

time. The more it became a personal contest between Henry and Becket, the more would the great statesman have subdued the passionate churchman to his will. For Henry was, unquestionably, one of those few men in the history of the world who have vindicated their claims to be the natural rulers of mankind. Becket, by his adroitness, his activity, his courage, was invaluable to Henry as his lay-minister; but, thrown upon his own resources, and tempted by his archiepiscopal elevation to challenge the regal power to a conflict for supremacy with the ecclesiastical, he became the fanatical upholder of one dominant idea. He must have been crushed in the contest, if it had been a mere intellectual battle between two men of ordinary ambition. Henry was in every mental quality of greatness the superior of Becket. He was not a man of shows, but of realities. Becket wore "coarse sackcloth made of goat's hair, from the arms to the knees, but his outer garments were remarkable for their splendour and extreme costliness, to the end that, thus deceiving human eyes, he might please the sight of God." Thus writes his panegyrist, Hoveden. Henry was utterly regardless of mere appearances. Though his passions were violent, and his private life open to reproach, he won the admiration of all who came in contact with him, by his talent and energy, by his affability and modesty, by his unremitting power of labour, by his knowledge of languages and of all graceful and useful learning, by his discernment in the enactment and administration of laws.* With many of the faults of his age, he had a sense of duty which raised him far above the mere selfish temptations of his position. Had Becket not been so wickedly and rashly slain by the rude knights who saw but one way of terminating so violent a contention, the king must have triumphed, and the claims of ecclesiastical tyranny must have been reduced to moderate dimensions at an earlier period of our history. But the victory of the crown might, at this time, have also retarded, for a long season, that enfranchisement of the Commons from the feudal oppressions which was slowly but steadily advancing. In such a contest as this, the claims of the lowly make some progress; and thus every humble pilgrim, whose knees wore the stones on which he knelt at the shrine of Saint Thomas, entered his protest against the reign of brute violence, and prepared the way for a time when piety might be separated from superstition, and freedom from disorder.

* See the character of Henry in the interesting Latin work "Gualteri Mapes de Nugis Curialium," published by the Camden Society, p. 227.

CHAPTER XXI.

First Landing of Anglo-Normans in Ireland.—The Irish Nation.—Strongbow.—Henry in Ireland.—Rebellion of Henry's Sons.—Insurrection in England.—Henry at the Tomb of Becket.—Reforms in the Administration of Justice.—Mission from Jerusalem.—Rebellion of Richard.—Death of King Henry.—Coronation of Richard.—Massacre of the Jews.—Richard the Crusader.—Progress of the Crusaders.—Siege of Acre.—Massacre of Hostages.—March towards Jerusalem.

IN the reign of Henry II. commenced that direct connection of Ireland with the government of England which has lasted nearly seven hundred years—a connection which has involved as much oppression and misrule, revolt and misery, as ever belonged to a struggle between races and creeds, of which the natural evils were always heightened and perpetuated by selfishness and ignorance on every side. In May, 1169, the first landing in Ireland of the Anglo-Normans took place. For several centuries the inhabitants of Ireland had made hostile descents on England, to take part in the various contests between Saxon and Briton. The Norman kings appear to have occasionally contemplated the subjection of Ireland; and William Rufus is stated to have looked from a high rock in Wales upon the green island in the distance, and to have said, "With my ships I will make a bridge to invade that land." Early in the reign of Henry, Pope Adrian had given him a pretended authority to subdue Ireland, and to reform its barbarous people. Before the ninth century the Irish had schools of learning which were celebrated throughout Europe, and the Celtic tribes were gradually acquiring a taste for the advantages of civilised life. But the incursions of the fierce Northmen drove the great bulk of the people into a condition of semi-barbarism, living apart from the settlements on the coasts in wild forests and dreary morasses. Giraldus Cambrensis has left a description of the nation, amongst whom he travelled in the train of prince John, which, with some allowance for the partiality of the Welchman for his own race, does not place the Irish much lower than the people of Wales which he described. They had the same internal contests under separate chiefs; the same preference of pasturage to

