he saw as he travelled through it. "The wildernesses were so fat (he means fruitful) that where dragons and serpents once had their dwellings, there were now green reeds and cane."

Knights and ladies dressed very richly and in bright colours in time of peace, and kept high state in the great castles. In war-time the Crusaders' armour consisted of a hauberk, or coat, of chain-mail, with leggings of the same; a heavy close-fitting helmet of steel, with nose and neck-pieces, covered the head; while the shield was of thick wood, covered with leather, and over that bands of steel. On these shields were painted (or, as it was called, emblazoned) the arms of the Knight. They used spears, swords, and bows in battle. Richard Cœur-de-Lion's favourite weapon was the terrible iron mace that few could even lift, so great was the weight of it, but which he used so easily and so mightily. The soldiers of the Christian

Kingdom never gave up their heavy armour, and though of course it protected them wonderfully well they also found it very hot and heavy in the East, and often the men were tired out by the very weight of their armour, marching in the hot sun, before they began to fight. The Saracens, who wore very little armour, and that of the lightest kind, did not suffer nearly so much; nor did their horses, untroubled by great weights upon their backs. The Saracens used curved swords something like scythes, which were called scimitars, while the Crusaders kept to the long straight blade that they understood best how to use. But both Saracens and Crusaders loved to have their swords made of the wonderful steel of Damascus, which was famous then all over the world, and is still remembered. The blade had curious streaks upon it like water, which were made by twisting iron and steel together in strips, and beating them out into one solid piece. When the blade was red-hot the armourer of Damascus would take it and plunge it hissing into the cold waters of the river Barada (which is called Abana in the Bible); and their boast was that nothing could ever break a sword which had been cast in the forges of Damascus and cooled in the Barada. Both Crusaders and Saracens used music when going into battle, the Christians having horns, pipes, and trumpets, and the Saracens cymbals and sometimes drums. When Khartoum was taken by the English and Egyptian troops in 1898 a good deal of Crusading and Saracen armour was found amongst the

Dervishes, which, having lasted all those hundreds of years, was still as good as ever for use, and which many of them had put on to fight in. After the battle of Omdurman, and when the Sudan was safe and open to the rest of the world, chain hauberks and steel helmets, shields and cross-handled swords, which had first seen use in many battles in Palestine eight and nine hundred years ago, made their way down the Nile, and came into the markets of Egypt, Palestine, and Europe.

Coins were struck at Acre, having on one side the words in Arabic, "God is One," and on the other, "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." These are still found in Palestine.

The Christian Kingdom had many sports and amusements, as well as much fighting, to exercise it. The Western Knights had brought with them their hawks and hounds, and there was big game in the Land as well as small; they hunted bears and leopards and wild boar, and for smaller game, swift gazelles and hares. Sometimes they hunted with cheetahs and leopards, as the Saracens did; and in times of peace Christians and Saracens went out hunting together in all friendship and good sportsmanship. In the evenings, seated by windows set wide to let in the cool night breeze, or in winter by blazing fires of sweet-smelling olive-wood, oak, and pine, they told the old Western tales from home—of King Arthur, Beowulf, Roland and the Peers of France, and Charlemagne, and of the great deeds of valour performed by the Leaders of the First Crusade. Great feasts they had,

too, when the long tables were heavy with gold and silver plate, and the minstrels played sweetly in the gallery.

Certainly the Crusaders found Palestine a mighty pleasant Land to live in, and were very well content—too well content, perhaps—to settle there for good and all. "Consider," wrote a pilgrim, who came to the Holy Land about this time, "how the West has been turned into the East; how he who was of the West has become of the East; he who was Roman or Frank has become here a Galilean or an inhabitant of Palestine; he who was a citizen of Rheims or of Chartres is become a citizen of Tyre or of Antioch. The stranger has become the native, the pilgrim the resident; day by day our relations come from the West and stay with us. Those who were poor at home God has made rich here. Why should he who finds the East so fortunate return again to the West?" That was the trouble. The Christians were already beginning to forget their own colder lands, and to dislike the idea of returning to what were, perhaps, harder lives at home; and there is no blessing for a man who deserts or forgets his own country only for the sake of gain. "Men of every tribe and every nation came there. They came in crowds from beyond the sea, especially from Genoa, Venice, and Pisa. But the greatest number came from France and Germany," says our pilgrim; and he goes on to say that the Italians were more courageous at sea, and the French and Germans on land. "The Germans, the Franks, and the English are less deceitful, less careful, but more daring than the Italians;

less sober, more generous; less wise and careful; more devout, more generous, more courageous; therefore they are considered more useful for the defence of the Holy Land, and more to be feared against the Saracens." I have altered some of the words of the old writer (who liked to use the very longest ones he could find), but it is nice to know that all those years ago England gave her best to help the Christian Kingdom. Perhaps it was these English Crusaders who, being "generous, devout and courageous," first made good the saying that is still alive in Palestine, and which makes us proud in hearing it spoken now—"On the word of an Englishman it is true."

We must never think that the Crusaders were rough, lawless, savage people; they counted amongst them the best and noblest of Europe, and it was not a set of barbarians who won the Kingdom of Jerusalem, and ordered it so wisely for over eighty years. Palestine was richer, more prosperous, and more content under the Crusaders' rule than at any other time in all her history. But as the Christians grew richer, and left off the hardy habits they had brought with them from home, they came to care too much for ease and comfort and riches; and this, with the numbers of mean and selfish men who hurried out to the East wanting only to get rich, was what made the Kingdom weak, and in the end brought it to its fall.

But in the day of Fulke there was no sign of coming trouble. Everywhere there was ease and comfort, wealth and prosperity, and there was little sign of coming trouble

to disquiet his people. Small expeditions against the Saracens, or against robbers who still troubled the Land in parts, kept the Crusaders' swords in use, from time to time, and as these were usually successful, they only added to their contentment and self-satisfaction.

Fulke did not at all trust his wife's sister, Alice of Antioch, for he remembered how false she had been to her own father, King Baldwin; and as she was beginning to be restless and troublesome again, he thought of a way in which he could keep her quiet. It was not a very good way, but it answered his purpose. He sent to Europe to a Knight he had known there in the old days, Raymond of Poitou, and invited him to come out and marry the little Constance of Antioch, who was now about twelve years of age. Raymond was only too ready to do this, for Constance was one of the chief people in the Kingdom, as Antioch was one of its richest provinces. Fulke thought that he would find a good husband for his little niece, who would also be a strong defender and ruler for Antioch, but no one seems to have thought at all about Constance herself and her wishes in the matter.

Now, Fulke knew very well that Alice would never let the power pass out of her hands into those of any other, so he tricked her in a way that was not quite worthy of a King. He told her that Raymond of Poitou was coming out to marry her, and never even breathed the name of Constance in connection with Raymond's coming. Alice was delighted, though she had been married twice already,

for she thought it would mean more power for her, and she looked out eagerly for the stranger's arrival. But when Raymond did come, the Patriarch of Antioch, who had had his secret orders from the King beforehand, married him at once to the child Constance. Alice was furiously angry, especially at the trick that had deceived her, but she could not undo the marriage. Everyone was glad that Fulke had got the better of her; Fulke himself was laughing at her, and altogether it was too much for her pride to bear. She left Antioch, and from that day she troubled the province and the Kingdom no more. In fact, Fulke had cut her claws, and she was robbed of all power to do any more harm. It was a pity for the Kingdom that Fulke was never able to put a stop to Milicent's power for working mischief.

The first great blow to the peace of the Kingdom was the sudden death of Fulke himself at Acre. He was walking one day outside the City walls with Milicent the Queen, when he put up a hare in the long grass. He was ever a keen hunter, and calling for his horse and lance he set off in hot pursuit; but the horse caught its foot in a hole hidden in the grass and fell, throwing the King with such force that his skull was cracked. Sadly his people carried him to the City, where he lay for four days quite unconscious, and then, to their deep sorrow, he died. Fulke's two sons, Baldwin and Amaury, were only thirteen and seven years of age when he died. Each of them was destined in turn to wear the thorny crown of Jerusalem, to his own sorrow

and the undoing of the Kingdom; and the Kingdom was thus left in the weak hands of a boy of thirteen, and of his mother, a clever, selfish, and ambitious woman, who cared nothing for either King or Kingdom—Milicent the Armenian.

The Second Crusade
Baldwin III, 1144-1162

"This mighty war
Shook realms and nations in its jar;
Beneath each banner proud to stand,
Looked up the noblest of the land."

Scott.

Baldwin III, the eldest son of Fulke and Milicent, became King of Jerusalem at the age of thirteen. He was a plucky, generous-hearted boy, tall and broad like the first Kings, but full of fun like his father; fond of all outdoor sports and exercise, and fond, too, of books, and especially of histories. His manner, which was courteous and friendly, yet always full of royal dignity, won him the hearts of his people; and, unlike his father, he had the royal gift of never forgetting a face or a name. He grew from a bright, high-spirited boy into a man of clean and upright life. His great faults were his passion for dicing and gambling; but it could never be said of Baldwin III that he forgot a service or deserted a friend, and only once that he broke a trust. If Fulke, the wise and merry King, had lived to see his son grow up, and to train him to wear what was surely the heaviest crown in all Christendom, they two between them might have brought the Kingdom to a lasting greatness; but the boy of thirteen was not able to do it by himself. To begin with, he was hindered in every

way from the first day of his reign by his mother Milicent, who insisted on being crowned with him in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre as regent. Proud and crafty, Milicent was no good helper to her open-minded son, and she could have done so much to strengthen his hands; but she suspected everyone because she herself was not straight, and she filled the mind of Baldwin with mean and horrid doubts of everyone around him, until the boy knew not whom to trust. And a man who does not trust others is never served well by them. Again, men remembered all the trouble she had brought upon the Kingdom in the past, and they could never trust her freely, for all her fair words and her present good behaviour.

Directly Fulke's hand was off the Kingdom, and she herself regent, Milicent gave as much power as she could into the hands of her fellow-countrymen; and she persuaded Baldwin III, (as she had sometimes been able to persuade Fulke), to give posts of honour and wealth to Armenians. These Armenians often treated the people under them very badly, especially the patient and hard-working peasants, by taxing them unfairly, and by taking the same taxes from them more than once. For all these things Milicent was blamed and hated by the people. They also thought that the young King was too much under her power, and so they were afraid to trust him entirely either. It was this feeling on the part of his people that prevented Baldwin from doing any really useful work for the Kingdom.

The two young Sieurs, or Lords, Jocelyn of Edessa and Raymond of Antioch, had somehow come to have each a bitter jealousy of the other; and they spent all their time in trying to spite each other, more like two naughty boys than the heads of the two chief Principalities of the Kingdom. Jocelyn was a foolish, vain, and light-minded youth, who should have been busy in strengthening his country; for Zanghi, the terrible Sultan of Egypt, was preparing for war, and Edessa lay right in his path, so that he must either pass it by or take it on his way to Jerusalem. But Jocelyn thought far more of teasing Raymond than of sharpening his sword; and he laughed at his Knights when they warned him of the danger that was coming nearer every day. A most unlovely person was this Jocelyn, both in mind and body; weak, false, and idle. And in the winter of 1144, Zanghi of Egypt appeared before the walls of Edessa with a great army. Jocelyn in a terrible fright sent messengers here and there for help, even to his old enemy Raymond of Antioch. But Raymond refused to help him, putting his private quarrel with Jocelyn above the service of the Kingdom. The young King Baldwin was a boy, not long since crowned; and when his mother ordered the army in his name to march to the help of Edessa, the soldiers refused as one man to obey an order given by the woman whom the whole country hated and distrusted. There was no help for Jocelyn anywhere, and he himself was as useless in war as a baby, and far more troublesome to those about him.

Zanghi took Edessa with very little trouble, and not much loss. He undermined the great towers of the city—that is, he dug deep under their foundations—and, as the earth was taken away, the stones were held up with great beams of wood; when all was ready the beams would be set on fire. For twenty-two days this went on, then suddenly the great towers fell crashing to the ground; the fierce soldiers of Zanghi rushed in, killing all they found without mercy. As the Crusaders had treated the Saracens at the taking of Jerusalem in 1099, so were they treated now by Zanghi at the fall of Edessa.

Great was the grief of the Christian Kingdom, and of Europe, too, when the fall of Edessa was known. In every place men feared when they heard that the army of the Cross had been beaten by the Saracens, and they feared the name of Zanghi more and more. But it happened that Zanghi was murdered the following year by his own slaves; and hope began to rise once more in the hearts of the Christians.

Meanwhile, the young King, boy though he was, was proving his mettle by two campaigns. One, carried out in the wild country beyond Jordan, was quite successful, though it was a small affair; the other, though it ended in loss and trouble, yet showed that Baldwin III had the spirit of the old Kings in him. The Armenian governor of the Saracen town of Bozrah, in the Hauran, (which is the rich corn-land beyond Damascus), came secretly to Jerusalem, and offered to deliver up the town with which he was

entrusted to the Christians, if they made it worth his while to do so. The offer was eagerly welcomed by the Christians, for it would be something to have Bozrah though Edessa was lost. No doubt Milicent, too, was very anxious that this offer, made by a fellow-countryman of her own, should be accepted. It would seem that men were always ready enough to fight in those days, for Baldwin gathered an army quite easily, and went with it; for though, as King, he was leader in name, he was too young really to command it.

The march was full of difficulties and hardships. The Saracens, lightly armed and mounted on fleet horses, hung upon them on all sides, and worried them with showers of arrows by day and by night. Water was scarce, and often too bad to drink. After four days of this, the Christians, (every one of whom, and also their horses, had been wounded more or less badly by the darts of the Saracens), came in sight of Bozrah, and camped for the night in view of it; meaning to attack it on the morrow when they were a little rested.

So they lay down to dream of victory; but at midnight a messenger from the town arrived secretly, and was taken to the young King's tent. He brought bad news, for he said that the wife of the Armenian governor had vowed that she at least would have no share in the treachery of her husband, and that she had warned the Saracens of the coming of the Christians. The Saracens were now

occupying the town in great strength, and were all on the alert.

"Let us go back!" was the cry then, through all the Christian camp. "We cannot take the town now, and if we stay here the Saracens will fall upon us. Why should we perish?"

But the nobler minds amongst them mastered the fears of the lesser men. "Christians cannot turn their backs upon Saracens," said the Knights, "but we must surely save our King. Let him take the horse of John Gomane, which is the fleetest in our camp, and get back to Jerusalem in safety. Later on he can avenge our deaths."

Baldwin struck in, in hot and generous anger. He would have none of this. What did they take him for—him, the King! If his army remained, so would he; was it for the King to leave his soldiers in any difficulty? The Knights gave way; they could not but admire and love the high-spirited boy of fourteen.

At dawn the Christian army began the homeward march. The wounded, and even the dead, were bound upon the backs of the horses and of the baggage-mules and camels, so that the enemy might not know how much the Christians had suffered from their attacks. It was very hot; water there was none; the army was half choked by the clouds of dust it raised as it marched over the dry heavy ground; and still all around them hung the tormenting Saracens, with their stinging flights of arrows.

The Christians kept good order in spite of everything; and the fact that there were no dead, or even wounded (as they thought), amongst them, puzzled the Saracens very much, and made them afraid to attack the full army at close quarters. Instead, they set fire to the dry stubble and brushwood which springs up everywhere in Palestine, and the wind blew the flames and smoke in the very faces of the Christians. Now the men could bear no more, and they cried to Archbishop Robert of Nazareth, who marched with them, "Father, pray for us! We can bear no more! Pray for us, in the name of the True Cross which you carry in our midst!"

And as the Archbishop prayed, suddenly the wind changed, and the smoke and flames blew backwards into the faces of the Saracens instead. But even so, the faces and hands of the Christians were already black with the smoke, their eyes were smarting, and their throats dry and parched with the dust, and heat, and thirst. They were almost at the end of their courage.

Then the Christians sent a message of truce to the pursuing Saracens; but the only one who knew the language was a Knight, whom some of his companions thought to be untrue to his side.

"Do you swear to deal truly in this?" said the Barons, as they charged him with their message to the Saracens. "Will you faithfully repeat our words to the enemy, and as faithfully tell us again what their answer is?"

"You suspect me unjustly," said the Knight with bitterness. "I will do what you ask of me. If I am guilty of treachery may I never return to you! Let me perish at the hands of our enemy!"

They sent him; and before he had gone many yards he fell dead, shot through and through with Saracen arrows.

This hope being now at an end, the Christians pressed doggedly on. As they passed by Damascus, the Emir of that city sent messengers to invite them in, to rest and refresh themselves. The Christians, worn out, sick, and disheartened, longed to enter that lovely city, with its cool rivers and fountains, and its great belt of green surrounding the walls for over a mile on all sides; "the Paradise on earth," as the Prophet Mohammed had called it in his day. But after taking counsel amongst themselves, they all agreed that they dared not trust the Emir's word; and so they pressed on. Then, say the Christian writers of that day, there appeared to them the good Knight St. George, and showed them a road which was unknown to the enemy, and by which they could escape.

So at last they reached Jerusalem in safety, though not, perhaps, in much honour; and the people came out with joy to welcome the King. "This our son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found!" they sang as he rode, sadly enough, through the crowds in the streets to his home.

The whole expedition had been a mistake. To gain an advantage through the treachery of the Armenian governor would never even have entered Godfrey's mind; but the whole spirit of the Christian Kingdom was much lower now. The only good thing about it all was that the young Baldwin had proved himself a boy of fine and manly courage. The miserable failure of the expedition was laid by the people at Milicent's door; and they hated her the more bitterly for it, without trying to find out whether she were really in fault or not.

The Christian countries of Europe were sorely troubled at the loss of Edessa. It was a double danger, first to the Kingdom, of which it was an outpost, and secondly to Europe; for if the Saracen Turks got hold of Jerusalem, it would leave them free to try for Europe itself. Out of this fear arose the Second Crusade. It was preached by St. Bernard of Clairvaux, and was composed only of Germans under Conrad, King of the Romans, and French under Louis VII of France. Louis, in a fit of wickedness, had set fire with his own hand to a Church at Vitry, in which perished thirteen hundred people—all his own subjects; and he took the Cross as a penance for this awful deed. Unfortunately the chief Knights and leaders of the Crusade brought with them their wives, and these had with them the women of their households; so that the whole army was very much hindered by the presence of so many women, and all their baggage. And in the end, whether by sickness, or by the enemy's attacks, the

unfortunate women all perished; and Eleanor of Aquitaine, the wife of Louis (she who afterwards married our King Henry II, and was the mother of Richard Cœur-de-Lion), was the only one who reached the Holy Land alive, with her ladies.

The Crusaders stayed at Antioch a long time; for Eleanor of Aquitaine was cousin to Raymond of Antioch, and he kept them there by one excuse after another, hoping to reap some good for himself from the presence of this army and the great King of France. At last a very urgent message from Milicent at Jerusalem brought the Crusaders from Antioch to Acre, where Baldwin met them; and the three Kings held a great council together with their chief men. It was a pity that instead of trying to recover Edessa, which was what they had really come out to do, they made up their minds to try and take Damascus and its rich country all round; and more foolishly still they set out to do it in the fierce heat of July. The Emir of Damascus at that time was one Eyub, the father of the great Saladin who afterwards fought against Richard I. The Templars advised an attack, but the Kings thought differently; so they tried to take the city by surprise, and were hopelessly defeated. After which the whole Crusade beat a most unworthy retreat. The Templars were accused of treachery and greed, but no one could prove it against them; though no doubt there was very little honour or faith left in the Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem by now.

No sooner were the Crusaders out of the Land than Nur-ed-din (the name means Light of the Faith: he was a very fine man), the Sultan of Aleppo and Damascus, invaded the Province of Antioch, captured many of its castles, and finally killed the Count, Raymond. It was all that King Baldwin could do to keep Antioch for the Kingdom during his lifetime. The Kingdom was getting smaller and weaker. Edessa was gone, Antioch was very unsafe, only Tripoli remained untouched; and to the fierce attacks of the Saracens from without, was added the worse danger of quarrels, jealousy, and treachery within. A great deal of the trouble seemed to come from Milicent. She wanted so much, and she cared nothing for anyone else, not even for her son and his Kingdom. She was determined to keep Jerusalem for her own, and she openly defied her son. At last Baldwin had to besiege her in the Tower of David, where she had shut herself in; and very likely he would have taken both her and it, if the Patriarch had not made peace between the royal mother and son. Milicent was given Nablous for her lifetime, to which beautiful town she retired at once, and where she died about twelve years later.

A touch of brightness and success came to the Kingdom in the capture of Ascalon, that most important seaport, which Baldwin took after four months' siege. Baldwin gave generous terms to the prisoners, and gave them guides to take them across the desert to Egypt. It was

not his fault that these poor people afterwards perished through the treachery of a guide.

About this time Baldwin's young cousin Constance of Antioch, being now a widow while still a girl in age, surprised everyone by marrying a poor and unknown Knight, of the name of Renaud de Chatillon. Baldwin was very glad, as Antioch badly needed a strong hand to keep it against the attacks of the Saracens; but the Patriarch of Antioch, for some reason, was extremely angry at the marriage, and spread abroad a great many stories about Renaud. De Chatillon was naturally very angry, and he took a rather mean revenge; for he pretended to have forgiven the Patriarch, and invited him to be his guest; and when he had got hold of him, he covered the Patriarch's bald head with honey, and fastened him up outside, where the wasps stung his poor bald head very badly indeed. The whole Kingdom was in a laugh about it, and the poor Patriarch had to give up his charge and leave Antioch for good.

Peace for four years followed the taking of Ascalon; and during this time of quiet Renaud de Chatillon very meanly made an attack upon the Island of Cyprus, for no reason at all except greed; and he murdered and plundered from shore to shore. Baldwin, too, did the only mean deed that can be told against him, for he broke faith with some Saracen and Arab shepherds whom he had allowed to feed their flocks and herds on the rich Mountains of Lebanon. They were quiet and peaceable

people, but Baldwin was heavily in debt when one of his friends suggested this evil plan to him; and the King himself, with a few followers, went to the Lebanon, killed the shepherd-tribes without mercy, and returned to Jerusalem rich in the plunder of their flocks, horses, and other possessions.

