

## CHAPTER II.

*CRUSADES AND THE CRUSADERS.*

1. AFTER the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, in the year 70 of the Christian era, Palestine continued for upward of two centuries in the condition of a Roman province, inhabited by a mixed population of pagans, Jews, and Christians. In Jerusalem, temples of Venus and Jupiter were erected on the most sacred spots of Christian history; and heathenism triumphed in the possession of the Holy City of two religions. On the establishment of Christianity in the Roman Empire by Constantine, in the year 321, this state of things was changed; Palestine and Jerusalem became objects of interest to all Christians, and crowds of pilgrims visited the localities celebrated by the evangelists. Splendid churches were erected on the ruins of pagan temples, and every spot pointed out as the scene of the memorable events in the life of Christ and his apostles was marked by a chapel or house of prayer. Jerusalem and the Holy Land became the resort of numerous bodies of clergy, who resided in the churches and monasteries which the piety of the wealthy had founded for them.

2. At the end of the fourth century, the gigantic Roman Empire was broken up into two, the Eastern, the capital of which was Constantinople, and the Western, the capital of which was Rome. It was to the former of

these that Syria and Palestine were attached. Before the end of the fifth century the Western Empire had been destroyed by the eruption of the German races, and the beginnings of a new European civilization were rising from its ruins. Meanwhile, the Eastern remained entire, till about the year 630, when the Arabs, burning with the spirit of conquest infused into them by the religion of Mohammed, poured into its provinces. Egypt, Syria, and Palestine were annexed as dependencies to the great Arabic Empire of the caliphs. The religion of Mohammed became dominant in the Holy Land, the temples and chapels were converted into mosques.

3. Numbers of pilgrims still continued each year to visit Palestine. In return for a certain tribute, the earlier caliphs permitted the Christians of Jerusalem to have a patriarch, and to carry on their own form of worship. Of all the caliphs, the celebrated Haroun al-Rashid, best known to us in the stories of the "Arabian Nights," was the most tolerant, and under him the Christians enjoyed perfect peace.

4. Great cruelties were practised by the Fatimite caliphs, who conquered Syria about the year 980. The pilgrims were robbed, beaten, and sometimes slain on their journey, the Christian residents oppressed by heavy impositions, and their feelings outraged by insults against their religion. These sufferings were slight, however, compared with those which they endured after the invasion and conquest of Palestine by the Turkish hordes in 1065. But recently converted to Moslemism, and therefore more rude and fanatical than the other Mohammedans, these Turks wreaked their vengeance on all alike—Christians, Jews, and even the native Mohammedans.

5. The news of the atrocities perpetrated by the Turks produced a deep sensation over the whole of Christen-



dom, as well among the Latin Christians as among the Greek Christians, the name given to the population of what remained of the old Byzantine Empire. The latter had reason to dread that, if the Turks were not checked, Constantinople, their capital, would soon share the same fate as Jerusalem. Accordingly, about the year 1073, the Greek Emperor, Manuel VII, sent to supplicate the assistance of the great Pope Gregory VII against the Turks. Till now there had prevailed a spirit of antagonism between the Greek and Latin churches, the former refusing to yield obedience to the pope of the West as the universal head of the Church. Gregory, therefore, eagerly received the application of the Greek Emperor, seeing the promise of the final subjection of the Greek to the Latin Church. He resolved to give the enterprise his countenance, and to march himself at the head of an army to rescue the Holy Sepulchre.

6. Gregory was prevented from ever carrying out his design, and the idea of a crusade gradually died away. Meanwhile, the Turks extended their victories at the expense of the Greek Empire. Before the accession of the celebrated Alexius Comnenus to the throne in 1081, the whole of Asia Minor was in the possession of the Turks, and broken up into a number of kingdoms, the sultans of which soon began to quarrel among themselves. The disturbed state of Asia Minor greatly increased the sufferings of the pilgrims; not one out of three returned to recount the story of his hardships.

