

BOOK THE SECOND—ACRE.

CHAPTER I.

IMMEDIATELY after Richard's departure, then at the close of November, died Sir N. Gardiner in Acre, and was succeeded by Sir 1192 Daps, who may have reigned for some days in January, but not longer, since a document shows Sir Godfrey de Duisson, Grand Master in 1193 January, 1193,¹ which completely agrees with that letter in April,² which contains no allusion to recent promotion. Of Daps nothing is known; nor if he did anything during his short reign. It is only reverence for former historians (a sort of prescription) which gives him a right to be placed in that post at all; for not a scrap of documentary evidence names him.³

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros. Num. clxxiii.—Appendix, xlvi.—Bosio writes D'Aps, Sir Esmengard D'Aps, lib. vii.

² Bib. Crois., iii. 302.—Appendix, xlix.

³ Seb. Paoli : Serie, i. 340.

Daps is said by some to have been an Englishman, but upon no sufficient authority. It may seem ridiculously minute, but there must have been many English. But as the order's historians have been nearly all foreigners, these names are translated or ill spelt; so as to have been too difficult to discover even formerly, and now impossible. Yet many old English names have in themselves proof of a Palestine origin, as D'Acre. England was much more connected with the Continent then than in Bonaparte's time.—But you so often speak to us of those documents as certain. Are they quite so? Are you very sure of it?—Why, yes, quite! as certain as anything human.—How? Might they not have been forged?—No!—Have not similar forgeries been?—No! never! For these only regard individuals and things of little importance to any except private interests, and each of them has been sifted and resifted thousands of times, and they all agree with each other, as well as with whatever is extant of like validity. They are neither historical nor political, but only the solid basis on which history may be raised. History must cover far wider ground, and embrace within itself not only much that is highly probable, and from coincidences acquires a moral certainty or nearly, and some particulars

of more or less truth, or perhaps doubtful; but also a few quite incredible in themselves, but yet with this of verity, that they express the way of thinking of that time. Then these documents may be relied on blindly as far as they go, and that is not far, save dates and small contracts and concerns of no general value. But they may be used as a test with regard to others that are. What is in contradiction with them, in even so minor a point as date or place, must be apocryphal or necessarily be false. They are the cross-examinations of a lawyer.

Ibn-Alatir's observation, that the founder of an empire has scarcely in any instance been succeeded by his children, for that he probably lies under pollution of blood, which, however necessarily shed or legitimately, cannot but be displeasing to the Eternal—so that ambition is punished even in this life—is applied by many Moslems to Saladin himself, who leaving seventeen sons and one daughter, these and his turbaned emirs cut up his inheritance into a number of small states, and conducted themselves so ill, that Safadin was in a manner forced to become Sultan of Egypt and Damascus; and ended by concentrating in himself and transmitting to his own children the entire possessions of his mighty brother, with the single exception of

Aleppo, which small angle one of his sons contrived to keep. Had Saladin left a will, it might perhaps have been otherwise; but he died intestate, and the natural consequence was confusion.¹ He was but fifty-seven when he died.²

Far from indifference in religion and doubt, as is pretended, Saladin, after having lain senseless three days, at the imam who assisted his last moments coming to the line, which he read with solemn strength, "God is Omnipotent!" "It is true it is true," cried the Soldan, springing up; and then fell back and expired.³ He was sincerely attached to his creed, and tenderly loving his children, brought them up in the same principles; yet he left no will to regulate the succession;⁴ forgotten it perhaps, as what appeared to him so trifling a matter, in the magnitude of his dying thoughts. Singularly affectionate in his domestic relations, a trait is related of him that resembles what the French relate of Henry the Fourth. His private secretary recounts that, on the conclusion of peace a little before his death, some ambassadors presenting themselves for audience, when he was employed in playing with his youngest child, who astonished to see men with their beards cut, and short hair,

¹ Arab. Chron., 376, 382.

² Id., 363.

³ Id., 367.

⁴ Id., 377.

and in clothes different from what he was accustomed to see, began crying; on this the soldan begged the ambassadors to excuse him, and put off their business to the next day.¹

But in addition to what was said already, it is proper to take a further review of Acre; for it must now be for a period what Malta has since been, the sovereign dominion and chief residence of the order; though a fief of Jerusalem, as that other of Sicily; and therefore called for the future not simply Acre, but St. John's Acre, *St. Jean d'Acre*. At the foot of Carmel, its shelter to the south, and Thabor within sight—seated on the sea, commanding the whole line of coast from Egypt to Asia Minor—not far from the celestial Nile, nor from the king of rivers, Euphrates; emporium not only of Palestine and Syria, but also what Alexandria had been before it, and was to be after it, chief transit between the Oriental countries and Europe, whether *viâ* Pisa, or Genoa, or Naples, or Venice, termination of the tongue of that beautiful and renowned plain that runs northward all along the shores between it and Libanus, and leaving the cedars, crosses to Mount Taurus, and returning to Caiphaz stretches east to where our Saviour passed

¹ Arab. Chron., 365.

his boyhood, and where He pronounced His divinest discourse, and to the lake whose waters He trod, and Jordan and stern Judea's hills:—with so grand a situation, whether considered materially, relative to commerce and landscape, or morally from its historic and sacred recollections, Acre could not well but be one of the richest, most populous, and most agreeable cities of the whole world.¹ And though it had more than once been partially razed, it had always been rebuilt with increasing magnificence. If the Moslems had been its masters twice, yet they had not been long so either time, and treated it on both occasions with unusual respect; and the Franks being always lords of the sea, Acre was on the skirts of Europe, and enjoyed complete security in that direction. And if it was continually menaced, yet what foe approached close enough to injure its suburban districts? That could be only in a regular siege; rare misfortune, to which all cities are liable, and six years had scarcely elapsed since its taking in the third crusade, when its houses had been greatly embellished, and many of them re-erected, for which the not distant hills yielded a white stone nearly equal to the finest marble. Nor had those huge armies been unattended

¹ Michaud: *Hist. des Crois.*, v. 119.—*Corneri Chron.*—*Bib. Crois.*, iii. 135.

with considerable compensation, for they had imported and spent immense treasures, and, with all their doleful memorials, left also much wealth of every kind behind them, and refinements and fashions, and usages, from the best of every land over the civilised globe; and that long fallow and those tremendous slaughters had rendered its fertile plain more fertile than ever; so that with a gayer and more vivid vegetation than before, it lay in a labyrinth of villas and gardens. The roofs were flat, with terraces; so that you could go from one end of the city to the other in an uninterrupted walk on the same level, without descending into the street, as is partially the case in Aleppo even now; and the streets were wide for the Levant, which might be worse respecting sun, but gave air, and above all was better for riders, and all knights went then on horseback as universally as the Turks now. The whiteness of the cut stone houses, those marble terraces ornamented with jars of orange and lemon trees and flowers, the universal practice of glass windows, then a singularity everywhere else, without excepting London or Paris of that day (which is certain), but even of the present, which may be doubtful—paintings decorating the interior of the principal houses, the gilded cupolas, domes, minarets, steeples standing out from the brightness of the

green and sparkling waters for horizon on one side, and on the other those gorgeous mountains, presented a most impressive view whether you approached Acre by land or sea. The population was usually calculated at one hundred and fifty thousand, a third more than Jerusalem. Acre was by far the gayest and most fashionable place then in existence. It had no duties, nor, it would appear, any other taxes than a very small capitation and an easy land tax. But the tithes were rather heavy, as were the feudal obligations on knights and large proprietors. Altogether these were the bright features which had, for counterpart, the want of order in the legislation. There are said to have been seventeen jurisdictions for various nations, each of which pretended to be governed by its own code—Venetians living exclusively in one street, Genoese in the next, Pisans, Templars, Syrians, and so on; most of those having acquired their rights long previous to the Hospitallers' reign there. Indeed Venetians, Pisans, and Genoese, date by treaties from the first crusade, nor could Richard have given away what did not belong to him; nor did he pretend to conquer, but only restore, and Acre had been a fief of Jerusalem, and those Franks had title deeds that derived from former Kings of Jerusalem; but the Hospitallers, having much of

the republican in their own constitution, did not dislike this. Gerard, when he had to choose, did not choose a monarchy, but a sort of commonwealth, with a Moderator or President, with only one vote more than any other knight of the order. Indeed it was but conforming to the Norman fashion, for the first Normans established a military republic in Puglia; and, if they afterwards became royal, it was to follow the taste they found there; they only did not resist the temptation, but they had brought other usages. The Normans permitted, as an exception, the use of force as to what they considered their right to visit the Holy Sepulchre as often as they pleased. Their desire to go there might be religious, but to impede them was an attack on their liberty; and would be, had the Moslems been Christians. The holy war was then (at least at its best, the first crusade) not so much a war against Mahometanism as against tyranny; and rather defensive, than aggressive. So in strict neutrality between Christians, the order were only keeping to Norman principles, never to use force in matters of mere belief.

The Hospitallers perhaps gave the example for the Italian republics. It is not hard to credit that the reins of government were loose in Acre—too loose. Times of great trouble, as a siege,

might unite; but even then, to have taken such habits of independence must have been injurious to soldierly discipline. The bad had its good also—mixture as in all human things. Many of the most illustrious rank chose Acre for habitual residence. So that at one time twenty crowned heads lived there, and kept up stately and splendid establishments and courts. Not ex-sovereigns, but rich and potent masters of far-off realms. There were the three military orders, and grandees of every country. And beside these residents, there were always Emperors of Germany, or Kings of France, Sicily, England, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, as well as troops from all those parts. There were a great number of stately palaces; and we have seen that even before the Christians took it, King Guy, foreseeing it would be soon theirs, had given a spot to the Hospitallers to erect a wide gate to their Xenodochia, and a square in front, as to increase their hospital to be worthy of the one they had left in Jerusalem.