agriculture; the same dislike of sedentary pursuits; the same excitable natures; the same impetuous bravery; and the same universal love of music. The rulers of this people were called kings, and there was a chief monarch who claimed the sovereignty over the whole island. There was no hereditary claim to a regular succession amongst the sons of these kings; but the "tanist," or heir-apparent, was elected by the voices of the "sept" during the life of the chieftain, who had also been so chosen. It was held that the choice should fall upon the worthiest; but sometimes there was none found worthy in the reigning family, and another branch was selected to supply the coming king. Perpetual battle and assassination, open violence or more dangerous treachery, were the inevitable results of "tanistry." The same contests prevailed as to inheritance. Lands descended to all the sons of a family in equal shares, whether these sons were legitimate or of spurious birth. But there was not only this division upon the death of the father, but upon the death of each possessor the lands were thrown into the common stock, and a new division was made. Under such a system no improvement could take place in the cultivation of the soil. There could be no accumulation of capital, and no profitable industry. The system, in all its deformity, lasted to the days of James I., and wherever it prevailed, the country "seemed to be all one wilderness."* Whether under this old system of "gavelkind," or under the cottier-system of later times, the minute subdivision of land, and the ferocious conflicts for its possession, have perpetuated evils through many generations of whose cure we are scarcely now beginning to have an assured hope.

In the middle of the twelfth century, there were several independent provinces of Ireland, of which the MacCarthys, O'Briens, Mahons, O'Malachlins, O'Neills, O'Donalls, O'Connors, and others less famous, were kings. The nominal sovereignty was then claimed by the O'Connors, the kings of Connaught. There had been great agitation in the country since the time when Dermot, king of Leinster, had carried off the wife of O'Ruarc, prince of Leitrim; and after years of battle and vicissitudes of power, Dermot was driven out of the island in 1167. He went to Aquitaine, did homage to Henry, and obtained permission to enlist adventurers to recover his dominions. He obtained the aid of Richard de Clare, earl of Pembroke, surnamed Strongbow, and of two

* Sir John Davies, who wrote a political treatise on Ireland in that reign.

Welch brothers, Robert and Maurice Fitzgerald. The Welchmen landed first with a large company of knights and archers. Dermot joined them with his native adherents; and they gained victories, and perpetrated atrocious cruelties. The next year Strongbow came with large forces; and Dublin and Waterford were taken. Strongbow married Eva, the daughter of Dermot; but the native king died the same year, and the ambitious adventurer from England assumed the royal authority. Henry was not disposed to have an energetic rival quite so near his own dominions; and he forbade any more English to engage in the invasion, and commanded Strongbow and his adherents to return. The adventurer was alarmed, and hastened to lay his authority and acquired possessions at the feet of Henry, as his liege lord. The king of England proceeded himself to Ireland, with a disciplined and numerous band. He landed at Waterford and marched to Dublin, receiving the homage of native princes as he went forward. He committed no excesses, and received the chieftains with his politic cordiality. The princes of Ulster alone refused to bow to the authority of the English king. Henry returned to England in the spring of 1172. He had made no conquests; and his possession of the island, even as a feudal superior, was exceedingly precarious. But in 1175, Henry produced the bull of Pope Adrian, and claimed to be monarch of Ireland. He then granted to Roderic, king of Connaught, that he should be king under the English crown, over the other chieftains, tribute being paid by all to Henry. Strongbow, the king of Leinster, died in 1177. The same year the king obtained a papal bull, giving him power to enfeoff either of his sons with Ireland, as its lord; and he conferred that authority on prince John, then twelve years of age. The king, however, chose a sagacious lord-deputy, Hugh de Lacy; who laboured successfully to reconcile the people to the authority of the English strangers. He was recalled in 1185, and prince John, with a numerous force, proceeded to Ireland. As was his course through life, he disgusted those whom he should have conciliated; and his wanton insolence was even more hateful than his studied tyranny. His wise father placed the native chiefs at his own table, and propitiated them by the attentions of a chivalrous and elevated courtesy. The chiefs of Leinster came to acknowledge John as their lord, and he encouraged his silk-clad attendants to ridicule their homely dresses, and to pluck their bushy beards. Instead of loyalty the English now found revenge. The oppressions which this impolitic boy

encouraged raised up enemies on every side; and after a perilous and contemptible rule of less than a year his father recalled him.