Nur-ed-Din, who was almost as much feared by the Kingdom as Zanghi had been, attacked the Castle of Banias, which was held by the Knights Hospitallers. Baldwin marched to their relief, and Nur-ed-Din raised the siege, and retreated swiftly, drawing on Baldwin in pursuit of him; until near Lake Huleh (in north Galilee) he surprised the Christian army. Baldwin, with a handful of men, just managed to escape to the Castle of Safed, which was the nearest place of refuge; the rest of his men were either killed or kept as slaves by their Saracen conquerors. Amongst the first were eighty-seven Templars, whose death was a great loss indeed to the Kingdom. Fortunately for Baldwin and his crown, a small French army arrived unexpectedly not very long after this defeat; and with the help of this force Baldwin was able to drive the Saracens out of Tripoli and Antioch, and also, to the great surprise of both sides, to defeat them really badly at Damascus.

These small victories only helped to keep the Kingdom alive; they could not save it; for the Kingdom itself was fast rotting away to its fall through the selfishness, greed, and jealousy of its own Knights and

rulers. Though Baldwin was a good man himself, he was not strong enough to change things. When the Knights Hospitallers quarrelled with the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and revenged themselves by ringing the bells of their Church just opposite whenever the Patriarch went into the Holy Sepulchre to take service, so that no one could hear a single word that was said, Baldwin could do nothing with either side. And it was the same in every difficulty; Baldwin was ready to do everything, and he was not strong enough to do anything.

In 1162 Baldwin visited Antioch, and on his return he fell ill, and died at Beyrout. He was only thirty-two years old, but he was glad to go, for the eighteen years of his reign had been full of trouble and disappointment. Two years before his death he had married Theodora, the niece of the Emperor of Constantinople; she, poor child, was only thirteen at the time, but she brought a great deal of money with her, which was badly wanted for the Kingdom. Beyond this she was no possible help either to Baldwin or to Jerusalem, which she filled with tales of the selfish and ease-loving life she led. Baldwin died, leaving the Kingdom weak and shaken; the Knights and Barons for ever quarrelling with each other; the Church against everything that came in the way of its getting richer; and a strong and eager enemy almost at the gate. His people mourned for him truly. Perhaps they guessed that even sadder days were coming upon the Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem.

The Kingdom on the Wane
Amaury, 1162-1174.
Baldwin IV, the Leper, 1174-1185.
Baldwin V, 1185-1186.

"Where wise men are not strong:
Where comfort turns to trouble:
Where just men suffer wrong.
Where sorrow treads on joy:
Where sweetest things soon cloy:
Where faiths are built on dust:
Where Love is half mistrust."

Matthew Arnold.

Amaury, the younger brother of Baldwin III, succeeded him without any real trouble, though just at first the Knights and Barons could not make up their minds to choose him. For Amaury was not at all liked by the people. He was a very fat, heavy, silent man, who seldom spoke, and never laughed; he stammered a little in his speech, too; and was cold both in heart and in temper. He was not a good man, either, as Baldwin had been, and he was something of a miser in his money affairs. But because he had always given much to the Church, and seemed to be really afraid of themselves, the Patriarch and clergy insisted on his being chosen; and at length he was crowned in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Now, no sooner was Amaury made King, than he suddenly changed all his ways. Instead of giving to the Church, he taxed it well for the uses of the Kingdom; he was no longer afraid of the anger of the clergy, but snapped his fingers at their rage. Therefore the Church joined with the rest of the Kingdom in disliking the new King, only rather more, perhaps, because of being so disappointed in him. King Amaury found himself very much alone, and he turned more and more to the thing he most cared for, and that was reading. He read a great deal, and he was well learned in history and in law; but he had very few friends, and even those who were oftenest with him could not really love the cold, silent, heavy man, who seemed to care only for his books, his money, and his food.

Amaury was married to Agnes, daughter of the Count of Edessa, and had three children, Baldwin, Sybil, and Isabella. The little Baldwin was the godson of Baldwin III, his uncle; and when he was baptized one of the Knights present said to King Baldwin, "What will you give your nephew and godson, Sire?" "Give him?" said the King, laughing; "why, shall I not give him my name, and my crown too!" Men shook their heads at this careless saying at the time, and whispered that it was a bad omen for Baldwin the King.

Amaury's first little war was a successful one. It was against Egypt, and though it was quite a small affair altogether, he returned from that country well pleased, and laden with spoils and riches. But when he reached

Jerusalem he heard that while he was away Nur-ed-Din had defeated the Counts of Tripoli and Antioch, and had taken the stronghold of Banias—or, rather, it had been weakly given up to Nur-ed-Din by the Castellan, or Keeper, of the castle, in a moment of most unworthy fear. Banias was one of the most important and most valuable castles in the whole Kingdom, and its loss could not be made good; and Amaury, in great anger, hanged twelve Templars who had been there when it was given up, for having allowed such a deed. By doing this he made the whole Order of the Temple his bitter enemies for life, and they never lost a chance afterwards of working him harm.

Nur-ed-Din next made up his mind to send the uncle of Saladin to take Egypt as well, weakened as it was by Amaury's invasion just before. Amaury saw the great danger of this to his own Kingdom; for if Nur-ed-Din in Syria and the north joined with Egypt in the south against the Christians, the weak little Kingdom of Jerusalem would be crushed like a nut between crackers. He therefore hastily made friends with the Sultan of Egypt, and together they were able to stop Nur-ed-Din's plans for a time.

Amaury often sent urgent letters to Europe for help, but no good came of them. The old Crusading spirit was almost dead; men were now more selfish, and they much preferred to make easy pilgrimages (if, indeed, they made them at all) to the tombs of saints in Europe; for such journeys gave them little trouble or danger, and were

holidays rather than pilgrimages. No one seemed to care any longer for the City of Christ.

Amaury was disappointed time after time of the help he needed so much; but he still dreamed of a great Christian Kingdom which should reach from Jerusalem to Cairo; and in the hope of doing this he married Maria, the niece of the Emperor of Constantinople. Having done one bad deed—for he sent away Agnes of Edessa to marry this young Greek princess—Amaury went on to break faith with the Sultan of Egypt, his first ally; and to cover his own unfaithfulness he accused the Sultan of having been untrue to him first, and made war upon him. It was the great sin of the Christian Kingdom that its people never kept their word, if it suited them to break it; and from being unfaithful to those outside, they soon came to being unfaithful to each other; and so they became weaker and weaker. Amaury was quickly punished for his sin, however, for the Greek alliance was not the least help to him. The Emperor had promised faithfully to send food for the Christian army, but he sent so little that it was of no use at all. Storms scattered the Greek fleet here and there; and Amaury was left without help from either the Greeks or the Egyptians, with barely enough food for himself and his own household, and without any honour at all in the eyes of either his past or his present allies. He gave up the thought of this great Christian Kingdom from Jerusalem to Cairo, and was glad to return safely to his

own land; where, at Ascalon, he signed a treaty of peace with the Sultan of Egypt.

After this shameful business Amaury returned to Jerusalem; where he spent most of his time in reading, eating, and trying to squeeze money out of his Kingdom, which was already as poor as it could well be.

The next year, 1170, brought no comfort to the Kingdom, but only fresh troubles; for there were bad earthquakes from time to time, lasting through three or four months, in which the city of Tyre was badly hurt; and Edessa, Antioch, Aleppo, and Tripoli were reduced almost to ruins, and half their inhabitants killed. "The cities were heaps of stones." They were the strongest cities in the Kingdom, too, and the money that had to be spent on rebuilding and repairing them was so much wanted for other purposes.

A great man had by now arisen in the East—Saladin—whose name we know as that of the great Saracen chief who fought against our own Richard I. There has seldom been in any land a greater man than Saladin; wise, generous, and just, brave, merciful, and very straight in all his dealings, he was a second Godfrey, only that he was on the other side. Saladin (the name may be translated as meaning Splendour of the Faith) was now about thirty years of age; and he was Sultan of Egypt. From his capital there he marched across the deserts that separate Egypt from Palestine, and entered the Christian Kingdom on the

south. Amaury hurried down to Gaza, with an army of two hundred Knights and about two thousand men. Saladin advanced a little further, plundered a few towns and villages, and then went back. He did not want to meet the Christians just yet in full battle, for he knew that his men, lightly armed and unused to the foreign ways of fighting, could not yet be trusted to make a good stand against the Christians in their heavy armour. Saladin wished them to become well used to the Christians by meeting them in small encounters, so that when he was ready he could crush the Christian Kingdom with one great blow. This was the dream of Saladin. We shall see how far it came true.

Amaury found himself too weak to stand alone; he must have help from somewhere, and there seemed no place but Constantinople that could give it. He told his Barons in council that he was going himself to get it. The Barons were astounded. "If you, the King, go and leave us," they said, "who will keep the Kingdom?"

"Let the Lord look to the Kingdom—if it be His!" answered Amaury roughly and bitterly; for he was disgusted at their selfishness, in which they thought only of themselves. "As for me, I go to fetch help."

He went to Constantinople, and returned with some gold, but no men. He found Nur-ed-Din plaguing Galilee, burning here and plundering there, but taking care never to stop long enough in any one place for the Christians to

catch him. Amaury's return sent Nur-ed-Din out of Galilee; and the Saracens were defeated soon after at Kerak, on the other side of the river Jordan.

As Constantinople had failed him, Amaury looked around for some other helper, and he found a very strange one. In the Mountains of Lebanon there lived a most strange and mysterious old man, the chief of a great tribe; he was called the Old Man of the Mountains, and also the Chief of the Assassins. His people were trained from their earliest days to obey his orders exactly, no matter what they were; any disobedience, however small, was punished by instant death. Very often the Old Man would send them out to kill an enemy of his, and this pleasant habit gave him his second name of Chief of the Assassins. The Assassins were always successful; they would follow a man for weeks or for months, but in the end they always killed him. In fact they dared not fail, for the Old Man would have had them followed in their turn by other Assassins, and put to death.

The Old Man sent messengers to King Amaury with a strange offer.

"I will become a Christian, and all my people with me," said the Old Man; "I will lend you a strong army to use as you please, if you on your part will give me two thousand pieces of gold every year."

Very gladly did Amaury agree; and he sent away the messengers with rich gifts, and his royal word. But on their

way home, the Templars fell upon them suddenly, and cut nearly all of them to pieces. This was their revenge upon Amaury for having hanged twelve of their Order after the loss of Banias.

The ill news filled Amaury with rage and despair. His great plan was spoilt; the last chance of the Kingdom gone. He ordered the Grand Master of the Templars to deliver up the chief of the band which had killed the Old Man's messengers, that he might be punished as he deserved. The Grand Master refused. "I myself," he answered proudly, "as Head of the Order, will do judgment!" Whereupon Amaury seized the Knight himself, and dealt with him very hardly; for which we may be sure the Templars did not love him any better. Amaury was able to make the Old Man believe that he himself had had no hand in this horrid deed; but the Assassins and their Chief had had enough of Christian ways, and they made no more offers of friendship.

There is a tribe living in the north of Palestine now, which some people believe to be descended from these Assassins of olden days. They are not Assassins now, of course, but only rather a wild and lawless set of men, who once made travelling in that part of the Holy Land less safe than it was elsewhere. It is things like this that help to make Palestine such a nice Land—full of links with the past, that are old and yet ever new.

In 1173 the great and much-feared Nur-ed-Din died. Amaury at once besieged Banias, but—for to this low state had Godfrey's Kingdom fallen—he actually accepted money from the widow of Nur-ed-Din to go away and leave her in peace! King Amaury returned to Jerusalem ill with fever. There Greek, Syrian, and Latin doctors all tried their skill upon him, and their different medicines; and under their too kind care the King died (1174). He was only thirty-eight, and he had been King for just twelve years. Those twelve years were one long story of disgrace and weakness and defeat; but the blame for these things was not all his. And to Amaury and his love for history we owe one of the most delightful histories ever written—the History of Jerusalem that Archbishop William of Tyre wrote, and which tells us so much about the Christian Kingdom.

Amaury's only son succeeded him, Baldwin IV, a bright, clever, handsome boy of thirteen. He was a reader, like his father, and yet as active as his uncle Baldwin III had been. But he was a leper. Leprosy is a fearful disease, which is found in Eastern countries; it slowly wastes away the person till he becomes blind and miserable and awful to look at, and can hardly be called alive, but is just a breathing misery. The Crusaders suffered a good deal from leprosy in the later years of the Kingdom, for they were not careful how they ate and drank and lived in the hot Land of Palestine; and they never thought that because it was not the land of their birth, they ought to

have taken all the more care. They even brought the fearful sickness back with them to Europe, where it remained for many years. In some old Churches in England you can still see a long narrow window, set slanting in the thickness of the wall. Such windows are called Leper Windows, (or "Squints"), and they were made so that the lepers, who were not allowed to go into Church with the rest of the worshippers, could look through, and see the altar and the priest while service was being held.

This awful sickness had shown itself in the little King when he was only eight years old. He was so beautiful and so healthy to look at that no one could ever have thought of his having it, and it was quite by chance that his tutor, Archbishop William of Tyre, found it out. The Archbishop noticed that Baldwin did not seem to feel being pinched or touched by other boys in play, for he never called out as they did; and when the doctors examined him, they found that the disease had already got a firm hold of him. All the many medicines that were tried upon Baldwin did him no good at all; for there is no cure for leprosy, as far as we know, even now, and the doctors in those days were not very clever. It was a dreadful trouble to poor King Amaury, and after it was found out he gave a great deal of money to lepers. There were many lepers in Jerusalem in those days, as there are even now.

Baldwin IV was crowned in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and Count Raymond of Tripoli was made regent of the Kingdom.

That same year (1174) the people of Damascus invited Saladin to be their ruler, instead of the young son of Nur-ed-Din, who was only fourteen. Saladin accepted the crown they offered him, and married the widow of Nur-ed-Din. In this way he became Sultan of a very great Empire indeed, which included Damascus, Aleppo, and Cairo, right away to Sinai in Arabia, and the land of Yemen. In his new strength Saladin marched against the Christian Kingdom, and got near enough to Jerusalem to frighten the people thoroughly; but being stopped by the strongly defended castle of Gezer, (between Jaffa and Jerusalem), he turned back, plundering the land as he passed through. For ten years Saladin did not trouble the Kingdom; but those years were spent in thorough and careful preparation for the great attack.

The leprosy of Baldwin quickly became worse, and the Barons named his eldest sister Sybil to succeed him. Sybil's first husband died, and their little son, another Baldwin, was declared heir to the Kingdom. Then Sybil married again, a young Knight called Guy de Lusignan, who was handsome in face and pleasant in manner, but as weak as a man could well be, and who was even less able than the sick young King to lead or manage the proud and unruly Barons of Palestine. And it was this worthless Guy

who was presently named regent of the Holy Land, in the place of Count Raymond of Tripoli.

We must go back a little way to that Renaud de Chatillon who had married Constance of Antioch, the niece of Baldwin III and of Amaury. Constance was dead; and Renaud married again in order to get what he much wanted, power and great possessions in the rich country east of the Jordan. Here he made friends with the Templars, who also had lands in that part, and he joined them in making little private attacks upon the Saracens, robbing their caravans, or travelling parties, plundering their lands, and killing them whenever he had the chance. The worst thing he did was to attack a Saracen caravan during a time of peace, at a place where they had camped for the night, not far from Renaud's castle of Kerak. Renaud swept down upon these unfortunate people while they were at their evening meal, killed some of them, tortured others, and shut them up in cells and in grain-pits—dark places where they could hardly breathe. When they reminded him that he was breaking faith by treating them so in a time of peace, Renaud mockingly replied, "Ask your Prophet to deliver you!" When Saladin heard of these things that Renaud had said and done, he swore a great oath that he would kill Renaud with his own hand, if he ever fell into his power.

Saladin also complained of these things to Baldwin, but the leper-King was powerless through his illness, and Guy the regent was no use either; he was not only weak,

but he did not care enough about what went on to take any trouble to stop wrong things being done. Renaud simply laughed at both King and regent, and went on exactly as before. Then Saladin swept through Galilee, doing much harm to that fair Christian province; and then, turning north, he besieged Beyrout. Luckily for the Christians, he was suddenly recalled to Damascus by urgent affairs of his own, before he had time to do much harm there.

The Barons by now were thoroughly tired of Guy's folly and weakness. They forced the King to take away the regency from him, and to name as co-King with himself his little nephew, also called Baldwin, Sybil's son. So now there were two Kings in Jerusalem of the same name, Baldwin IV and Baldwin V—the one a helpless leper, the other a helpless child. Guy was ordered by the elder King to explain the many wrong things he had done, or allowed, while he was regent; but he refused to appear before the court, and fled away in haste to Ascalon. To that city the King, now blind and very suffering, painfully followed him. The great gates of the city were shut in his face; and when Baldwin, saying, "They will surely open to me, for I am still the King!" beat with his own poor hand upon those heavy doors, Guy and the soldiers on the wall only laughed at him, and mocked his weakness with many cruel words. So Baldwin returned to Jerusalem, and took away all the grand titles, or names of honour, that he had given to Guy in better days, and made Count Raymond of Tripoli regent in his place.

About this time the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Heraclius, and the Grand Masters of the Hospitallers and of the Templars, were sent by the Barons of the Kingdom to make one last strong appeal to Europe for help. Their words fell upon deaf ears. The Kings were all too busy with their own affairs to listen or help. Henry II of England gave money, as a sort of make-peace to the Church for the murder of Archbishop Thomas à Becket; but his sons were all in arms against him, and he dared not leave home. Henry had wished for many years to lead a Crusade, (it is said that he had even taken the Cross privately); and no doubt the fame of his name as a soldier would have drawn many to follow him, as a few years later the very name of his son Richard brought men flocking to his banner. Ten years before Henry had sworn in public to take the Cross, but his life at home had been so full and so troubled, that he had not dared to go so far away. He now offered the Patriarch money for the Kingdom of Jerusalem, but he could not go himself, as they had hoped. At this the Patriarch, who was a very bad-tempered man, fell into a furious rage.

"You swore to lead an army to the Holy Land," he said, "ten years ago! And your promise is still unkept. You have deceived God, and do you not fear the punishment of God upon those who try to deceive Him? You may kill me in your anger, as you have killed my brother Thomas of Canterbury; it matters nothing to me whether I die by the

hand of the Saracens, or of you, who are more cruel than any Saracen!"

Henry kept his temper wonderfully in the face of the Patriarch's angry reproaches; perhaps he respected him for not being afraid to scold him, the King. All he said was, "My mind is made up. I cannot leave my Kingdom; but any of my people who wish may take the Cross."

But very few cared to do so, either in England or on the Continent; and the few Crusaders who came out from time to time were too few to be of any real use. The Christian Kingdom was ready to fall. The Land was dotted all over with strong castles, wherein the lord of each lived like a little king, and cared chiefly for himself; making his own treaties with his Saracen neighbours, and breaking them as soon as it suited him to do so. The Knights Hospitallers and the Templars were open foes of each other; and neither Order would serve the Kingdom unless well paid for its service. The Patriarch Heraclius was a really bad man, greedy and proud; the clergy had no power, and many of them were bad men too, caring only to get rich; so that the people said that the Church no longer cared to feed its sheep, but only to shear them. Some of the people showed openly that they only thought about being rich, and living in ease and comfort; and each man seemed more selfish, greedy, and unfaithful than his neighbour. If ever a Kingdom showed rottenness and bad faith, it was the Kingdom of Jerusalem in its latter days.

While his Kingdom was thus bending to its fall, Baldwin the Leper slipped out of his troubles by death. The little Baldwin V followed him the next day. Men were not afraid to say openly that the child had been poisoned by his mother; and Sybil was certainly not a good woman, and everyone knew that she would do anything to please her idle husband, Guy, or to push him forward. Baldwin IV and Baldwin V were both buried in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, near Godfrey and the other Kings, under the Place of Calvary. They were the last of the Kings of Jerusalem to be laid there.

The Fall of the Kingdom
Guy De Lusignan, 1186-1187.

"From shore to shore of either main
The tent is pitched, the Crescent shines
Along the Moslems' leaguering lines."

Byron.

Sybil was determined to be Queen in Jerusalem; and directly the two poor Kings were buried, she sent for the Patriarch and the Grand Masters of the Hospitallers and the Templars, and asked them straight out to help her to this end. The Patriarch and Gerard de Riddeford, the Grand Master of the Templars, promised their support at once, but Roger de Moulines, the Grand Master of the Hospitallers, refused, because he knew how worthless Guy was; and many of the great Barons sided with him. Sybil, however, named a day and an hour for her coronation; and when the time came, she entered the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, walking between the Grand Master of the Templars and Renaud de Chatillon. Now, there were three keys to the Treasury where the crown and sceptre were kept, and unless all three were used the Treasury could not be opened. Two of these keys were kept by the Patriarch and the Grand Master of the Templars, who gave theirs up; but the Grand Master of the Hospitallers, who held the third key, refused to part with his one; and without it the other two were useless.

They pressed him for it, and he said he had hidden it. They hunted for it everywhere, but of course they could not find it, for it was in his hand all the time. While all this was going on the coronation service had to be stopped, and Sybil and Guy and their following of Knights and ladies, all very angry, had to sit in their places in the Church, looking at nothing, and, no doubt, feeling very foolish. At last the Grand Master of the Hospitallers lost his temper, and flung the third key down at their feet. "Do as you wish!" he said. "But I am clear of it!"

Sybil got her own way; she was crowned; and being told by the Patriarch to share the crown with the person whom she thought most worthy of that honour, she beckoned to Guy, and placed it upon his head as he knelt there, saying to him, "Sir Guy, I give it to thee, for I know none worthier to wear it."

So the crown of Jerusalem, which Godfrey had not thought himself worthy to wear, was set on the head of this Guy de Lusignan; a man who had had to leave Europe in haste to escape being punished for murder. When Guy's brother at home heard of the crowning at Jerusalem, he laughed mockingly. "Those men who have made my brother a King," he said, "would surely have made *me* a god!"

While these things were happening at Jerusalem, the angry Barons were gathered at Nablous, a town twelve hours to the north of the Holy City; from where they sent

a spy to Jerusalem to find out what was going forward there. The spy returned with the unwelcome news that Sybil had been crowned, and Guy with her.

"Is Guy then made King?" said one of the Knights, Baldwin of Ramleh. "I will wager he will not be King for one year! As for me, the crown is lost, and I shall go; for I will have no part in the shame and ruin of our Kingdom."

Raymond of Tripoli, one of the few really noble-minded men who yet remained in the Kingdom, stopped him.

"Have pity on the Faith, and stay to help us!" he said. "The Knights of St. John are with us; and I am on truce with the Saracens, who will help us if it must be so."