The order having become sovereign, their hospital was no longer restricted to the crusaders alone, but received Moslems also, or any one whatever. The flimsiest disguise, if even that was requisite, sufficed. So, on that score, the current story is very possible; but, on another it is scarcely so—

Saladin's death in March.¹ But he was so astonishing a person, that it is hard to say what he could not do. Who durst deny but in the short space of a few months, it is barely possible that what is told he may have executed, during some military recognisance into the immediate vicinity of that town, before his mortal sickness? At all events the rumour shows the public opinion at that time. "Master Saladin, King of Babylon, who commanded over thirty kings, having heard surprising matters of the hospital at Acre, determined on taking a stick, and piece of old carpet for cloak, fumbling it round him as well as he could, and came straight to Acre, feigning grievous sickness; and hobbling, inquired whether, for the love of God, they could lodge him. On which he was received at once, and invited to lie down at his ease, and a little after, asked what he wished to eat. He who desired to be thought sick, declared he did not care for eating, but for God's sake to allow him to repose, as being very tired, and that he had long wished to die, so they let him sleep all that day and night. The next day the infirmarians asked what he would eat, but he assured them that not only he did not wish to eat, but could not. 'Friend,' replied the in-

¹ Appendix, Num. xlix.

firmarian, 'eat; for, unless you eat, you cannot live long.' But Saladin remained two days and nights without bit or sup. Then the chief infirmarian returned to say, 'My dear friend, you must really take something to eat; for, otherwise, we should be much blamed, and my superiors would say you died here of starvation.' 'My lord,' replied Saladin, 'I believe I shall never eat again in all my life, and it is far better for me to die, since the only thing I could eat, and desire intensely, it is madness even to name.' 'Oh, as for that, sweetest brother, do not hesitate in the least, for the established law in this house is to use the very extreme of charity. A sick man, here, is given everything he fancies, if gold can buy it; so, ask for whatever your warmest fancy demands, and be assured of it you shall have it.' On which Saladin determined to ask: 'Then I wish for the right foot of Moriel, your grand master's favourite horse, and that it be cut off here in my presence, or I'll never eat a morsel more; so now you have my desire; see if it be not preferable I die; for I am but a poor man, and that beast is very valuable; the grand master would not take a thousand bezants of gold for him, they say.' Then the chief infirmarian went and told it all to the grand master, who reflected a little, and could not imagine how such a strange

desire could come into the head of a sick person. 'However, since it is so, take my horse,' replied he to the infirmarian. 'Better that all my horses were dead, than a man; and, besides, we should be reproached with it for ever!' So the horse was led out, and thrown down alongside Saladin's bed, and tethered close, and a groom got ready, and having armed himself with a large hatchet and a small block of wood, 'Which foot is it,' said he, 'which the sick man wishes for?' Whereat he was told the right fore-foot; and he took the wooden block, and put it under that foot, and raised the hatchet with both his hands to strike with more force, on which Saladin cried, 'Hold! for my desire is satisfied; and I would be contented now with a good slice of mutton.' So Moriel was loosed and led back to the stable. And the grand master was vastly pleased, and all the brethren too. And the sick man ate and drank well, for he had fasted for four days, and then taking his cloak and stick, he thanked the infirmarians for all the honour and courtesy he had received, and returned to his own land; nor forgot to write a charter, which he sealed with his seal, to this purpose in substance: 'Let all know that I Saladin, Soldan of Babylon, leave and bequeath in perpetuity to the Hospital of Acre one thousand bezants of gold every year, on St. John

the Baptist's day, to buy sheets, and secure said sum on my rent-roll of Babylon; and expressly desire that in all wars between Saracens and Christians, this continue to be paid the same, and sent to the grand master, whoever he be; and that it is in gratitude for the wonderful charity of his order.'"¹

Margat² is a clear proof of what I have stated already, that the stories of dissensions between Templars and Hospitallers are likely to have been inventions of malignant idlers, to which neither of the parties themselves attended much. There could never have been any dispute between them concerning Margat; for the Templars knew just as well as the Hospitallers themselves, that given to these latter it had been years before by a regular deed of gift or sale, and with a whole cloud of witnesses among whom the Bishop of Valence, the Prince of Antioch, &c., &c., in date of 1186;³ and was a fief of the Massocians—*Castrum munitissimum Margatum quod fuit Hospitalis*.⁴ Were the information of Mathew Paris perfectly correct, that the Templars had become enormously richer than the Hospitallers,

¹ MS. du Roi de France, Num. 454.—Bib. Crois., iii. 341.

² Michaud: Hist., iii. 12.

³ Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. lxxvii., vol. i. 77.—Seb. Paoli Notizie Geograf., i. 423.—Appendix, l.

⁴ Sanuti: lib. iii. 14.

these might perhaps have been goaded on to see with some displeasure their own children put over their heads; but indeed it was not so, and other chroniclers of that time say the direct contrary. The fact is, that neither orders had time for such squabbles; and it was those who hated both who tried to play them off against each other, and alas! had too quickly their intent regarding one. But all that is childish now.

Great warriors were lost in those holy wars, and Mahometanism survived. Frederick I. was held quite as valiant and as able a soldier as Alexander the Great; and they appeared on nearly the same scene. One conquered the Sultan, the other Darius; why then so different a result? Frederick had an established religion against him, Alexander not; but an established religion is what is hardest to vanquish.¹

In 1193, another Bohemond becomes an aggregated member of the order by election;² and a new Pope confirms what his predecessors had said, particularly respecting the Hospitalleresses in Spain—his Holiness praising them as no doubt they deserved;³

¹ Suabian Chron.—Bib. Crois., iii. 184.

² Confrater factus sum S. Domûs Hospitalis. Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. lxxx., i. 86.

³ Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. xxxiv., i. 313.—Appendix, Num. li.

but he does not mention what tradition adds, that they each had to hold a little silver sceptre in their hand during divine service, to remind them that some of their sisterhood had been queens;¹ nor avows that it was contrary to the ancient custom of the order that they should be thus shut up like
1194 nuns. Of Cœur de Lion's nephew, Harry Count Palatine of Troyes (or Champagne), we have a deed of gift, less remarkable for his not entitling himself sovereign for the property in Acre, than for his care to mention his wife, in whose right he could pretend to royalty.²

But early in the next year is a letter from the grand master to the prior of his knights in England,
1195 in which he relates the shipwreck of several noble gentlemen of his order, the sore famine in Egypt, where that river of paradise had not overflowed, the menaces of Safadin, and worse still, the forlorn state of their house in Sicily, from its having been sacked by Germans and others; so that their knights were obliged to leave it; nor was it possible for it to assist the Holy Land; "Wherefore, my good brother, we entreat of you to send us all you can by the very earliest opportunity in March, for we are heavily in debt, and you know what loads

¹ Vertot: ii. 301.—Bosio.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. lxxxii., i., 87.—Appendix, lii.

of money and provisions of every kind are necessary to maintain our garrisons and armies; and it is but with these that we can hope any respite from the Moslem. Fearfully monstrous is our expenditure. But our trust is in God."¹ How tender is the command "good brother!" But it is only a fair specimen of the order's affectionate fraternization!

Next comes a deed from the Empress Constance, confirmatory of all her ancestors had done for the order, and executed in Palermo.² Cœur de Lion's truce having been renewed by mutual accord of the parties, was broken by some Franks headed by Valeran de Limbourg, son of the Duke of Ardennes, 1197 without the knowledge of Henry, England's nephew,³ to the great detriment of the Christians of the land; for the Paynim, in reprisal, marched against those of Jaffa, and slew five thousand of them.⁴ And unfortunate Henry, who had gone thither, and returned to Acre, anxiously to prepare for inevitable war, whether in washing his hands, he backed and fell from the window, as the servant held a basin of water, or in rising 1198 by night, for whatever purpose, or in the

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. xxxviii., i. 317.—Bosio.—Appendix, l.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. clxxxv., i. 228.

³ Michaud: Hist., iii. 24.

⁴ Lamberti Parvi: Chron.—Bib. Crois., i. 334.

morning, while looking out from a terrace on his troops filing past, or in the portico, had a sudden apoplectic stroke;¹ however it was, he was killed. Another Henry, Duke of Lorraine and Brabant, succeeded;² but in two or three months to be superseded by the defunct's widow taking a new husband—Almeric, who had followed his brother Guy, on the throne of Cyprus, and now married Isabella, by the Grand Master of the Hospitallers' means, and in her right became titular King of Jerusalem, which he hastened to authenticate by a deed, dated Tyre, in August, 1198.³ Almeric is represented to be a good wise man by the Moslems themselves;⁴ which, and the Pope's eulogy, is no contradiction to the same Pope's blame of the patriarch, for having connived at a woman's taking a fourth husband while her first one was still alive.⁵

And, what was of more consequence, a truce was again assented to, by the Moslems, for six years six months and six days, permitting the Christians a free passage to and from the Sepulchre, Jordan,

¹ Bib. Crois., iii. 284.—Arnold de Lubeck : Chron. 4.

² Lamberti Parvi : Chron.—Bib. Crois., i. 334.

³ Cod. Dipl. Geros, Num. clxxxix.—Appendix, liii.

⁴ Arab. Chron., 381.

⁵ Seb. Paoli : Storiche, i. 376.—Muratori.—Bib. Crois., ii. 497.

and the other sacred places.¹ And in the very end of that same year, is a bull of Innocent III., requesting of the Hospitallers to defend Cyprus, whose king they had themselves elected to Jerusalem, and to defend him and his island as cordially as Palestine itself.²

Beautiful—which law papers rarely are—is the deed by which a lady of Holy Land certifies she has become a sister of the order, with her husband's consent, without calumny, without 1201 revocation, without contradiction.³

Nor could De Duisson have died earlier than the last days of 1201 (Vertot mistakes much), as documentary proof shows, and in 1202, he was succeeded by Sir Alphonso, of the royal family of 1202 Portugal (probably son of Alphonso I.), who being very austere at the expenditure, called a chapter in cloaks⁴ for some minute and ill-timed reforms, where, not considering it compatible with his own dignity, he had a proposal made by another, to whom a younger knight having replied sharply, that it would render harder what was already hard, that no officer could ever do with one horse—at least

¹ Reiner: Chron.—Bib. Crois., i. 334.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., Bolla iii., i. 270.

