

part of the kingdom was still little more than nominal. He died after a reign of twenty-nine years and a-half, having deservedly attained the appellation of Alfred the GREAT, and the title of founder of the English monarchy. (A. D. 901.)

60. To Alfred the English ascribe the origin of many of those institutions which lie at the foundation of their nation's prosperity and renown. As the founder of the English navy, he planted the seeds of the maritime power of England: with him arose the grandeur and prosperity of London, the place of the assembling of the national parliament or body of prelates, earls, barons, and burghers, or deputies from the English burghs, or associations of freemen: he made a collection of the Saxon laws, to which he added others framed or sanctioned by himself; he reformed the Saxon division of the country into counties and shires; divided the citizens into corporations of tens and hundreds, with a regular system of inspection and police, in which equals exercised a supervision over equals; and in the mode which he adopted of settling controversies, we trace the first indications of the glory of the English judiciary—the trial by jury. The cultivation of letters, which had been interrupted at the first invasion of the then barbarous Saxons, was revived by Alfred, who was, himself, the most learned man in the kingdom: he founded schools at Oxford—the germ of the celebrated university of that name; and he set aside a considerable portion of his revenues for the payment of the salaries of teachers. The character of Alfred is almost unrivalled in the annals of any age or nation; and in the details of his private life we cannot discover a vice, or even a fault, to stain or sully the spotlessness of his reputation.

## SECTION II.

GENERAL HISTORY DURING THE TENTH, ELEVENTH, TWELFTH, AND THIRTEENTH CENTURIES: A. D. 900 TO 1300 = 400 YEARS.

### I. COMPLETE DISSOLUTION OF THE BONDS OF SOCIETY.

ANALYSIS. 1. Causes of the CONFUSION OF HISTORIC MATERIALS at this period.—2. STATE OF THE SARACEN WORLD. [Bagdad. Cordova. Khorassan.]—3. THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE. Turkish invasions and conquests. [Georgia.]—4. The divisions of the Carolingian empire. CONDITION OF ITALY. Berenger duke of Friuli. Prince of Burgundy. Hugh count of Provence. Surrender of the kingdom to Otho. [Friuli. Switzerland. Provence.]—5. Italy under the German emperors. Guelfs and Ghibellines. Dukes, marquises, counts, and prelates.

Petty Italian republics.—6. CONDITION OF GERMANY. Its six dukedoms. [Saxony. Thuringia. Franconia. Bavaria. Swabia. Lorraine.] Encroachments of the dukes. Reign of Conrad Henry I. of Saxony. Powers of the Saxon rulers.—7. CONDITION OF FRANCE. Charles the Simple. Other princes. Deposition of Charles. [Transjuran Burgundy. Provence. Brittany.]—8. Settlement of the Normans in France. [Normandy.] Importance of this event.—9. The counts of Paris. Hugh Capet. [Rheims.] Situation of France for two hundred and forty years after the accession of Hugh Capet.

### II. THE FEUDAL SYSTEM; CHIVALRY; AND THE CRUSADES.

1. Europe in the central period of the Middle Ages. Origin of the FEUDAL SYSTEM. Its duration and importance.—2. Partition of lands by the Barbarians who overthrew the Roman empire. Conditions of the allotment. Gradations of the system.—3. Nature of the estates thus obtained. Crown lands—how disposed of. The word *feud*.—4. The feudal system in France. Charlemagne's efforts to check its progress. Effects upon the nobility. Growth of the power of the nobles after the overthrow of royal authority. Their petty sovereignties.—5. Condition of the allodial proprietors. They are forced to become feudal tenants.—6. Legal qualities and results that grew out of the feudal system. Reliefs, fines, escheats, aids, wardship and marriage.—7. The feudal government in its best state. Its influence on the character of society. General ignorance at this period. Sentiments of independence in the nobility.

8. Rise of CHIVALRY. Our first notices of it. Its origin.—9. Its rapid spread, and its good effects.—10. Its spirit based on noble impulses. Extract from Hallam: From James. Customs and peculiarities of chivalry. Who were members of the institution.—11. The profession of arms among the Germans. Education of a knight. The practice of knight-errantry.—12. Extent of chivalry in the 11th century. Its spirit led to the crusades.

ORIGIN OF THE CRUSADES.—13. Pilgrimages to Jerusalem. General expectation of the approaching end of the world.—14. Extortion and outrage practiced upon the pilgrims. Horror and indignation excited thereby in Europe. The preaching of Peter the Hermit. [Amiens.]—15. The councils of Placentia and Clermont. [Placentia and Clermont.] Gathering of the crusaders for the FIRST CRUSADE.—16. Conduct and fate of the foremost bands of the crusaders. The genuine army of the crusade. [Bouillon.]—17. Conduct of Alexius, emperor of Constantinople. His proposals spurned by the crusaders.—18. Number of the crusaders collected in Asia Minor. First encounter with the Turks. [Nice. Bithynia. Roum.] The march to Syria. [Dorilaum.]—19. The siege and capture of Antioch. The Persian and Turkish hosts defeated before the town.—20. Civil wars among the Turks. The caliph of Egypt takes Jerusalem. Proposal to unite his forces with the Christians rejected.—21. March of the crusaders to Jerusalem. [Mt. Libanus. Tripoli. Tyre. Acre. Caesarea.] Transports of the Christians on the first view of the city. Attack, and repulse.—22. Capture of Jerusalem. Acts of veneration and worship. Reception given to Peter the Hermit. His ultimate fate.—23. The new government of Jerusalem. Minor Christian States. Defenceless state of Jerusalem under Godfrey. Continued pilgrimages. Orders of knighthood established at Jerusalem. The noted valor of the knights.