During his expedition to Ireland, Henry appears to have devoted himself entirely to the concerns of that new accession to his authority. He spent the Christmas of 1171 in Dublin. At the end of March, 1172, vessels arrived from England and Aquitaine; and he immediately resolved to leave the island. It is remarkable that for five months there had been no maritime communication from England or the continent. It is held that this suspension of intercourse was not accidental; and that the king prevented any vessel coming to disturb him with the announcement that the spiritual arm was uplifted against him on account of the murder of Becket. When the news of that catastrophe reached him in Normandy, he gave way to the most passionate grief, and sent envoys to Rome to declare his innocence, and to moderate the anger of Pope Alexander. After excommunicating the assassins, with all the advisers and abettors of Becket's death, Alexander sent two legates into France to investigate the whole circumstances of the unhappy affair. Henry immediately withdrew from Normandy, and in Ireland he waited the result. He went there, according to contemporary writers, to avoid a visit from the papal legates. At length an encouraging issue of five months' debate was announced to him; and then his characteristic vigour was displayed by his immediate presence in Normandy. "The king of England neither rides nor sails; he flies with the rapidity of a bird," said the king of France. Henry met the legates; solemnly swore in the cathedral of Avranches that he was innocent in word or deed of the murder of the archbishop; and was as solemnly absolved of all censure, upon agreeing to certain concessions in favour of the Church, which had the effect of suspending the operations of the Constitutions of Clarendon. Henry was now in his fortieth year, perhaps with that touch of grey in his hair which Peter of Blois has described, but in the most perfect vigour of his powerful understanding and energetic will. He had four sons living—Henry, in his eighteenth year; Richard, in his fifteenth; Geoffrey, in his fourteenth; and John, in his sixth. These were the children of queen Eleanor. At this period Henry, it may be concluded, lived unhappily with the queen; for the romantic stories of Rosamund Clifford, and of the secret bower of Woodstock, where the enamoured king concealed his beautiful mistress from the revenge of his wife, have this much of fact in them; that William Long

sword, earl of Salisbury, and Geoffrey, who became archbishop of York, were the sons of fair Rosamund, and Henry was their father. In 1172, some influence had been at work to produce a powerful confederacy against the great king of England; and in this confederacy queen Eleanor and her sons, Henry, Richard, and Geoffrey, were involved. The young Henry had been a second time crowned at Westminster, with his wife, the daughter of the king of France; and he was termed king, from this circumstance. It was not unusual, according to a custom of the French monarchy, to crown the heir-apparent. But prince Henry, at the instigation, it is believed, of his father-in-law, set up a pretension to divide the royal power with his father, and demanded that the king should resign to him either England or Normandy. In the same spirit, Richard, the boy of fifteen, claimed Aquitaine, because he had performed homage to Louis for that duchy; and the other boy of fourteen, Geoffrey, claimed the immediate possession of Brittany. The rebellious sons fled from the court of their father to the French king; and their mother soon followed. The bishops of Normandy exhorted her, under pain of ecclesiastical censure, to return with her sons. King Henry took a more effectual mode—he secured her person, and kept her in close durance for many years. This was something more than a domestic quarrel. Louis of France dreaded the great extent of Henry's possessions, and stood in awe of his talents. The people of Normandy, and Aquitaine, and Brittany,—and especially those of Aquitaine, of whom Eleanor was the duchess—were desirous of independence. By the people, we of course only mean those who had wealth and power. To the villains and the slaves it was of little consequence who governed them. To the young rebellious princes it appeared, as it has appeared, to historians, that the struggle for inheritance was a mere personal question. Richard used to say that it was the birth-right of their race to be at variance. But there was something more than this curse fated to rest upon the line of Plantagenet, as the old chroniclers believed. The power which the second Henry had acquired was too enormous to be long upheld. It would have fallen to pieces at once in the hands of a weak king. It was broken up, in less than a quarter of a century after his death, when a king came who was neither a warrior nor a statesman. To avert the severance of his vast dominions, Henry had need of all his great qualities. Louis of France bound himself, with the usual oaths, to aid the young Henry in his attempt to possess England; and the young