Very low indeed had the Christian Kingdom fallen, that her chief men could even think of asking the Saracens to help them against their fellow-Christians; but the Kingdom was dying, and Raymond was ready to try anything that might save her, if only for a little while. Raymond also advised the Barons to do homage to Guy for the sake of the Kingdom, and they did so, though very unwillingly. As Baldwin of Ramleh bent his knee to the worthless King, he said, with more truth than politeness, "Sir Guy, I do you homage, but not with a willing heart, for I would not hold my lands under you!"

Guy had to swallow his rage as best he might; and very soon after Baldwin of Ramleh gave over his lands to his

son, and left Palestine for ever. He would not stay on as the subject of such a man as Guy.

Raymond of Tripoli went to his own castle of Tiberias, and Guy made up his mind to besiege him there; for he hated and feared the upright Raymond, and he wanted to revenge himself upon the Barons by overthrowing the greatest of them. In the meantime, while Guy was preparing for the attack, Saladin, who was at peace with Raymond, sent to the Count, asking leave for his eldest son, El-Afdal, and a small Saracen force, to make an expedition into Raymond's lands. Raymond could not well refuse the request of his ally; and as Saladin did not say what his son wanted to do—whether to get food, or merely to have a day's hunting—he said that they might come, but that they must promise to go and return in one day, while the sun was still shining, and that they must hurt neither town nor house upon their way. And Saladin gave his word that it should be so. Raymond, on his part, to prevent any unlucky meeting between Christians and Saracens, warned the people in every place which the Saracens must pass to keep within their walls upon that day.

But most unluckily the Grand Master of the Templars got word of this; and he, being Guy's friend, was very angry that Raymond and the Saracens should make friends in this way. Gathering a little force of about one hundred and forty Knights and soldiers of the Temple, he hurried forth to attack the Saracens, and came up with

them as they were on their way back. A fierce little fight followed, in which the Templars, almost to a man, were cut to pieces, only the Grand Master and a few of the Knights escaping to Nazareth. The Saracens quietly returned home; and as they passed Tiberias Raymond, from the castle walls, could easily see the heads of the Templars which they carried on their spears. He was greatly troubled at the sight. The Templars were fellow-Christians and his brethren-in-arms; but he could not accuse the Saracens of having broken their word. They had not touched a single house, or town, or village, or castle; the Templars had attacked them, not they the Templars; and they had returned to their own country before the sun was down.

The Grand Master of the Templars and a few of his Knights had escaped, as we know, to Nazareth. The next day the Grand Master caused a proclamation to be made through the city, that he would show a rich prize of war to any who cared to follow him; and the people of Nazareth greedily answered the call—though they had been too cowardly to help in the fight. The Grand Master led this eager crowd out to the scene of the fight, and showed them the bodies of the Templars and their horses, lying one on top of the other, just as they had fallen in that stern little fight. Amongst the dead bodies was that of one Sir Jacques de Maillé, who had borne himself with such bravery and force that the Saracens had marked him out, even in a company of such splendid fighters as all the

Templars were. The Saracens said that he must be St. George (in whom they also believed), for no human person could fight in such a way, nor do the deeds that Sir Jacques had done that day; and after the fight they cut off little pieces of his garments, and wore them as charms to make them as brave as he had been.

It was the body of this Knight, and those of his no less valiant companions, that the Grand Master pointed out to the people of Nazareth, as they followed hard upon his footsteps.

"There is prize of war for you, my masters!" he said bitterly. "Where again will you find richer treasure than these men who have given their lives for the Kingdom!"

Angry, ashamed, and disappointed, the people of Nazareth crept back to their homes.

Soon afterwards Guy and Raymond made peace—Raymond with all his heart as his way was, and Guy because he had to; and Saladin, who was not pleased at hearing this, at once advanced upon Tiberias. Raymond advised the King to offer battle near a certain place which was in a good position for fighting, and where there was a fountain to supply the army. He also advised that the piece of the True Cross that was in Jerusalem should be sent for, with the Patriarch Heraclius to carry it, for the men always fought better when they had this great treasure to guard. The Templars agreed with Raymond in all this, and for the purpose they gave Guy all the money that Henry II of

England had sent them—a vast treasure by now, for he sent them thirty thousand marks every year. Guy's army numbered twenty thousand foot soldiers, a large body of horse, and twelve hundred Knights; it was the best Christian army raised in Palestine since the days of Godfrey.

Meanwhile Raymond's wife Eschowe and their four sons were closely besieged by Saladin in Tiberias, and the Countess sent for help to Guy. "I must give up the city," she said by her messenger, "unless you can send me help very quickly."

Guy sat in council with the Barons. They were all for going at once to the help of this gallant woman. Only one voice was raised against it, and that was the voice of Count Raymond, her husband. To him the Kingdom was more than wife, or son, or city.

"Sir King," he said, "leave Tiberias to its fate, though my wife and my sons and all that I have be lost, and the city, too. We had best lose all that than try to stop Saladin. If he takes Tiberias its riches will satisfy him, and by and bye we can beat him and recover the city. But if we go out against him now, when the heat is at its worst and the springs are all low, we and our men and our horses will certainly perish from the sun and from want of water; for there is no single fountain between us and Tiberias."

"Here is some of the hair of the wolf!" cried the Grand Master of the Temple mockingly; meaning that Raymond

was in secret treaty with Saladin, and because of that did not want to fight him. But the other Barons cried "Shame!" upon this mean suggestion; and Raymond's word carried the day.

But late at night the Grand Master of the Temple went to Guy's tent, and persuaded him not to follow Raymond's advice.

"It is but a trick of his," he said; "the man is in league with Saladin and the enemies of God! Let us march now, swiftly, and fall upon the Saracens before they know of our coming, and we shall save Tiberias, and the Kingdom, too!"

Guy was nothing but a shadow that danced in the strong light of other men's wills. He listened to the Grand Master, protested a little, and argued a little, but of course in the end he gave in. The Grand Master in triumph hurried from the royal tent; and, in case any one should go into Guy after him, and talk the foolish King into a change of mind, he gave the order from the King to march at once. As the first light of morning crept up into the sky, the Christian army set out in gloom and silence (July 1, 1187). The move was made in deep unwillingness by the army. In the heart of every man was the thought that was told in Raymond's bitter cry, when he heard the King's command: "Alas! alas! Lord God! The war is over; we are dead men. The Kingdom is undone!"

It was fiercely hot, for Tiberias and Galilee in the summer months are like steaming cauldrons. The Christians in their heavy armour could hardly move for weariness; the horses panted and struggled. The Saracen cavalry hung around them at a safe distance, ready to strike down any who fell behind; and there were many who did so, from being too tired to keep up with the rest. They also fired the dry grass and stubble—a favourite Saracen trick, as we know—so that the Christians could hardly set foot upon it. After a terrible day, Guy was obliged to call a halt for the night; for the Templars and some of the other troops were unable to keep up with the main army any longer, and they would have been cut off by the Saracens had the rest moved on too far ahead. The Christian camp was so close to that of Saladin that "a dog might have run from one to the other"; and the Christians could hear the Saracen sentries calling to each other on their rounds, and the cry of "God is most great!" of the men who felt that victory was already given into their hands. The two camps were set close by the Horns of Hattin; it is the little hill, (shaped in two points like horns, from which it gets its name), from which, it is said, our Lord preached the Sermon on the Mount. From it the Christians could see the blue waters of the Sea of Galilee, by which stood the besieged city of Tiberias. In the darkness some of the soldiers crept away to Saladin's camp, and begged for a drink of water; they had had none

all day. "Fall on our fellows now," said these wretched deserters; "they are weak; they cannot fight."

At daybreak Guy gave battle to end the sufferings of his men. He had marched straight into the lion's mouth, and the Christian host was bound to be absolutely defeated. Even so, and knowing that there was no hope for them, they fought like heroes. "But the grip of fear was on the throats of the crowd," as a Saracen writer has it, "who went like driven beasts to the shambles. They counted as sure defeat and death, yet the fury of the fight never slacked."

Guy ordered Raymond of Tripoli to cut a way through the enemy, knowing that if any man could do it he was that man. The Count, and a few others of tried courage and daring like his own, made a desperate charge; the Saracens seemed to give way before them easily enough, as they had often done before; but it was really a trick, and they closed up again behind them at once, like a sheer wall. Raymond and his party were cut off from the rest of the army. Seeing this, and knowing that they had failed to help the main army, and now could do no more, Raymond and those who were with him rode straight on, and reached Tyre, on the northern coast, in safety.

The chief fury of the fight raged round the tent of Guy. It was scarlet in colour, and shone like a flame in the middle of the host. Here, too, was the piece of the True Cross, in the care of the Bishops of Acre and Lydda, (for

the Patriarch, whose duty it was to carry it himself, had been far too much afraid to come, and had pretended that he was ill). While that red tent could be seen by the Christians, they knew that all was not yet lost, and that the Cross was safe as well. Near the tent Guy and a hundred and fifty of his chief Knights made a gallant stand; while the Saracens swept round and round them "as a globe turns round its pole," seeking for some place in which to break through. The eldest son of Saladin, El-Afdal, a boy of sixteen, was with his father, watching his first battle. His story of it has come down to us in his own words. "The King of the Franks and his Knights made a gallant charge," he said, "and drove the Moslems back upon my Father. I watched him, and I saw his dismay; he changed colour, tugged at his beard, and rushed forward, shouting, 'Give the devil the lie!' So the Moslems fell shouting upon the enemy, who retreated up the hill. When I saw the Franks flying, and the Moslems pursuing, I cried in my glee, 'We have routed them!' But the Franks charged again, and drove our men back once more to where my Father was. Again he urged them forward, and they drove the enemy up the hill. Again I shouted, 'We have routed them!' But my Father turned to me and said, 'Hold thy peace! We have *not* beaten them so long as that tent stands there.' At that instant the royal tent was overthrown. Then the Sultan dismounted, and bowed himself to the earth, giving thanks to God, with tears of joy."

The scarlet tent was overthrown just as the Holy Wood also fell into the hands of the victors, with the death of the Bishop of Acre, who had held it up high for all to see, all through the day. The Christian soldiers had done wonders, in spite of the weariness and thirst which had made them weak before ever the battle began. They had no longer any strength to lift a sword. Many flung themselves down upon the ground, and were killed as they lay there, unable to resist. Their swords were snatched from the hands of the Knights, who were too weak to hold them. The dead lay everywhere in heaps, as stones are piled upon stones; bits of broken crosses, heads, hands, and arms cut off from their bodies, broken weapons, shields, and armour, strewed the blood-stained field in a dreadful confusion. The field of battle, and also the country for many miles around, showed the marks of this awful fight for a long time after. The Saracens said that thirty thousand Christians had fallen; they themselves had lost heavily, too; and the white heaps of bones could be seen for a full year after the battle.

Guy and those few of his chief Knights who were yet alive, were taken to Saladin's tent. There was nothing in the conqueror's manner, nor in that of his Emirs and officers who stood around him, to add to the shame and misery of these conquered men. The coolness of the rich silken tent was beautiful to them, after the burning glare outside. Saladin made Guy sit beside him, and, at his command, his servants brought Guy to drink a bowl of

sherbet made with rose water and cooled in snow, for he was suffering severely from thirst. Guy drank a little, and then passed his bowl on to Renaud de Chatillon, who was standing behind him.

Saladin sprang to his feet.

"Tell the King," he said to the interpreter, "that it is he who has given this man drink, and not I!" meaning that though, according to the Eastern custom, Guy's life was safe after receiving food and drink at his hands, Renaud de Chatillon could expect no mercy, having received nothing from him. Pointing at Renaud as he stood near Guy, Saladin went on:

"Twice I have sworn to kill that man; once when he tried to invade the holy cities, and again when he took a caravan by treachery. Lo! I will avenge the Prophet upon you!" he cried, turning suddenly upon de Chatillon himself.

With his own scimitar Saladin cut off Renaud's arm from the shoulder; and the Saracen guards dragged him outside the tent and finished the deed there. Guy thought that his turn would come next; but to him Saladin said, "It is not the custom for a King to slay a King. That wicked man had broken every law of honour; therefore what has happened has happened!"

Two hundred and thirty Knights of St. John and of the Temple were offered their lives if they would give up their

faith. One and all they refused to buy their lives at the price of their honour, and they were all beheaded.

Tiberias surrendered after the crushing defeat at the Horns of Hattin. Saladin gave Raymond's wife free way to join him at Tyre; but the gallant Count, the last of the Knights with the old Crusading spirit, died very soon after the battle, heartbroken at the fall of the Kingdom. One by one the Christian fortresses and cities fell before Saladin's conquering sword. Tyre, Tripoli, and Ascalon alone held out; and Ascalon surrendered on the condition that Guy was set free within the year, and that the people were allowed to leave the city in safety, with whatever possessions they wanted to take with them.

The road to Jerusalem was open now to Saladin.

The Fall of Jerusalem, 1187

"Now shall the blazon of the Cross be veiled."
Shelley.

Sir Balian of Ibelin was one of the Knights who had followed Raymond of Tripoli, in his fierce charge through the Saracen lines at Hattin. He was allowed by Saladin to go up to Jerusalem to fetch his wife and children, under solemn promise that he would only stay one night.

When Balian arrived, he found the City in a state of the wildest fear and excitement; and the people pressed round him, begging him with tears to stop and fight for them. They clasped him by the hands and feet; mothers held out their babies to him, as if he could not refuse their wordless appeal; little children sobbed and wailed, the more sadly that they knew not what the trouble was. "Save us—save us!" was the cry on all sides. "If you leave us we must perish! If you do not care for our trouble, at least save the City of God!"

Poor Balian! Was ever a man more hardly pressed?

"But, good people, I have given my word to Saladin to go!" he cried at last, in despair.

"No promise made to an unbeliever is binding in the sight of God," answered the Patriarch, quickly. He was not a good man, as we know, and just now he was as frightened as any of them that Balian would go away and leave them

to their fate; and his head seemed to shake upon his shoulders already. "Indeed," he added, "it would be a far greater sin on your part to keep such a promise than to break it, for it will be a lasting shame upon you if you leave Jerusalem in her hour of need. Be very sure that if you do so, you shall never afterwards have any honour in the eyes of men, wherever you may go. As Patriarch of the Holy City I set you free of your oath!"

Then Balian gave way; and he sent a message to Saladin, telling him that he was forced to break his word. Perhaps Saladin had not really expected him to keep it; he knew too well that the Knights of the Kingdom could not be counted on to keep faith with any man.

Generous and merciful in all his dealings, Saladin first offered good terms to the City. "Jerusalem is the House of God," he said: "that is a part of my faith. I am not willing to hurt the House of God, if I can take it in peace and friendship. I will give you thirty thousand bezants if you will give up the City. I will give you land for five miles all round the City for your own, to use and to plant as you wish. I will fill the City with food, so that its markets shall be the cheapest in the world. You shall have peace from now till Pentecost, and if after that time you think you can hold the City, keep it if you can; and if not, give it up to me, and I will send you all in safety and honour to Christian lands."

But the City refused his offer; partly because the Christians were burning to win back something of what had been lost on the field of the Horns of Hattin, and partly because they thought that it was made out of weakness, and not out of the greatness of a strength that was so sure that it could afford to be merciful.

"God helping us," the Christian garrison said, "we will never give up the City where our Saviour died for us!"

Saladin was better pleased at their refusing his offer than he would have been had they accepted it; for, to his mind, it showed that they really cared for the Holy City, and were ready to fight for her to the end, no matter what it cost them. To meet their courage, he gave them his word of honour that he would not take the City except with honour—that is, by the sword, and not by treaty or by agreement. Whichever side won, the full price of the City must be paid in the lives of men.

So Saladin marched upon the City, and planted his camp at first on the same ground that Godfrey had used, eighty-nine years before; and in September of the year 1187 the siege began. There were only two Christian Knights beside Balian in the City, and he had to make fifty more to act under him as officers. Guy had taken all the money he could find to prepare for the Battle of Hattin, and because there was not enough money left in the City to buy food or to pay the men, Balian stripped off the silver and gold from the Holy Sepulchre, and turned it into coin.

Very bravely did the Christians, led by the stout-hearted Balian, hold out for eight days; until a large part of the outer wall fell in, having been undermined by the Saracens. The Knights and soldiers then were all for sallying out and dying in arms, as became soldiers. But again the Patriarch interfered; perhaps because he was too bad a man to face death quietly. He advised that Saladin should be asked to grant them terms; and to Balian, as the leader, fell the hateful task of asking the conqueror for the mercy they had despised before.

But though Balian went at the will of the people, he was a soldier, and he would not be the bearer of terms of shame for anyone. His words to Saladin were hard and straight, and they were understood by Saladin, who was himself a soldier first of all.

"O Sultan," said Balian, "know that those of us who are soldiers in the City are surrounded by God knows how many people who will not fight, because they hope to receive from you the same grace as you have given to other cities. These people fear death, and only long to live. But for us who are soldiers, when we see that death cannot be escaped, we will burn our houses, and our churches, and our provisions. We will kill our women and our children. We will destroy the Rock and the Mosque, and every other holy place that we honour. We will put to death every Moslem slave that is in the City—and there are five thousand of them. We will kill every horse and every beast we have. We will not leave you a bezant or a jewel or a

treasure for your enriching; nor one man or woman to be your slave. And when we have done all this, we will sally forth, and we will fight you for our lives. There shall not be one man of us who will not take the life of a Saracen, as payment for his own before he falls. Thus we will either die gloriously, or we will conquer you—as we be Christian gentlemen!"

The words of Balian were full of the desperate courage of men who may have lost all, but who will yet face death with readiness, and they made Saladin think. He could not press such men too hard, or he would lose all he hoped to win, and he was afraid to face the loss of the Mosque and the Rock; neither dared he bring his army into an empty city, after a hard siege in which they had done so well, and in which so many of their companions had fallen. His men deserved a good reward, and they would most certainly expect it. Saladin saw very clearly that Balian's words were not empty ones, but that what he said he would do, he would most certainly carry out, if he were pressed too far. But even while Balian and Saladin were talking together, the Saracens made another fierce attack, and began to swarm into the City over the fallen walls, and already ten or twelve of their banners were waving there in triumph.

Saladin, seeing these signs of his own victory, said to Balian, "Why do you talk to me about terms when you see my people ready to enter? It is too late now; the City is mine already!"

Even as he spoke—so strangely does the tide of war change—the Christians massed themselves together for a last desperate charge, and drove the Saracens back, and out again.

"Go back," said Saladin to Balian then; "I can do nothing more now. If you come again tomorrow, I will willingly listen to what you have to say."

Balian left the camp of victory, and returned to the City. Here all was terror and confusion; women were sobbing and wringing their hands; soldiers hurrying to and fro between their posts; the wounded and the dying were carried hastily away; long processions of monks, priests, and nuns walked barefoot, carrying crosses, and chanting dolefully. The shadow of death was upon them all. "But," said Bernard the Treasurer, who saw all these things, "our Lord Jesus Christ would not listen to any prayers that they made, by reason of the sin in the City, which prevented any prayers from mounting to the mercy-seat of God."

The next day Balian again went to Saladin.

"We will give up the City," he said—hard words for any soldier to utter—"if the lives of the people are spared."

"You speak too late," was Saladin's quick and stern reply; then generosity to a fallen foe drove out anger from his mind, and he added, "Sir Balian, for the love of God and of yourself, I will have some pity on them. They shall give themselves up to me, and I will leave them their

property to do with as they please; but their bodies shall be my prisoners; and he who can ransom himself with money shall do so, and he who cannot shall be my prisoner."

"Sir," said Balian, "what shall be the price of the ransom?"

"The same price shall be for poor and for rich alike," answered Saladin: "for every man thirty bezants, for every woman and every child ten bezants. Whosoever cannot pay his ransom shall be my prisoner."

"We have no money!" said poor Balian; and he returned to the City with these hard terms. No doubt he wished many and many a time that he had never broken his word to Saladin in the beginning, but had refused to listen to the prayer of the people of Jerusalem to stay and lead their defence. Now he had lost everything, the people hung upon him like greedy leeches, expecting him to save them at any cost, and used him as their messenger to a mighty and victorious foe, whose terms were very hard for a Christian Knight to carry or agree to. His whole Knighthood was shamed in being forced in this way to play the part of a go-between, by the frightened City on the one side, and Saladin on the other.

All through the night that followed, Balian argued and talked with the Grand Masters of the Templars and the Hospitallers, pressing them to give him what treasure their Orders still possessed, to ransom the poor in the City

who could not pay for themselves. At last he persuaded the two Grand Masters to give up to him the contents of their Treasuries; and the next day, when he went back to Saladin, the Sultan met his message halfway by lowering the ransom by one half.

"Sir, you have fixed the ransom of the rich," then said Balian; "fix now the ransom of the poor, for there are twenty thousand in the City who cannot pay the ransom of a single man. For the love of God, show a little mercy, and I will try to get from the Templars, the Hospitallers, and others, enough to ransom all."

"For one hundred thousand bezants all the poor shall go free," answered Saladin.

But when Balian told him that they could not raise even half that sum, Saladin said that he would set free seven thousand men for thirty thousand bezants, and that two women or ten children should count as one man in this reckoning. He also gave them fifty days, during which time they were all free to do as they liked with their own goods. "At the end of that time," said Saladin, "all that is found in the City shall be mine, whether it is the bodies of men, or only their possessions."

Balian returned to the City, where the people were waiting for him, trembling to hear their fate. He had been successful in his dealings with Saladin; he had got for the doomed City far better terms than they had expected; but even so the judgment of the conqueror was a hard one;

and to know that within fifty days they must leave their homes and everything that they cared for, was quite enough to make them all feel very sad. It must have been very hard indeed for them to leave a place that people grow to love as they often love Jerusalem. So the people wept and wailed aloud when they heard what Balian had to tell them. They went to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and, falling on their knees before the Sacred Tomb itself, they wet the very stones with tears. From one holy place to another they hurried in sad processions, to say a last sad good-bye to all they held most precious; they kissed the very walls of the City, and beat their heads against the stones. "To leave Jerusalem was to tear the hearts out of them."

All the gates of the City were now shut except the Gate of David, at which Saladin set a strong guard to prevent anyone escaping; and Saracen soldiers kept order in the streets. We are told that not one of these dared to offer even a rough word to the old inhabitants, for the commands of Saladin were strict and clear; and though some of the officers and Emirs cheated and bargained with the people, to try and gain something for themselves before the fifty days were out, these things were done secretly, and never came to the ears of Saladin. The Saracens were allowed, however, to buy from the Christians, who were only too glad on their part to sell everything they had, to raise the money for their ransoms. The Patriarch and Balian had got thirty thousand bezants

from the Knights Hospitallers, which was all that the Order had to give; and they made everyone in the City swear on the relics of the saints that they would keep back nothing, but would give all they had to the general ransom. The seven thousand who were to be ransomed were then chosen, so many from each street and ward of the City, and were sent out. They were free. But still there were many poor frightened people left who could not pay, for during the siege they had given all they had for the defence of the City, and for their ransoms there was no money left. Seeing this, Saladin's brother Saffadin (as his name is written), who was one of his generals, went to the Sultan.