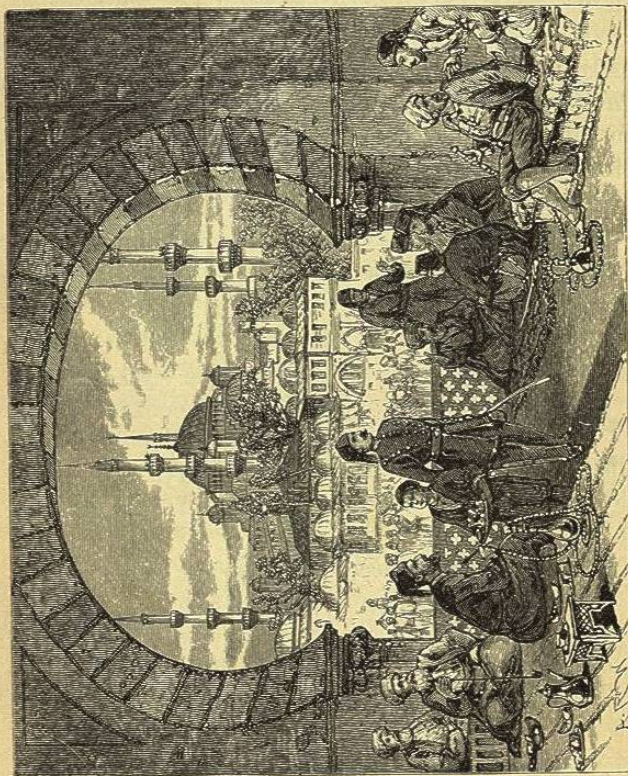
7. Among those who undertook the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, when the dangers attending it were the greatest, was a native of Amiens in France, named Peter, who had become a monk and an ascetic, being called from his solitary manner of life, Peter the Hermit. He arrived safely at Jerusalem, and visited all the scenes sacred to a Chris-

tian's eyes. As he walked along the streets, looking at this and that holy spot, insolent and contemptuous Turks looked on and mocked him, and his spirit grew bitter within him, and his hand clutched itself convulsively as if longing for a sword.

8. Burning with a sense of injuries sustained by the Christians, and the desecration of the sacred places, he sought the counsel of Simeon, the Greek patriarch of Jerusalem. In reply to Peter's questions, he explained that nothing was to be expected from the Greek Empire in behalf of the Holy Land, the court of Constantinople was so dissolute and corrupt, and that the only hope was that the Latin princes might be persuaded to form a league for the grand purpose entertained by Gregory VII. "Write," Peter said to the patriarch, "to the pope and to all Latin Christians, and seal your letters with the signet of your office as patriarch of Jerusalem. As a penance for my sins, I will travel over Europe, I will describe everywhere the desolate condition of the Holy City, and exhort princes and people to wrest it from the profane hands of the infidels."

9. The letters were accordingly written, and the hermit set sail with them from Joppa. Arriving in Italy he presented the documents to the pope, Urban II, a pupil and *protégé* of Gregory VII, urging his holiness to use his authority, as the head of Christendom, to set in motion a scheme for regaining the birthplace of Christ. Enthusiasm is contagious, and the pope appears to have caught it instantly from one whose zeal was so unbounded. Giving the Hermit full powers, he sent him abroad to preach the holy war. Peter departed, going from town to town, and from village to village, and, in the language of the chroniclers, "traversing the whole of Europe in less than a year's time." His strange and wild aspect, his





Mosque of Achmet, Constantinople.

glittering eye, his shrill and unearthly eloquence, the grandeur of his theme, his pathetic descriptions of Jerusalem and the Christians there, produced everywhere the most extraordinary sensations. "He set out," says a contemporary historian, "from whence I know not, nor with what purpose; but we saw him passing through the towns and villages, everywhere preaching, and the people flocking round him, loading him with gifts, and praising his sanctity with such eulogiums, that I never remember having seen so great honors paid to any other man. The people revered him so that they plucked the hairs from the mane of his mule, and kept them afterward as relics. Out of doors he generally wore a woolen tunic, with a brown mantle, which descended to his heels. His arms and feet were bare, he ate little or no bread, but lived on fish and wine."

10. Such being the success of the Hermit's mission, the pope showed his approbation of the project by summoning in the year 1095 two councils. The first of these was held at Placentia in March; ambassadors from the Greek Emperor appeared to petition for aid against the Turks, and the members of the council were unanimous in their support of the crusade. The second, the famous Council of Clermont, was held at the town of that name in Auvergne in the month of November. It was in the midst of an extremely cold winter, and the ground was covered with snow. During seven days the council sat with closed doors, while immense crowds from all parts of France flocked into the town, in the expectation that the pope himself would address the people.