Henry vowed never to make peace with his father, unless France should give consent. There were two other princes who became parties to this league—William, king of Scotland, and Philip, earl of Flanders. In England, there were discontented barons, whose oppressions were checked by a sovereign who had strenuously asserted the very disagreeable principle of legal justice. Henry collected an army of twenty thousand adventurers, soldiers of fortune, who were ready to support any cause that afforded pay and plunder. The allied enemies of the king entered Normandy; but they were repulsed. The Scots made incursions upon the north of England, but they were driven back by Richard de Lacy, the justiciary, and Humphrey de Bohun, the lord constable, who ravaged Lothian and burnt Berwick. Meanwhile, the earl of Leicester, who had taken part against the king, had brought over a large body of Flemings; and the force was joined by the earl of Norfolk, at Framlingham Castle. Near Saint Edmundsbury they were met by the army which had returned triumphantly from Scotland. The banner of Saint Edmund was carried in front of the royal army; and, at a marshy place called Fornham, on the bank of the river, the rebel forces were entirely defeated, and the earl of Leicester and his countess were taken prisoners. In 1126, at this place, beneath a pollard ash, a heap of skeletons was discovered, with marks of violence on several of the skulls. Jocelin de Brakelond begins his chronicle from the year 1173, "when the Flemings were taken, without the town."* The rebellious barons being thus defeated, many captives were sent to Henry in Normandy. In 1174, the rebellion became even more formidable. The Scots again entered England in great force. The insurrectionary standard was raised in the northern, the midland, and the eastern counties. A fleet was ready at Gravelines to bring over the young Henry. But there was one, who whilst all around him seemed to be crumbling into ruin, stood as unshaken as in the days of his most joyous security. On the 8th July, the king took ship, and crossed the channel in a heavy storm. He was more than usually solemn during the long and difficult passage. His ordinary gaiety of heart was overclouded by deep thought. The man who had fallen dead at the shrine of Saint Bennet at Canterbury was now a canonised saint, at whose tomb miracles were wrought which noble and churl equally believed. On the 10th of July, Henry rode from Southampton during the night, and as he saw the cathedral towers of

* See the notes to Mr. Tomlin's translation, p. 41.

Canterbury looming in the grey dawn, he alighted, and walked in penitential garb barefoot to the city. He knelt at the tomb of Becket in deep humiliation. The bishop of London preached, and maintained that Henry had thus appealed to Heaven in avowal of his innocence of the guilt of blood. Then the great king, before the assembled monks and chapter, poured forth his contrition for the passionate exclamation which had been so rashly interpreted; and he was scourged with a knotted cord. He spent the night in the dark crypt, and the next day rode fasting to London. There he fell ill. But on the fifth night of his fever, a messenger came from Ranulf de Glanville. "Is Glanville well?" said the king. "He is well, and has now in his custody your enemy, the king of the Scots." On the morning when Henry was humiliating himself before the tomb of Becket, the Norman barons in the interest of the English king had ridden from Newcastle to Alnwick, and there surprised the king of Scotland, flitting in a meadow with sixty companions. He bravely set lance in rest to meet assailants who were in earnest; but at the first encounter his horse was killed, and he became a captive. The Scottish lords threw down their arms, and a long train of English knights and their prisoners marched the same evening into Newcastle. The insurrection was at an end in England. The army which Henry had sent to oppose the rebel lords was now turned against his rebel sons and Louis of France. In another month Henry had scattered or terrified all his enemies; and at the end of September there was peace.

The king of Scotland was confined for several months in the castle of Falaise. A deputation of Scottish nobles and prelates assembled in Normandy to advise their king; and he was finally liberated, after doing homage to Henry as liege lord, it being stipulated that the Scottish clergy and barons should also take an oath of fealty to the English king, and that certain castles in Scotland should be garrisoned by English. This treaty was ratified at York, in the succeeding year. Sir Walter Scott terms this acknowledgment of the king of England as lord paramount of the whole kingdom of Scotland—homage never before having been claimed except for Lothian—as "a miserable example of that impatience which too often characterised the Scottish counsels."* It was some time before Henry would receive the reconciling homage of his eldest son; but in 1175 they sailed to England in company, and lived in apparent cordiality together. Relieved of these press

* "History of Scotland," vol. i. p. 38.

ing anxieties, the king again directed his mind to the better administration of his English dominions. In 1176, at a council at Northampton, he divided the kingdom into six districts, each having three itinerant justices. The circuits of modern times do not greatly vary from these ancient divisions. It has been imputed to Henry that he established these courts of assize chiefly to bring money into his own exchequer.* That the revenues of the Crown would be increased by the power which these justices possessed of inquiring into wardships, lapsed lands, fines received from defaulters, and other matters connected with sovereign rights, cannot be doubted. The pleas of the Crown and of the forest afforded royal profit. The common pleas between subject and subject were also a source of pecuniary advantage to the treasury. But that the king and his chief-justiciary were desirous to judge righteously, and to compel others so to judge, we have some evidence. Peter of Blois, who always writes to the king with honest freedom, in one of his letters says, "If causes are tried in your highness's presence, or before your chief justice, there is no place for bribery or favour; all goes on equitably, and your sentences do not exceed, in the least degree, the bounds of moderation. But if a poor man's cause goes to the petty judges, the wicked is justified for his gifts, snares are laid for the poor, quibbles on syllables are practised, and word-catching." In the same letter he says, "Your justices in eyre, who are sent to check other men's faults, have a great many of their own. They hide men's crimes, from favour, or fear, or relationship, or for money." Henry did not allow these practices to remain unchecked. In three years after their appointment he removed all the justices in eyre, except Ranulf de Glanville, who, with five others, held assizes north of the Trent. He was subsequently appointed chief-justiciary. One of the most ancient treatises on English law bears the name of this judge, and contains some notices of trials held before him. In his preface, he maintains that at the period at which he writes, there was not in the king's court a judge who dared to swerve from the course of justice.