24. Continued yearly emigration of pilgrim warriors to the Holy Land. Six principal crusades. Their general character.—25. THE SECOND CRUSADE. The leading army under Conrad. The army of French and Germans.—26. Jerusalem taken by Saladin. THE THIRD CRUSADE. Fate of the German emperor. Successes of the French and English. Return of Philip, Richard concludes a truce with Saladin. [Ascalon.]—27. THE FOURTH CRUSADE, led by Boniface. The crusaders take Zara, and conquer Constantinople. No benefit to Palestine. [Montserrat. Zara.]—28. THE FIFTH CRUSADE. Partial successes, and final ruin, of the expedition. [Damiatta.] Expedition of the German emperor, Frederic II. Treaty with the sultan, by which Jerusalem is yielded to the Christians. Jerusalem again taken by the sultan, but restored.

29. Cotemporary events in northern Asia. TARTAR CONQUESTS in Asia and in Europe. [China. Russia. Kiev. Moscow.] Alarm of the Christian nations of Europe. Recall of the conquering hordes.—30. The Corasmins. They overrun Syria and take Jerusalem, but are finally expelled by the united Turks and Christians.—31. THE SIXTH CRUSADE, led by Louis IX., who attacks Egypt. The second crusade of Louis. Attack upon Carthage. Result of the expedition.—32. Acre, the last stronghold of the Christians in Syria, taken by the Turks, 1291. Results of the Crusades.

## III. ENGLISH HISTORY.

1. Our last reference to the history of England. The present continuation. -2. Condition of ENGLAND AFTER THE DEATH OF ALFRED. England during the reign of Ethelred II. Massacre of the Danes. Effects of this impolitic measure. Canute. Recall of Ethelred. Edmund Ironside. Canute sole monarch.—3. His conciliatory policy. His vast possessions. Character of his administration of the government.—4. Harold and Hardicanute. The reign of Edward the Confessor. Events that disturbed his reign. Accession of Harold. The NORMAN CONQUEST. [Sussex. Hastings.]—5. Gradual conquest of all England. William's treatment of his conquered subjects.—6. The feudal system in England. The Doomsday Book. Saxons and Normans.—7. Reigns of William Rufus, and Henry I.—8. Usurpation and reign of Stephen. Henry II. [Plantagenet.]—9. Henry's extensive possessions. REDUCTION OF IRELAND. [History of Ireland.] The troubles of Henry's reign.—10. Reign of Richard, the Lion Hearted.—11. Reign of John, surnamed Lackland. Loss of his continental possessions. Quarrels with the pope;—with the barons. *Magna Charta*. Civil war, and death of John.—12. The long reign of Henry III. His difficulties with the barons. First germs of popular representation. 13. The reign of Edward I. SUBJUGATION OF WALES. [History of Wales.]—14. Relations between England and Scotland. The princess Margaret.—15. Baliol and Bruce. Beginning of the SCOTTISH WARS. Submission of Baliol. [Dunbar.]—16. William Wallace recovers Scotland, but is defeated at Falkirk. [Stirling. Falkirk.] Fate of Wallace.—17. Robert Bruce crowned king of Scotland. Edward II. defeated by him. [Scone. Bannockburn.]

18. Northern nations of Europe during this period. Wars between the Moors and Christians in the Spanish peninsula. Final overthrow of the Saracen power in the peninsula.

I. COMPLETE DISSOLUTION OF THE BONDS OF SOCIETY.—1. The tenth century brings us to the central period of what has been denominated the Middle Ages. The history of the known world presents a greater confusion and discordance of materials at this than at any preceding epoch; for at this time we have neither a great empire, like the Grecian, the Persian, or the Roman; nor any great simultaneous movement, like the mighty tide of the barbarian invasions, to serve as the starting and the returning point for our researches, and to give, by its prominence, a sort of unity to cotemporaneous history; but on every side we see States falling into dissolution; the masses breaking into fragments; dukes, counts, and lords, renouncing their allegiance to kings and emperors; cities, towns, and castles, declaring their independence, and, amid a general dissolution of the bonds of society, we find almost universal anarchy prevailing.

2. In the East, the empire of the caliphs, the mighty colossus of Mussulman dominion, was broken; the Saracens were no longer objects of terror to all their neighbors, and the frequent revolutions of the throne of Bagdad, the central seat of the religion of the prophet, had ceased to have any

I. THE SARACEN WORLD.

1. *Bagdad*, a famous city of Asiatic Turkey.—long the chief seat of Moslem power in Asia,—the capital of the Eastern caliphate, and of the scientific world during the "Dark Ages," is situated on the river Tigris, sixty-eight miles north of the ruins of Babylon.