11. All the neighborhood presented the appearance of a vast camp. Issuing from the church in his full canonicals, surrounded by his cardinals and bishops in all the splendor of ecclesiastical costume, the pope stood before



the populace on a high scaffolding, erected for the occasion, and covered with scarlet cloth. A brilliant array of bishops and cardinals surrounded him, and among them, humbler in rank but more important in the world's eye, the Hermit Peter, dressed in his simple woolen gown. The pope's eloquent words touched every heart. He was interrupted by the united voice of the people shouting "God wills it! God wills it!" Hushing the joyous tumult with a wave of his hand, the pontiff continued: "Be they then your war-cry in the combat, for those words came from God. Let the army of the Lord, when it rushes upon its enemies, shout but that one cry, 'God wills it! God wills it!' Let whoever is inclined to devote himself to this holy cause wear on his breast or back the sign of the holy cross." From this time the red cross was the sacred emblem of the crusaders.

#### THE FIRST CRUSADE.

12. Following the Council of Clermont, preparations for invading the Holy Land began in almost every country of Europe. The clanging of the smith's hammer, making or repairing armor, was heard in every village. All who had property of any description rushed to the mart to change it for hard cash. The nobles mortgaged their estates, the farmer endeavored to sell his plow, and the artisan his tools to purchase a sword for the deliverance of Jerusalem. Women disposed of their trinkets for the same purpose. During the spring and summer of 1096 the roads teemed with crusaders, all hastening to the towns and villages appointed as the rendezvous of the district. Very few knew where Jerusalem was. Some thought it fifty thousand miles away, and others imagined it but a month's journey; while at the sight of every tower

or castle the children exclaimed "Is that Jerusalem?" Little attempt at any organization was made, though the multitude had three leaders. It is said that the first band, consisting of twenty thousand foot, with only eight horsemen, were led by a Burgundian gentleman, called Walter the Penniless. They were followed by a rabble of forty thousand men, women, and children, led by Peter the Hermit, a medley of all nations and languages. Next followed a band of fifteen thousand men, mostly Germans, under a priest named Gottschalk. These three multitudes led the way in the crusades, pursuing the same route, that, namely, which leads through Hungary and Bulgaria toward Asia Minor.

13. Like their nominal leader, each of the followers of Walter the Penniless was poor to penury, and trusted for subsistence to the chances of the road. In Hungary they met with loud resistance from the people, whose houses they attacked and plundered, but in Bulgaria the natives declared war against the hungry horde; they were dispersed and almost exterminated. Some of the survivors retraced their steps; the rest, among whom was Walter, reached Constantinople, where they awaited the arrival of Peter and his companions. The Hermit, who had the same difficulties to contend with in marching through Hungary and Bulgaria, reached Constantinople with his army greatly reduced, and in a most deplorable condition. Here he and Walter joined forces, the Hermit assuming the superior command. They were hospitably received by the emperor, but their riotous conduct soon wearied out his patience, and he was glad to listen to a proposal of the Hermit to furnish them with the means of passing at once into Asia. The rabble accordingly crossed the Bosphorus, and took up their quarters in Bethynia. Here they became perfectly ungovern-



able, ravaging the country around, and committing incredible excesses; at length Peter, utterly disgusted and despairing, left them to their own guidance and returned to Constantinople. The bravest of them were annihilated in a battle fought near Nice, Walter the Penniless falling with seven mortal wounds. Between two and three thousand alone escaped, brought back to Constantinople by the troops of Alexius, who rescued them from the Turks. The emperor dismissed them, with orders to return home, and thus ended the disastrous expedition of Walter the Penniless and Peter the Hermit.

14. The fifteen thousand Germans led by Gottschalk never reached Constantinople, being slaughtered or dispersed during their passage through Hungary. Hungary was also fatal to another army of crusaders, the fourth in order, but greatly exceeding in numbers the other three put together. This terrible horde, consisting of about two hundred thousand, swept through Germany committing horrible outrages, especially against the Jews, whom they murdered without mercy. They were preceded by a goose and a goat, to which they attributed divine powers. As the rabble advanced, the Hungarians gave themselves up for lost, the king and nobles were preparing to flee, when the mass fell asunder of its own accord. Many were slain by the enraged Hungarians. Some escaped to the north, a few ultimately joined the succeeding bands of crusaders, but the majority perished. Thus, within a few months, upward of a quarter of a million of human beings were swept out of existence. And they had spent their lives, without one important result having been accomplished, without one glorious feat having been achieved.