³ Id., Num. lxxxvi., i. 91.—Appendix, liv.

⁴ Bosio:—Appendix, Num. xxxvi.—Seb. Paoli: Serie, i. 340.

not the Hospitallers, in continual dangers and exertion of every sort, the warm debate was closed by one of their best veterans standing up, and reverently laying back his hood thus calmly: "Were the regulations from our Grand Master, and my opinion unfavourable to them, I should hesitate to interfere; but, as I am decidedly in their favour, I permit myself to express it, because this peace is propitious to grave proceedings, as our very conversation in this hall attests; for the sanguinary Marchtoub once commanded here in the name of the law of Mahomet, whereas Cœur de Lion drove off the Saracens for ever; and if three of the best horses were not then enough to enable me to fulfil my various duties, but I was often obliged to borrow a fourth, and on one pressing occasion, in the battle near Antioch, a fifth—that was a period of war, and very different from what we see at present."

And when he sat down, the turcopolier rose smiling, "and now let every one of you judge by what he has just heard, and give his vote without our losing more time in vain discourse." And the sequel was that Alphonso abdicated and returned to Lisbon, and it is said died badly, after having taken a prominent part in some revolutionary attempt. And on his tombstone in that country

was inscribed, "Anno 1245, Kalend. Martii, obiit Alfonsus, Magister Hospitalis Hierusalem."¹

Any considerable diversity of opinion in their chapters, or among themselves or with those of the Temple or others, is not so much to be considered a passing burst or exception, as indeed a radical consequence of the republican spirit kneaded up with the first principles of the Hospitallers from the very beginning; which however excellent, still share in the nature of all human things, and have some defects amalgamated with their excellencies. If, as a commonwealth, each individual took an intense and personal interest in every proposal, that exclusiveness easily during intervals of armistice degenerated into disputes in their own body and a facility to offend their neighbours. It was only in war and the execution of their decisions, that much of the dictatorial power entered. There are few or, I believe, no instances of disobedience, or even the smallest hesitation to obey on the field of battle in the fine times of the order; but very many of the fullest exertion of the power of a most rigid dictator by whoever happened to be their grand master, from whom all authority was then derived.

¹ Seb. Paoli : Serie, i. 340.

That Sir Godfrey Lo Rath did not succeed till
1205 (though Vertot like the rest has 1195)
1205 is clear from the document of December,
1204, in which Alphonso was still the reigning Grand
Master.¹

But if the fourth crusade took place earlier about a year, yet as a war between Roman and Greek Christians, the order had nothing to do with it, but kept true to its neutrality between all such; except that individual Templars and Hospitallers went to Greece also, for it was the land of glory;² nor either then nor ever could the grand master prevent individual knights from taking what side they pleased; nor, though the order had a priory and much property at Constantinople, did its banner ever fly there, although it had scarce a member but had near relatives amongst those Franks, and they had certainly its sympathies and names that were very dear to it, and reminded it of its own Norman descent, and its earliest protectors and friends, and its founder, and all his glorious race. Nor is it surprising it exulted when a Baldwin was elected Emperor of Constantinople, and testified his singular esteem by sending it, as proof of his victory, the chain he had to break, to reach the

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. lxxxvii., i. 92.—Appendix, lv.

² Michaud : Hist., iii. 210.

Golden Horn, and the gates of that celebrated Byzantium,¹ and likewise a deed in aid of its exchequer,²—the fourth part of his own private estate (the Duchy of Neocast)—and therefore the surer and more expressive of his warm friendship; no crown property, but entirely his own. Yet there was a person, who paid for so much glory with her life—his wedded spouse, his faithful and affectionate Margaret, who had preceded her husband to Acre to join him there on their way to Jerusalem, and whose gratification for his sake at his attainment of what she knew was the object of his ambition, that immensity of joy killed her. What brought out the chain and gates under orders to return with their young and lovely sovereign, expected with such ardour, as the fittest to preside at the coronation festivities she was to share—alas! that ship returned with no living empress, but her corpse—sad presage of what was brewing (in the not far clouds) for Baldwin himself.³ About the same time there were various scourges of earthquakes and plague and famine in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria. More than two thousand Christians were buried in one day at Acre of plague.⁴ The ground rolled

¹ Michaud: Hist., iii. 121, 210.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. lxxxviii., i. 93.—Appendix, lvi.

³ Michaud: Hist., iii. 211.—Vertot: iii. 360.

⁴ Id.: Id., 154.

about, like the rising and falling of a bird's wings,¹ and devastated what remained of the antique in the Holy Land, Baalbec, and many places round Lebanon (whose mountains opened and descended), and much of Damascus, Tyre, Tripoli, and other towns; and the walls of Acre, and even the very palace where the King of Jerusalem was staying; so that the monies raised in Europe for the crusade had to be laid out in rebuilding the walls of Acre.² The state of affairs could not be pleasing for people that loved quiet—every one making war *ad libitum*—even the poet Saadi for awhile in prison, and condemned to work like a galley slave. Though Aleppo was at peace with Jerusalem, the Christians of Antioch were at open war with Saracen Hamah; so, as Almeric liked quiet, he thought it best to come and die at Acre.³ Isabella is once more free. Will she take her a fifth husband? John de Brienne took heed of that, for disembarking at Acre with only three hundred horse and eighty thousand livres (half from the King of France, and the other half from the Pope) he was received with great pomp and married to her daughter, and in her right became King of Jerusalem—at least to the Latins, for the Moslems called him King of

¹ Michaud: Hist., iii. 255. ² Id.: Id., 256.

³ Id.: Id., 258.

Acre.¹ And these besieging Tripoli and threatening Acre, the new king marched out and made his valour be admired on the field of battle. Still he had no other than that shadow of feudal superiority, and no army to defend it.² That most shameful of crusades (with which, thank Heaven, the order had nothing to do), that against the Albigeois, in every sense belonged to Europe, and "from their persecution," says the French historian, "came the Inquisition, that disgrace to humanity, religion, and our country."³ I am glad to copy that fervent Catholic's words. What has been said about the earthquakes, is by some referred to May, 1202; but such dates are uncertain, and let me observe once for all, that it is only the chronology in the margin that can pretend to documentary certainty, while that in the text is only extremely probable. But not only Godfrey Lo Rath was Grand Master in 1205, immediately on Alphonso's abdication, as has been shown, but also we have a deed of his the year next following which even Seb. Paoli 1206 seems not to have read with attention, probably from its coming too late.⁴ And the same grand master was living in May of 1207 (though

¹ Michaud : Hist., iii. 260.—Arab. Chron., 379.

² Id. : Id., 266. ³ Michaud : Hist., iii. 271.

⁴ Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. clxxv., i. 217.—Appendix, lvii.

others say he died in 1206), not only because there
 1207 is a deed wherein one of the witnesses is his
 successor, still marshal, as Paoli rightly
 says,¹ but likewise, as I remark, because Lo Rath
 is himself mentioned, though the name be ill
 printed Lirath in one word, instead of two; and
 still more, that in another contract of 1207, he signs
 to it in full, *Lo Rath*, Master of the Hospitallers,
 and writes the name correctly with his own hand.
 Amongst this document's witnesses (the *alii plures*
 of the Appendix), is Hugo de Burin, which no doubt
 means Byron); so the late lord (the poet) was not
 wrong in thinking he had ancestors in the crusades.²
 And in another document of that same year, I read
 among the witnesses Frater Galfridus Lo Rath.³
 Lo Rath,⁴ after exerting his insinuating manners
 1208 by being a peace-maker, as became his age,
 between the Armenian and Antioch, died in
 1208, and his successor as grand master was one
 who until then had been marshal, Sir Gawen de
 Montacute,⁵ whom Vertot unhesitatingly dubs Mon-
 taigu,⁶ and that he was a French gentleman. And

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. xci., i. 95.—Appendix, lix.

² Id., Num. xc., i. 94.—Appendix, lviii.

³ Id., Num. x., of the *Giunta*, i. 289.—Appendix, lxxxv.

⁴ Is not *Lo! Rath!* Anglo-Saxon? *Here! Early one!*

⁵ Seb. Paoli: Serie, i. 341. ⁶ Vertot: iii. 367.

Bosio and even Seb. Paoli concur; but be it observed that, according to Lodge¹ and Sir Harris Nicolas,² the Montacute was an *old* English family in 1168, earlier than the period we are treating of, and that they did not take the name of Montaigu until two centuries later, when they merged in the Nevils and old Earls of Salisbury; so that, until the contrary be decided by greater authorities (and the historians of the order cite none), I must certainly vindicate the claim of England to the Grand Master Montacute, and that he was no further a Frenchman than that his ancestors had been Normans. But at that time, if the Montaigus belonged to Auvergne, the Montacutes did to Wiltshire; and Montacute is the name in all the documents. And he had to exercise his diplomatic talents much, in a similar pacific way; but also in a sterner sort, for they were unhappy times, and the military orders were an exception to the surrounding degeneracy, which induced people easily to have small regard for their oaths and break truces every moment without compunction. Nor is it quite clear whether Christians or Moslems were the first in that respect, since mutual are the accusations; and it is painful to decide (without the fullest

¹ Lodge : iv. 16.