"Brother," he said, "I have helped you by God's grace to conquer the Land and this City. I pray you, give me a thousand slaves of those that are still left within the walls."

"What will you do with them?" asked Saladin.

"As it seems best to me," answered Saffadin.

Saladin asked no more questions, but gave him the thousand, perhaps guessing at his purpose; and Saffadin set them free as his thank-offering to God.

Then one of Saladin's generals, an Armenian called Kukbury, went to the Sultan, and asked him to let him have five thousand Armenians who were in the City. "They came here as pilgrims before the siege," Kukbury said; "they are not fighters, nor do they belong to the City at all. Should they not go free, being strangers?" And

Saladin said, "Be it so," and gave him all the five thousand Armenians. So these, too, went free. And after this, the Patriarch, seeing that every one seemed to get what he wanted from this generous and merciful man, went in his turn to Saladin and asked for some; and Saladin gave him seven hundred; and when Balian asked for some, he gave him five hundred.

"And now," said Saladin, who seemed never to tire of giving, "I will make my alms." And he ordered the little Postern of St. Lazarus to be set open, that all the poor who really could not pay might leave the City by it, free. From sunrise until sunset the stream of people passed out through the little gate, wondering greatly at their own deliverance. Even so there were eleven thousand left. Then Balian went to Saladin—and he forced the Patriarch to go with him—and begged the Sultan to hold them both as prisoners in the place of the eleven thousand, until money could be raised in Europe for their ransom. But Saladin replied, "I will not take two men against eleven thousand; speak of it to me no more." So the eleven thousand went free in their turn. To the women and children who went before him, crying for mercy, Saladin showed a wonderful pity. If their husbands and fathers were in prison, he ordered them to be set free; if they were dead, he gave largely to the widows from his own treasure, according to their rank and state. "And he gave them so much, that they gave praise to God for the honour and wealth that Saladin showed to them"—as well they might!

At the last the Patriarch made haste to leave Jerusalem. While others had been full of the trouble of the City, he had been very careful to get hold of all the gold and silver, the jewels and treasures, that were still left in the Holy Sepulchre and the other Churches, and these he made ready to take away with him. Saladin's Emirs were very angry when they saw this, for their Sultan had already been so generous that to take more in this way seemed to them like stealing; besides they wanted something themselves, after all they had done. They begged Saladin not to allow it; but Saladin said that his word had been given, and it was not his will that any man should be able to accuse him of breaking it. So the greedy Heraclius made off with as much as he could carry.

With all this, the City of Godfrey and Fulke was so rich that when the Saracens came to take it over they found many treasures in it still. Amongst the richest of all the spoil was a large gold cross, blazing with jewels, which the Templars had set up upon the Rock itself, and which the Saracen soldiers horrified the Christians by dragging through the dirt of the streets. But deeds like this, done in ignorance or malice, can do no harm beyond the pain they give; it could not hurt the Cross. Saladin also stripped off the covering of marble which the Knights had put all over the Rock, to keep it safe from pilgrims and others, who used to chip off little pieces to take away with them, either to keep as a great treasure or to sell in other lands.

Now Saladin divided the remainder of the Christians into three parties to send them away; one party he put under the Templars, one under the Hospitallers, and the third under Balian himself. With each party he sent fifty of his own most trusted officers, to guard them on their way into Christian land. These Saracen guards were as tender-hearted as their great master, for they would walk themselves in order that the Christians might ride when they were tired or footsore; and when the little children cried from weariness, they thought it no trouble to pick them up, and carry them over the rough ground. Sybil, the Queen, and her sister, Isabella, had been amongst the first to leave Jerusalem, free from tax or question. Sybil joined Guy later on; but she had been through hard times, and she did not live to be an old woman. Not one of the conquered Christians was hardly treated by Saladin, nor even mocked at in their fall by the Saracen guards, for the spirit of Saladin was strong in all his host. A very different taking of Jerusalem was this to that July day eighty-nine years ago, when the Crusaders cut down men without pity, and their horses trod the Temple courts knee-deep in blood.

The Christians from Jerusalem reached Tripoli safely after a weary march, which all the kindness of their Saracen guards could not make anything but long and very sad. And at Tripoli, instead of a welcome and shelter, they found harder fare than all that had gone before. For the Count of Tripoli refused to let these sad wanderers enter

his city. He was not the great Raymond who had cut his way through the Saracens at the Battle of Hattin, for he was dead by now; the new Count was Boemond of Antioch, who had succeeded him at Tripoli by Raymond's own wish. This hard and most unknightly Knight sent out his soldiers to seize any of the travellers who still had a little money left, and forced them into the city, where he threw them into prison until they had given up everything they had. Those who were too poor to be worth robbing were not allowed within the city walls; and so they wandered away, some even into far Armenia, and settled down with thankfulness wherever they were allowed to do so.

Saladin captured Jerusalem on October 1, 1187. As soon as the City was really his, he set to work to clear the Temple of every sign of its use by Christians. The altars were taken away and the pictures destroyed, and Saladin gave a wonderful pulpit of inlaid wood from Damascus, which is still standing in the place where he put it, as his thank-offering. His name and titles were written round the dome of what had been the Templar's Church, which from that day onward was to be known and used as a Mosque. If any man had earned the right to record his deeds in a place of worship, "in the Name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful," surely that man was Saladin. By and bye many Christians, on payment of a tax, were allowed by him to return to Jerusalem, and to settle down there again in peace.

Jerusalem being safely in his hands, Saladin pushed on with the conquest of the whole Land, which fell under his power bit by bit. Soon only Tripoli, Antioch, and Tyre among the cities were left of the once great Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem. The Christian rule in Palestine was broken for ever. Crusades might come and come again; and parts here and there be recovered for a time; but the Kingdom as a Kingdom was dead, slain as much by the selfishness and want of faith amongst its own people as by the sword of Saladin.

As for Guy, when he was released a year later he went to Cyprus, and got the title of King of Cyprus from Richard I. Then he joined Richard in Palestine, and at once broke his parole, or word of honour, given to Saladin as a condition of his being set free, that he would not take arms against the Saracens again. He was a most unworthy Knight, but he did not live long to disgrace the name of Christian and King by his broken promises and his oft-stained honour.

The Third Crusade, 1189-1192

"Therefore friends,
As far as to the Sepulchre of Christ,
Whose soldiers now, under Whose blessed Cross
We are empressed and engaged to fight,
Forthwith a power of England shall we levy."

Shakespeare.

"England! awake! awake! awake!
Jerusalem thy sister calls!"

Blake.

"Jerusalem has fallen! The Holy City has fallen!"

The dreadful news spread all through Christendom, and startled the Kings of Europe; startled them at last—and too late. They had turned a deaf ear for so long to the cry for help; they had been so full of their own concerns, that they had cared very little really about the Christian Kingdom. Perhaps they thought that the soldiers of the Cross could never be defeated. But the impossible had happened, the Christian power had been utterly overthrown, the King of Jerusalem was a prisoner, the chief of his Knights were dead, the Orders of the Hospitallers and the Templars had been almost wiped out, and Jerusalem herself, together with the Sepulchre of Christ, was in the hands of Saladin.

The very awfulness of the news stirred the people of Europe to action. A new Crusade was preached

everywhere for the recovery of Jerusalem, and all who did not take the Cross were made to give the tenth part of their possessions in a tax called the Tithe of Saladin. It was the first time that a Crusade had been preached in England, but the people caught at the idea with eagerness, and hundreds of them rushed to take the Cross. The Crusade was under the Kings of France and England, Philip II and our own Richard Lion-Heart. As the Tithe of Saladin did not bring in enough by itself, both Kings raised money in other ways; Philip chiefly by squeezing the Jews, and Richard by selling honours, titles, and offices to his subjects. "I would sell London itself if I could only find a buyer!" he said—not because he loved London so little, perhaps, as because he loved Jerusalem so much. The fire of a true Crusader burned hotly in Richard's heart, but he was the only one of the Princes of the Third Crusade who put any real love or faith into the expedition. Many very strict rules were made, so that the soldiers might behave as true Crusaders should. Swearers were to be fined, and also to have their heads first shaved and then covered with hot pitch and feathers; a murderer was to be tied to the body of the victim, and the two bodies thrown together into the sea or buried in the same grave. The army of the Third Crusade counted over four hundred thousand men, English, French, and Germans, and Richard himself had two hundred and nineteen ships, all well manned and fitted out.

The German army was a splendid one, as large as the English and French forces put together, and very well trained; and it was under Frederick I, whom his people called Barbarossa because of his long red beard. There are several Barbarossas in history. Two of them were Turkish pirates, brothers, whose exploits filled Europe with terror for many years, and after the greatest of whom one of the Turkish warships is now called; but the Barbarossa whom we of the West know most of was this Frederick the German Emperor. He was a very Knightly man, for certain, and before he started on his Crusade he sent a message to Saladin to warn him of his coming, and thus began his war in a far more gentlemanly spirit than either of the other Kings.

But Frederick was not the man to free Jerusalem. He led his army overland, (1189), and it melted day by day under the fierce attacks of enemies through whose countries he passed. Nothing went well with him. He expected help from the Armenians, and they turned their backs upon him, and joined the Greeks, who would not help him, either. Before very long, Barbarossa himself met his death,—not in the shock and glory of battle, as he would have wished, but in crossing a river, in whose ice-cold currents he was caught and swept away (1190). His death broke up the German army. The men wandered apart, seeking shelter where they could find it, some in Antioch, some in Aleppo, (where the Saracens made slaves of them); many died by the way; and out of that

splendid army of two hundred thousand men, not even five thousand reached home.

The rushing river tore away poor Barbarossa in its icy clutches, now tossing him up like a leaf, now dragging him down, now spinning him round and round in some hidden undercurrent. He was never seen again. But his people declared that Barbarossa was not dead; the river had borne him home, they said; and he was now in a cavern in the Kyffhauser Mountain in Thuringia, waiting till his country should need his strong arm and his wise head again. And so the story comes down to us to-day; and when we hear the name of Frederick Barbarossa our thoughts turn to that dark cavern in Thuringia, where the Red Beard rests and waits for the call of his country, his good sword lying ready to his hand. He was joined to the great company of waiting Kings, who rest in peace and in patience, till the cry of their country in some hour of sore need shall call them forth: and those Kings are Arthur of Britain, who waits in Avalon; Charlemagne of France; Roderic of Spain; and Barbarossa of Germany. May they rise in all good fellowship!

The Kings of France and England met at Sicily; and here there first began the quarrels which in the end broke up the Crusade. When at last they started for Palestine, Richard's sister Joan, the widowed Queen of Sicily, and Berengaria of Navarre, to whom he was betrothed, accompanied him in a ship of their own.

"They loved each other dear,
And lived as birds in cage,"

sang a poet of their day; and it was very lucky for them that they were such good friends, for the journey to Palestine, under the banner of such a fighter as Richard, was no easy pleasure-trip for women. Fierce storms scattered the fleet, and for some days the different ships did not know which of their companions had escaped the angry waves. When at last the sea calmed down, Richard found the Princesses' ship in safe harbour at Limasol in Cyprus; but, unluckily for himself, the Emperor of the Island, a Greek named Isaac, had treated them very roughly and unkindly in refusing to let them land, though they were ill and unhappy after the storm. Richard landed at once in great anger; defeated the Cypriots; put Isaac in chains of silver (because he was an Emperor); took a large sum of money from him; and gave him into the hand of Guy de Lusignan, and his daughter to be Sybil's maid-in-waiting. He did all these things with the speed of lightning, as his custom was; and he had conquered the Island before all the inhabitants even knew that he had come. It was certainly not safe to cross the Lion's path! Richard's conquest of Cyprus made Philip of France very angry, for he expected Richard to share it with him; to which Richard replied that he had taken it alone, and he would keep it alone.

At Cyprus, Guy de Lusignan met King Richard, who, filled with pity for the misfortunes of the fallen King of Jerusalem, gave him a handsome share of his booty, and

the title of King of Cyprus. And in the strong Castle of Limasol, Richard was married to Berengaria of Navarre. The room in which the marriage took place is still to be seen, the great walls being fifteen feet thick. Richard was dressed very richly, as became the royal bridegroom and the conqueror. He wore rose-colour, covered with crescents of pure silver, and a scarlet hat embroidered with birds and beasts. His red saddle shone with gold, and the high peak at the back showed the Lions of England in gold; while his sword-hilt and his long spurs were of solid gold. He was a fine man, this English Richard of ours, whom we love to look back on and to remember. "He was tall of stature, graceful in figure," wrote one of his followers, who knew him well, and evidently loved him well, too; "his hair between red and auburn, his limbs were straight, his arms not to be matched for wielding the sword, or for striking with it; while his appearance was commanding." "He had the valour of Hector, he was gifted with the eloquence of Nestor, and the prudence of Ulysses"; (which is only rather a long way of saying that he was perfect!). "A man who never knew defeat, impatient of an injury, and impelled to assert his rights, though all he did was marked by an inborn nobleness of mind." "He was far superior to all others in strength, and notable for prowess in battles, and his mighty deeds outshone the most brilliant description we could give of them."

Such was our Richard Cœur-de-Lion, the greatest man of the West, eagerly pressing forward through storms

and fighting and delay to Palestine; there to meet Saladin, the greatest man of the East.

From Cyprus Richard pressed onward, till he came to Acre, which King Philip of France and his Crusaders were besieging. But there was so much idleness and carelessness and quarrelling in the camp, that they had made very little way against the city, which was well defended and provisioned. "The chiefs envy one another and strive for place," said the Archbishop of Canterbury, who came with Richard; "the poor folk are in want, and find no one to help them. In the camp there is neither order, cleanliness, faith, nor charity—a state of things which I call God to witness I would never have believed had I not seen it."

The Crusaders had suffered almost as much in the siege of Acre as the city itself; for Saladin and his army lay behind their lines, and prevented their getting in food from the country, while the storms often kept the little ships from landing corn and other things. It was much worse during the winter, of course; the Crusaders were starving, and sickness was abroad in the camp, brought on by hunger and weakness, as much as by bad food and the cold. A sack of corn cost a hundred pieces of gold, one egg was six deniers, horses were killed and eaten, and even those that died from sickness or age were used for food. Men ate grass like cattle, and picked at the bones left by the camp dogs in the road. Even the Knights could not always keep from stealing food, they were so hungry; and

beans were sold by number and not by weight. Some of the soldiers—but not many—even deserted to Saladin, who received them very kindly, and gave them food and warm clothing, and sent them to Damascus. Those who stayed on, and fought and suffered and were hungry, were the better men; but hunger and cold break a man's pride, and make him do things that are mean and wretched.

But with the coming of Richard things changed, so great was his fame. The Crusaders, who had grown very tired of the long useless siege, now burned to prove their metal to the mocking Saracens. "Now let the will of God be done!" they cried joyfully when Richard landed, tall and glowing in his armour, his heavy battle-axe shining in his hand, "for the hope of all rests upon King Richard!"

These words only made the jealous French King more vexed and jealous still. Like all small-minded men, he had not enough fame to be able to spare any of it to another. But Richard was ill when he landed, of the fever that troubled him during all his time in Palestine. From his bed he gave orders that forts, and war-engines called petrariæ, should be prepared, for casting huge stones against the city walls, but he himself could not stand. The jealous King of France was glad of his illness, "for now," he said, "is the time to prove my own skill in war! I will attack Acre and take it while Richard is thus laid aside. Why should all the glory be to him?"

Richard heard in the camp outside the sounds of preparation for the attack; and when he knew what was being planned, he sent to Philip, warning him to wait till he himself was able to join him, or at least until the rest of the English fleet should arrive from Cyprus. Philip refused, and the attack failed miserably; whereupon the King of France took to his bed ill and angry—or, no doubt, ill from anger at having failed, and made himself look so foolish before the Christian host. All this time King Richard, "whose fever was getting worse, lay on his bed fretting sorely when he saw the Saracens challenging our men, whilst his sickness prevented him from attacking them. For the constant onsets of the enemy gave him more trouble than the fiery pains of his fever."

As soon as the two Kings were both well, they set hard to work to replace the siege-engines which had been destroyed in Philip's foolish attack. Richard's engines were very much feared by the Saracens, for they did more harm than the others. "When a single stone from one great engine killed twelve men, the Saracens sent the stone to Saladin to see; and the messengers who carried it said that 'that devil the King of England' had brought with him a great store of such terrible stones, which either broke to pieces or ground into powder whatever they fell upon." The Templars and the Hospitallers each had an engine, and the Saracens were very much afraid of the Hospitallers' petraria, too, for it never seemed to fail of its aim. Philip built one which he called "Bad Neighbour"

(meaning that it was a bad neighbour to the city); and the Saracens quickly built one to meet it, which they mockingly named "Bad Kinsman."

In spite of all these terrible engines, and the constant attacks of the Crusaders, Acre was a very hard city to take; it was very strong in its position and defences, and it was garrisoned by the pick of the Saracen troops, who were now well tried in war. In fact, it held out for about two years, though the Crusaders pressed it hard, and all Saladin's attempt to help the city were prevented. At last, starved and despairing, the Saracen garrison asked for terms, with Saladin's consent. The Christian Kings said that Saladin must give back the wood of the True Cross, which he had taken at the Battle of Hattin; set free fifteen hundred Christian captives whom he held; give up Acre; and ransom the garrison for twenty thousand pieces of gold. They on their part promised to spare the lives of all who were in the city. Saladin agreed to these terms, for he could not help himself; but as he did not pay the ransom up to time—perhaps with him, too, as with the Christian army, gold was scarce—the Crusaders put to death all the Saracens in Acre; there were about five thousand of them. We need not believe that Richard was so very willing to allow this horrid deed to be done; but in his time all Saracens were looked upon as "the enemies of God," and therefore as not fit to live. Richard wrote of this massacre of prisoners sadly enough, as we may think. "Thus, as in duty bound," he says, "we put them to death." Saladin was

stung to hot anger by this cruel act, and replied by putting to death some thousands of his Christian prisoners. It was certainly rather hard on the poor prisoners on either side, but then no one seems to have given a thought to them; they were just like cards in a game, to be used as the players thought best.

The Crusaders had been fighting constantly amongst themselves all the time of the siege. Philip was jealous of Richard, and Richard's temper was hot and quick; the Knights and soldiers of both Kings, of course, were no better friends than their masters. No sooner had Acre fallen, than Philip gave out that he was going back to France. He was ill, he said; but the Crusaders, who knew that Richard had suffered far more than Philip from fever, believed that he was jealous rather than ill. Philip asked Richard to let him have two ships, and the generous Lion-Heart let him have them at once; he also left any of his men who wished to remain, under the command of Leopold, Duke of Austria; and made Richard many solemn promises not to enter or to trouble his dominions in any way as long as he remained in Palestine. So King Philip turned his back upon the Crusade, and departed; "and instead of blessings, he received wishes of misfortune from all"; for all men agreed with Richard when he said of Philip, "He does against the Will of God, and the eternal dishonour of his Kingdom, so shamelessly fail in his vow."

Left to himself, Richard did his best to pull his men together, and to give them back some of the Crusading

spirit which they seemed to have lost so easily. He sent Guy de Lusignan to try and recover some faint-hearted men who had deserted to Acre, where they knew they would find ease and plenty of food; and when Guy's weak ways failed to persuade them to return, the Lion-Heart himself set off in hot haste, and by his fiery force and his stern words he fairly shamed a number of the wretches into following him meekly back to camp.

Directly Richard could move his army he marched down the coast towards Jaffa, on his way to Jerusalem; using the old road by the sea that the Romans had made, when they ruled in Palestine all those hundreds of years ago. In the midst of the host was a covered car in which was carefully borne the Standard of the Cross. At night, when the men lay down to sleep, heralds would pass between the lines crying aloud, "Help! Help! for Holy Sepulchre!" to remind them of their vows. When the soldiers heard the heralds' cry they awoke, and wept, and prayed to God to help them in the fight. That was no easy march through the hot sun of September, troubled all the time by the enemy, who were "like mountain-torrents rushing down upon them from the heights," stung by poisonous insects and by scorpions and snakes, which lay hidden under stones or lurked in the dry grass.

Richard defeated Saladin in the great battle of Arsuf, in which over seven thousand Saracens were left dead upon the field. It was perhaps the most splendid of all Richard's battles in Palestine, as it was his completest

victory, and it was fought in the breathless heat of a September day in the plains. Richard, "who was very skilful in military matters," had divided his army into five parts, giving the Templars the first place, which was always theirs, and which was, of course, the place of honour; next came Richard's own men of Anjou; then his men from Poitou under Guy de Lusignan; then the English and Normans with the Royal Standard; and last of all the Knights Hospitallers. Richard ordered the battle so that the Saracens were faced wherever they might turn; one body of the Crusaders was between them and the sea, another guarded the mountain ways; and the whole army marched on "at a gentle pace" so as to keep well together.

Suddenly, with noise and shouting, Saladin's advance-guard of ten thousand men burst upon the Crusader's rear, "hurling darts and arrows, and making a terrible din with their cries." These were followed by a body of men "very black in colour"; and then came the Bedouins, "a people light of foot and most eager for battle"; while behind them all the main Saracen army, twenty thousand strong, "on steeds swifter than eagles, thundered down upon us, till the whirling dust blackened the very air." The two armies were locked in battle almost before they knew it. The Saracens, just by the weight of their numbers, forced an opening in the Crusading ranks; but those behind held well together, and met them with a fury equal to their own, marching backwards so that their faces were towards the enemy. The Crusaders' horses suffered,

"being pierced through and through with arrows and darts"; and every man seemed to bear his wound as well.

All the time the Saracens were pressing hard upon the rear of the army, which was formed by the Hospitallers, who at last sent word to Richard that they could bear up no longer, unless their Knights were allowed to charge. But Richard forbade it, for he did not think the time had yet come. So the Hospitallers held on, bearing the hardest part of that day's fight, in having to obey an order that they saw no use for, and doing nothing. By now the Saracens were so close to them that their heavy maces rang upon the Crusaders' armour, and hand to hand fights were going on all the time. At last the Grand Master of the Hospitallers himself rode up to Richard, and said, "Lord King, we are grievously beset, and are likely to be branded with eternal shame as men who dare not strike in their own defence. Each one of us is losing his horse for nothing, and why should we put up with it any longer?"