Bagdad was founded by the caliph Al-Mansour, A. D. 763, and is said to have been prin-

influence on the rest of the world. About the middle of the eighth century, the Moors of Spain had separated themselves from their Eastern brethren, and made Cor'dova the seat of their dominion, and little more than two centuries and a half later, (A. D. 1031) the division of the Western Caliphate into a great number of small principalities, which were weakened by civil dissensions, contributed to the enlargement of the Christian kingdoms in the northern part of the peninsula. Soon after the defection of the Moors of Spain, an independent Saracen monarchy had arisen in Africa proper: this was followed by the establishment of new dynasties in Egypt, Khorassan,<sup>2</sup> and Persia; and eventually, in the tenth century, we find the Caliphate divided into a great number of petty States, whose annals, gathered from oriental writers, furnish, amid a labyrinth of almost unknown names and countries, little more than the chronology of princes, with the civil wars, parricides, and fratricides of each reign. Such was the condition of that vast population, comprising many nations and languages, which still adhered, although under different forms, and with many departures from the originals, to the general principles of the moslem faith.

3. The Byzantine empire still continued to exist, but in weakness and corruption. "From the age of Justin'ian," says Gibbon, "it

pally formed out of the ruins of Ctesiphon. It was greatly enlarged and adorned by the grandson of its founder, the famous Haroun-al-Raschid. It continued to flourish, and to be the principal seat of learning and the arts till 1258, when Hoolaku, grandson of Gengis Khan, reduced the city after a siege of two months, and gave it up to plunder and massacre. It is said that the number of the slain in the city alone amounted to eight hundred thousand. Since that event Bagdad has witnessed various other sieges and revolutions. It was burnt and plundered by the ferocious Timour A. D. 1401, who erected a pyramid of human heads on its ruins. In 1637 it incurred the vengeance of Amurath IV., the Turkish sultan, who barbarously massacred a large portion of the inhabitants. Since that period the once illustrious city now numbering less than a hundred thousand inhabitants, has been degraded to the seat of a Turkish pashalic. The rich merchants and the beautiful princesses of the Arabian Tales have all disappeared; but it retains the tomb of the charming Zobeide, the most beloved of the wives of Haroun-al-Raschid, and can still boast of its numerous gardens and well stocked bazaars.

1. *Cor'dova*, a city of Andalusia in Spain, is situated on the Guadalquivir, one hundred and eighty-five miles south-west from Madrid. It is supposed to have been founded by the Romans, under whom it attained to great distinction as a rich and populous city, and a seat of learning. In 572 it was taken by the Goths, and in 711 by the Moors, under whom it afterwards became the splendid capital of the "Caliphate of the West;" but with the extinction of the Western caliphate, A. D. 1031, the power and the glory of Cor'dova passed away. Cor'dova continued to be a separate Moorish kingdom until the year A. D. 1236, when it was taken and almost wholly destroyed by the impolitic zeal of Ferdinand III. of Castile. It has never since recovered its previous prosperity; and its population has diminished since the 11th century, from five hundred thousand to less than forty thousand. (*Map No. XIII.*)

2. *Khorassan*, (the "region of the sun,") is a province of Modern Persia, at the south-eastern extremity of the Caspian Sea, inhabited by Persians proper, Turkmans and Kurds. The region is still Moham' medan

was sinking below its former level: the powers of destruction were more active than those of improvement; and the calamities of war were imbibed by the more permanent evils of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny.<sup>a</sup> It was daily becoming more and more separated from Western Europe; its relations, both of peace and war, being chiefly with the Saracens, who in the period of their conquests, overran all Asia Minor, and were forming permanent establishments within sight of Constantinople. Toward the close of the tenth century, however, a brief display of vigor in the Byzantine princes, Niceph'orus, Zimisus, and Basil II. repelled the Saracens, and extended the Asiatic boundaries of the empire as far south as Antioch, and eastward to the eastern limits of Armenia; but twenty-five years after the death of Basil (1025, his effeminate successors were suddenly assaulted by the Turks or Turcomans, a new race of Tartar barbarians of the Mussulman faith, whose original seats were beyond the Caspian Sea, along the northern boundaries of China. During the first invasion of the Turks, under their leader Togrul, (1050) one hundred and thirty thousand Christians were sacrificed to the religion of the prophet. His successor, Alp Arslan, the "valiant lion," reduced Georgia and Armenia, and defeated and took captive the Byzantine emperor Romanus Diogenes; and succeeding princes of the Turkish throne gathered the fruits of a lasting conquest of all the provinces beyond the Bosphorus and Hellespont.