² Synopsis, 2.

proof) against our own co-religionists. Nor had creeds much to do with the matter; for if the first crusades were more religious than political, the later ones were more political than religious.¹ And in lieu a great indifference of religion was observable over Syria and Palestine—all parties seeking but their interests, Christians against Christians, and Mahometans against Mahometans, with astonishing impartiality;² so that Pope Innocent III. wrote to the Sovereign of Aleppo to felicitate him on his having become a Christian—though he never thought of it, but only had been generous towards some of that belief;³ which, if it scandalized the Pope of Rome the Great,⁴ or Caliph of the Franks,⁵ it did not less the Pope of the Infidels,⁶ as the chroniclers call the Caliph of Bagdad; the Apostle of Rome, and the Apostle of the Saracens
 1210 are also their terms.⁷ We have a document
 by which a German count and his wife
 became aggregated to the order in October
 of 1208.⁸ A King of Cyprus in 1210 gives
 1213 various lands to Sir Gawen Montacute,

¹ Michaud: Hist. iii. 291.

² Arab. Chron., 382.

³ Arab. Chron., 383.

⁴ Id., 387.

⁵ Id., 482. Note.

⁶ Vitri.

⁷ Michaud: Hist., iii. 325. Note.

⁸ Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. xcii., i. 96.

Grand Master of the Sacred House of the Hospital of St. John, and the Hospitallers.¹ On the 13th of October, certain persons borrow a thousand Saracen bezants from Montacute, Grand Master of the Hospitallers, one of the witnesses being a Garnerius with the adjunct of *Alemannus*, the German, to distinguish him from others of the same name, English or of whatever country; for though *languages* were a posterior creation far, yet not so several leading offices being assigned to particular lands. Prior of England was always an Englishman by a custom dating from the very beginning of the order,² and on the 8th of the calends of August in 1216 the brief of Pope Honorius III.,³ recommends the Prince of Antioch to the Hospitallers; and on the 9th of the same month and year, comes a letter from the said Pope to the Grand Master of the Hospitallers, bidding him to go to Cyprus to confer with the King of Hungary and Duke of Austria, as to the affairs of Palestine,⁴ and in January, 1217, John of Brienne, King of Jerusalem, speaks of Gawen de Montacute Grand Master of the Hospitallers.⁵ Therefore, in

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. xcvii., i. 101.

² Id., Num. xi., i. 290.—Appendix cvi.

³ Id., Num. xl. 320.—Giunta.

⁴ Id., Num. xli. 320.—Giunta.

⁵ Id., Num. cexii. 253.—Pantaleone: Hist. book iii.

spite of the existing treaties, Brienne led a force against Jerusalem, and, upon discomfiture, determined on taking the road by where its resources came from; nor can there be any doubt of his being at Acre in the January of 1217,¹ and embarked for Egypt in the month of May, 1218, as the Islamites have it, whose authority as to dates is reputed better than that of our chroniclers. These differ a little, but those estimate the crusaders as (what is probably an exaggeration) seventy thousand horse and four hundred thousand foot,² and that while some of the fleet were only two days on the voyage from Jaffa to the Nile, others were an entire month; which, whatever it came from, it were wrong to attribute to nautical deficiency, since part of that same crusade leaving the Meuse in June, 1218, and in its way touching at ports on the south of England, and north of France and Spain, entered that of Lisbon towards the middle of July³—very tolerable sailing.⁴ Four months hardly sufficed to take the first of the outworks of Damietta,⁵ the tower of the chain, which seemed so violent a loss to

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., Num. cexi., i. 253 —Appendix, lxxxvi.

² Arab. Chron., 388 ³ Michaud: Hist. iii., 313.

⁴ Chron. Cologne.—Bib. Crois., iii. 20.

⁵ Michaud: Hist., iii. 319.—Arab. Chron., 392.

Islam that it broke Safadin's heart when he heard of it on the banks of the Lake of Galilee;¹ so his corpse was borne secretly into the citadel, at Damascus, and buried at night, in private, for fear of a sedition; so loved and venerated was he by every class.² That the Grand Master was away is implied by there being a *locum-tenens*, in his stead, during those years, as in one document;³ and, by another, that Montacute was still in Egypt, in May of 1221;⁴ by a third, that he was still there in June;⁵ and by a fourth, that he was back in Acre, in October of that year, since his travelling 1219 companion was.⁶ Brienne's expedition went on swimmingly at first, taking Damietta after a good defence, to his exultation, except that it was found to be an immense charnel house, scarcely containing a human creature alive; but the streets choked up with loads of carcasses, in various stages of putrefaction, dead of plague, or famine, or

¹ Arab. Chron., 392.—Michaud: Hist., iii. 320. Note.

² Arab. Chron., 393. Note 1.

³ Cod. Dipl. Geros.—Num. xii.—Giunta: i. 290.—Appendix, lx.

⁴ Cod. Dipl. Geros.—Num. cviii.—Giunta: i. 114.—Appendix, lxxxvii.

⁵ Cod. Dipl. Geros.—Num. xiii.—Giunta: i. 291.—Appendix, lxi.

⁶ Cod. Dipl. Geros.—Num. cvii.—Giunta: i. 113.—Appendix, lxxxviii.

wounds, and emitting such an intolerable stench, that it frightened back the storming party,¹ much more the whole Christian army, when they got in by one of the gates, but arrested by the same horrible smell, were obliged to retreat, and encamp anew under its walls, until the streets and houses were a little cleaned; yet a moment sufficed to inoculate them with the plague, dire disease, that continued lurking in their ranks, and growing every day; during which interval arrived the Papal legate. So there were two cardinals, and, if one of them was meek and pious, the other was a fire-brand. But the former was soon killed, which only left the other's outrageous audacity without control.

1221 "Cardinal Peter is gone, and Cardinal Pelagius left living, the more the pity," says the chronicler.² Hospitallers and Templars, at the storming of Damietta, in which were then eighty thousand men,³ were firmly believed by the Mahometans—not at all ashamed of being beaten by such—to be no human creatures, so transcendent was their valour, but white angels, and St. Bartholomew and St. George and company in red; the

¹ Olivier.—Bib. Crois., iii. 150.

² Michaud: Hist. iii., 325.

³ Potestats di Reggio.—Bib. Crois., ii. 596.

Templars wearing their white mantles, and the Hospitallers their scarlet surcoats.¹

The Sultan, Malek-Kammel, Safadin's eldest son, had written the most woe-begone letters to his brothers, who, all fourteen, came, one by one, from various parts of the East on this side, and from beyond Jordan; their different dominions, with their troops to join him. Above all, the Prince of Damascus, who, before he left Palestine, took care to raze the walls of Jerusalem, lest the Franks should take them, was remarkably enthusiastic;² and, by a stratagem, forced his brother Arschaff, King of Armenia, who, having come with his army into Palestine, and after they had a conversation late one evening, retired to bed; the prince, who may have perceived some hesitation in the other, pulled on his little boots in the middle of the night, and roused and harangued the troops, "March!—To Damietta!" But Arschaff, in the morning, dressed, took a bath, and coming from it, was astonished not to see his soldiery. But learning what the prince had done, mounted; and without one word, marched towards Egypt after him.³

So now the sultan's army counted forty thousand

¹ Potestats di Reggio.—Bib. Crois., ii. 591.

² Arab. Chron., 398. Note, and 410.

³ Id., 411.

horse, and an infinite multitude of foot;¹ while that of the Christians, according to the Moslem himself, was only the half; twenty thousand horse, and two hundred thousand foot.² How diminished since landing! Still the Latins were such celebrated soldiers, and their advance struck their foes with such terror, that, in both Cairos they forgot to open the gates for two days; and, though the Nile was on its increase, that which brought fertility, and decided whether they should have a good harvest or a famine, and which formed then, as at present, the usual topic of conversation in all Egyptian classes, was completely unattended to,³ and it got tacitly full up to the very edge of its banks, before it was perceived. Fertile Egypt had more Christians in it than Palestine. Egypt was so holy and precious in the sight of the Lord, that He chose it to be the road by which thousands of Franks should reach Him: for they died very quietly of dysentery.⁴ The Saracens came within our hearing, drawn up on the other side of the river, and summoned us to renounce our superstitious creed: "For either you must turn Mahometans, or we Christians." And the circumcised

¹ Arab. Chron., 412. ² Id., 409.

³ Id., 410.

⁴ Vitri: Letters, iii. Bib. Crois., i. 429.

ate two fowls on it, to make good their oath, devouring the fowls as hungry dogs do bread. And the battle began, and in a twinkling—it was the day of the decollation of St. John the Baptist—who wanted companions, observes the chronicler, and here they were, fifty Templars, thirty Teutonics, thirty-two Hospitallers, the Chamberlain of the King of France, and that nobleman's son, several counts and princes, eighty knights, and five thousand men of different nations.¹ Unwillingly had Brienne set out from Damietta, disapproving totally of that unmilitary excursion, headlong, without any preparatives; and wished, at least, to wait for the succours promised by the emperor. But Pelagius treated his worldly misgivings with utter disdain, and arrogated to himself the supreme command, saying it was a Papal army, since composed in part of Italians, and under the Pope's protection.² And, although some Roman princes ran away at the first of the action, that was not very wonderful; and if, on another morning, a Spaniard was caught selling a piece of bread to two Saracens, the traitors—not Spaniards, but Saracens—were tied to a horse's tail, and dragged all through the Christian camp; no trifle, its extent being of ten

¹ Potestats di Reggio.—Bib. Crois., ii. 603.

² Oliveri : Hist. Damatiana.—Bib. Crois., iii. 155.

miles.¹ And when Brienne proposed that they should halt until the galleys cleared the river, Pelagius vociferated treason, and that his galley should not lower its masts till they reached Cairo, which he hoped would be within three days.² This utter blindness was deeply blamed by Brienne, but seems to have terrified the sultan; for he made frequent proposals for peace during the march, and now that the Christians had arrived at the southern extremity of the Delta, opposite to the new town of Mansourah, where the whole Moslem army was drawn up, continued for three weeks to send deputies proposing to give Jerusalem to the Christians,³ and one hundred thousand pieces of gold to rebuild its walls, besides Ascalon and all the cities that had been won from them by Saladin in Syria and Palestine, in exchange for Damietta alone.⁴ One would think such terms surrendered all that was wanted, and that the Christians would accept them with warm satisfaction. But not so Pelagius, who disdained any peace, and would be contented with nothing but the extermination of Islam, and effectually chasing every shadow of opposition from the face of the earth.