Richard only answered, "My good Master, it must needs be borne, for none can be everywhere."

The Grand Master returned to his place, to find the Saracens pressing on, and dealing death amongst his men, "while there was no chief or count who did not blush for very shame that he might not strike a blow back." At last two of the Knights Hospitallers swung round, and calling out, "St. George! St. George!" they turned upon the Saracens. Eagerly the whole of the Hospitallers turned at

that well-known battle-cry, and body after body of horse turned with them, until the whole line was thundering down upon the Saracens in one of the finest and fiercest cavalry charges the world has ever seen. Who can describe the surprise and the horror of the Saracens when the men whom they had counted as cowards, and half-dead, turned upon them in this furious way! Richard had meant all along to make just such a wild charge as this, when the time came; the Hospitallers had forced him to make it earlier; but he was not the man to be outdone by a surprise. Putting spurs to his horse, he dashed right through the Hospitallers to their head, and led that grand charge himself.

Still for a time the battle wavered. Both armies were composed of brave and tried soldiers, who would fight to the very end; and now one side held the day, and now the other. Richard had said to the Master of the Hospitallers earlier in the day, "No man can be everywhere," but he himself seemed to be in all places at once. Urging on the horse he had brought from Cyprus, until it was as madly excited as himself, he was now chasing the Saracens up the narrow hill-passes, now in the front, now in the rear; "helmets clinked as the enemy fell before him, and sparks leapt out from the battery of his sword." At last the Saracens seemed to have been driven off; and the weary Crusaders set to work to pitch their tent outside the town of Arsuf. But while they were in the very middle of doing this, a great mass of Saracens fell upon them from behind.

Out dashed Richard, calling to his men, and with only fifteen companions he flung himself upon the foe. His great shout, three times repeated, "God and the Holy Sepulchre aid us!" brought the rest of the army rushing pell-mell after him; the Saracens wavered, broke, and gave way before the terrible Lion-Heart, and fled back headlong to the woods of Arsuf from which they had just come.

Richard had won the day. Many brave men had fallen on both sides; and the Crusaders especially mourned for the loss of one splendid Knight, Sir James d'Avesnes, whose dead body was found on the field, lying in a circle of fifteen Saracens, who had all been slain by his mighty sword.

If Richard had followed up the Battle of Arsuf, he might have even reached Jerusalem and taken it, before Saladin had time to collect another army to stop him. But Richard did not know how strong his hand had been. His name, since Acre and Arsuf, had become a real terror to the Saracens, so that they fled at the very sound of it. In vain did Saladin rebuke his men. "Are these the deeds of my brave troops?" he said. "Where is that prowess which they promised to put forth against the Christians, to overthrow them utterly? Lo! these Christians cover the whole Country at their pleasure! It is a disgrace to our nation, the most warlike in the world!"

The Saracen chiefs listened to his words in deep shame, with heads bent down; and at last one of them spoke.

"Most sacred Sultan," he said, "saving your Majesty, this charge is unjust, for we fought with all our strength against the Franks and did our best to destroy them, but it was of no use. And further, there is one among them greater than any man we have ever seen; he always charges before the rest, slaying and destroying our men; he is the first in everything, and is a most brave and excellent soldier. No one can resist him, or escape from his hands. Such a King as he seems born to command the whole earth!"

It was not only the Saracen soldiers who feared the Lion-Heart's name. "What then! do you see King Richard?" the rider would exclaim to a frightened horse; while the Saracen mothers hushed their children with the words, "If you cry, King Richard will hear you, and he will come and take you!"

The Saracens were always hoping that some lucky chance would give King Richard into their hands, for they knew that if they once got hold of him, the whole Crusade would fall to pieces at once. Richard was no easy man to trap, however; but once the Saracens came upon him as he lay asleep under some trees, and they would certainly have caught him if one of his Knights, called Sir William de Preaux, had not cried out in Arabic, "I am the King!"

Hearing this, the Saracens turned from pursuing Richard and seized hold of de Preaux, while the King and the rest got safely away. De Preaux remained a prisoner for many months, but he was well treated; and Richard did not forget him, but before he left the Holy Land he gave a large ransom for him, and set him free.

Richard had all the rashness and pride of courage that goes with great strength of body. Alone, he would gallop up to the front ranks of the enemy, waving that great battle-axe of his round his head, and daring any or all of them to single combat; then, scornfully turning his back upon them, as if he despised them for not answering to his call, he would ride slowly back to his own lines, while the Saracens simply dared not accept his challenge. Or he would ride out with a small following, and return to camp rich in plunder, with ten or twenty Saracen heads fastened to the saddles, after the savage custom of those days. He would rush hot-headed into the greatest dangers, while his Knights and soldiers held their breath in very fear for his safety, and come out untouched, laughing at their fears. "There was never a man like him, nor one whom the enemy feared so much, who destroyed so many Saracens single-handed."

Richard was a good leader as well as a brave and strong fighter. He could put heart into his men, no matter what dangers and troubles they had to face; they would have followed him anywhere. But his fiery temper, and his proud and masterful ways, made the lesser chiefs of the

Crusade dislike him very much, and all the more because they were afraid to cross his will in any way; while in his heart each one thought himself at least as good as the King of England. Richard saw quite well that these silly quarrels were killing all their hopes of success. He tried more than once to bring back old friendships. "Our differences of opinion may be not only useless, but dangerous to the army," he said in Council to the other Princes. And then for a little while things would go smoothly in the camp, until some outburst of temper from Richard himself, or some fresh piece of trickery in another, made the whole quarrel blaze up again. When Leopold of Austria had the impudence to strike his banner into the ground beside the Lions of England, Richard, burning with rage, tore it up and trampled it under foot. That was before Philip of France left Palestine, and he smoothed the trouble over with soft words; but Leopold never forgave the insult to his flag.

Little by little the Crusading army fell away. Numbers died from sickness, wounds, and fever; and many of the chiefs got tired of the affair and went home, taking their men with them. Only Richard seemed to have heart for everything, no matter what troubles and perils lay before him in the road to Jerusalem; but even he could not conquer single-handed. He did his best; he built and repaired castles and fortresses, fought small fierce encounters with the enemy almost every day, and held his own English and Norman troops together with an iron

hand. All the while he was pressing on nearer to Jerusalem; and so great was the terror of his name, that even Saladin could not keep his men quite in hand. Thousands of the Saracens fled from the City, and even soldiers deserted, when they heard that Richard had only to pass the steep rocky hills that lie between Jaffa and the Holy City to be upon them. It was at this time, when one good blow would have given Jerusalem into the Crusaders' hands, that Leopold of Austria said that he was ill, and went home; putting his own private grudge against Richard before the good of the Crusade, and his own vows as a Crusader. With Leopold went so many of the French, Austrian, and Burgundian soldiers, that Richard had hardly any left beside his own men. It was really the jealousy of Leopold of Austria that saved Jerusalem to the Saracens.

On the 12th of June Richard set out at earliest dawn to surprise a large body of Saracens who, so his own spies had brought him word, were lying in wait at the Fountain of Emmaus to surprise him. It was just the sort of mischievous and dangerous expedition that Richard's very soul delighted in. He caught them unawares, killed twenty, and captured Saladin's herald—a person of some importance—as well as much spoil. "The rest of the Saracens he pursued over the mountains, routing and slaying them, until, after piercing one of the enemy, and casting him dying from his horse, he looked up and beheld in the distance the City of Jerusalem." Raising his shield

before his eyes, he cried aloud, "Ah, fair Lord God! since I may not save Thy Holy City, let me not even see it!" Then turning his horse's head he rode swiftly away, followed by his wondering escort. The hilltop from which Richard saw Jerusalem is one lying to the north of the City; its Bible name is Mizpah; but the Crusaders called it Mount Joy, because it was often from here that they got their first sight of Jerusalem. They built a Church there which they called St. Samuel's, and which is still in use as a mosque; the place to-day is called Nebi Samweel (Prophet Samuel).

After this great disappointment, Richard fell back on Jaffa, meaning to take ship there for England, where Philip of France, and Richard's own traitor brother John, were working every kind of mischief in his absence. But there was fighting to be done first. Saladin, with a great army, suddenly swept down upon the seaside city and took it; and Richard, who was making a last hasty visit to Acre, was sent for with all speed, and came back to find the Saracens plundering Jaffa, and the Christian garrison shut up in the citadel, too weak and too few in number to stop them. Saracen banners waved upon the walls and towers, and the wild music of Saracen cymbals and trumpets floated out to sea. At first Richard thought that the town was altogether in their hands, even to the citadel itself, and it seemed of no use to land. But just then he saw a man fling himself into the sea from the citadel, and begin to swim towards the ships as they waited. Very soon the bold swimmer was pulled up on board Richard's own ship; it

was an all-red ship, the decks were covered with a red awning, and a broad red flag flew from it. The messenger from the citadel was a priest.

"Oh, noble King!" he said as soon as he had breath to speak with, "the people who are left hunger for your coming! They will perish on the spot, unless God helps them through you!"

"Perish the hindmost man in this!" shouted Richard; and the red ship set in hard for the shore. Over the side leapt Richard, waist-deep in the water, careless of the sharp hidden rocks and the uneven places that make the Jaffa shore so dangerous. One after the other his Knights and men splashed in after him, and in a breath they were all amongst the Saracens. These fell like heads of corn before the great sweep of Richard's battle-axe. He cleared for himself a path right through the city to the Templar's House. He flung himself up the outer stairway, alone, and a moment later the Banner of England was floating out from the top, run up by the King's own hand. At sight of that flag—which has been in all times the sign of safety and protection—the garrison with shouts of joy rushed out, adding their swords to the few already fighting round Richard. A few minutes more, and Jaffa was in Richard's hand.

Saladin sent his chamberlain at night to speak of peace with Richard. The Saracens found the King in a right

merry mood, as he generally was after he had refreshed his soul in battle.

"Eh!" he said, "this Sultan of yours is mighty, and there is none greater or mightier than he in this land of Islam. Why, then, did he make off at my first appearance? I was not even armed or ready to fight; I am still wearing only the shoes I wore on board! Why, then, did you fly?" Then he burst out into open praise of Saladin, feeling for him the honour that one brave man will always feel for another. "But I thought he could not have taken Jaffa in two months, and yet he made himself master of it in two days! Greet the Sultan from me," he added to the chamberlain; "give him my greeting, and tell him that I beg him in God's Name to give me the peace I ask at his hands. There must be an end to all this. My country over the sea is in a bad way; I must go to it. There is no use to us or to you in letting things go on in this way."

Richard and Saladin made out conditions of peace through their messengers. "If you give me these two cities, Jaffa and Ascalon," said Richard, "the troops I leave there will be always at your service; and if you have any need of me, I will hasten to come to you and be at your service; and you know that I can help you." To this Saladin returned answer: "Since you trust with such trust in me, I propose that we share the two cities; Jaffa and what is beyond it shall be yours, whilst Ascalon and what is beyond it shall be mine." But Richard said that he must have Ascalon, and he gave Saladin eight days in which to

give it up to him; and as Saladin would not consent to this at all, the talk of peace fell through for that time. The Saracens were very angry because they had lost the rich plunder of Jaffa when Richard retook it, and Saladin saw that they would not fight well while their anger was still hot; but, on the other hand, it would be a shame to him to keep his great army in sight of the little Crusading one, and not strike one blow. There was one small fight, during which Richard, lance in hand, rode along the whole length of the Saracen army from right to left, and not one of them left the ranks to close with him. Then Saladin, angry and ashamed, moved his whole army to another place.

Soon after the recapture of Jaffa, Richard fell very ill again of Syrian fever, and the knightly Saladin refused to fight until he was well enough to take the field once more. The Sultan also sent Richard presents of ice and fruit, especially peaches and pears for which the sick King had a great longing, and very welcome they must have been to him in his burning fever. He sent his own doctor to attend him, for the Crusading doctors, or barber-surgeons as they were called, were very rough men and little taught, and in any case they knew next to nothing about Syrian fevers.

Richard slowly recovered, and Saladin sent him a splendid Arab horse from his own stables. Richard, well-pleased, leaped upon its back at once to try its paces; whereupon the horse, turning a glad head that way, galloped swiftly towards the Saracen camp, its old home. The Crusaders rushed out with loud shouts of horror at

seeing their King carried off at such speed towards the enemy's camp; but Richard was able to check its mad rush almost at once, and returned safely to his own place. The Crusaders swore that it was a trick of Saladin's to get hold of Richard's person, but the Lion-Heart knew well that no such meanness was ever in the mind of Saladin. Another time, Richard's horse was killed during a fight, and Saladin sent him straightway two of his best horses. "It were shame," he said by the messenger who brought the horses, "that so gallant a Knight and so noble a King should fight on foot." Richard took the gift in the same generous spirit that it was offered. He would have done the same himself for Saladin if he had had the chance. Saladin was a very open-handed Prince, it is clear; no wonder that his devoted friend and servant, Beha-ed-Din (who wrote his Life), should say of him in praise, that "no one could outstrip him in the matter of presents, his heart was so large, and his generosity so great."

Richard's fever grew worse, and the news that he had from England of all the bad things that John was doing there, gave him no rest. Most likely he would have held on to the end but for this; but as it was, he gave way to Saladin about Ascalon, and the treaty of peace was brought to him in his tent, where he lay ill, for him to sign. Richard said, "I am not strong enough to read it; but I solemnly declare that I will make peace; and here is my hand!" It showed how much he trusted to Saladin's honour, that he could take the treaty thus on faith. The next day the chief

Crusading Knights, all fasting as the custom was, swore to keep the treaty of peace; but Richard said, "I will not take the oath, for it is not the custom for Kings to do so." So his word and his hand were Richard's bond; and Saladin was content with that, for he knew the English King.

So though Richard recovered, he and Saladin fought no more. Richard had very few men left by now to fight with, even if his own Kingdom had not needed him so badly. Saladin, too, was more ready for peace than for war, for he was suffering from the painful illness which had troubled him for years past, and which carried him to his grave within a few months of Richard's leaving. So these two great men were glad to agree to a peace for three years, on terms that were equally good for both sides.

"Tell your Sultan that I shall return to take Jerusalem from him!" Richard said to the Saracen Emirs. And Saladin sent back word, "If it pleases God to take Jerusalem out of my hand, there is none more worthy to hold it than King Richard."

Richard took ship for England, dressed as a Templar, and on one of the Templars' ships; but he did not get home for fourteen months. The jealous Duke of Austria had been longing for years for a chance of doing harm to Richard, and he waylaid him on his way through Europe, and imprisoned him. For many months no one could find any trace of him at all, but at last he was discovered in a distant castle; and then such a huge ransom was asked for

him, that everyone in England had to be taxed heavily in order to raise it. But the English people gave willingly; and when at last Richard landed in England, the people crowded round him with loud cries of welcome and rejoicing, kissing his hands and his garments, and even the long cross-handled sword that had done such good work in the Holy Land.

"Look to yourself; the devil has broken loose again!" wrote Philip of France to his secret ally, John. And the black-hearted John, coward and craven that he was, being sorely afraid of the punishment he so richly deserved, hastened to kneel before Richard and make his peace. He brought his mother with him, to speak for him to Richard, for he knew very well that he could hardly expect Richard to forgive such meanness and treachery as his had been; and he knew also that Richard would never refuse anything that his mother asked of him.

"Sire and my brother, forgive," he said.

Richard looked at him as he knelt, and half pitied him for his fears, half scorned him for his meanness and his treachery. Raising him, he answered, "John, I wish that I might as easily wipe out the harm you have done, as you will forget this my pardon!"

Richard never took the Cross again, though he always meant to do so; he was kept far too busy at home; and about six years later he was killed while laying siege to the castle of one of his own nobles, who he thought was hiding

from him a great treasure, a part of which should have been his by right as King.

Splendid King Richard—*English* King Richard! His name and his fame and his great deeds belong to us still, and as we tell the story of them we shall always feel proud of our English Crusader.

The Children's Crusade, 1212

"We are but little children weak,
Nor born in any high estate;
What can we do for Jesus' sake,
Who is so High and Good and Great?"

Hymn A. & M., 331.

When Richard Cœur-de-Lion left Palestine, it must have seemed to the people there that their last hope for the Holy Land had gone with him. He had not been able to recover Jerusalem, but he had done a good deal, for he had regained most of the seaports for the Christians; and though very little else remained of the Christian Kingdom beyond a narrow strip of coast-land, still that strip was a valuable one, and well worth having. He had also made Saladin agree that all pilgrims should have free and safe entry to the holy places. The two great Orders of the Hospitallers and the Templars remained in Palestine, to show that Christendom had even now some share in the Land of Christ. If they had only been friends and worked together, they might have done a great deal towards recovering the lost power of the Christian Kingdom, but they were far too jealous of each other, and would only act alone.

A small Crusade went out from Germany soon after Richard's departure, expecting to reap where Richard of England had sown; but when they arrived they found that

there was nothing for them to do, and they were not wanted in the least. The Land was quiet; the three years' truce made by Richard and Saladin was not yet over; and as the Christians needed peace so much to repair and to strengthen their places of defence, they refused to break the truce. In fact, they even talked of getting it renewed when the three years were out. The Germans did a little fighting here and there, and thereby broke the truce. They then went home, not much better either in honour or in pocket for this very foolish little Crusade.

As the truce had been broken, the Christians were very much afraid of being punished by the Saracens, and they sent many urgent messages to Europe for help. But help was not to be had for the asking in these days. Everything in Europe was in a state of turmoil. Richard's death, which happened suddenly, while fighting against a rebellious subject of his own, was followed by the shameful reign of John. France was in a state of trouble and unrest; and Germany had had enough of Crusades for the present. An army which called itself a Crusade did at last set out, but it never reached Jerusalem; for it spent all its force in tearing Constantinople from the hands of the Greek Emperors, and setting up there a Latin Kingdom, that lasted for about fifty-seven years (1204-1261). Constantinople was a city of many and wonderful riches; it was easier to reach than Jerusalem; and while it was in the hands of Western rulers, men preferred to go there for what they could get, rather than make the long and difficult journey to Palestine.

Perhaps they were beginning to think more of filling their pockets in the quickest and easiest way, than of adding honour to their country, or even to their own names. So it was that no one seemed to care very much what happened to poor Palestine; where, after all (men said), the Christians of the Kingdom had shown themselves to be rather a faint-hearted lot, and altogether too fond of making and breaking promises to be easy to help. In the old days the Crusaders had loved the Holy Land—but especially Jerusalem—so much, that they had not minded how much they suffered in order to help her; but now they hardly remembered her, she was so far away, and they were all so busy with their own affairs.

But out of all this carelessness and hardness of heart, there arose what was perhaps the most wonderful Crusade of all—that of the Children.

In 1212 a half-crazy priest, named Nicholas, was struck by a sudden idea, which he declared was sent to him from Heaven; and he went through France and Germany preaching a Children's Crusade.

"Why have the other Crusades all failed?" he said. "Was it not because the men who joined them were not pure in heart and in thought? To you children it is given to set Jerusalem free! God calls you! He will most surely work miracles for you all along your way. The waters of the sea shall be dried up for you to pass over. The Saracens will flee in terror before you. And you, the pure in heart,

shall see the City of God. Lo! it has been revealed to me that these things shall be!"

As Nicholas and his fellow-preachers went through the streets, talking in this wild way, the children everywhere left their games and their work to listen. The boys thought of all the delightful adventures by the way, the robbers and the pirates and the wild beasts they were to overcome; the girls thought of the miracles that would be worked for them, and of the strange new countries they would see, where the sun always shone, and the woods were full of wonderful new birds and flowers. How much better it would be to join this great adventure, than to stay at home, doing the same dull work day after day, until they were old and worn out! In vain the fathers and mothers begged and scolded, and threatened and punished; some even put their children in prison to keep them safe. Somehow or other the children got away; and fifty thousand of them took the Cross, led by a boy of fifteen, named Stephen. Waving branches and crying, "We go to Jerusalem to deliver the Holy Sepulchre!" these poor children started joyfully upon their way. The German bands went to Genoa, the French to Marseilles. "Lord Jesus, give us back Thy Holy Cross," they sang as they went.

After these helpless little Crusaders there crept a dark stream of thieves, cut-throats, and bad people of all sorts, who robbed and murdered them without mercy. Many of the children died of the hardships of the journey, the long

hours of trudging over rough ground, and wading through ice-cold streams, the heat by day and the cold by night. Many of them must have longed for the safe shelter of homes and mothers, as they huddled together, trembling and afraid, through the long dark night.

About seven thousand of them, however, reached Genoa. There the sight of the bright blue sea restored their courage and their hope. Day after day these poor, trustful children crowded down to the shore, expecting every moment to see the great waves of the Mediterranean roll slowly backward, to leave a dry road for their feet. But no miracle turned the course of the sea; and the rough sailors and shippers in the harbour mocked the tears and disappointment of the Child Crusaders. Finally, some kind-hearted Genoese nobles took charge of a few children of good birth, to bring up in their own households; and more than one Genoese family of to-day counts its descent from these little Crusaders. The others sadly tried to make their way home again. Very few of them, if any, ever got back, and those were ragged, footsore, and wretched—children in spirit no longer.

Even sadder was the story of the French band. They made their way to Marseilles with great weariness and trouble, and they, too, expected that the sea would dry up before their feet. It did not; but after some days of waiting and hoping, two merchants who traded between France and the East, with seven good ships of their own, spoke to the children, and offered to take them to the Holy Land.

Their names were Hugh Ferreus and William Porcus—names which sound less well turned into English as Iron Hugh and Pig William; but which were, without a doubt, quite good enough for such men as they turned out to be.

"We will take you," said these soft-spoken merchants, "not for money, but purely for the love of the Holy Land and your own goodness!"

"Oh, do you know our Lord's own Holy Land, good masters?" cried the Child Crusaders. And they made up their minds at once that this was the way they were meant to go; not dry-shod through the sea, but in ships with these good men as their guides. Perhaps the miracles were to be worked only in the sight of the Saracens. With great joy and thankfulness did they accept this welcome and unlooked for offer. Carrying their banners, and raising their cry, "Lord Jesus, give us back Thy Holy Cross!" they crowded eagerly into the seven ships which were rocking at anchor in the Bay of Marseilles. Not many days after they had put out to sea a bad storm blew up, and two of the ships went down, and all on board were drowned. The other Child Crusaders mourned for the loss of their companions, who now would never share with them the wonderful triumphs that awaited them in their conquest of the Holy Land. The two merchants mourned, too, but for very different reasons. The remaining five ships, which were really less happy in their safety from the sea, arrived in good time at Alexandria, the great seaport of Egypt.