15. This was the worst paroxysm of the madness of Europe, and this passed, her chivalry stepped upon the

scene. Men of cool heads, mature plans, and invincible courage stood forward to lead and direct, not mere fanatical masses, but the gentry, yeomanry, and serfs of feudal Europe. These were the true crusaders. Altogether they formed six armies, marching separately, and at considerable intervals of time. First came the army of Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine, the pride of his age for all noble and knightly virtues, immortalized by the poet Tasso. He had risen from a sick-bed to join the crusade, and sold his lordship to raise the necessary money; around his standard assembled many of the best knights of the age. In the month of August, 1096, they commenced their march, through Hungary and Bulgaria.

16. Four other chiefs of the royal blood of Europe also assumed the cross, and led each his army to the Holy Land; Hugh, Count of Vermandois, brother of the king of France; Robert, Duke of Normandy, the elder brother of William Rufus; Robert, Count of Flanders, and Bohemond, Prince of Tarentum, eldest son of the celebrated Robert Guiscard. With Bohemond, and second in command in the army, came Tancred, the favorite hero of all the historians of the crusade, so young, so valiant, so enthusiastic. There was not among them all, says Tasso, a greater warrior, nor any one of more courteous behavior, of fairer countenance, or of loftier and more intrepid heart. The last army was led by the haughty and resolute Count Raimond of Toulouse.

17. To detail the progress of the various armies is unnecessary. Upward of six hundred thousand warriors of the West, beside a multitude of priests, women, and children, were at last actually encamped on Asiatic soil. It was literally a moving nation, in which all languages were spoken, all costumes worn. There was the fair-haired son of the north, with broad, open forehead, mild blue



eyes, sanguine complexion, and large frame; there the dark visaged southron, with his flashing glance and fiery soul; there was the knight in his armor, the priest in his robes, the foot-soldier in his tough jerkin, the unkempt serf with his belt of rope. There were pawing horses, swearing grooms, carts full of provisions, sacks, groups of gossiping women, crowds of merry children. Under the bright sun of Asia, all was gaudy and brilliant. Spear-points glittered, breast-plates and helmets gleamed, thousands of targets displayed their painted glories, pennons of blue, purple, and white streamed from every tent, while heavier flags flapped their sullen folds; and everywhere, on shield, flag, helmet, tunic, and coat of mail, was seen blazoned the holy sign of the red cross. Walking through all these, heedless of the looks cast upon him, and hearing not the oft-repeated bugle-blasts from all parts of the camp, might be seen a man of small stature, thin and poorly clad, with down-cast face, wild, unsettled eye, and timid, nervous gait. It was the man who had created it all—Peter the Hermit. He had crossed from Constantinople with Godfrey of Bouillon. His revenge was near! On, on, then, to the Holy City!

18. Alas, the Holy City was yet far distant! Not much more than half their journey in point of space had been accomplished, and in point of difficulty and peril their march had little more than begun, for they had just entered the countries of the infidels. Months had to roll on, and many battles to be fought, ere the pinnacles of the Holy City should greet their longing eyes.

19. The route of the crusading armies lay in a southeasterly direction, through Asia Minor, and then southward to Jerusalem, along the shores of the Levant. Their march along this route, counting from the time of their crossing into Asia Minor, May, 1097, to the time when

they came in sight of Jerusalem and laid siege to it, June, 1099, occupied upward of two years. Countless were the dangers to which the crusaders were subject in this trial. Of the many sieges two are especially memorable, that of Nice and that of Antioch.

20. The siege of Nice was the first exploit in which the crusading armies were engaged. During these six weeks the slaughter of the Christians, by the arrows of the Turkish garrison, and by the bolts and large stones which they discharged from mangonels and catapults, was immense. The city surrendered at last, not, however, to the Latin chiefs, but to an envoy of the Greek Emperor Alexius, who contrived to enter into communication with the besieged and induced them to capitulate. Angry and dissatisfied, the crusaders left their encampment and resumed their march, not in one mass, but in several bodies. At length the scattered armies reunited for the siege of Antioch toward the end of October, 1097. All the known means of attack were put in operation; movable towers were constructed from which to discharge missiles into the city. The walls were battered, and the sallies of the besieged bravely met, still without any effective result. At the end of ten days famine stared them in the face, so extravagant were they in the use of their stores. Pestilence joined its ravages, and instead of the brave army of chivalry which had sat down before Antioch, was to be seen a crowd of gaunt and famishing creatures, with scarcely a thought but that of procuring food. Multitudes died, desertions became numerous.

21. The chiefs began to weary of the expedition, and, most disgraceful of all, Peter the Hermit turned his back on the enterprise, and had actually fled several miles on his way home, when he was brought back by the soldiers of Tancred and forced to undergo a public retri-



mand. At length, after infinite sufferings on the part of the Christians, Antioch was taken on the 3d of June, 1098, by means of the treachery of an Armenian captain, whom the Turks had intrusted with the command of one of the towers, and who admitted a number of the crusaders during a dark and stormy night.