¹ Potestats di Reggio.—Bib. Crois., ii. 605.

² Michaud: Hist., iii. 352.—Arab. Chron., 419. Note 2.

³ Id.: Id., 354.

⁴ Arab. Chron., 413.

Brienne once more expostulated: "Let us encamp where we are, we can entrench the army well; believe me, it is better not to be in a hurry, and if we were twenty years in conquering Egypt, it would not be too much."¹ At which words the legate could no longer contain his rage. Brienne replied, "Well, if you will go on, I'll accompany you, and be resigned to the will of God. Lead me where you please; you will see what will come of it!"² And did come of it, that the deputies were given a flat refusal.

"Ho! ho," cried the Saracens and their horses too. "Now you may just wheel about and retire; for we have lost all patience, and our scimitars are thirsty, and burning our hands to dash down on you!"³ So we perceiving them reinforced and so resolute, thought it best to take them at their word, and turned to withdraw in some confusion; but it was too late, for they attacked us, and a great battle ensued, which we lost; and had it not been for the Hospitallers, and also the other military orders, and Brienne himself, we should have been cut to pieces to a man.⁴ Nor was this enough, but the sultan had the dykes broken, and

¹ Arab. Chron., 418.

² Id., 419.

³ Id., 418.

⁴ Potestats di Reggio.—Bib. Crois., ii. 603.

out burst the Nile, bellowing most awfully, and the entire country was a deluge. Then might you see the cardinal quite changed, and hang his head in shame, and fear, and sorrow.¹ The very first thing was, of course, that all our boats and provisions were lost. Some of our people sprang the wine and spirit casks, that they knew would soon be swamped, and died dead drunk. Many who lay down on some dry spot, the waters coming over their heads while they slept, drowned them. Every horse of ours had disappeared; and those of pitiless Arabs and Mamelukes drove through the waters to get at us and trample us, or that their riders might transfix us with their long lances. Howling famine also waylaid us, and the plague; but why further of that deplorable retreat? Worse than by the recent Berezina; for this was a Berezina of several nights. It would have been hard for Brienne to have imitated Saladin, who on losing a battle had his charger's tail cut off, by way of mourning; since there was not a horse amongst us.² Not one of the whole Christian army would have got half way to Damietta alive, were it not for compassion in direct opposition to the Prince of Damascus, who voted for no

¹ Michaud: Hist., iii. 358.

² Sicardi: Chron.—Bib. Crois., ii. 549.

quarter;¹ but Moslem charity allowed the residue to retire in peace, on the sole condition of surrendering Damietta, though much injured; and hostages were given, Brienne and legate on the one side, and on the other the sultan's eldest son, a boy of about fifteen. So the sultan had the dykes closed, and the land was quickly as before. Yet this did not suffice, for the unfortunate Christians were fast dying of hunger; whereupon Brienne walked into the sultan's tent, and sat down and began to weep; then the sultan looked at the king, who dolefully was weeping, and said to him: "Sire, why do you weep?"—"Sire, good right I have to weep," replied the King; "for do I not see the people, whom God has given me in charge, die of hunger?" The sultan took pity of the king, that he had seen him dolefully weeping, and began to weep himself also, and gave thirty thousand loaves of bread for poor and rich without distinction; and so for the four following days.² And further still did the compassionate Malek-Kammel go; for he forbade the Mussulmen to direct a word of obloquy to the retreaters. Far from taking an ignoble advantage of their distress, the Christian deputies were always received by him with great honour;

¹ Arab. Chron., 416.

² Michaud: Hist., iii. 367.

and the sultan's own brothers and all his grandees used to stand upon their entering, and remain standing, in token of respect for them.¹ And he sent commissaries from his own Court to protect them, and defray all their expenses on the road, even unto their own ships; nor will gratitude permit us to inquire whether something is not to be subtracted from his generosity, and to be ascribed to his wisdom; inasmuch as it is good policy to assist the departure of a defeated foe.² Of the few Hospitallers who came back to Acre, all were more or less badly wounded; and most severely so, the grand master. Not only Montacute was at Damietta in June, 1221, quietly receiving a donation to the order by a German officer then there³ (which proves how accurate the Arabs are in their dates, by which late in spring was the advance of the Christians, and the 28th of August that of their retreat from the Delta⁴), but likewise in October Montacute was back at Acre.⁵ The other Hospitallers had been slain, and most of the Templars and Teutonic also. She who had rejoiced at their first successes, and flattered herself with the Holy Land's being free for ever, Acre, had now to mourn in con-

¹ Arab. Chron., 417.

² Michaud: Hist., iii. 362.

³ Appendix, lxi.

⁴ Arab. Chron., 416.

⁵ Appendix, lxxxviii.

sternation at the plight in which they returned. But to console them, there was a grand procession; the Patriarch holding the true cross! How could he have it in 1222, whereas it had been taken by Saladin, who (and his descendants) always refused to restore it to the Christians? Very simply (replies the chronicler), because its thickness had been sawed in two previous to the battle of Tiberias, so that one half was preserved!¹

But scarcely two years² of sweet pacific giving and receiving had elapsed, when Cairenes and Damascenes fell out; the former accusing the latter of partiality to the Franks, in consequence of which there were skirmishes near Ascalon, in one of which the Templars took a Turkish grandee prisoner, whom rumour called Prince of Damascus; and if they did not kill him instantly, it could have been for no common purpose they conceded him a respite, since they seldom either were given or gave quarter. So there took place a meeting of deputies from all the military orders of Acre in their cloaks and hoods, presided over by the Grand Master of the Templars, when the president thus addressed the prisoner: "Sir Turk, it having been too long the custom to except us and our associates of the other two

1225

¹ Oliveri: Chron.—Bib. Crois., iii. 139.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., i. 254.—Num. ccxiii.—Appendix, lxxxix.

military orders, from quarter, we propose a change and wish to send you with that intent to the sultan on this condition, that you promise to return with an answer, when if it be (which God forbid) in the negative, it afflicts me to have to state, that you must submit to fair reprisals; except only that we shall use no torture, which so many Hospitallers and Templars have undergone from you."—"Superfluous totally is your pity," replied the captive, "for I am as ready to go joyous to death as any of you; I can speak as pure English as any of you, or purer. So need none of your foreign gibberish. *What, Sir Turk? What Damascus? My name is St. Alban.¹ Was not my cousin, Sir Thomas Montacute, your Grand Master? My other cousin of the same noble house your Hospitaller?*² My father was a Knight Templar as you are, and wore the white mantle like you, but had the grace to be enlightened, and abjuring his false creed fled to the magnificent Saladin, who received him kindly, and gave him wealth, and a high command, and his own niece in marriage;³ so (Allah be praised) I was brought up in the true religion. Look on me sharp, and you will recollect me. Is not my skin as milky as that of

¹ Hoveden.—Bib. Crois., ii. 775.

² Seb. Paoli: Osservazioni, i. 515.—Appendix, xc.

³ Hoveden: 1187.—Bib. Crois., ii. 775.

any of you?" And he threw back his collar, and his lofty forehead was also of as dazzling a white; and his large blue eyes beneath his flaxen eyebrows shone terribly, and his expanded nostrils were transparent and immensely wide, as was perhaps necessary to feed the lungs of his capacious chest. Like almost all the Normans, he was of gigantic stature—nearly as tall as their lances.¹ "Think me a Bohemond!" and he stretched his muscular arm, and might seem an Apollo glorious from the Python, "I think I know that wolfish face, but it was then downcast, and you kept your tail between your legs. Look on me again! and remember Egypt! I am he who, when my gentle brother and master asked my counsel, answered, *Drive his owl of a soul out of the Christian.* Malek-Kammel gave you, too tenderly, your life and liberty. And now I see you here. But I repeat what I then advised, though in vain. Would you and I were with the faithful! my words would not again meet deaf ears. But I am far prouder of my maternal blood! Ought I not to be proud that I can call the King of kings father?² Yes, Malek-Adel, you were truly the sword of religion. The Christians feared you, and all your subjects loved and revered you, but

¹ Alexiad Anna Comnena.—Bib. Crois., iii. 400.

² Appendix, xc.

most your own kindred, of whom you were the defence and glory! Rejoice then, O my son, that two of the most illustrious of Islam, at the present day, were your near relatives! See then, Giaour, if you could have chosen a worse ambassador for your most infamous project? Not softness towards the infidel is what we want, but pitiless hate. Ay, by the verdant angels, and the Valley of Mecca,¹ hate! Like my fathers both Norman and Mahometan, my first shall be my last, my only love. The warm heart and true; not cold law! Plurality of wives proves the freedom of our doctrine; but many are the Moslems who have but one wife. This heart beats for only one, who responds as faithfully. What cares she for fidelity by statute? She has it more effectually by choice. Far better does the Norman war-cry, *God's aid*, suit us than you; for you believe in three Gods, we in one alone. You are the Paynims and idolators, not we. Was not my Mahometan brother, Malek-Kammel, knighted by Cœur de Lion? Did King Richard not come on purpose hither, and perform the proper ceremonies? Were I to accept your errand, I hope it would be useless; but at all events, I'll not submit to the opprobrium of having given such bad advice. Christians may.

¹ Arab. Chron., 425.