During the peace which Henry enjoyed for eight years after the suppression of the revolts of 1174, he devoted himself to the unremitting discharge of his civil duties. That tranquillity was not disturbed till 1183. In that year the unquiet Plantagenet blood was again asserting "the birthright of their race to be at variance."

* Lingard, vol. ii. p. 404.

Henry, the eldest son, had been the foremost in every tournament; and Richard and Geoffrey were equally emulous of the fame of accomplished knights. In 1183, the king commanded Richard to do homage to his elder brother for Aquitaine. He refused; and Henry entered Richard's territory with an army. The father interposed and apparently reconciled the sons. But new causes of quarrel arose; and then Henry and Geoffrey rebelled against the king. Into these quarrels, as obscure in their details as they are hateful in their principle, we have no desire to enter. Being about to give battle to his father, the young Henry fell ill; and then he became penitent. The king, always forgiving, sent him a ring as a token of his love, and the unhappy man died, pressing that token to his lips. Geoffrey was pardoned; but he then made new demands, and repaired to the court of Philip, now king of France, to excite new troubles. In 1186, he was thrown from his horse at a tournament, and died in a few days. Richard and John only remained, to show "how sharper than a serpent's tooth" is filial ingratitude.

Since the conquest of Jerusalem by the Crusaders, in 1099, the Christian kingdom had been upheld under six successors of the illustrious Godfrey. But a man had risen who was destined to set a limit to the Latin dominion in the East, and to fill the chivalry of Europe with indignation at his triumphs. Saladin, undoubtedly entitled to the name of the great, was a humble soldier of the pastoral tribe of the Curds. He was born in 1137; but he became lord of Egypt, and "at the hour of his death his empire was spread from the African Tripoli to the Tigris, and from the Indian Ocean to the mountains of Armenia."* The decay of the kingdom of Jerusalem, amidst quarrels and treacheries, weakness and crime, at last became so full of peril to what was considered the cause of Christendom, that the kings of England and France were instigated solemnly to enrol themselves as defenders of Jerusalem. Louis of France died in 1180; and Henry of England was then released from their mutual obligation to visit the Holy Land. In England there were two powerful bodies especially sworn as defenders of the cross—the Knights Hospitallers, and the Knights Templars. In 1185, during a suspension of hostilities with Saladin, the patriarch of Jerusalem, Heraclius, arrived in England; and the church of the new house of the Templars in London was consecrated by him. In those quiet courts, now so changed, but looking out upon the

* Gibbon, vol. vii. p. 255.

same broad river, dwelt the prior, the knights, and the serving brethren of the great order of the Templars; and in that round church, which in late years has been restored to its primitive beauty, the chaplains of the community prayed for the fall of the infidel; and the knights who had fought against him were buried with monumental honour—as they were in other churches—distinguished by that singular attitude of the crossed legs, which denoted that the Holy Land had witnessed the performance of their sacred vows. Heraclius had a special mission in England. It was to urge King Henry, as the representative of Fulke of Anjou, whose descendants had been kings of Jerusalem for half a century, to rescue the sacred city from the dangers by which she was threatened. Henry referred the question to his great council,—whether he should go to the East, for the defence of Palestine, or remain to govern the nations of which Heaven had given him the charge. The council decided wisely. The king remained: but he promised a large sum to assist those who were engaged in the sacred warfare. In 1187, Jerusalem was surrendered to Saladin. Then went forth deep lamentation throughout Europe. A pope died of grief. A king wore sackcloth. Other sovereigns trembled for the safety of their own possessions, under a possible invasion of the triumphant Mussulmans. In 1188 Henry proceeded to France, and he and Philip Augustus resolved to take the cross. He returned to England, and obtained an enormous tribute, of which nearly one-half was extorted from the Jews. Henry was bent upon a new field of enterprise. He was yet vigorous, though past the prime of life. But a suspicious friendship had arisen between Philip and Henry's son, Richard. The real causes of the troubles that ensued are not very manifest; but the disputes ended in Richard joining the French king in a war against his father. The projected crusade was necessarily suspended. Philip and Richard took his castles, whilst Henry remained in a condition of unusual supineness. He was now broken in spirit. He met the king of France in a plain near Tours, during a violent thunder-storm. His agitation was great. In his weakened health he yielded, almost without a struggle, to the demands which were made upon him. They were exorbitant; and put that proud heart wholly under subjection to the will of Philip, and that of his rebellious son Richard. Throughout these unnatural conflicts, he had rested his hopes upon his beloved John, to whom he had required his seneschal to deliver his castles in the event of his death, and who he had hoped might possess Normandy.