Once in anchor there, the thoughts of the two merchants were made plain to the unhappy frightened children; for their trade was in stealing fair strong children from Europe, that they might sell them as slaves in Eastern markets. No tears, no prayers, could help the Child Crusaders now; those cruel men were hard as iron. The Sultan of Cairo bought forty of the strongest and best-grown boys to train up for service in his body-guard; and of these, twelve gallant little fellows refused to change their faith, and so were killed at once. No voice has ever reached us out of the darkness that hides the fate of the rest of the Child Crusaders. We only know that they passed through the horrors of the slave markets of Egypt, into the awful misery of life-long bondage.

The Last Crusades

"Faith,
Unchanged by sufferings, time, or death;
And Valour, lion-mettled lord,
Leaning upon his own good sword."

Scott.

We are to think of the lovely land of Palestine as a shore to which the full tide, pouring in at its height, brought Crusades, both small and great, as well as stray companies of men from time to time. But now the tide was going out; real Crusades were very few, and the little companies of men were fewer still. In a few years more the tide would be out altogether, and then the Holy Land would be left to help herself as best she could; because men now cared only for what they could get out of her, and they seldom brought her anything, but came with empty, greedy hands that would be filled, no matter how. The people of Palestine were beginning to understand at last that no one cared any longer about Crusades, and all the trouble and hardships of them. Though there were here and there priests who preached them, and a few who were ready to take the Cross, the Kingdoms of Europe were having to fight hard each one for its own place and safety among the nations, and every sword and every penny was wanted for that.

In 1216 Andrew, King of Hungary, led a small Crusade to the Holy Land, but he never reached Jerusalem, and nothing came of it except a few uncertain battles. Andrew himself left the Crusade early on, in order to take back to Hungary some ancient treasures he had got hold of; amongst these was what he quite believed to be one of the twelve waterpots of stone, in which the water was turned into wine at Cana of Galilee. The rest of the army, wandering into Egypt, suffered dreadfully from hunger, and were fed by the kind-hearted Sultan of that land, who was moved to tears by their pains, and for three weeks sent them three thousand loaves of bread every day.

Ten years later Frederick II of Germany led a well-armed force to Palestine. At Acre the Knights Hospitallers and the Templars joined him, and received him as their King in right of his wife, who was a daughter of the Prince who now bore the empty title of King of Jerusalem. Frederick made a treaty with the Saracens by which the Christians were to have the Holy City itself, the Saracens only keeping the Mosque, the old Temple Church of the Knights Templars, for their house of worship. But men were afraid either to follow Frederick openly, or to stand apart from him. He had quarrelled with the Pope before leaving Europe, and they knew that if they sided with Frederick, the Pope would most likely excommunicate them with him; and if they went against Frederick too boldly he was strong enough to punish them. So between the two fears the Crusade of Frederick II of Germany got

no support; and when he reached the Holy City he met with a very cold welcome. He went straight to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; it was empty. Frederick crowned himself in the sight of his own Knights and soldiers, for no one else was there; and there was no service of any sort, no prayers said, no vows taken. How Frederick and his following—soldiers all—must have despised the silly fear of the Pope of far-off Rome, that kept the priests and people of Jerusalem from going to the crowning of the man who had actually recovered Jerusalem for the Christians!

Not that Frederick cared for either one or the other. He had come to Jerusalem to show the Pope that he could do so, with or without his blessing. "I promised I would come," he said, "and I am here. But," he added, "I am not here to deliver the Holy City, but to keep up my own name!" Perhaps what gave him the most pleasure, was writing from Jerusalem to tell the Pope that, "by a miracle," he had got back the City of Christ for the Christians. It was really quite like a miracle to have recovered Jerusalem, without having shed one drop of blood. The Pope was extremely angry at the thought of any miracle being worked for a man with whom he had had a quarrel, but not all his angry words could undo what Frederick had done.

Frederick left Jerusalem two days after he entered it. His Crusade and his coming had brought no real comfort to the Christians of Jerusalem. Though they had been

given back the City, they lived in daily terror of being attacked by the Saracens, and they spent most of their time in flying to the Tower of David for safety. And sure enough, as soon as the ten years' truce made by Frederick was over, the Saracens from Kerak, beyond Jordan in the Land of Moab, marched suddenly upon Jerusalem, and took it from the Christians, who were far too frightened to resist. The Saracens also levelled to the ground the Tower of David, which had been for so many years the chief fortress of the City.

A small Crusade followed on this bad news, led by Richard, Earl of Cornwall, a son of King John, and nephew of the Lion-Heart. When the Saracens heard his name they thought that it was King Richard himself, who had come back from the grave to punish them, and they were filled with the wildest fears. But they need not have troubled themselves in the least, for Richard of Cornwall was a very different man from his uncle. The Templars and the Hospitallers both refused to help him in any way; and Richard could only visit Jerusalem as a pilgrim, see the holy places, and return to England, having done nothing at all.

Worse days were in store for Jerusalem. A fierce Turkish tribe, called the Kharezmians, swept down upon the City, some twenty thousand of them; and at their approach all the Christians fled from their houses, for they had heard of the cruel and bloodthirsty ways of the invaders. They fled in haste, taking what they could carry

with them, but thinking more of saving their lives than of their possessions; and the Kharezmians found only a few old and sick people who could not escape, and whom they murdered at once. They then set out to trick the Christians into returning, by hoisting Christian flags upon the walls.

The Christians, looking out from their hiding-places all around the City, saw the flags, and believed that some miracle had saved the City for them. "A miracle! Behold, a miracle! Yea, the Lord hath done great things for us already, whereof we rejoice!" They hastened back in joy, mothers carrying their babies; little children trotting joyfully behind, happy in the thought of going home; men driving back the donkeys and mules, laden with the few things they had been able to carry out with them in their hasty flight. There was not a sign, not a sound, from the City to make them afraid, as they poured in through the gates, all rejoicing as they made their way to their deserted homes. But presently the great gates of the City swung-to heavily; no escape was possible this time. And at nightfall the savage Kharezmians went from house to house, and simply butchered the unfortunate citizens whom they had tricked too well, all to this end.

Every Christian was hateful to these wild people; and they even broke open the coffins of Godfrey and the other Kings, and burnt the poor dead dust.

So great was the terror that these Kharezmians brought with them wherever they went, that the Christians and the Saracens joined together to turn them out of the Holy Land; but they were defeated in an awful battle near Jaffa, and thirty thousand Christian and Saracen soldiers fell that day. Of the Christians, only thirty-three Templars, twenty Hospitallers, and five Knights of a German Order, remained alive. Fortunately the Sultan of Egypt sent a large army against them soon after, and the Kharezmians were wiped out in ten bloody fights. They disappeared from the Land, and from history at the same time; and it is quite certain that the world has not missed them at all.

Out of all this darkness and unrest arose at last the Ninth Crusade—that of Louis IX, King of France, and Saint (1248).

This good King had a very bad illness, of which he so nearly died, that one of the two ladies who were nursing him thought he really was dead; but the other one declared that he was not; and while they were arguing about it, the King suddenly came out of his faint, and in a weak voice commanded that the Cross should be brought to him, that he might take it to show his gratitude to God for having spared his life. This was done, and "when the Queen, his mother, heard that he had recovered his speech, she showed as much joy as could be; but when she was told by himself that he had taken the Cross, she displayed as much grief as if she had seen him dead." For

she feared the long journey to the Holy Land, with all its dangers and hardships; and she feared also for the safety of France, during the many months that the King must be away.

But Louis, having taken the Cross, never rested until he had got together a large army; and they all took ship at Marseilles in August 1248. There were many of the bravest of the French Knights and nobles who took the Cross with the King, and amongst these was one whom he loved very much, and who was really the greatest friend he had in the world; and this Knight, the Sieur de Joinville, has written the story of the Crusade of St. Louis, which is one of the nicest books that ever were written. De Joinville tells us how they embarked, and how "the door of the vessel was opened, and the horses were led inside; then they fastened the door and closed it up tightly, because when the ship is at sea the whole of the door is under water." Poor horses, they must have suffered a good deal in their dark, cramped stable, with the noise of the sea beating against the ship just near their heads all the time, and getting no light or air or exercise at all. But in those days, when men were often so cruel and hard to each other, I suppose they thought very little of the sufferings of animals. "When the horses were in, the captain of the ship called to his men, 'Are you all ready?' and when he knew they were, he called for the priests to come forward, and 'Chant in God's Name!' Then all together, led by the priest, they sang the Hymn, 'Come, Holy Ghost, our souls

inspire': the master cried to his men, 'Set sail in God's name!' And in a little time the wind struck the sails, and carried them out of sight, so that they saw nothing but sea and sky." There were some among the Crusaders who did not much enjoy the voyage, for de Joinville wrote, "When you fall asleep at night you know not but that ere the morning you may be at the bottom of the sea"; which is not a very happy thought to go to sleep on. Evidently the good Knight, though he was so gallant on shore, was not a very cheerful or willing sailor.

Louis reached Egypt after many adventures, and anchored before the city of Damietta. The Sultan of Egypt had had word of the coming of this great French Crusade, and his own forces were all drawn up on the sea-shore. "Fine troops to look at," wrote de Joinville, "for the Sultan's arms are of gold, and the sun striking upon the gold made the arms shine forth brilliantly. The noise they made with their cymbals and Saracenic horns was frightful to hear."

Louis took counsel with his Knights: should they land and face this terrible enemy with the few troops they had, or wait until the main army joined them? Many of the Knights were for waiting; but in the end Louis settled the question by saying that he would land, because there was no good harbour near Damietta where he could shelter while he waited, and he was afraid of bad winds driving him further along the coast, or right out to sea, and so he might lose a good chance of battle.

On the day fixed, the French ships, or galleys as they were called, put in closer to shore, and when the word was given, the rowers bent to their oars, and the galleys flew along. Each gallant Knight and Baron was thirsting to be the first to land and meet the foe, who were waiting for them on shore, just as eager for the fight as the French were. De Joinville was one of the first to land, and just after his foot had touched shore, the Banner of St. Denis was landed. A Saracen horseman, as soon as he saw that, dashed into the midst of this landing-party, expecting that his companions would follow him, and they would capture the French flag at the outset. But the rest shamefully held back,—perhaps they did not understand what he was doing,—and the gallant Saracen, fighting alone, was cut to pieces by the long French swords in a moment.

When King Louis saw that the Banner of St. Denis had been borne ashore, he flung himself overboard, though the sea just there was so deep that it came right up to his shoulders. Half swimming, half wading, he pushed forward, "his shield round his neck, his helmet on his head, and lance in hand, until he came up with his people who were on shore." As soon as he saw the Saracen lines he laid his lance in rest, and would have rushed upon them, but his Knights forcibly held him back.

Three times the Saracens had sent word to their Sultan by carrier-pigeons that the French King had landed with his host; and they were troubled and surprised at

receiving no orders from him in reply. But the Sultan was dying, and knew nothing of the trouble of his soldiers; and word reached the men upon the shore that he was actually dead, and their hearts failed them, and they drew off. Then King Louis, whose way had been so marvellously cleared before him, called all his army together, and they all sang "with loud voices" and great joy the *Te Deum*. After this, Louis led his men forward, and pitched camp before the strong city of Damietta, which he knew he must take before he went any further.

After hard fighting the city was taken; but the rising of the river Nile delayed him in Egypt for many months. During this time of idleness the waiting Crusaders fell into all kinds of trouble and mischief, quarrelling a great deal amongst themselves, both Knights and men. At last the river went down, and the army could leave Damietta, of which place they were all thoroughly tired by now. Louis had made the city very strong during the weeks of waiting, and now he left his Queen and her ladies there, with a strong force to guard them. He himself marched on Cairo. The country round was full of canals, or small waterways, by which the Egyptian peasants watered their fields; and the French, who did not know the country, got mixed up among these canals and were separated from each other. All the time, wherever they went, they were followed by bands of Egyptian Saracens, ready to catch and kill any of them who happened to fall behind.

When Louis saw how the whole army was delayed and troubled by these canals, he set his men to build a bridge over the Nile, by which they and the heavy waggons could cross quickly and safely; but while they were working, his brother found a shallow place which they could ford. The Prince thought that this was a splendid chance to win honour for himself; and without waiting for the main army to come up, he hurried across the river with about two thousand men, and attacked the strong city beyond, called Mansourah. It was really well garrisoned, but the Saracens all hid when they saw the French coming, and so the Crusaders thought they had run away. They did not trouble to look carefully first, but broke ranks, and spread all over the city in search of plunder. Suddenly the Saracens showed themselves on the roofs of the houses, which in the East are made flat, and covered over with stones like a terrace; and with yells and wild cries they hurled down great stones upon the Crusaders, who were all crowded together in the narrow winding streets below. At the same time other Saracen soldiers rushed out of their different hiding-places, and attacked them on all sides. The Prince himself, and many of the chief French Knights were killed, and all would have perished if Louis had not arrived just in time to save the day. As it was, the Crusaders had lost many more brave men than they could spare; and while their defeat had left them heavy of heart and disappointed, it had encouraged the Saracens very much indeed.

The Crusaders held Mansourah; but the Saracens pressed them close on every side, and they suffered very much from sickness and hunger. Louis himself fell ill, and seemed about to die; but from his sickbed he gave orders that the sick and wounded should be taken to Damietta to be healed there. As the ships, crowded with sick and helpless men, were setting off, the Saracens made a sudden onset, seized the ships, dragged all the sick upon deck to be killed, and threw them into the river, without caring whether they were really dead or only very badly hurt. At the same time, a second large Saracen force attacked the Crusading camp on shore, overcame the French army, and captured the sick King himself.

The Saracens asked a very large ransom for Louis, and threatened him with torture if it were not paid in full. They also asked for one hundred and fifty thousand livres as the ransom of the whole army. Louis at once agreed to this; at which the Sultan of Egypt was much surprised, and said, "By my faith, the Frenchman is generous and liberal, not to bargain about so large a sum! Go, tell him from me, that for my part I will forgive him one hundred thousand livres of the ransom."

As soon as Louis' own ransom was paid—the Templars giving a good part of it—the French King went to Acre in Palestine; but his army was too small by now to be much more than a guard. Out of the two thousand eight hundred Knights he had led so proudly from France, only one hundred of those who were still alive said that they

would stay on with him, to share his good or evil fortune; and with those who returned home went many of the soldiers as well. With the little force that remained faithful to him, King Louis did all that he could to repair and strengthen some of the cities of Palestine. He also bought with his own money, and set free, twelve hundred Christians, whom the Saracens had made slaves. At last, seeing that he could do no more, he returned to France; where he received a mighty welcome from his people.

For sixteen years Louis remained in France; and during the whole of that time he wore the Cross, and only longed for the day to come when he would be free once more to lead a Crusade to the Holy Land. At last the chance came to him. His wise and good government had made France so strong and peaceful, that he was able to leave her with a quiet mind. Once more he turned his face towards the East; and with him went the young Prince Edward of England, afterwards Edward I, who was eager to use his sword in the service of the Holy Sepulchre, and to win, if he might, some such honour in Palestine as the great King Richard had won there, a hundred years before.

The French and English armies set sail at different times, having agreed to meet in Palestine. On the way Louis landed at Carthage, a strong city in Africa belonging to the Saracens, meaning to take both it and the province of Carthage from the Sultan of Egypt, who owned it. But here the good King was struck down by the great heat, (it was August, which is a burning month), and he lay sick

unto death in his tent. Knowing that death was very near, Louis asked his Knights to lift him out of his bed, and lay him upon the ground. His dying thoughts turned with sadness and affection to Jerusalem, whose freedom he must leave to other hands to win. "O God, I will enter Thy House—I will worship in Thy holy place!" he said; and repeating over and over again the word "Jerusalem! Jerusalem!" King Louis died (1270).

The English army that Edward brought to this Crusade was a very small one. There were only a thousand men all told, but the Templars and the Hospitallers joined him in Palestine, and the spirit of the warlike Prince was in them all. With him came his young wife, Eleanor of Castile, whose courage was equal to his own, though her strength of body might not be.

This eager little army reached Palestine safely, though not till after King Louis' death; and so swift and successful were the attacks of Edward that the Saracens were filled with fear and anger. It was a large army of Egyptian Saracens, under their Sultan, Bibars, against which this gallant little army set itself; though the wise heads in the Prince's train were sure that it was worse than useless to try to stand before such a force. Edward laughed all such unworthy fears and counsels to scorn, for he knew what English soldiers could do. "If all other Christians go away, yet will I and Fowyn, my groom, remain!" he said. And he drove Bibars out of Acre, and then beat him soundly in a hard-fought battle at Nazareth. Bibars, who had never

been defeated so often or so badly in all his years of warfare, fell back in a very black temper before the Prince; and really it was a little hard upon him, for he was in the habit of conquering in most places, and he liked to carve his name and his many great titles upon the different castles he captured from the Christians, adding after his name the proud words, "Father of victory and Pillar of the faith."

Bibars, being obliged to give way before this small but terrible army from a little Island over the sea, fell into a great rage, and suggested to the Old Man of the Mountains of that day, that it would be a very good thing to get Edward out of the way. The Old Man thought so, too, and accordingly he sent one of his Assassins to murder him. The Assassin persuaded Edward's Knights to let him into the Prince's tent, by pretending that he wished to become a Christian, and had many questions to ask Edward about his faith; and then, while they were talking, he suddenly sprang upon Edward like a tiger, and aimed a dagger at his side. Edward quickly bent to one side, so that the dagger struck him on the arm instead, and snatching up a small wooden stool from the floor he knocked the Assassin down. His servants heard the noise of the scuffle, and came rushing in to his help, and a Knight named Latimer killed the Assassin before he could rise from the ground. But then the wound in the Prince's arm turned black, and everyone was afraid that the dagger had been poisoned; and the Master of the Templars and all the

doctors shook their heads, and said that the flesh must be cut out all round, or the Prince would surely die.

Eleanor cried out at this, thinking of the pain he would have to bear; for the doctors in those days were not proper doctors at all, but often just rough, strong-handed men, called barber-surgeons, who, most likely, killed many more people by their ignorance than they cured by their skill—or by luck. After every battle the barber-surgeons went amongst the wounded to look to their hurts, and they would cut this one, and probe that one, until the air was full of the screams of the unfortunate soldiers. Probably they suffered far more under the doctors' hands than in the battle itself. So it was little wonder that Eleanor begged them not to cut the wounded Prince. But Edward's brother, Edmund Crouchback, Earl of Lancaster, said bluntly, "Madame, it is better that you should cry than that all England should weep!" And Edward thrust out his arm. "Cut, and spare not," he said; "I can bear it." Turning to his favourite Knight, Sir John de Vesci, he added, "Take the Princess away, for it is not fit for her to see." So the Knight carried poor Eleanor out of the tent, she struggling and crying all the time. The doctors cut away with all their might and skill, and Eleanor nursed the Prince back to health when they had done with him.

Sickness and fighting had thinned the ranks of the little English Crusade so much that Edward had to give up all thoughts of marching on Jerusalem, though it was very

bitter to the proud spirits of himself and his men to turn back from the great thing they had set out to do. It was just at this time, moreover, that he heard of the death of his father, Henry III, which made it necessary that he should return to England, and quickly. For things were going badly at home. King Henry had let slide a great deal that should have been taken up, and England needed the strong hand of Edward I to guide her.

The Loss of Acre

"The earth quakes and trembles because the King of Heaven hath lost His Land whereon His Feet once stood."—St. Bernard.

In spite of the constant fighting that had been going on in Palestine for so many years, the Christians there had increased in number, and there were now many more than there had been in the days of the earlier Crusades. As long as Saladin was alive there was safety and protection for men of all creeds, as a general rule; but after his death, in 1193, life became very much harder for the Christians. They had few rights, and those few were not always respected by the Saracen rulers, who, on their part, distrusted the Christians; for they knew that they were always longing for the old Christian Kingdom to be set up again, and that they would do anything they could to get help from Europe to bring about that end. To Christian eyes the state of Palestine seemed very sad indeed. There is a letter from an English Knight Hospitaller, Sir Joseph de Cancy, or de Chancy, to Edward I, written in May 1281, which tells us how things were at that date.

"Never in our remembrance," he wrote, "was the Holy Land in such poor estate as it is at this day, wasted by lack of rain, by divers (different) pestilences, and the paynim (he means the Saracens)....And now, Sire, the Holy Land was never so easy of conquest as now, with able generals

and store of food; yet never have we seen so few soldiers or so little good counsel in it:...And would to God, Sire, that this might be done by yourself. And this is the belief of all dwellers in the Holy Land, both great and small, that by you with the help of God, shall the Holy Land be conquered and brought into the hands of Holy Christendom."

No doubt he hoped that King Edward would lead out a powerful Crusade, and do what he had been unable to do in the earlier days when he had joined St. Louis. But Edward I could not leave England now that he was King, and in his answer to Sir Joseph he told him so.

A few cities and castles still belonged to the Christians, and they were in the hands of either the Knights Hospitallers or the Knights Templars. Let us look at one or two of them, and get some idea of how these old Crusaders built in Palestine to guard their position there.

The stronghold called Pilgrim Castle, (which is now known as Athlit), was built by the Templars in 1192, and a great part of it remains to-day; and though in many places it has fallen into ruin, there is still enough of it left standing to give shelter to the peasants in that district, who live in the great Banquetting-hall of the Knights. It was the most strongly fortified of all the places ever held by the Christians. "It stands in the deep sea, and is fenced with walls, outworks, and such strong barbicans and towers, that the whole world ought not to be able to take it." So

wrote a monk, who saw it just eleven years before the Saracens took it. It had two great towers, each a hundred feet high; it could take a garrison of four thousand men; and the two walls were forty feet and fifteen feet in depth. Pilgrim Castle to-day is one of the finest Crusading ruins left in the Land. It stands partly on a small plain which is rather higher than the country all round it, and partly on rocks pushing out into the sea, so that from the great watch-tower the Templars could see out over both land and sea, for many miles on all sides, as well as across to the Bay of Acre and the Hospitallers' city of St. Jean d'Acre. The castle plain was entered by two narrow gateways cut out of the rock, which were so narrow that only one man could pass through at a time, leading his horse. Unfortunately these passages were made broader a few years ago, to let a royal visitor's carriage and three horses abreast go through; and every one who sees the place now wishes that the Turkish Government had not been quite so polite, but had let their visitor walk through like other people. But at least you can still see on one side the hollow place cut out of the stone, where the sentry found shelter from the sun and from the rain, while he stood on guard.