But who ever heard of a Moslem's being bribed? Thanking Him from whom all strength comes, I fling you back your offers, and reject and scorn them. What are your princes? Roaring lions in peace, or at board, or a-bed, but timid as deer in war. Shame to Latins! greater shame to Palestine! Are not its spotted hybrid Christians full of what is most base, and worse than brutal, prodigious, secret, disgusting vices and meanness? Bright eyes will be wet for my death; but she will have taught our son, the lotus-eyed David, to avenge it. Hearken to her all your days, O my dearest boy, and recollect I send my last blessing and kiss to you both. If there be any spark of feeling in any one of you, you will let them know these my dying words. I surely die while it is sweet living. Blasphemers, I defy, despise, spit on you. For I wish to die, being tired of enduring the same air with you; your smell corrupts it; the foul breath of your hypocrisy poisons me; it disgusts and sickens me! To me you are the filthiest of mangy curs, the most swinish of the grovelling swine. Yes, yes, yes, a blessed martyr am I! The honest, happy St. Alban's curse be on you all." And as he left the saloon, the grand master said in a placid and solemn tone, "At least, we have done our duty; so, Sir Hugh de Burin, see that the

master-at-arms does his.¹ If ever Acre is lost, it will be lost by a renegade!" And hardly had the Mahometan passed the threshold, when in the corridor was heard the noise of a heavy fall, as of a corpse, and the rolling of, as it were, a head, which sank on the silence of that meeting; and silently, as if in mourning, they broke up.

Though old and severely wounded, the grand master assisted when the Pope (Honorius III.) met the Emperor, Frederick II., at Ferentino, in Italy, in 1223,² and thence hastening back, was 1227 certainly alive and at Acre in May of 1227, as we find by a Frenchman, who came thither to implore his protection for his father, who had fallen into Saracen hands, where the poor man died in slavery, just as the Grand Master Montacute was on the point of obtaining his liberation; so the son, seeing that as much as depended on the Hospitallers had been done, testified his gratitude by presenting them with this deed, obliging himself and his heirs to pay a certain annual rent into the hand of the prior of the order in France. But the document shall tell its own story, for the substance shall be in the Appendix.³

¹ See Note 48, page 15.

² Platina, iii. 66. Note F.

³ Cod. Dipl. Geros. i.—Num. clxxvii.—Appendix, lxii.

A quarrel having arisen between (I will not say the brothers) but the ministries of Cairo and Damascus, in which the latter, threatening to call in the Karismians, the former were so terrified, that application was made to Frederick II., who had long promised, and at Ferentino had newly sworn, to go on that crusade; and he might well think that he could not act in a more friendly manner than engaging the parties to a reasonable peace, for there had existed an old friendship betwixt the sultan and that emperor, who, as having been brought up in Sicily, where there were many Mahometans, and one of them his master in logic and astronomy, was almost ranked by them as one of themselves, and they vaunted his learning as something their own. Moreover, to hasten his coming, was sent the famous Emir Fakr-eddin, as celebrated in diplomacy as war, who quickly won a high place in Frederick's esteem, as finding him, on many points, of his own opinion in philosophy, which rendered him the Egyptian sovereign's warm ally. As long as the Prince of Damascus lived, the Cairo government was accused of partiality to the Franks, and this was the true foundation of his anger; and it was then the emperor had been invited. But when the Prince of Damascus died, the sultan thought his nephew's minority was a fortunate opportunity to

consolidate all Palestine, and even Syria, in his own hands, by uniting those countries to Egypt. Therefore came to Palestine, and changed so completely, that when young David entreated another of his uncles, Arschaff of Mesopotamia, to protect him (as indeed he marched with an army to do), the sultan wrote to him that he had come to curb the Christians, who were getting too audacious for a minor. "The land is without defence. The Franks have rebuilt the walls of Sidon and other fortresses that had been razed. You know that our uncle Saladin transmitted to us a name illustrious by taking Jerusalem. If the Christians had seized the Holy City, it would have been an eternal dishonour to us, and our memory would have been handed down blasted to our descendants. Become unworthy of the reputation gained by our uncle, how should we be estimated by God and men? Nor would the Franks have been contented with what they have already won, but would want to win more. However, since you are come, my presence is no longer necessary here. I'll return then to Egypt, and leave you to defend Syria. It shall never be said of me that I waged war against my brother. It is the idea furthest from me."¹ This

¹ Arab. Chron., 428.

letter had the desired effect; and the fear that the Franks might get so strong as to pay him a visit in his own dominions, made Arscaff turn against his nephew. And when Frederick II. arrived at Acre, the sultan, who was out of his embarrassment, would have been better contented he had never called him. But here he was, and must be satisfied. Nor did he arrive at Acre without presents, and forwarded them by a deputation in great pomp, which was received by the whole Mussulman army under arms; and the most intimate relations were immediately established between sultan and emperor.¹ And when the latter suspected some hesitation, he wrote thus, dissembling perhaps a tinge of resentment: "I am your cordial friend. You cannot but know I am the chief of all the sovereigns of Christendom. It was you yourself engaged me to come hither. The Pope and all the Western princes are informed of my voyage; and should I return without attaining anything, I should lose all consideration in their eyes. After all, was it not Jerusalem that gave birth to Christianity? Was it not you that destroyed it? It is now in a most miserable condition. I entreat of you then to restore it to me, in even the state it is; that when I go back to Europe, I may be able to hold

¹ Arab. Chron., 429.

up my head among our kings. I renounce every other advantage." For he had begun by asking not only for Jerusalem, but all the towns anciently possessed by the Franks, and favourable terms for commerce. "It is not," said he to Fakr-eddin, "that my motive in coming here was to deliver the Holy City! No such thing; but to preserve the esteem of the Franks. If I insist with such fervour on what I ask, it is simply that I am afraid of losing all credit in the West."

The sultan also felt great pain at sacrificing Jerusalem;¹ but he had a powerful foe, and besides argued he, we give the Franks but dismantled churches and ruined houses. And, indeed, Jerusalem, at that time, was without walls or fortifications, and the sultan gave only one road and its villages, that from Jerusalem to Acre, so that the Mahometans remained masters of the country. In the Holy City, too, they retained the mosque of Omar, and the free exercise of their religion. And, likewise, there was a clause that the Christians should not re-build its ramparts, but that it should remain an open town. So, on this basis, was sworn a peace that was to last ten years and five months and days, from the twenty-fourth of February, 1229.² Most Christians, says the chronicle, ap-

¹ Arab. Chron., 430.

² Id., 430.

proved of Frederick's peace; though Templars and Hospitallers could not, from their attachment to Rome.¹ Before embarking for home, Frederick chose to visit Jerusalem, and there is a narrative of it by a Moslem, who officially accompanied him.

“The emperor was bald and red haired, and with weak eyes. Had he been a slave, he might sell for ten drachms. His conversation showed little belief in the Christian religion; since, when speaking of it, he always turned it into jest. When noon struck, we of course said our prayers, and the Mahometans in the suite of the prince, without his ever attempting to prevent them. Amongst them was his ancient teacher, of Sicilian origin. The *cadi* had orders from the sultan to see that nothing ever happened that could displease Frederick, and, particularly, that there should be no sermon in Omar's mosque, nor prayers proclaimed from any of the minarets. On the first day this was forgotten, so the *muez-zins* did as usual; even more, for one of them affected to recite at a most elevated pitch of voice various passages from the Alcoran against Christianity. The emperor lodged at that *cadi's*, whose house was quite close to Omar's minaret, and con-

¹ Gozlar Chron.—Alberic Chron.—Bib. Crois., iii., 126.—Bib. Crois., iii. 76.

sequently heard the muezzin in question, whom the cadi, much afflicted, called, and reproached, and to take care and let no one cry the next night. But the day after, the emperor asked for the cadi, and said: 'But the man I heard from the minaret say so and so, what has become of him?' The cadi, craving his excuse, said it was from fear of offending his Imperial Majesty. 'You were wrong,' replied Frederick. 'Why, on my account, renounce your duty, your law, your religion?' And he desired to see, with his own eyes, the chair in which the Imams sit, when they preach. And, while he was in the mosque, he saw a Christian priest entering it with a Bible in his hand, though it had been precisely stipulated that in the mosques the Mussulmen should be secured from all insult, and no trouble given in any case to them, or their religious ceremonies. This boldness irritated the emperor, and he forbade the priest to advance a step; swearing to punish any Christian severely who entered a mosque without a special permission; 'for,' he added, 'we are all the sultan's servants and slaves; it is he restored to us our churches, we ought not to misuse his favour.'"¹

After this stay of two days in Jerusalem, Frederick went back to Acre, and sailed. He was

¹ Arab. Chron., 432.

remarkable above all the princes of his time for fine mental qualifications, and knew all the branches of sciences well, particularly logic, astronomy, and medicine. Such was the impression he left in the East.¹ But these are Mahometan accounts, which must be cooled down by those of our own chroniclers. It is not a wonder the Hospitallers and Templars should be against him, if the Popes were so; since even if the Pope erred, yet at that time they owed the Holy See too much gratitude for continued favours, not to obey it almost blindly. As for the Teutonics, they as Germans and the emperor's subjects, of course did him honour. But the Popes, even Gregory IX., was he not against him? It were in most direct contradiction to a bull by that same Gregory IX. (which shall be in the Appendix), in which he strictly commands the Hospitallers to assist the Emperor Frederick II. as much as ever they can in his Palestine expedition.² But on reading it over with more attention, it entirely alters my mind, and convinces me that no exaggerations, as I thought, but direct falsities, are what are told on the faith of the chroniclers. But these were in truth the newspapers of that day; and, when they are not in contradiction with solemn

¹ Arab. Chron., 433.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., Bolla v., vol. i. 271.—Appendix, lxiii.

documentary evidence, may be received as the opinions reigning; but where completely contradictory to it, they merit no kind of consideration whatever. Now here the Arab historians agree with this Papal record so far, that they are all perfectly silent as to that scene in the Holy Sepulchre, or that the Pope had ordered the Hospitallers and Templars not to fight under his command. Then no such things ever took place, but are only the inventions of malignancy or ignorance. And I observe on it the more, that historians of the highest estimation have copied those errors, even the most devout Roman Catholic Michaud. But they had never seen these decisive documents, or not examined them. The Mahometans and Papacy are two antipodes, and what they recount alike, cannot but be true; and what neither of them mentions cannot have subsisted at all. Is it not a fair conclusion? and even a necessary one for an honest writer, however eminent his predecessors, who have only fallen into a mistake? Truth is indeed what must prevail in the end, notwithstanding his weakness who wields it. This bull is so worthy of the head of a Church, and those fables so unworthy, and suppose such arrant dishonesty, that to drive them out of notice, is but mere justice, unless they be clearly proved. And the proofs are the other

way. Frederick II. was a very remarkable personage. That he spoke jestingly of his religion, rather in reference to their disbelief, than to himself, may be in bad taste, and exaggerated, but was no crime, nor argues scepticism.¹