22. Imagination can not conceive a scene more dreadful than that presented by the devoted city of Antioch on that night of horror. The crusaders fought with a blind fury which fanaticism and suffering alike incited. No quarter was shown. At daylight the massacre ceased, and the crusaders gave themselves up to plunder. They found gold, jewels, and rich fabrics in abundance, but of provisions little of any kind. Suddenly they were roused from their sloth and pleasure by the appearance before Antioch of an immense army, which the Persian caliph had dispatched to sweep the Christian locusts from the face of the earth. Great was the alarm of the Christians when they saw this splendid host of more than two hundred thousand men encamped around the hills of Antioch. The corn and wine found in the city were soon exhausted; all the horrors of a second famine began.

23. Many deserted and escaped over the walls, carrying the news of the sad condition of the Christians back toward Europe. The worst consequence of these desertions was, that the Greek Emperor Alexius, who, hearing of the successes of the Latins, was on his march to assist the crusaders, was deterred from advancing, and returned to Constantinople. With increasing famine came a pestilence, so that in a short time but sixty thousand remained of the three hundred thousand that had invested Antioch. But this bitter extremity knit the leaders more firmly together, and Bohemond, Godfrey, and Tancred swore never to desert the cause while life lasted.

24. It is said that belief in the remarkable fulfillment of a dream brought hope once more to the disheartened crusaders. Peter Barthelmy, a priest of Provence, dreamed, he said, that Saint Andrew appeared to him in the night, and informed him that underneath a certain spot in the floor of the church of Saint Peter was buried the identical lance with which the Roman soldiers pierced the side of Christ as he hung on the cross. This relic, said the apparition, was to be the guarantee of God's presence and their guide to victory. Twelve persons were chosen to conduct the search. A whole day was spent in vain, the workmen were tired out, and still no lance was found. At last Peter descended into the pit and began to dig the loose earth. Suddenly a cry of joy was heard, and stretching himself to his full height, Peter handed up into the eager fingers of those above an actual rusty lance-head. In an instant it was noised abroad that the holy relic had been found. What remained now but to issue forth and discomfit the infidel host.

25. The infidel host was discomfited. On the 28th of June, 1098, two hundred thousand Turks, in the full flush of health and strength, were routed, outside the walls of Antioch, by a half-famished Christian army. Antioch was bestowed upon Bohemond, and it was resolved that the army should remain there to recruit before advancing toward Jerusalem. The tragical fate of Peter Barthelmy must be mentioned. Many of the crusaders had begun to question the genuineness of the relic he had found. He was prevailed upon to submit to the ordeal of fire, and perished in the flames. From that moment the story of the relic lost credit.

26. It was on a lovely morning in the summer of 1099 that the forty thousand crusaders, who were all that remained of the vast army which had two years ago



laid siege to Nice, were recompensed for all their toils by a sight of the Holy City, bathed in the splendor of eastern sunshine. The name "Jerusalem" escaped from every lip; some leaped and shouted, some kneeled and prayed, some wept, some threw themselves prostrate and kissed the earth, some gazed and trembled. "All had much ado," says the quaint Fuller, "to manage so much gladness."

27. Preparations for a siege were soon under way. The besiegers, who had gained skill by their former attempts, employed all the methods of attack that experience could suggest or courage execute, while the garrison of forty thousand Turks, who maintained the city for their master, the caliph of Egypt, resisted with determined obstinacy. At length, after a confession of sins by the whole army, and a penitential procession around the walls, a simultaneous attack was made with battering-rams, mangonels, and all manner of besieging engines. At one quarter a huge wooden tower was wheeled close to the wall, a movable bridge was let down, and, bounding across it, a soldier named Lutold was the first man to stand upon the battlements. Godfrey of Bouillon and a number of knights sprang after him, and the Christians were within Jerusalem. Meanwhile, at another part of the wall, Tancred and Robert of Normandy had shattered open a gate, and rushed in with their men; while at a third part of the city, Raimond of Toulouse effected an entrance for himself and his followers by the help of scaling-ladders. In an instant after, the banner of the cross floated upon the walls of Jerusalem. The crusaders, raising once more their redoubtable war-cry, rushed on from every side, and the city was taken. The battle raged for several hours, and the Christians gave no quarter. Peter the Hermit, who had remained so long under the veil of neglect, was

repaid that day for all his zeal and all his suffering. He was once more the idol of the army, but history is silent concerning the remainder of his life.