4. Turning to the West, to examine the condition of the three great divisions of the empire of the Carolingians—Italy, Germany, and Gaul,—we find there but the wrecks of former greatness. In Italy, the dukes, the governors of provinces, and the leaders of armies, were possessed of far greater power than the reigning monarch. Having for a long period perpetuated their dignities in their families, they had become in fact petty tyrants over their limited domains; ever jealous of the royal authority, and dreading the loss of their privileges, they con-

1. Georgia is between the Caspian and the Black Sea, having Circassia on the north and Armenia on the south. This country was annexed to the Roman empire by Pompey, in the year 65 B. C. During the 6th and 7th centuries it was a theatre of contest between the Greek empire and the Persians. In the 8th century a prince of the Jewish family of the Bagratides established there a monarchy which, with few interruptions, continued in his line down to the commencement of the 19th century. In 1801 the emperor Paul of Russia declared himself, at the request of the Georgian prince, sovereign of Georgia.

a. Gibbon, iv. 4.

spired against their sovereign as often as he showed an inclination to rescue the people from the oppressive exactions of their masters. In the early part of the tenth century they arose against Berenger, duke of Friuli,<sup>1</sup> who had been proclaimed king, and offered the crown to the prince of Burgundy, who during two years united the government of Italy to that of Switzerland.<sup>2</sup> (923–925.) Soon abandoning him, the turbulent nobles elevated to the throne Hugh, count of Provence;<sup>3</sup> and finally Italy, exhausted by the animosities and struggles of the aristocracy, made a voluntary surrender of the kingdom to Otho the Great, the Saxon prince of Germany, who, in the year 962, was crowned at Milan with the iron crown of Lombardy, and at Rome with the golden crown of the empire.

5. During several succeeding centuries the German emperors were nominally recognized as sovereigns of the greater part of Italy; but as they seldom crossed the Alps, their authority was soon reduced to a mere shadow. The pretensions of the court of Rome were opposed to those of the German princes; and during the quarrels that arose between the Guelfs and Ghibellines,<sup>4</sup>—the former the adherents of Rome, and the latter of Germany—Italy was thrown into the greatest confusion. While some portions were under the immediate jurisdiction of the German emperor, a large number of the dukes, marquises, counts, and prelates, residing in their castles which they

1. Friuli is an Italian province at the head of the Adriatic, and at the north-eastern extremity of Italy.

2. Switzerland, anciently called Helvetia, is an inland and mountainous country of Europe having the German States on the north and east, Italy on the south, and France on the west. Julius Cæsar reduced the Helvætiæ to submission 15 years B. C.; after which the Romans founded in it several flourishing cities, which were afterwards destroyed by the barbarians. In the beginning of the 5th century the Burgundians overran the western part of Switzerland, and fixed their seats around the lake of Geneva, and on the banks of the Rhone and the Saone. Fifty years later the Aleman'ni overran the eastern part of Switzerland, and a great part of Germany, overwhelming the monuments of Roman power, and blotting out the Christianity which Rome had planted. At the close of the fifth century the Aleman'ni were overthrown by Clovis;—the first Burgundian empire fell A. D. 535; and for a long period afterward Helvetia formed a part of the French monarchy. The partition of the dominions of Charlemagne threw Switzerland into the German part of the empire. In the year 1307 the three forest cantons, Uri, Schwytz, and Unterwalden, entered into a confederacy against the tyranny of the Austrian house of Hapsburg, then at the head of the German empire. Other cantons from time to time joined the league, or were conquered from Austria; but it was not till the time of Napoleon that all the present existing cantons were brought into the confederacy. (Maps No. XIV. and XVII.)

3. Provence, see p. 271.

4. These party names, obscure in origin, were imported from Germany. In the wars of Frederic Barbarossa, (the Redbeard,) the Guelfs were the champions of liberty; in the crusades which the popes directed against that prince's unfortunate descendants they were merely the partisans of the church. The name soon ceased to signify principles, and merely served the same purpose as a watchword, or the color of a standard.

had strongly fortified against the depredating inroads of the Normans, Saracens, and Hungarians, exercised an almost independent authority within their limited domains; while a number of petty republics, the most important of which were Venice, Pisa, and Genoa, fortifying their cities, and electing their own magistrates, set the authority of the pope, the nobles, and the emperor, equally at defiance. Such was the confused state of Italy in the central period of the Middle Ages.

6. Germany, at the beginning of the tenth century, under the rule of a minor, Louis IV., the last of the Carolingian family, was harassed by frequent invasions of the Hungarians; while the six dukedoms into which the country was divided, viz.: Saxony,<sup>1</sup> Thuringia,<sup>2</sup> Francônia,<sup>3</sup> Bavaria,<sup>4</sup> Suabia, and Lorraine,<sup>5</sup> appeared like so many distinct nations, ready to declare war against each other. The dukes, originally regarded as ministers and representatives of their king, had long been encroaching on the royal prerogatives, and by degrees had arrogated to themselves such an increase of power, that the dignities temporarily conferred upon them became hereditary in their families. They next seized the royal revenues, and made themselves masters of the people

1. *Saxony*, the most powerful of the ancient duchies of Germany, embraced, at the period of its greatest development, the whole extent of northern Germany between the mouths of the Rhine and the Oder. (Map No. XVII.)

2. *Thuringia* was in the central part of Germany, west of Prussian Saxony. In the 13th century it was subdivided among many petty princes, and incorporated with other States, after which the name fell gradually into disuse. It is still preserved, in a limited sense, in the *Thuringian forest*, a hilly and woody tract in the interior of Germany, on the northern confines of Bavaria. (Map No. XVII.)

3. *Francônia* was situated on both sides of the river Maine, and is now included mostly within the limits of Bavaria. (Map No. XVII.)

4. *Bavaria*—comprising most of the Vindelicia and Noricum of the Romans, is a country in the southern part of Germany. It was anciently a duchy—afterwards an electorate—and has now the rank of a kingdom. (Map No. XVII.)