The city of Acre belonged for some time to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, to whose Order it was given by our King Richard, and so it is nearly always called St. Jean d'Acre in old books of history or travel. It was the chief of the cities remaining in Christian hands, and its position on the sea, holding the Bay of Acre, made it the

strongest of the Christian possessions, as it was at one time the richest, too. The city was three-cornered in shape like a shield; two sides faced the sea, and the third overlooked the plain. There were many castles and citadels in it belonging to the Templars and the Hospitallers, and the walls were so broad that two carts could easily pass each other driving along on the top. The Crusaders always built these great, deep walls, and the city of Tyre when they held it had three such walls, each one being a great height and twenty-five feet thick; and there were twelve strong towers as well. There was a good harbour at Acre, which the Knights guarded with very great care; and the plain on the land side was very rich, and was carefully ploughed and planted so as to give food to the great city. It seemed as if such a strong city as Acre was, guarded by such famous Knights as the Templars and Hospitallers, could never be taken by any enemy.

But in 1291 the Sultan of Egypt led a mighty Saracen army against Acre, which he had quite made up his mind to take, and so to put an end for ever to the Christian power in Palestine. The other castles and strong places had fallen before him, one after the other; but both Saracens and Christians knew that the fate of Acre would be the fate of the Christian hold on Palestine.

The Saracens had brought with them huge siege-engines, made of cedar of Lebanon and of oak from Nazareth. From these they showered great rocks and logs into the city without stopping. The Templars twice

advised that terms should be made with the Saracens, but the rest of the garrison cried out "Treason! treason!" at the very idea, and refused to listen. At last on May 4, 1291, which was the twenty-ninth day of the siege, a great body of Saracens was seen advancing to the attack; all were well armed, and carried big golden shields which caught the light of the bright May sunshine, and threw it back into the eyes of the anxious watchers on the city walls. All that day and the night that followed, the attack and defence were carried on furiously; and the Templars and the Hospitallers fought like giants and heroes upon their crumbling walls. At last the Saracens drew off for a time. Many lesser attacks followed during the next two weeks, and on the 18th of May the Christians sallied forth and attacked the Saracens; but they were driven back, and the Grand Masters of the Hospitallers and of the Templars were wounded. There were now only about a thousand Christian soldiers left in Acre; and the Templars took refuge in their great tower overlooking the sea. A violent storm of hail and rain suddenly broke over the city, as sometimes happens in Palestine, and during this the Saracens cut their way into the city. The Christians fought bravely from street to street, but they were driven back inch by inch. The Master of the Templars was killed at his post at one of the gates; the city was plundered from end to end; and many Christians were burnt alive in the Churches to which they had fled for safety.

Many of the ladies of Acre fled down to the seashore then, and offered their jewels to the boatmen; choosing rather to face the perils of the stormy Bay in little boats, than the Saracen victors who were beginning to pour into the city, excited, and thirsting for blood and treasure. While the storm howled and shrieked all round, and the cries of death and of victory filled the streets, these frightened women, whose dainty feet had never touched rough places before, stood in the driving rain by the shore, on which the waves beat so furiously, and tried to bribe the boatmen with all their rich and shining store of jewels—chains of gold, and pearls, and rubies; these rough seamen might have all, if only they would take them away at once from the city of terror. The sea was tossing violently, and the boatmen were not willing to venture out upon it in their little boats, unless they were very well paid for it; and in the fears of these high-born women was a splendid chance for them to make hand over hand. While the ladies begged and pleaded, and the boatmen bargained and argued, one small ship actually went down before their eyes, and all on board were drowned. The sight of these poor people struggling and crying out in the water only made the boatmen less willing to put out to sea themselves; though death in the storm-tossed Bay seemed to the Christian ladies of Acre better than waiting on in the lost city behind them.

The Saracens were still pouring in over the ruined walls, killing everyone who crossed their path without

mercy, and sixty thousand Christians of all ages were either killed, or sold into slavery. Blood ran like water, and the screams of the dying who were trampled under foot, and of hunted women and children as they fled in terror from their pursuers, were mixed with the loud shouts of the triumphant Saracens.

A number of the besieged Christians, and some Knights and ladies among them, had fled to the Templars' Tower for safety. Soon this was left like a rock in the midst of the sea; for the Saracens held the harbour and the city, a good part of which had been in flames. For a few days that lonely gallant Tower held out, but the Saracens were hard at work undermining it; and at last it fell with a terrific crash, shaking the ground like an earthquake, and every one who was in it—lady, and Knight, and Templar—was crushed to death in that tremendous fall.

It had been a terrible siege, lasting forty-three days; but the last Christian city of Palestine had made a splendid defence, worthy of the best days of the Kingdom. "After its loss all Christian women, poor and rich, who dwell on the shores of the Mediterranean, dress in black as mourning for Acre to this day." This is what a German pilgrim wrote, who visited the Holy Land in 1350, nearly sixty years after the siege.

The fall of Acre ended every hope of the Christians again holding the Land in rule. What was the use of Crusades when the whole Land would have to be

reconquered from end to end; when the strong castles built by Christian hands would be turned to use against them by the Saracens? Europe, which had not cared to help while yet there was time, had now for ever lost the chance.

The Two Great Orders

"Glory, glory, glory,
To those who have greatly suffered and done!
Never name in story
Was greater than that which ye shall have won."

Shelley.

Only seven of the Knights Hospitallers remained alive after the fall of Acre, and these managed to escape to Cyprus. Here their Grand Master, who was one of the seven, joined them; and, after a time, he called them together to talk over with him the sad state of their Great Order, and how they could restore its lost fortunes.

"My dear Brethren," he said, "Jerusalem is fallen, as you know, under the tyranny of the Saracens. A mighty power has forced us little by little out of the Holy Land. For more than an age past we have been obliged to fight as many battles as we have defended places. St. Jean d'Acre is the latest witness of our efforts, and almost all our Knights lie buried in the ruins of that once great and proud city. Brethren, it is for you to fill the places of those who have been thus lost to our Order! It is the valour of you all that must bring about our return to the Holy Land. You hold in your hands the lives, not only of our Order, but of the vast number of fellow-Christians who groan in slavery under the Saracens."

One by one the Knights made answer solemnly that they were all ready to give their lives for the Holy Land, and that they only longed to meet their ancient foe once more in the open field, and to restore the Order to the proud position it had always held.

With this end ever in view, the Knights of St. John settled at Limasol, the town that Richard had taken a hundred years before, and where he had been married to Berengaria. They refortified it; and as the Order began to grow in strength and in numbers, they built Churches and hospitals in other places on the Island. In time, too, the Order built a good-sized fleet, which sailed about in the waters between Palestine and Europe, and worked hard and well in keeping down the pirates of Egypt and Barbary, and rescuing many Christians whom they were carrying off into slavery. Only once did the Knights of St. John have a chance of entering the Holy Land again, and you may be sure they caught at it eagerly. A Tartar Prince who was leading an army against the Saracens asked for Christian help in his attempt, and the Knights were only too glad to answer the call, for they hoped that it would lead to their returning once more to Jerusalem, and living in the old House of the Order. But the Tartar expedition came to nothing in the end, and the Knights were disappointed of their hope.

When the Order had been in Cyprus for a little longer than a hundred years, the King of Cyprus of that time became so dreadfully jealous of its power that it became

necessary for the Knights to leave the Island. They therefore took ship and sailed to the Island of Rhodes, which they stormed very valiantly, and so gained possession of it, together with the small islands lying near it. This was in the year 1310. The Knights built beautiful Houses here, as they had done in Cyprus; and planted and sowed, and made the Islands all much richer and more prosperous than they had ever been before. They were now often spoken of as the Knights of Rhodes, and their name was as great as it had been when they were the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. Besides improving their new property, guarding the seas, helping pilgrims, and caring for the sick, the Knights had often to be at war; for while they held Rhodes they made it into a sort of gate of defence to Europe, and time after time they had to beat off the fierce attacks of Saracen armies, both Turkish and Egyptian. But, try as they might, none of these could ever pass the Knights of Rhodes. It was while they were at Rhodes that the Order was divided into separate branches, called Langues, each nation having its own Langue, with its special officers and duties. These Langues are still kept up in Europe; England, Germany, and Austria each have one; and though they are so different in race and language, the members of these Langues count themselves Brethren all of the one great Order.

Less than a hundred years after the Knights had settled at Rhodes, the Order was almost wiped out of existence again by the Turkish Sultan Bajazet, who led a very great

army against the Christians, and defeated them in several battles. In one battle the whole Christian army was either cut up or put to flight, and only the Knights of St. John and a few others made a stand; but the numbers of the Turks flowed over them like waves, and those who did not fall at once upon the field were killed the next day, to the number of at least ten thousand, by the victors. The Turks swept forward on their victorious way, took Athens, and besieged Constantinople. In his trouble the Greek Emperor of Constantinople was foolish enough to call in the help of a fierce Tartar chief called Tamerlane.

Tamerlane will always be remembered as one of the most bloodthirsty savages the world has ever seen. He had a favourite saying which shows what kind of man he was: "A King is never safe if the foot of his throne does not swim in blood!" and he lived up to this entirely; for he was really not worthy to be called a soldier, but only a butcher. No one seemed able to stand against him. He invaded Russia and India, Syria, Armenia, and Asia Minor, not only because he cared for the riches of victory, but simply for the sheer love of killing, and of shedding blood; and wherever he passed he left his mark—a pyramid of human heads. When the Greek Emperor asked him to help, Tamerlane was quite delighted at the thought of fighting in new lands. He hurried to Constantinople, with eight hundred thousand men as savage and bloodthirsty as himself, sacking Aleppo and Bagdad on his way, and leaving his well-known mark upon Bagdad in the shape of

a pyramid of ninety thousand heads set up amongst the smoking ruins of the destroyed city. Tamerlane and Bajazet met in a tremendous battle, in the midst of which some Tartar soldiers in Bajazet's army deserted to Tamerlane, and gave up the Sultan himself to his foe.

Having settled matters with Bajazet, Tamerlane began to look around with greedy eyes for fresh fields of victory and blood; and he attacked Smyrna, which was defended by the Knights Hospitallers. No defence, however brave, was of any use against such a monster as Tamerlane; the city fell, and Tamerlane put everyone he found in it still alive to a cruel death, whether they were already wounded or not, and passed on, leaving the usual pyramid of heads to mark his triumph.

The Knights Hospitallers had learnt an awful lesson from Tamerlane, and they doubled their defences at Rhodes, making three lines of fortifications and thirteen large towers, with a deep moat all round. They also built a new castle about this time, which they called St. Peter's of the Freed; it was for the special use of all the Christian prisoners and slaves whom their ships were able to rescue from the Saracens. The Knights also trained their dogs to search for escaped Christian slaves, just as St. Bernard's are now trained to find travellers who are lost in the snow.

The Knights' fleet was always at work, chasing Turkish vessels in search of Christian slaves on board, and even boldly running into Turkish and other Saracen harbours

to snatch these wretched people out of the very hands of their owners. In fact the Knights worried the Saracens so much in this way that the Sultan of Egypt tried to come to some agreement with them, by which they should let his ships alone. But the Knights knew how strong they were, and their terms were very hard ones. They were to be allowed to build a wall round the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; six Knights were to live in Jerusalem to look after the pilgrims, and that without paying taxes of any sort; all the holy places were to be open to the pilgrims; and the Order was to be allowed to free all Christian slaves by simply paying the price given for them, or by giving a Moslem prisoner in exchange. The Knights also said that one Knight Hospitaller must be allowed to live in each of those towns in Palestine which were most often visited by the pilgrims, so that they could look after them as they passed through. No doubt the Saracens did not like these terms at all, for not very long afterwards the Sultan made a sudden attack on Cyprus, and the Knights at once hastened to help the Christians there. The Cypriots were defeated, however, and the Knights lost very heavily in numbers. After this, the Sultan of Egypt attacked Rhodes itself, out of revenge for the help that the Knights had given to Cyprus; but though he did a great deal of harm in a siege that lasted forty days, the Egyptian forces had to draw off at last.

In time there arose a great Turkish Sultan, Mahommed II, called the Conqueror. He swore that he

would never rest until he had taken Rhodes from the Knights, and he prepared a vast army for its capture. He had a great number of cannon, which were then new in warfare, and which had been cast at Adrianople, (which was then the capital of the Turkish Empire), by a Bulgarian master-gunner. This man had offered his services first to the Emperor of Constantinople, who was so foolish as to refuse to have anything to do with the cannon, partly because they were new, and partly because he was too miserly to pay the price asked for them; so the Bulgarian offered his work to the Sultan of Turkey. The warlike Mahommed was wise enough to see how well these might serve him, and all the more because the invention was new, and so his enemy would have no cannon to meet his own. He gave the Bulgarian whatever he asked for in the way of money and workmen; and with the help of these cannon, which were taken with great difficulty over the rough ways from Adrianople to Constantinople, he captured the City of the Emperors from the Greeks. After this great conquest there was nothing left to keep him out of Europe, except little Rhodes and the fearless men who held her.

The Knights worked hard day and night preparing for the siege; they broke down Churches and hospitals and houses, so that the Turks might have nowhere to take cover if they landed; they even destroyed the crops and fruit-trees, so that there might be nothing for them to eat. All the inhabitants of Rhodes took part in the work; even

the nuns came out of their convents to work with their hands at the fortifications.

When at last the Turkish fleet of one hundred and sixty ships, and a hundred thousand men, appeared before Rhodes—and it was a gallant sight to see from the shore—the Knights were ready for them. The Turks were led by a Greek, who had given up his faith and his country for the sake of the riches and power he got in the service of Mahommed the Conqueror; and the chief engineer was a German, who nearly succeeded in tricking the Knights to their fall. For he went to them secretly, and pretended that he had escaped from the Turkish army, and that he was a Christian, and only wanted to help his fellow-Christians against their enemies and his. Some of the Knights believed his story, and they all treated him kindly, until some of the older Knights, watching him carefully, found out that he was trying to send news to the Turks of the strength and the defences of Rhodes, and of the plans of the Knights. So he was seized at once, and rightly paid for his meanness and treachery with his life.

Time after time the Turks fiercely attacked the Island, and time after time the little army of the Knights beat them back. The Grand Master, Sir Peter d'Aubusson, was seen everywhere, leading, encouraging, and directing his men: they said in Rhodes that he never slept nor took off his armour, for though he would be the last to leave his post at night, the first rays of the rising sun would find him back again, all ready for the dangers of the day. The Turks

almost gave up the attempt as useless. When they built a floating bridge from which to attack one of the forts, an English sailor called Rogers swam boldly out and cut the ropes, so that it floated away in the wrong direction and was lost. At last, after three months' furious fighting, the Turks did give it up as hopeless, and sailed away. They had lost twenty-four thousand men in killed and wounded, and they had gained nothing. The people of Rhodes watched the sails of the Turkish ships disappearing over the horizon, and could hardly believe that the terrors of the siege were really over (1480).

Now, at last, the Knights could put off their battered and blood-stained armour, and crowd into the Churches to offer up their thanks and praise for this great deliverance.

Rhodes was saved for this time. But forty years later, after the death of the great Peter d'Aubusson, "the darling and delight of his Knights, the sword and buckler of Christendom," and another furious and determined siege gave the Island into the hands of the Turks. This was in the year 1523. "Nothing in the world has been so well lost as Rhodes!" said the Emperor Charles V of Spain, when he heard of its fall. The Knights, who had held Rhodes for two hundred and twenty years, were homeless and broken once more. Less than five thousand in number, they gathered in Crete; and by and bye, to show the honour he felt for their brave defence, Charles V gave them the Island of Malta.

The record of the Knights of Malta (as they were now called) was just as splendid as it had been in the Holy Land, in Cyprus, and in Rhodes. They enriched the Island with many beautiful buildings, as well as in its better crops and fruits. But the chief glory of the years the Knights spent in Malta is its siege by the Turks in 1565, which lasted for four months, and is one of the most famous sieges there have ever been; and the Grand Master, La Valette, who directed the defence, will never be forgotten. This is the story of the siege.

A great Turkish army was sent against the Island by the Sultan Sulieman the Magnificent: it was he who built the beautiful walls of Jerusalem that close her in to this day. The Turkish force consisted of a hundred and sixty ships and more than thirty thousand trained soldiers, with many great guns which did much harm to the forts of Malta. The Knights fastened a great chain right across the mouth of the harbour, so that the Turkish vessels could not get close in to the shore; but even so the attacks they made upon the Island were fierce, and never seemed to stop, whether by day or by night. Then the Turks managed to capture one of the chief forts, that of St. Elmo, and this was a terrible blow to the Knights, though they made a most splendid defence. The Knights who were holding this Fort had received the Holy Communion the night before, and by dawn they were all at their posts upon the half-ruined walls, ready to a man to die there, but never to give in. For four hours the Turks rushed up against

them in never-failing numbers; for though they, too, had lost heavily there were still so many of them that there were always fresh men to take the place of those who fell. But there were only sixty Knights left to hold the Fort, and they were all of them wounded and exhausted. Almost all of these sixty Knights fell in the last attack made by the Turks, but a few who were found alive were held to ransom; others were crucified, or hung up by the feet till they died in slow torture. Down came the Cross of St. John, and the crescent flag ran up in its place, amid the excited shouts of the victors. This sight was worse than death to La Valette, the Grand Master, and the Knights, as they looked on from the other forts, not daring to leave their own place to help their comrades. Even after St. Elmo had fallen, the Knights who were left in the other forts held out, and at last they beat off what remained of the great Turkish army. The Turks had lost heavily, for they were fearless fighters then as they are now, and they did not spare themselves any more than they regarded the lives of those whom they fought against.

And if that great army had suffered, what of the Knights? Malta lay in ruins, and nearly all the Knights were dead, but still they had kept it for the Cross. If they had not held it with such glorious pluck, the story of Malta would have been what the story of Rhodes has been, since it was torn from the hands of the Knights of St. John. The capital of Malta is named Valetta after the brave Grand Master who saved the Island; and to this day the place is

full of memories and traces of the great Order. In the Church of St. John are buried many of the Grand Masters and Knights; their coats-of-arms are carved over the doorways of old houses still in use; the skulls and bones of soldiers who fell in the Great Siege are still to be seen, stored up in a chapel; and in the Governor's Palace are treasured the arms and armour with which they did such good service, and the coats-of-arms of the Grand Masters almost from the beginning.

The Order of St. John remained on in Malta, building itself up after the siege. It was often at war with the Turks, who attacked the Island again and again; or with the pirates of the Mediterranean for the mastery of the sea. On this hung not only the safety of the Knights and their Island, but of Europe itself.

In 1792 the French Republic seized all the property of the Langue in France, and even beheaded many of the Knights, who the Republicans said were aristocrats; and six years later the great Napoleon himself went to Malta to put down the Order there. The Maltese sided with the French, and Napoleon took over the Island as part of the French dominions, and gave the Knights three days in which to leave the place they had held so gallantly for nearly three hundred years. Napoleon then sailed back to France, taking with him everything in the way of treasures, jewels, relics, and historical records of the Order that he could lay hands upon, from the different Churches and Houses. Not very many things were saved from him that

were of value, but the Knights had been able to paint over the beautiful silver gates in the Cathedral before he came, so that Napoleon did not guess what they were made of, and left them alone, thinking that they were of no real value. The gates are in their place to this day. But Napoleon had broken the power of the great Order of St. John of Jerusalem for ever. It was never again a Sovereign, or ruling, Order; and three months after Napoleon had spoiled it of its treasures, Nelson besieged and captured Malta, which has ever since belonged to the English Crown.

The Order has changed, of course, in many ways to suit the changes of the passing years, but it still lives, and is strong for good. A French writer has said of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, that "Of all the Orders which took birth during the Wars of the Holy Land, it is the only one which has been true to the spirit of its first foundation, and has continued ever since to defend religion."

In Jerusalem, at the present day, the English, German, and Austrian Langues are all at work. The English Langue has a wonderful Hospital for eye-diseases; and in the English Cathedral of St. George the Martyr there is a Chapel of the Order. The Germans have a Church and Hospice; and the Austrians a Hospital, working in the name of their Langues. In this way the double motto of the ancient Order is remembered and lived up to by all three:

"Pro Fide, pro utilitate Hominum,"

which means that its aim was the defence of the faith and the service of men. The Order has now gone back to the use of its old name, and its Members are no longer called the Knights of Rhodes or the Knights of Malta, but the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem.

The Order of St. John of Jerusalem is a link between our times and those wonderful days when the Knights Hospitallers gathered in their shining armour under the Standard of the Cross.

The Templars

The Knights of the Temple suffered as heavily in the siege of Acre as did the brother-Order of St. John; and after it was over the very few who were left escaped to Cyprus, which was their nearest place of refuge. There they elected a new Grand Master in the place of one who had been killed in the siege. But when Palestine fell under the power of the Saracens once more, the whole purpose of the Order was gone, for now they were no longer wanted to defend the Temple or the Holy Land. The Temple was now the Mosque of the Saracens. The Holy Land was no longer in Christian hands; and the Templars are not strong enough even to try for its recovery alone. Nor were the people of Europe at all likely to help them. If the Order had broken up there and then, after the siege of Acre, its history would have closed in glory, as it had begun. But the Knights of the Temple were no longer the

Poor Knights of Christ; they had about nine thousand Houses, rich and splendid buildings, scattered all through Europe; they were enormously rich; their Grand Masters were the friends and the tutors of Princes; and the pride of a Templar was fast becoming a common proverb amongst the people. One Grand Master of the Temple brought to Paris in his train one hundred and fifty thousand gold florins, and ten horseloads of silver. Few people would dare to meddle lightly with an Order that was so powerful and so rich, while the Knights themselves were quite strong enough to interfere as much as they wanted to in the affairs of other people. And they did interfere, too—far too much; so that in every land men were beginning to hate the name and sight of the Templars almost as much as they feared them. The famous Temple in Paris was, of course, one of the Houses of the Order. It was used during the French Revolution as the prison of the little Dauphin, the son of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. Later on it was destroyed by the people of Paris in one of their excited risings; and it was really just as well, for the memory of the cruel imprisonment of the little Dauphin, and of all his sufferings there, would have blackened its walls for ever.