28. Eight days after the capture of the city, the Latin chiefs unanimously elected Godfrey of Bouillon king of Jerusalem. A new Christian state was thus founded in Syria, consisting at first of little more than the mere city of Jerusalem, but extending by subsequent battles and conquests until it included the whole of Palestine. A language resembling Norman-French was established in this kingdom, and a code of feudal laws drawn up for its government. The clergy also obtained their share of the conquest, Jerusalem was created into a patriarchate, and Bethlehem into a bishopric. The foundation of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in July, 1099, was the consummation of the first crusade.

29. A period of fifty years succeeded, during which time many battles were fought with the Saracens of Syria and Egypt, the result of which was to strengthen the Latin state. No fewer than five hundred thousand persons set out from Europe for Syria, incited by the news of the success of the first crusade. The three centers from which the Christian power sought to spread itself through the Mussulman possessions were Jerusalem, Antioch, and Edessa.

30. The very spirit of the crusade seemed to have died out. The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem had become, like any other kingdom of the period, a country in which men built houses, plowed land, made bargains, gave feasts, etc., drank, laughed, talked, quarreled, and went to law. The fall of Edessa, the first conspicuous success of the Turks, came like a surprise upon the Latin population of Syria. An attempt was made by the Christians to recover the city, but it failed, and the frontier of Syria was open to invasion from the East.



## THE SECOND CRUSADE.

31. The fall of Edessa, and the petitions of the people of Palestine for aid, produced a sensation throughout Europe, and especially in France. Nor was an apostle wanting worthy to fill the place of Peter, and to summon the chivalry of Europe to a second crusade. Commissioned by Pope Eugenius for that purpose, the famous Saint Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux in Champagne, traveled through France and Germany, exerting the power of his marvelous eloquence in recruiting the armies of the cross. The chiefs of the second crusade were two of the most powerful princes of Europe, Louis VII, King of France, and Conrad III, Emperor of Germany. Under their command upward of one million two hundred thousand men, collected from all parts of Europe, marched toward Palestine in two great armies, early in 1147.

32. Notwithstanding the vastness of the preparations, the expedition was a total failure. The events of the last fifty years had rendered the policy of the Greek princes hostile to the crusades. Manuel Comnenus, the grandson of Alexius, who now occupied the throne, suffered both armies to pass into Asia Minor, where, misled by Greek scouts, the army of Conrad was all but destroyed by the Turks, near Iconium, while the army of Louis, after undergoing infinite hardships, was wrecked in the defiles of the Pisidian mountains. The fragments of the two armies uniting made their way to Syria, where they cooperated with forces of the princes of Jerusalem and Antioch, in laying seige to Damascus, but without effect. In 1149 Conrad and Louis returned to Europe, and the second crusade was at an end, having attained nothing but the expenditure of more than a million of lives.

## THE THIRD CRUSADE.

33. A period of forty years elapsed before Europe fitted out another crusade. Meanwhile the struggle between the Christian and the Turks in Syria was carried on without intermission. Nouredin, the son of the conqueror of Edessa, displayed a genius which astonished both Christians and Turks. Keeping possession of Edessa, he aimed at extending his conquest at the expense of the Christians still further. For some time he was kept in check by the abilities of Baldwin III, King of Jerusalem. On his death, in 1162, his brother Amalric, far inferior to Baldwin in ability, succeeded to the throne.

34. At this crisis, while Nouredin, the Sultan of Aleppo, and Amalric, the Christian King of Jerusalem, were the rival powers in Syria, occurred a circumstance which exercised considerable influence on the subsequent course of events, and which makes necessary a retrospective glance.

35. At the time of the first crusade Palestine was the scene of a violent contest between the Turks, who had poured down from the North, conquering as they went, and the Fatimites of Egypt, who had possessed Syria for nearly a century. The Turks had at first been irresistible. The Fatimites, however, had been able to recover Jerusalem from the hands of their enemies, and held it when besieged by the Christians. Interrupted in their conflict with each other for the sovereignty of Palestine, the Fatimites and Turks turned their arms with one accord against the invader. In the person of Nouredin the Turkish power was now increasing. The Fatimite dynasty of Egypt, meanwhile, had long been showing signs of decay, the caliphs having become mere tools in the hands of their viziers. In 1163 one of these viziers, Shawer, finding