5. *Suabia*, of which Ulm was the capital, was in the south-western part of Germany, west of Bavaria, and north of Switzerland. It is now included in Baden, Wurtemberg, and Bavaria. (Map No. XVII.)

6. *Lorraine*, (German *Lotharingia*), so called from Lothaire II., to whom this part of the country fell in the division of the empire between him and his brothers Louis II. and Charles, in the year 854, eleven years after the treaty of Verdun, (see p. 260,) was divided into Upper and Lower Lorraine, and extended from the confines of Switzerland, westward of the Rhine, to its mouth, and the mouths of the Scheldt. (Skelt.) A part of the Lower Lorraine was afterwards embraced in the French province of Lorraine, (see Map No. XIII,) and is now comprised in the departments of the Meuse, the Vosges, the Moselle, and the Meurthe. Lorraine was for centuries a subject of dispute between France and Germany.

The relative position of the six German dukedoms was therefore as follows:—Saxony occupied the northern portions of Germany; Thuringia and Francônia the centre; Bavaria the south-eastern; Suabia the south-western; and Lorraine the north-western. (Maps No. XIII and XVII.)

and their lands. On the death of Louis IV., (A. D. 911,) they set aside the legitimate claimant, and elected for their sovereign one of their own number, Conrad, duke of Francônia. His reign of seven years was passed almost wholly in the field, checking the incursions of the Hungarians, or quelling the insurrections of the other dukedoms against his authority. On his death (A. D. 918), Henry I., surnamed the Fowler, duke of Saxony, was elected to the throne, which his family retained little more than a century. (Until 1024.) The Saxon rulers of Germany, however, were not, like Charlemagne, the sovereigns of a vast empire; but rather the chiefs of a confederacy of princes, reckoned of superior authority in matters of national concern, while the nobles still managed their provincial administration mostly in their own way. The history of the little more than nominal sovereigns of Germany, therefore, during this period, contains but little of the history of the German people.

7. In France, the royal authority, at the beginning of the tenth century, exercised an influence still more feeble than in Germany, and was little more than an empty honor. Charles the Simple, whose name bespeaks his character, was the nominal sovereign; but four other princes in Gaul, besides himself, bore the title of king,—those of Lorraine, Transjuran-Burgundy,<sup>1</sup> Provence,<sup>2</sup> and Brittany;<sup>3</sup>—while in other parts of the country, powerful dukes and counts governed their dominions with absolute independence. At length, in the year 920, an assembly of nobles formally deposed Charles, but he continued his nominal reign nearly three years longer, while the people and the nobility were scarcely conscious of his existence.

1. *Transjuran-Burgundy*, is that portion of Burgundy that was embraced in Switzerland—beyond the *Jura*, or western Alps.

2. *Provence* was in the south-eastern part of France, on the Mediterranean, bounded on the east by Italy, north by Dauphiny, and west by Languedoc. Greek colonies were founded here at an early period, (see Marseilles, p. 157,) and the Romans, having conquered the country, (B. C. 124,) gave it the name of *Provincia*, (the province,) whence its later name was derived. After the three-fold division of the empire of Louis le Debonnaire, the son and successor of Charlemagne, by the treaty of Verdun in 843, (see p. 260,) Provence fell to Lothaire; but it afterwards became a separate kingdom, under the name of the kingdom of Arles. In 1246 it passed to the house of Anjou by marriage; and in 1481 Louis XI. united it to the dominions of the French crown. (Map No. XIII.)

3. *Brittany*, or *Bretagne*, was one of the largest provinces of France, occupying the peninsula at the north-western extremity of the kingdom, and joined on the east by Poitou, Anjou, Maine, and Normandy. It now forms the five departments, Finisterre, Cotes du Nord, (coast-do-nor) Morbihan, Ille and Vilaine, and Lower Loire. Brittany is supposed to have derived its name from the Britons, who, expelled from England by the Anglo-Saxons, took refuge here in the fifth century. It formed one of the duchies of France till it was united to the crown by Francis I. in 1532. (Map No. XIII.)

8. The only really important event of French history during the tenth century was the final settlement of the Northmen in that part of Neustria,<sup>1</sup> which received from them the name of Normandy.<sup>2</sup> In the year 911, during the reign of Charles the Simple, the Norman chief Rollo, who had made himself the terror of the West, ascended the Seine with a formidable fleet, and laid siege to Paris. After the purchase of a brief truce, Charles made him the tempting offer, to cede to him a vast province of France, in which he might establish himself on condition that he would abstain from ravaging the rest of the kingdom, acknowledge the sovereignty of the crown of France and, together with his followers, make a public profession of Christianity. The terms were accepted: a region that had been completely laid waste by the ravages of the Normans was now assigned to them for an inheritance; and these ruthless warriors, abandoning a life of pillage and robbery, were soon converted, by the wise regulations of their chiefs, into peaceful tillers of the soil, and the best and bravest of the citizens of France. This remarkable event put an end to the war of Norman devastation, which, during a whole century, had depopulated western Germany, Gaul, and England.