My introduction of this piece a little before its date is knowingly, because written in 1236; it refers to all that had preceded, and shows that after his conduct in Palestine, the Hospitallers are commanded to obey him, which is a complete refutation. His Holiness would have then been in manifest contradiction with himself. If he had complained even, we should find it in these secret archives. Behold, they are turned inside out. We thought to discover great things, and what do we discover? Nothing. Without a command in clear writing, who would have dared to insult Frederick? It would be to suppose something extravagantly bold; as foolish, as enormous, quite incredible. Married to the daughter of John de Brienne, who had abdicated in his favour, it was *jure uxoris* that Frederick inherited the title of King of Jerusalem, and his appearing there, converted the titular into a kind of reality; and that, and the peace, form a not dishonourable close to the fifth crusade. Of which if I have spoken at some

¹ Appendix, xci.

length, it is that Sir Gawen Montacute had taken a great part in the whole Egyptian war, and if he only sent his Hospitallers with the emperor to Jerusalem, and did not go himself, he had a most valid excuse in his age and wounds. But he expired towards the close of 1231; for we have two deeds in each of which he is named reigning in October of that year.¹ And he was succeeded by Sir Bernard de Taxis of whom there is no document extant, which agrees with his reign being only of a few months; but not with ten years and various other borrowed plumes given him by Vertot; since Sir Bernard was succeeded by Sir Girino, early in 1232, at least; to whom are to be ascribed all the fine things that regard the order and its grand masters from 1231 to May, 1236.² For a deed of the Queen of Cyprus in October of 1232 shows Girino was then Grand Master.³ Nor were there hostile parties enough in that miserable land; but the Mogul Tartars were approaching, having left the bleak northern deserts to the spirits of their ancestors, and from some unlettered instinct or wild tradition, that

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros.—Num. cxiii, cxiv.—Appendix, lxiv.

² Seb. Paoli: i. 341.

³ Cod. Dipl. Geros. i.—Num., cexv.—Appendix, xcii.

remains a secret, began advancing south; and selecting five hundred thousand of their bravest, sent them in five divisions against Poland, Russia, Persia, and driving all before them, forced the fiercest of the preceding Tartaric hordes, the Karismians, to pass the Tigris and Euphrates, with the horrid ferocity of savages in despair. Not religious enthusiasm, but plunder and destruction were their furious passion. And Mussulman ambassadors went through Europe, imploring its nations to withstand the irruption of those who massacred alike circumcised and uncircumcised, and were just as inimical to Mahomet as to Christ. That the treaty made by Frederick had pleased neither party of fanatics, was natural, neither Moslems nor crusaders. The hot and thoughtless will be always against any wise measures. It certainly was not wrong in Frederick to decline breaking a truce; yet was it the age of paying little regard to treaties; and those who signed and swore, were at that very moment meditating a breach of them. It is a poor excuse, if any; but let it stand, that it was too general to be much of a deception. Not only in the East, but everywhere, it was, in the troubadour's words, "an age of felony, envy, and treason."¹

¹ Michaud: Hist., iv. 70.

Another branch of the Ayoubites had now seized on Damascus, and the boy David had been obliged to content himself with Petra, and those fortresses about the Dead Sea, whence as he grew up, he made continual sanguinary inroads on the Christians; for he was incited not only by creed and booty, but also that it was avenging his father. Peace or otherwise, what cared he? It was never peace for him; so a bloody war in that direction. The peace which bound the Hospitallers and all regulated people, did not a bit the reckless, who wishing for war created it. Yet a far more pleasing intercourse than war was that which made the Sultan of Cairo in this very 1232 send what a wondrous tent, as a present to Frederick II. The sun, stars, whole firmament, were represented in its ceiling, moving about regularly in their orbits by a most marvellous mechanism; and the moon, and the hours of night and day with infallible exactness. Beautiful clockwork; what a miracle of art at that time, if but as described! Yet since the description was made *then*, that it were in the head of the describer is an almost equal wonder! Arabia then, and Egypt, were they not in arts and sciences what France and England are to-day? But the price was royal, more than thirty thousand pounds, and

well worthy was that splendid gift of a place in the imperial treasury, where it was long preserved.¹

To Girino was directed a bull² in 1232, by which Gregory IX. exhorts him and his knights to assist his dearest son in Christ Jesus, Frederick the Roman Emperor, and King of Jerusalem and Cyprus; precisely of the same tenor as that four years later, and which has already been 1236 given as a talisman to meet whatever accusations, and reduce them to their just value.³ It would not have been long now to wait for the treaty made by Frederick to have ended, but a great deal too long for perturbed spirits.

Many of these documents are *dentati*. Readers of ancient parchments will know very well what is meant; but others will not object to learning that it consists in writing counterparts in two different columns, divided by an alphabet, or some adage, generally pious, as *Gratiâ Dei*. This is cut all along through the middle of its letters; so the two parties take each a column, which contains one of the duplicates and halves of the letters of the adage, and by joining the two halves, if they fit and produce the adage whole, then each of the duplicates

¹ Cologne Chron.—Bib. Crois., iii. 22.—Arab. Chron., 435.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., Bolla, iv., i. 271.—Appendix, lxxv.

³ Appendix, lxxiii.

is true and valid. The duplicates are in substance the same, but not always in the same language or dialect. Something of the sort is still used on the Barbary coast, as to passports of ships, not unlike our indentures.

Only come in the Papal name, and you may with a safe conscience break any truce with the Paynim; indeed many thought that not even the Pope could sanction such truces, and so some crusaders openly against his will, sailed off. The war had indeed quite changed from what it had been in the first crusade, and even the third, and scarcely had any more the least pretence to be called religious, but one of chivalrous delight, and by a most blasphemous union, "for the love of God and the ladies." In this state of things¹ emanated that bull of 1236. How Girino ended is unknown; but it was to him that those two bulls of Gregory IX. were directed; and it was he who, in manifest unison with those bulls, upheld with such vigour the right of Frederick's son to be King of Jerusalem against the pretensions of Adelaide, widow of Hugh of Lusignan, King of Cyprus. Nor could be what Vertot writes, that he fell in the battle against the Karismians;² for this took place in 1243,³ long after Girino was dead, who, though he reigned in May

¹ Seb. Paoli: i. 342.

² Vertot: iii. 480.

³ Cod. Dipl. Geros.—Num. clxxviii.—Appendix, xciii.

1236,¹ yet his successor was reigning on the 20th of September of the same year,² Sir Bertrand de Comps, a gentleman of Dauphiny, Prior of St. Gilles, of the same illustrious family that had produced a former grand master. The lot of this Comps fell on most difficult times. All was in confusion. To make up for having lost a mistress, the crusading troubadour invokes the Virgin Mary as coming next,³ and exhorts all ladies and misses to listen to no objection from husbands, parents, or any one, but set out East; for that all brave men flock thither, and none remain in Europe but cowards. No wonder therefore that such worthies scorned the advice of the Pope; and since he refused his consent, sailed without it, after insulting his nuncio. There was no longer even the name of religion, nor of soldiership either; but only of such extravagance as suits pipers, and drunkards, and lewd coxcombs, or who is, or fancies himself in love. It denotes an utter barbarism, 1237 that the same troubadour runs to see the burning of one hundred and eighty-four innocent men as heretics, just before he embarks.⁴ At that

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros. i.—Num. cxvii.—Appendix, xciv.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., i. 126.—Num. cxvi., dated Marseilles, 1234, among whose witnesses is another, Montacute, Knight Hospitaller, and Draperius, a very ancient charge in the order.

³ Michaud: Hist., iv. 41.

⁴ Id.: Id., 48.

time Cyprus ratifies a not inconsiderable cession to the Hospitallers.¹ Among the gallant enthusiasts were the Counts de Montfort and De Bar, flowers of chivalry, who, upon hearing from the people of Acre that it was peace, treated that as of no consequence, since they had pontifical authority to break it; and on the Templars and the Hospitallers refusing to join them, for that they would strictly maintain the truce to which they had sworn, determined to go alone, which Sir Comps did all in his power to dissuade them from; it being dangerous to march with so small a number, for that the Saracens might surround them; the advice was spurned. Still some Hospitallers followed them at a distance, but were soon recalled by their grand master. Valiantly the French advanced over the frontier, and were not far from robbing the Saracens, who however soon got them entangled in the sands near Gaza, where most of them were killed, and the rest led away into captivity. Which of these misfortunes the generous-minded De Bar underwent is untold, for never more was he seen; but long did he exist, if not in the hearts, in the songs of France.² It is said that about this time³ Richard Plantagenet,

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., i. 117.—Num. cx.

² Rothelin MS.—Bib. Crois., i. 382.

³ Wikes: Salisbury Chron.—Bib. Crois., ii. 651.