In 1307—that is, only sixteen years after the fall of Acre—Philip IV, the Fair, of France, who was badly in need of money at the time, cast his eyes upon the Order. He saw its richness, its great Houses, its strength, and he coveted all three. But the Order of the Temple had always been under the special care of the Popes, and the man who

would touch it must be very careful indeed. So Philip, knowing this, was wise enough first to make good his plans with the Pope, who had been born a French subject, and whom Philip himself had helped to become Pope. King and Pope agreed upon the horrid plot; and one night the Grand Master and sixty of the brethren were suddenly arrested. They were accused of the most terrible sins; of worshipping a hideous idol called Baphomet, which was made of skin, and had terrible glowing eyes of carbuncle; of being in league with devils; and of roasting little children, and then smearing the fat upon their idols as a sacrifice to them. Some of the charges brought against the Templars seem to us now almost too silly to be believed by grown men and women, but in those days people were very ignorant, and they were easily made to believe what their priests and leaders told them.

Soon all Europe was howling out against the Order, and demanding that every Templar should be put to death. One hundred and thirty-eight Templars were examined and tortured; and under tortures so horrible that we can hardly bear to read about them even now, when so many centuries have passed, some of the Knights confessed to having done some of the wicked things of which they were accused. This was all that their enemies wanted. Later on, fifty-four of the Templars took back their words, and said how very sorry and ashamed they were at having uttered such words, even under torture; but this did not save them. Altogether, one hundred and

thirteen Templars were burnt in Paris. A good deal of the property of the Order was given to the Hospitallers, so that it might not be said that Philip was a thief as well as a murderer. In Spain, Portugal, and Germany the Templars were also cruelly tortured, and their houses and riches were seized; but the Knights themselves were not put to death.

The last of the Templars who suffered death in Paris was the Grand Master, who had already suffered so much in the torture of his Brethren of the Order. He was condemned to be burnt to death at a slow fire, so that he might have just as much pain to bear as it was possible to give him; and this cruel sentence was carried out in Paris, which had already seen so many dreadful things done to the Templars within her walls. A large crowd gathered to see him die. But before he died, the Grand Master solemnly declared that he and all his Order were perfectly innocent of the horrible charges upon which they had been done to death; and he said that the King of France and the Pope would very soon follow him into the other world, to answer before the Throne of God for their wicked and unjust dealings with the Order. Men remembered his dying words when it came to pass that both King Philip and the Pope died, quite suddenly and unexpectedly, within a very short time.

Having done all his own Templars to death in this horrible way, Philip then wrote to King Edward II of England, urging him to put down the Templars there; but

for some time Edward refused to do anything against them. The Templars were very strong in England, and they had a good deal of property in different parts. Some of the Houses of the Order we can still find traces of in the names of the places where they were, such as Temple Hurst, Templecombe, Temple Rothley, Temple Newsom, and so on; and of course the great Temple Church in London. Edward wrote many letters, saying that the Templars in England were good and upright men, who were honoured by all; and he begged the Pope to make a very careful and long inquiry, so that the Order might be cleared of the dreadful charges that had been brought against it, and which he felt sure were all untrue. The poor weak King was a good man in himself, and he did not want to do anything unjust to the Templars; but he knew in his heart of hearts that if the King of France and the Pope only went on worrying him long enough, he would have to give way in the end, simply because he was so weak that he could never hold to his own will and his own way, against the wishes of other people. He honestly tried his best to save the English Templars. Richard Lion-Heart would have settled the question very quickly, once and for all, with his sword, and not with his tongue or his pen! But the Pope wrote back at once to Edward, telling him that as a faithful son of the Church it was his duty to follow the pious example of the King of France, and to root out those wicked men, the Templars, from his land. He was also careful to add that all the property of the

Templars was not to be touched, but must be kept in his, the Pope's, name until he had made up his mind what was to be done with it.

The weak King then gave way, and the English Templars were arrested and brought to trial (1308). They firmly denied every charge that was brought against them of wicked dealings, worshipping idols, murdering children, and playing with black magic; but all the same they were made to suffer a cruel imprisonment for three years. Some of the Knights Templars were quite old men, who had fought bravely in the Holy Land, and had held high places with honour; but nothing saved them now from the wicked men who sought their lives—and even more, their wealth. During those three years they were brought to trial, put to torture, and then sent back to prison, bent and broken; and this happened not once but many times. At last they were dragged into St. Paul's Cathedral, and there made to say just what their enemies wished them to. Those who were yet alive were then set free. A large part of their great property fell to the Knights Hospitallers in England, as it had done in France. The Temple Church in London was given to that Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, whose monument is in Westminster Abbey.

The great Order was dead.

But the property of the Templars, which had been taken from them in such mean and unjust ways, brought

no good fortune to the new owners. Aymer de Valence was murdered. The Duke of Lancaster, who next held the Temple Church, was beheaded after an unsuccessful rebellion. Hugh le Despenser, the friend of Edward II, was hung, with a crown of stinging nettles bound in mockery upon his head. Edward the King himself, who had been too weak and too much afraid of other men's words to protect his own people, though he had not actually gained anything by the putting down of the Order in England, met with a violent and painful death at the hands of his subjects. It seemed to men who lived in those days, that every one of those who had worked against the Templars came to a terrible end. Were the Templars in the right then after all; and were those who had destroyed the great Order all quite wrong? For a short time the Hospitallers held the Temple property in London; but in the reign of Henry VII it passed into the possession of the Crown.

The Order was dead, but no one could ever forget it; people still talked of its great deeds in Palestine, and of the awful end of the Knights. Later on a legend sprang up, which many believed, that every year on the anniversary of the day on which the Order was put down, the heads of seven of the murdered Templars rose above their graves. The ghost of a Templar, wearing a long white mantle of the Order with its blood-red cross, came into the churchyard, and cried aloud three times, "Who shall now defend the Holy Temple? Who shall free the Sepulchre of the Lord?" And the seven heads made sad and solemn

answer: "Not one! For the Order of the Temple is destroyed!" The old legend at least shows that men were not altogether happy in their minds at the way in which the great Order had been swept off the face of the earth.

"With the Templars perished a world; chivalry, (or knighthood), the Crusades ended with them. A greedy trading spirit rose up....The souls of men (were found) cold and incredulous."

What the Crusaders Did

"What God opens must open be,
Though man pile the sand of the sea.
What God shuts is open no more,
Though man weary himself to find the door."

Christina Rossetti.

In the fall of Acre all the Western Christian power in the Holy Land was broken. The ruling power was Moslem, and the Christian subjects found that safety for them lay, not in numbers, but in living very quietly in those rough and restless days, and in keeping out of the way of notice as much as possible. Churches were rebuilt, however, in some of the cities—Jerusalem, Nazareth, and Bethlehem—and Christian congregations grew up round them, holding to their faith, but without having any voice or share in the government of the Country, until they gave up wanting it. From the day when Saladin took the Holy City in 1187, right down through the eight hundred years, and more, that have passed, the Holy Land has been under Moslem rule. Sometimes it seems to us as if the Crusades were only like a great storm that swept over Palestine, and did nothing for her; but really they left such a deep mark on her that it can never be lost. And that at least is something for Westerns to remember.

And so our story of the Crusades is done. It is a story of striving and fighting, of gallant deeds and some very

black ones; but on the whole it is a noble story, and one that we can be proud of. One or two points in it stand out so sharp and clear that we had better stop to look at them. The first is that the true Crusading spirit was a fine one, for it was a spirit of real love and self-sacrifice, and when that spirit died out of men, the life of the Crusades died with it, and the world was left much poorer and colder for its loss.

Again, one reason why the Crusaders, who did so much yet managed to keep so little, was that they were not really one at heart amongst themselves after the first. Each man was jealous of his neighbour; the Church was jealous of the Crown; the King of his Knights; one Order of the other; and there was not one of them that would stand loyally by the other, even in a time of danger. If the Christian Kingdom had only been true to itself, the attacks made from outside would not have been able to beat it down. It is the secret foe within the city that is the real danger, not the open enemy outside the gate.

The Crusades did a great deal of good both to Palestine and to Europe. They opened, as it were, a door between the East and the West, which has never been shut since; pilgrims, soldiers, and travellers, all passing to and fro between the two, made each part of the world better known to the other; and as travelling has gone on getting easier and quicker, so everyone has become more friendly, as they have grown to know each other better. The Crusaders brought into the Holy Land their own free

ideas, their customs, and their language; and it was just because they believed so thoroughly in all their own ways, that they were able to press them upon Palestine so firmly that the mark has not been lost, and it never will be. Even to-day there are signs of Western blood in the people in some parts of Palestine; the dress of the women of Bethlehem is still very much like that worn by the ladies of the Crusading Kingdom; Western words have slipped into Arabic, and have become a part of the language, so that it has been forgotten how they first came in.

The Crusaders gained a good deal, too, in many ways from Palestine, and Europe gained through them. They brought back to their homes in the West the riches and the bright colours of the East; carpets and glass, and many little things which make a home comfortable and beautiful; as well as words that crept into their different languages, and stayed there—perhaps in exchange for the ones they left behind in Arabic! And in all the Crusaders there was that fierce love of adventure that was the cause of their travelling East, and which took firm root in Europe, and led to the wonderful voyages of the old explorers like Christopher Columbus, and Marco Polo, and Vasco de Gama; and which still lives to-day in men like Nansen, and our own Captain Scott, the immortal hero of the white Antarctic. In many ways the Crusaders have helped both the East and the West to understand that, in spite of all the many ways in which they are happily unlike, they are yet not two different worlds, but the two

halves of the same round globe. The Crusaders thought that as long as you were a Christian, it did not matter at all what sort of a Christian you were; and that everyone who was not a Christian was in some strange way "the enemy of God"; but we know a little better than that now. Still, on the other hand, we may very well learn from these Soldiers of the Cross that it is a fine and a good thing to have a very strong belief in our religion, and to be ready to fight for it, and to give up something for the sake of it.

It is often said of the Crusaders that they were rough, and cruel, and bloodthirsty, and unfaithful to their promises; and it is true; but they were a fine set of men in many ways. And in any case it is always better, whenever we can, to look at the beautiful side of things and of people (when there is one). And we shall get into our minds a much better and truer picture of the Crusaders and of the work they have done for the Holy Land, and also for the world, if we remember first the good they did, and let the bad part come next. "Whatsoever things are true, and pure, and lovely, think on these things." I mean, that it is better for us to think of the goodness of Godfrey, the uprightness of Saladin, the courage of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, the unselfishness of Raymond of Tripoli, than of the meanness of Renaud de Chatillon, or the greed of the Patriarch Heraclius.

One other point we must remember—and we shall understand it better and better as we grow older—is that the Holy Land was never held for long by any Power, after

that Power left off caring for it. It has been so all through history, even before the days of the Crusaders, and it will be so to the very end. Every country and every faith has poured out its treasure, in thought, and lives of men, and gold, upon Jerusalem; but no matter how great the treasure spent, how much the blood that was shed, none of them have ever been able to buy her for their own. This is because she belongs to all the world, in a wonderful and mysterious way that we can just see, but cannot understand; and one day the love and service of the nations will shine out as jewels in her crown.

"O City, sorrowful, yet full of grace!
The sinking sun adorns
With a celestial smile thine altered face
Beneath its crown of thorns.

The heavy storms of rage and sorrow beat
Around thy sacred heart:
Thou hast a deadly wound; yet strangely sweet
And beautiful thou art.

And thou hast drawn from all the colder lands
Beyond the northern sea,
Hearts burning for thy wrongs, and eager hands
To fight for God and thee."

"Death at the Goal."—B. M.

Arabic Words in the English Language Brought in by the Crusaders

ADMIRAL: a naval commander. From *Amir,* a chief.

ALCOHOL: pure spirit to drink. From *al-koh'l,* a fine powder.

ALCOVE: a recess in a room. Through the Spanish from the Arabic for vault.

ALEMBIC: a vessel or vase used in chemistry. Through Greek and Arabic.

ALGEBRA: a way of reckoning by signs or letters. Through Spanish and Arabic.

ALKALI: something used in chemistry.

AMBER: from the French and Arabic.

ARRACK: a fiery drink made from palm juice, rice, and sugar. Ar., *araq,* juice.

ARSENAL: a place for storing arms, &c. Ar. *dar sina'at,* workshop.

ARTICHOKE: a vegetable.

ASSASSIN: a murderer. Ar., *hashish,* a drug or drink made from hemp. The Assassins used to be excited with this before being sent out to kill their victims.

AZIMUTH: a term in astronomy. Ar., *al-sumut,* the direction.

AZURE: blue. Ar., *azrak,* blue.

CALIPH: Ar., successor. The successors of Mahommed were called Caliphs.

CARAT: a weight used in goldsmiths' work. Ar., *qirat*, a bean used as a weight.

CHECK-MATE: is from *Sheikh mayeet* (and in the Persian *Shah mât*), meaning "the chief is dead."

CHEMISTRY: from Khem, the ancient name for Egypt.

CIPHER: the o in arithmetic. Ar., *sifr*, empty.

CIVET: an animal of Africa, like a cat. From the Arabic through French.

COFFEE: Turkish, *qaveh*, and Ar., *qahweh* (wine).

COTTON: Ar., *qutun*.

CRIMSON: Old English and French, from Ar., *qermezun*, the insect from which the colour is made.

DRAGOMAN: a guide or interpreter in the East. Through Spanish and Ar., *tarjumaan*, an interpreter.

EMIR, or Amir: chief or ruler. Ar., *amir*, ruler.

FAKIR: a religious beggar, like the begging friars of the Middle Ages. Ar., *faqir*, a poor man.

FELUCCA: a small sea-vessel or boat. Ar., *fuluka*, a ship.

GAZELLE: a kind of small antelope. Ar., *ghazal*, a wild goat.

GIRAFFE: through French and Spanish from the Arabic name.

HUBBUB: Sudanese, *hooboob*, a sandstorm.

LUTE: a musical instrument. Ar., *al-'ud*.

MAGAZINE: a place for keeping military stores. Ar., *makhzan*.

MATTRESS: Ar., *matrah*, a place.

MINARET: a small tower or turret from which the Moslem hours of prayer are called. Ar., *manarat*, light-house (*nar*, fire).

MONSOON: a wind of the Indian Ocean that comes at certain times. Through Italian from Ar., *mawsim*, season.

NAKER: a kettledrum. Through French from Ar., *naqqara*, kettledrum.

SAFFRON: a yellow flower of the crocus kind. Ar., *safra*, yellow.

SENNA: dried leaves used as a medicine. Through French and Arabic.

SHERBET: a drink made from fruit juices. Ar., *sharbat*, a drink.

SHRUB: a drink made from lemon, currant, raspberry, &c. From the same Arabic word as Sherbet.

SIMOOM: a hot choking wind in the northern Arabian and African desert. Ar., *samm*, poison.

SIROCCO: east wind. Ar., *shark*, east.

SOFA: Ar., *saffa*, to sit in order.

SYRUP: from the same word as Sherbet and Shrub.

TALISMAN: a kind of charm, sometimes a pass-word. From the Ar., *tilsaman,* and through the Greek and German.

TALLY-HO: the hunting cry, is from the Ar., *ta'al hone,* come here.

TAMARIND: a fruit tree of the West Indies. Ar., *tamar-il-Hind,* the date of India.

TARIFF: a list of fees charged by a government upon things brought in from a foreign country. Ar., *taarif,* to know, to give information.

VIZIR: a Minister of State. From the Ar., *Wazir,* a bearer of burdens.

ZENITH: the point of the heavens which seems exactly overhead as you look up. Ar., *samt-el-ras*, the way of the head.

ZERO: 0, nothing, cipher. Ar., *sifr*.

Meanings of Christian Names

ALICE: Noble cheer. A Teutonic name.

AMAURY: Work-ruler. A Teutonic name.

BALDWIN: Prince-friend. A Teutonic name.

CONSTANCE: Firm, faithful. A Latin name.

EDWARD: Rich guard. Anglo-Saxon name.

FREDERIC: Peace-ruler. A Teutonic name.

FULKE: Peoples' guard (like folk). A Teutonic name.

GODFREY: God's peace. A Teutonic name. Geoffrey comes from the same root.

Louis: Famous warrior. The Latin form of a Teutonic name.

MILICENT: Strength in the Teutonic form; Sweet Singer in the Latin.

RAYMOND: Wise protection. A Teutonic name.

RENAUD: Power of judgment. A Teutonic name. Reginald is one form of Renaud.

RICHARD: Stern King. A Teutonic name.

SAFFADIN (Seyf-el-Din): Sword of the faith.

SALADIN (Saleh-el-Din): Splendour of the faith.

TANCRED: Grateful speech. A Teutonic name.

Introduction from

Tales from the Alhambra

by

Josephine Brower

Tales from the Alhambra
Introduction

There is a promontory in the southwest corner of Europe which rises from the sea on one side and a once unknown ocean on the other, cliff above cliff, hill above hill, mountain above mountain.

About its shores in Queen Dido's time prowled the high-beaked ships of Carthage, hungry for trade.

Curiously their captains scanned the mountain-paths down which, in order to traffic on the sea beach, came tall, bold-featured Iberians. Having finished bargaining, the savages distrustfully turned away, remounted the stony trails, to melt again into the mists that crowned their vast and gloomy tableland.

What was it like up there? the Phœnician trader wondered.

Years afterward, when Carthaginian generals had crushed many a hardy and liberty-loving race, the Phœnicians wondered still more. For the taciturn Iberians withdrew from every attempt at conquest.

One thing the old-world empires did know, however. Out of that unknown interior four great rivers wore their way westward into the Atlantic and as they fell toward the beach they washed down gold. And it was the rumour of this gold that called those sailing kites of wealth, Carthage,

Greece, Rome, the Goths, which make the first chapter of Spanish history.

Each of these nations in turn conquered the green strip of Spanish shore.

Not any one of them entered the guarded heart of Spain. Her invincible mountain rampart rolled back the invaders as the cliffs rolled back the sea: while from above the ancient Iberians looked down unconquerable, silent, and melancholy.

By and by a fifth invasion came.

Out of North Africa across the straits, rushing up and over the mountain barriers that had kept out the great races before them, came the desert-born Moors! They came like wildfire driving before them the old Iberian race until they hemmed it into the little northwest corner where Castile and North Portugal are outlined. There they passed it by for a time while they poured through the Pyrenees and streamed down into the green plains of France.

Like a seatide the green and glancing Moslem host rolled into the history of Europe.

In its path waited a forlorn army.

Fragments and remnants of the broken Roman Empire had gathered together, dreary and desperate, for a last stand. Before them loomed one colossus, Charles the Sledge-Hammer, that day the savior of a continent

It was on the plain of Tours in the year 732 that was fought one of the greatest battles of the world. Darkness and despair led by Charles the Sledge-Hammer broke and shattered the Moorish array.

Abdurrahman was killed, and slowly and sullenly the Moors receded southward again.

And now begins the romance of Spain.

The Moors had come back to stay. They built beautiful cities, graceful palaces, and Spain began to blossom like a garden.

Music and poetry flourished under the kindly smile of the Khalifs.

But behind this smile of peace the spirit of Iberia was gathering itself together up among the mountains of Castile. As soon as the Moors began to busy themselves in other ways than fighting, the Castilian Knights began to let down their drawbridges.

One day when everything was ready, they rode forth followed by their men-at-arms, their priests blessing them as they went. For they were going to fight against the infidels whose religion was a worse crime than their conquest.

Step by step the Iberians won back their country.

At last in the very same year when Columbus sailed for the discovery of the New World, the day came when

Boabdil and a handful of lamenting Moors surrendered the last jewel of their kingdom, one of the most wonderful palaces in the world — the Alhambra — and left forever the shores of Spain.

But the spirit of the Moor never has disappeared from Spain. Still he rules the Sierra Morena and haunts every water-course of Andalusia. To this day after nightfall Spain is no Christian kingdom, but is ruled over by the Khalif. The Spanish peasant who lingers too late on the mountain roads, bringing down snow or wood to cool the water or build the fire of the Spanish city-dwellers, runs the risk of being overtaken and caught up by some phantom cavalcade and swept away with them into their caverns deep under the mountains. There they sleep an enchanted slumber by day and with the night come forth to resume their ancient realm.

And this is why Spain is the most romantic country of Europe. The genius of the Moor enchanted her even while she drove him out.

A good many years ago one of our countrymen travelled into Spain on a sober errand of historical research. He was getting ready to write the life of the man who discovered America. It was this fortunate project which enabled him, four hundred years after Spain discovered America, to bring it about that America discovered Spain.

Washington Irving went to Spain in 1826. Some of the time he stayed at Court in Madrid, but best of all he loved the days in which he lived in the palace of the Moors. There, on the very spot where it reached its glory, he re-created the strangest, most gifted, most unreal monarchy that ever reared its fabric for a time in Europe.

Of his first sight of the Alhambra Irving wrote:

"But Granada, bellissima Granada!

"Think what must have been our delight when after passing the famous bridge of Pinos, the scene of many a bloody encounter between Moor and Christian...we turned a promontory of the arid mountains of Elvira and Granada with its towers, its Alhambra and its snowy mountains burst upon our sight! The evening sun shone gloriously upon its red towers as we approached it and gave a mellow tone to the rich scenery of the vega. It was like the magic glow which poetry and romance have shed over this enchanting place.

"The more I contemplate these places the more my admiration is awakened for the elegant habits and delicate taste of the Moorish monarchs. The delicately ornamented walls: the aromatic groves, mingling with the freshness and the enlivening sounds of fountains: the retired baths bespeaking purity and refinement: the balconies and galleries open to the fresh mountain breeze and overlooking the loveliest scenery of the valley of the Darro and the magnificent expanse of the vega—it is

impossible to contemplate this delicious abode and not feel an admiration of the genius, and the poetical spirit of those who first devised this earthly paradise.

Of the Moors he said:

"It is impossible to travel about Andalusia and not imbibe a kind feeling for the Moors. They deserved this beautiful country. They won it bravely: they enjoyed it generously and kindly. They embellished, enriched, elevated and defended their beloved Spain. Everywhere I meet traces of their sagacity, courage, urbanity, high poetical feeling and elegant taste. Whenever I enter these beautiful marble patios, set out with shrubs and flowers, refreshed by fountains, sheltered with awnings from the sun: where the air is cool at noonday, the ear delighted in sultry summer by the sound of falling water: when in a word, a little paradise is shut up within the walls of home, I think on the poor Moors, the inventors of all these delights. I am at times almost ready to join in sentiment with a worthy friend and countryman of mine whom I met in Malaga, who swears the Moors are the only people that ever deserved the country and prays to Heaven that they may come over from Africa and conquer it again."