9. Of the independent aristocracy of France, after the death of Charles the Simple, the most powerful were the counts of Paris, who, during the last few reigns of the Carolingian princes, exercised little less than regal authority. At length, in the year 987, on the death of Louis V., the fifth monarch after Charles the Simple, Hugh Capet, count of Paris, was proclaimed king by his assembled vassals, and anointed and crowned in the cathedral of Rheims,<sup>3</sup> by the archbishop of that city. The rest of France took no part in this election; and several provinces refused to acknowledge the successors of Hugh Capet, for three or four generations. The aristocracy still monopo-

1. *Neustria*. On the death of Clovis A. D. 511, (see p. 255,) his four sons divided the Merovingian kingdom, embracing northern Gaul and Germany, into two parts, calling the eastern *Austrasia*, and the western *Neustria*,—the latter term being derived from the negative particle *e* "not," and *Austria*:—*Austrasia*, meaning the Eastern, and *Neustria* the Western monarchy. *Neustria* embraced that portion of modern France north of the Loire and west of the Meuse. (Map No. XIII.)

2. *Normandy* was an ancient province of France, adjoining Brittany on the north-east. (See Map No. XIII.) It became annexed to England through the accession of William, duke of Normandy, to the English throne, A. D. 1066. (See p. 290.) Philip Augustus wrested it from John, and united it to France, in 1203.

3. *Rheims*, a city of France ninety-five miles north-east from Paris, was a place of considerable importance under the Romans, who called it *Durocortarum*. It became a bishopric before the irruption of the Franks, and received many privileges from the Merovingian kings. (Map No. XIII.)

lized all the prerogatives of royalty; and the power of the nobles alone flourished or subsisted in the State. The period of two hundred and forty years,—from the accession of Hugh Capet to that of Louis IX., or Saint Louis,—is described by Sismondi as "a long interregnum, during which the authority of king was extinct, although the name continued to exist."

II. THE FEUDAL SYSTEM, CHIVALRY, AND THE CRUSADES.—I. A glance at the state of Southern and Western Europe in the central period of the Middle Ages will show that, with the waning power, and final overthrow, of the Carolingian dynasty, a new order of things had arisen; that kingdoms were broken into as many separate principalities as they contained powerful counts or barons; that regularly-constituted authority no longer existed; and that a numerous class of nobles, superior to all restraint, and involved in petty feuds with each other, oppressed their fellow subjects, and humbled or insulted their sovereigns, to whom they tendered an allegiance merely nominal. The rude beginnings of this state of society may be traced back to the germinating of the first seeds of order after the spread of barbarism over the Roman world; its growth was checked under the first Carolingians, who reduced the nobles to the lowest degradation; but with the decline of royal authority in France, Germany, and Italy, it started into new life and vigor, and, towards the end of the tenth century, became organized under the name of the *Feudal System*. It maintained itself until about the end of the thirteenth century; and during the period of its existence is the prominent object that engages the attention of the historian of the Middle Ages. The unity of this portion of history will best be preserved by a brief historical outline of the system itself, and of the relations and events that grew out of it.

I. THE  
FEUDAL  
SYSTEM.

2. The people who overturned the empire of the Romans, made a partition of the conquered lands between themselves and the original possessors; but in what manner or by what principles the division was made cannot now be determined with certainty; nor can the exact condition in which the Roman provincials were left be ascertained, as the records of none of the barbarous nations of Europe extend back to this remote period. It is, however, evident that the chiefs, or leaders of the conquering invaders, in order to maintain their acquisitions, annexed, to the apportionment of lands among

their followers, the condition that every freeman who received a share should appear in arms, when called upon, against the enemies of the community; and military service was probably at first the only condition of the allotment. The immediate grantees of lands from the leading chief, or king, were probably the most noted warriors who served under him; and these divided their ample estates among their more immediate followers or dependents, to be held of themselves by a similar tenure; so that the system extended, through several gradations, from the monarchs down through all the subordinates in authority. Each was bound to resort to the standard of his immediate grantor, and thence to that of his sovereign, with a band of armed followers proportioned, in numbers, to the extent of the territory which he had received.

3. The primary division of lands among the conquerors, was probably *allodial*; that is, they were to descend by inheritance from father to son; but in addition to the lands thus distributed among the nation, others were reserved to the crown for its support and dignity; and the greater portion of the latter, frequently extending to entire counties and dukedoms, were granted out, sometimes as hereditary estates, sometimes for life, sometimes for a term of years, and on various conditions, to favored subjects, and especially to the provincial governors, who made under-grants of them to their vassals or tenants. On the failure of the tenant to perform the stipulated conditions, whether of military service, or of certain rents and payments, the lands reverted to the grantors; and as the word *feud* signifies "an estate in trust," hence the propriety of calling this the *Feudal System*.