Earl of Cornwall, with a large sum of money, not with an army, but sufficient body-guard, came to Acre, and was dear as a nephew of his famous namesake; and went to Jerusalem, rebuilt its walls in some degree, got Frederick's recent truce prolonged for a couple of years, procured the sultan's permission to bury the corpses of the recently slain at Gaza, and by his strictly pacific conduct did all in his power that was really useful to Palestine, more than can be averred of many who made more noise; and he bought the freedom of a vast number of Christian captives.¹ And this reasonable conduct perhaps ought to have spared him the gibe of representing his election to the empire (some years later), as barely a stratagem to degrade the imperial dignity; though he was very proud to display that vain title for the last fourteen years of his life.²

The citation to the knights of his order, which Mathew Paris speaks of in 1237, calling on them to come and replace those killed in the battles of Aleppo, was from Comps, and not Taxis.³ It was 1240 in the time of Comps that *the Pope asked the*

¹ Sir Harris Nicolas: Synopsis, i. 153.—Vertot: iii. 474.—Michaud: Hist., iv. 61.—Wike: Chron.—Rothelin MS.—Mathew Paris, anno 1240.—Chron. Waverley.—Bib. Crois., i. 383; ii. 654, 651, 814.

² Sismondi: Rep. Ital., iii. 346.

³ Seb. Paoli: Serie, i. 342.

*Teutonics why they did not continue to obey the Hospitallers?*¹ Where Comps died, seems unknown, but probably at Acre, from the consequences of former martial duties; yet not in 1243, as said, but in 1241 truth in 1241,² for we have a deed, proving that his successor was reigning in November of that year. It was Sir Peter de Villebride then, that was fated to meet the full shock of the Karismians; against whom Moslems and Christians joined in Acre. The former came first under the Prince of Emessa, who was received there as a liberator, and called by the people, "*One of the best Barons of Paganism.*"³ The Grand Masters of the Temple, and of the Hospitallers, and the other Latin grandees, and if not the Grand Master of the Teutonics, it was because he was in Germany with most of his knights—so that only a few of those called in the various records, German Hospitallers, could have been in Palestine, but all who were there, went; nor is it easy to conceive with what ardour the combined forces of the two religions marched, and encountering the terrible horde near Gaza, a most destructive conflict ensued, indeed of the longest and most sanguinary of that age.⁴ Both Christians and the Syrian Mussul-

¹ Cod. Dipl. Geros., Bulla vi., i. 272.

² Id., i., 129. Num. cxviii.,—Appendix, lxvi.

³ Michaud: Hist., iv. 97. ⁴ Michaud: Hist., iv. 100.

men were under one banner, so were the Karismians and Egyptians. It was on the same spot where De Bar and Montfort had been worsted a few years before; but that did not terrify the Christians. The Prince of Emessa counselled a retreat; but here, as elsewhere, the fault is imputed to a priest, that the Franks refused Emessa's soldierly advice, and following one who knew nothing about what he dabbled in, decided for battle. It lasted from the rising to the setting sun, and the most part of the second day, but, at last the Syrian Moslems were broken, and though the left wing, where the Hospitallers fought, resisted most perseveringly for several hours, yet the end was most disastrous; a total overthrow on our side, with the loss of thirty thousand, and of the military orders, only thirty-three Templars, twenty-six Hospitallers, and three Teutonics, ever got back to any Christian town. Among the slain was Villebride.¹ None of the Hospitallers—nor, perhaps, of the Templars and Teutonics, only they are not named—seem to have been taken prisoners, but got into the citadel of Ascalon, and were rigorously besieged there by the

¹ Seb. Paoli: Serie, i. 342. It seems to have been hoped at first that he had been only senseless, and so made prisoner. But true to his rule, he had ceased to be.

Egyptians, as the bishop declared, before the Council of Lyons, and in that sense, prisoners.¹

Of what country Villebride was, is not specified, but, probably, a Spaniard. He was instantly succeeded by the marshal of the order,² a French gentleman, named Sir William of Chateaufort, in 1243, and not 1251.³

The letter of the Patriarch, giving a full account of the disastrous battle of Gaza, is one of these documents, dated November 25th, 1244,⁴ and, in that same year, the Bishop of Beyrout was sent with the doleful news to Europe, and led by the Pope, afterwards, to the council.⁵ Great were the rejoicings at Cairo; and the Karismians, who had visited Jerusalem the year before,⁶ and slaughtered seven thousand of its Christian population, kept closer to the sea-coast on their return. But other Christians must have replaced the sufferers, for David, from Karac, made an inroad into the Holy City, with an enormous havock of its Christian inhabitants, immediately after the great Gaza defeat; and the tower of David was quite demolished, which, until then, existed in at least

¹ Bosio.—Vertot: iii. 490.

² Cod. Dipl. Geros., i. 133 Num. cxviii.

³ Seb. Paoli: i. 342.

⁴ Cod. Dipl. Geros., i. 321. Num. xliii. 1.

⁵ Michaud: Hist., iv. 105, 107. ⁶ Michaud: Hist., iv. 94.

some remnants.¹ In consequence of a sickness, Louis IX. took, and tricked some of his nobles into taking the Cross;² but, for some years, the French flattered themselves they should persuade him not to effectuate his threat, for though they were ready to attend their monarch on a crusade, or anywhere else, the spirit of religion, or fanaticism, was extinct, and few ever thought of Jerusalem.

There is a letter of the emperor and of the Grand Master of the Hospitallers relative to the Karismians and the invasion of those destructive savages, who in 1246 (and even further back) appear to have penetrated into Palestine.³ The Pope himself (Innocent IV.) seems to have been far too much occupied with politics and Guelphs and Ghibellines to think seriously of the holy war, except as it might be converted into an instrument against the emperor;⁴ and it was more with this intent than any beyond-sea projects (though he pretended to them certainly, and wrote to excite who needed no excitation),⁵ that he convened the Council of Lyons that was sitting in 1248.⁶ A letter

1247

¹ Arab. Chron., 442, 446.

² Michaud: Hist., iv. 126.

³ Mathew Paris: 2.—Bib. Crois., ii. 817.

⁴ Michaud: Hist., iv. 135.

⁵ Cod. Dipl. Geros. i. Num. xliv.—Appendix, xev.

⁶ Michaud: Hist., iv. 141.

from the sultan to the Pope in 1246 is given; the letter was very respectful, did words suffice. "To the highly great, highly venerable, thirteenth of the Apostles, mouth and guide of the adorers of Christ. God loves who desire peace and seek it. We venerate the Holy Scriptures, and love them. We have heard your messenger, who has spoken to us of the Christ whom we praise, and of whom we know more than you do, and honour him more. You say that you wish for tranquillity and repose, and that you have motives for calling the nations to peace. We are as desirous of it as you; we have always desired and wished it; but being bound by a treaty of amity to the emperor, we send to have his opinion. The same ambassador will afterwards visit you; and when we know what both think, we mean to answer and decide. We will do nothing which is not beneficial to all parties, and agreeable to Almighty Allah!"¹

The reason the sultan wrote in that tenor, and that no Mussulmen dared to defile the Holy Sepulchre, when they mercilessly sacked the rest of Jerusalem is (according to some chroniclers), that "the Mahometans believe firmly that Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary; that he lived without ever

¹ Zanzleit Chron.—Bib. Crois., i. 337.

committing sin; that he was a prophet, and more than a prophet; that he cured lepers, gave sight to the blind, restored life to the dead, and ascended into Heaven. Also the wisest of the Turks asked us to lend them our books of the Gospel, and then kissed them, and showed signs of the deepest veneration for the law that Jesus Christ had preached; particularly at the words of the Evangelist St. Luke, 'Missus est Gabriel Angelus.'"¹ But the rumours of Louis' preparations were noised abroad; nor is it necessary to suppose any imperial espial, for communications with Egypt and Syria were then continual—even Venetians alone sufficed, who cared little for anything but commerce and earthly interests and the grandeur of their republic. From which resulted the vain menaces of the Old Man of the Mountain: and that all the pepper and other drugs from the Levant were poisoned, in hopes of murdering the King of France, respecting whom, if the diabolical conspiracy failed, yet a great many innocent individuals died of it. Perhaps, however, they were inventions to increase hatred for the people they were going to war with. Such fables suited the ignorant vulgar.² As to the Old Man, he was soon settled and disposed of; for a single word from

¹ Tours Chron.—Bib. Crois., i. 392.

² Michaud: Hist., iv. 140.

the Templars and Hospitallers sufficed, not only to make him forthwith renounce all menaces or pretension to tribute from the king, but to impel him to solicit to become his tributary, sending him presents and his own privy seal, cut in a golden ring, and shirt, which last might denote their close alliance, the shirt being next the skin and heart.¹ Truth is, that some chroniclers aver it could not be, for that those infernal sectaries (neither Mahometans nor Christians, but rather a sort of fire-worshippers, or other Pagans) had been extinguished, as far back as Saladin's time.² Yet descendants of that abominable race are said to exist still, near the same spot in Mount Libanus. Why on earth do they pretend to be English?³

In the Council of Lyons the Bishop of Beyrout repeated what has been related of the Karismians, and that they were of so fearful a cruelty, that even the Paynim refused harbouring them, and none but the Egyptians could have invited them. "Those direst of savages have ravaged the whole of Syria, from Thoron of the Knights, to Gaza, breaking into Jerusalem, and disembowelling the priests in their vestments at the altars of the Holy Se-

¹ Michaud: Hist., iv. 140.—Bosio.—Vertot: iii. 514.

² Pipini: Henri de Champagne, &c. &c. &c.,

³ Michaud: Orient.

pulchre, with the most horrid scoffs, and committing enormities in the Cathedral of Bethlehem that I durst not mention; but impieties far more atrocious than any ever perpetrated by the Saracens. All our military orders, and nobility, and proprietors, as well as our Moslem allies, met the savages and those of Egypt, on the vigil of St. Luke, in a great battle, which was lost, by fault of the Moslems, who ran away, and most of our chiefs and soldiers were slain or taken. The remainder of the Hospitallers, having got into the citadel of Ascalon, are besieged there by the Saracens, so we do not know what to do, unless you succour us. We have implored the King of Cyprus and the Prince of Antioch, but what avail they to protect us? Yours, or Palestine has no human aid. Come to us in March next, or the Holy Land is desolate, and the Hospitallers to a man, and Templars, and all of us, are cut to pieces; or what is much worse, led off into slavery.”¹

¹ Bosio.—Vertot, iii. 486.