4. In a very imperfect state this system existed in France in the time of Charlemagne; but that monarch, jealous of the ascendancy which the nobles had already acquired, checked it by every means in his power,—by suffering many of the larger grants of dukedoms, counties, &c., to expire without renewal,—by removing the administration of justice from the hands of local officers into the hands of his own itinerant judges,—by elevating the ecclesiastical authority as a counterpoise to that of the nobility,—and by the creation of a standing army, which left the monarch in a measure independent of the military support of the great landholders. Thus the nobles, desisting from the use of arms, and abandoning the task of defending the kingdom, soon became unable to defend themselves; but when in the ninth and tenth centuries the royal authority was entire

ly prostrated, when the provinces were subject to frequent inroads of the Normans and Hungarians, and government ceased to afford protection to any class of society, the proprietors of large estates found in their wealth a means of defence and security not within the reach of the great mass of the people. They converted their places of abode into impregnable castles, and covered their persons with knightly armor, jointed so as to allow a free movement of every part of the body; and this protection, added to the increased physical strength acquired by constant military exercises, gave them an importance in war over hundreds of the plebeians by whom they were surrounded. In the confusion of the times, the governors of provinces, under the various titles of dukes, counts, and barons, usurped their governments as little sovereignties, and transmitted them by inheritance, subject only to the feudal superiority of the king.

5. Meanwhile the small allodial proprietors, or holders of lands in their own right, exposed to the depredating inroads of barbarians, or, more frequently, to the rapacity of the petty feudal lords, sunk into a condition much worse than that of the feudal tenantry. Exposed to a system of general rapine, without law to redress their injuries, and without the royal power to support their rights, they saw no safety but in making a compromise with oppression, and were reduced to the necessity of subjecting themselves, in return for protection, to the feudal lords of the country. During the tenth and eleventh centuries a large proportion of the allodial lands in France, Germany, and Italy, were surrendered by their owners, and received back again upon feudal tenures; and it appears that the few who retained their lands in their own right universally attached themselves to some lord, although in these cases it was the privilege of the freemen to choose their own superiors.

6. Such was the state of the great mass of European society when the feudal system had reached its maturity, in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Among the legal incidents and results that grew out of the feudal relation of service on the one side and protection on the other, were those of *reliefs*, or money paid to the lord by each vassal on taking a fief, or feudal estate, by inheritance; *finer*, on a change of tenancy; *escheats*, or forfeiture of the estate to the lord on account of the vassals delinquency, or for want of heirs; *aids*, or sums of money exacted by the lord on various occasions, such as the knighting of his eldest son, the marriage of his eldest daughter, or for the redemption of his person from prison; *wardship*, or the

On page 376

privilege of guardianship of the tenant by the lord during the minority of the former, with the use of the profits of his estate; *marriage*, or the right of a lord to tender a husband to his female wards while under age, or to demand the forfeiture of the value of the marriage. These feudal servitudes, which were unknown in the time of Charlemagne, distinguish the maturity of the system, and show the gradual encroachments of the strong upon the weak.

7. The feudal government, in its best state, was a system of oppression, which destroyed all feelings of brotherhood and equality between man and man: it was admirably calculated, when the nobles were united, for defence against the assaults of any foreign power; but it possessed the feeblest bonds of political union, and contained innumerable sources of anarchy, in the interminable feuds of rival chieftains. It exerted a fatal influence on the character of society in general; while individual man, in the person of the lord or baron, was doubtless improved by it; and the great mass of the population of Europe, during the three or four centuries in which it was under the thralldom of this system, was sunk in the most profound ignorance. Literature and science, confined almost wholly to the cloister, could receive no favor in the midst of turbulence, oppression, and rapine: judges and kings often could not write their own names: many of the clergy did not understand the liturgy which they daily recited: the Christianity of the times, "a dim taper which had need of snuffing," degenerated into an illiberal superstition; and everything combined to fix upon this period the distinctive epithet of the DARK AGES. Still the sentiment of independence—the pride and consciousness of power—and the feelings of personal consequence and dignity with which the feudal state of society inspired the nobles, contributed to let in those first rays of light and order which dispelled barbarism and anarchy, and introduced the virtues of a better age.

8. In the midst of confusion and crime, while property was held by the sword, and cruelty and injustice reigned supreme, the spirit of *chivalry* arose to turn back the tide of oppression, and to plant, in the very midst of barbarism, the seeds of the most noble and the most generous principles. The precise time at which chivalry was recognized as a military institution, with outward forms and ceremonials, cannot now be ascertained; but the first notices we have of it trace it to that age when the disorders in the feudal system had attained their utmost point of excess, towards

II CHIVALRY.

the close of the tenth century. It was then that some noble barons, filled with charitable zeal and religious enthusiasm, and moved with compassion for the wretchedness which they saw around them, combined together, under the solemnity of religious sanctions, with the holy purpose of protecting the weak from the oppression of the powerful, and of defending the right cause against the wrong.

9. The spirit and the institution of chivalry spread rapidly; treachery and hypocrisy became detestable; while courtesy, magnanimity, courage, and hospitality, became the virtues of the age; and the knights, who were ever ready to draw their swords, at whatever odds, in defence of innocence, received the adoration of the populace, and, in public opinion, were exalted even above kings themselves. The meed of praise and esteem gave fresh vigor and purity to the cause of chivalry; and under the influence of its spirit great deeds were done by the fraternity of valiant knights who had enrolled themselves as its champions. "The baron forsook his castle, and the peasant his hut, to maintain the honor of a family, or preserve the sacredness of a vow: it was this sentiment which made the poor serf patient in his toils, and serene in his sorrows: it enabled his master to brave all physical evils, and enjoy a sort of spiritual romance: it bound the peasant to his master, and the master to his king; and it was the principle of chivalry, above all others, that was needed to counteract the miseries of an infant state of civilization."<sup>a</sup>

10. Though in the practical exemplifications of chivalry there was often much of error, yet its spirit was based upon the most generous impulses of human nature. "To speak the truth, to succor the helpless and oppressed, and never to turn back from an enemy," was the first vow of the aspirant to the honors of chivalry. In an age of darkness and degradation, chivalry developed the character of woman, and, causing her virtues to be appreciated and honored, made her the equal companion of man, and the object of his devotion. "The love of God and the ladies," says Hallam, "was enjoined as a single duty. He who was faithful and true to his mistress, was held sure of salvation in the theology of castles, though not of cloisters."<sup>b</sup> In the language of another modern writer, "chivalry gave purity to enthusiasm, crushed barbarous selfishness, taught the heart to expand like a flower to the sunshine, beautified glory with generosity, and smoothed even the rugged brow of war." A description of the

a. Introduction to Froissart's Chronicles.

c. James's Chivalry and the Crusades, p. 31.

b. Hallam's Middle Ages, p. 519

various customs and peculiarities of chivalry, as they grew up by degrees into a regular institution, would be requisite to a full development of the character of the age, but we can only glance at these topics here. As chivalry was a military institution, its members were taken wholly from the military class, which comprised none but the descendants of the northern conquerors of the soil; for, with few exceptions, the original inhabitants of the western Roman empire had been reduced to the condition of serfs, or vassals, of their barbarian lords.

11. The initiation of the German youth to the profession of arms had been, from the earliest ages, an occasion of solemnity; and when the spirit of chivalry had established the order of knighthood, as the concentration of all that was noble and valiant in a warlike age, it became the highest object of every young man's ambition one day to be a knight. A long and tedious education, consisting of instruction in all manly and military exercises, and in the first principles of religion, honor and courtesy, was requisite as a preparation for this honor. Next, the candidate for knighthood, after undergoing his preparatory fasts and vigils, passed through the ceremonies which made him a knight. Armed and caparisoned he then sallied forth in quest of adventure, displayed his powers at tournaments, and often visited foreign countries, both for the purpose of jousting with other knights, and for instruction in every sort of chivalrous knowledge. It cannot be denied, however, that the practice of knight-errantry, or that of wandering about armed, as the avowed champions of the right cause against the wrong, gave to the evil-minded a very convenient cloak for the basest purposes, and that every adventure, whether just or not in its purpose, was too liable to be esteemed honorable in proportion as it was perilous. But these were abuses of chivalry, and perversions of its early spirit.

12. During the eleventh century we find that chivalry, although probably first appearing in Gaul, had spread to all the surrounding nations. In Spain, the wars between the Christians and the Moors exhibited a chivalric spirit unknown to former times: about this period the institution of knighthood appears to have been introduced among the Saxons of England; and it was first made known to the Italians, in the beginning of the eleventh century, by a band of knights from Normandy, whose religious zeal prompted them, as they were returning from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, to undertake the relief of a small town besieged by the Saracens. As the

feudal system spread over Europe, chivalry followed in its path. Its spirit, combined with religious enthusiasm, led to the crusades, and it was during the progress of those holy wars, which we now proceed to describe, that it attained its chief power and influence.

13. Pilgrimages to Jerusalem, and other hallowed localities in Palestine, had been common in the early ages of the church; and towards the close of the tenth century they had increased to a perfect inundation, in consequence of the terror that III. ORIGIN OF THE CRUSADES. arose from the almost universal expectation then entertained, of the approaching end of the world.<sup>a</sup> The idea originated in the interpretation given to the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse, where it was announced that, after the lapse of a thousand years, Satan would be let loose to deceive the nations, and to gather them together to battle against the holy city, but that, after a little season, the army of the Deceiver should be destroyed by fire from heaven. But the dreaded epoch, the year 1000, passed by; yet the current of pilgrimage still continued to flow towards the East; for fanaticism had taken too strong hold of the minds of the people to be easily diverted from its course.

14. After Palestine had fallen into the possession of the Turks, about the middle of the seventh century, (see p. 249,) the pilgrims to Jerusalem were subjected to every species of extortion and outrage from this wild race of Saracen conquerors; and the returning Christians spread through all the countries of Europe indignation and horror by the pathetic tales which they related, of the injuries and insults which they had suffered from the infidels. Among others, Peter the Hermit, a native of Amiens,<sup>1</sup> returning from a pilgrimage to Palestine, where he had spent much time in conferring with the Christians about the means of their deliverance, complained in loud terms of these grievances, and began to preach, in glowing language, the duty of the Christian world to unite in expelling the infidels from the patrimony of the Saviour.

15. The pope, Urban II., one of the most eloquent men of the age, engaged zealously in the project, and at two general councils,

1. *Amiens* is a fortified city of France in the ancient province of Picardy, seventy-two miles north from Paris. (Map No. XIII.)

a. The archives of European countries contain a great number of charters of the tenth century, beginning with these words: *Appropinquante fine mundi*;—"As the end of the world is approaching."—Sismondi's Roman Empire, li. 256.