On a sick-bed he signed the treaty. He had asked for the names of those barons who had joined the French king. The first name he saw was John. He read no more. The world and all its troubles and hopes faded from his view. He turned his face to the wall, and exclaimed, "Let every thing go as it will." He was then carried in a litter to his pleasant palace of Chinon, and there laid himself down to die. One only watched over him with real affection—his illegitimate son, Geoffrey. His great heart was broken. On the 6th July, 1189, Henry II. was no more.

Roger de Hoveden, who writes of these events as a contemporary authority, thus speaks of the demeanour of Richard at the burial of his father: "On the day after his death, when he was being carried out for burial in the Church of the Nuns at Fontevraud, earl Richard, his son and heir, came to meet him, and, smitten with compunction, wept bitterly." He adds,—in the belief of that age that the body of the murdered bled at the presence of the murderer,—“immediately on which, the blood flowed in streams from the nostrils of the body, at the approach of his son." This is at least an indication of the common opinion as to the conduct of Richard. His remorse, or his deference to that opinion, produced an unexpected result: "All the persons, clergy as well as laity, who, leaving his father, had adhered to himself, he held in abhorrence, and banished from his acquaintanceship; while those who had faithfully served his father, he retained with him, and enriched with numerous benefits."

Richard was crowned king of England, at Westminster, on the 3rd of September, 1189. During the interval of two months from his father's death, his mother, Eleanor, had exercised some administrative powers; and had ordered the liberation of all prisoners, "for the good of the soul of Henry, her lord, inasmuch as, in her own person, she had learnt by experience, that confinement is distasteful to mankind."* At the coronation of Richard there was more than usual magnificence. The golden spurs, the sceptre, the rod with the dove, the great and massive crown decorated with precious stones, were carried by earls; and then Richard, duke of Normandy, walked between the bishop of Durham and the bishop of Bath, four barons holding over them a canopy of silk. With a great company of earls, barons, and knights, proceeding to the altar, Richard swore to observe peace, honour, and reverence towards the Holy Church, and to exercise true justice and equity

* Hoveden.

towards the people committed to his charge. After the gorgeous ceremonies of the coronation, the crowned king went to dine, with archbishops and bishops at his table, and earls and barons waiting on him, and citizens of London serving in his cellar, and those of Winchester in his kitchen. Then, the chief men of the Jews came to offer presents to the king. They had been forbidden to come, but they came with gifts, and they were therefore bold. The common people, according to the chronicler, rushed upon the Jews, stripped them, and cast them forth out of the king's hall, with wounds and blows. The citizens of London, following the example, attacked and murdered the Jews in the city, and burnt their houses. Some of the offenders were hanged, by the king's command. But, not altogether in that spirit of justice in which he had sworn to govern, he punished the rioters, "not for the sake of the Jews, but on account of the houses and property of the Christians which they had burnt and plundered."* Under Henry II. the Jews had only been robbed. They were the great accumulators of property, as lenders of money; and all the general hatred against those who took interest, or use, for money, was increased by the vulgar prejudices against this unhappy people, to whom all hateful opinions were ascribed, and who were universally believed to be cruel murderers of innocent children, as well as rapacious plunderers of insolvent barons. After the riot of London, the spirit of persecution went through the kingdom; and the Jews were barbarously treated and atrociously massacred in many a town. The crusade was resolved upon. Richard, and Philip of France, had agreed to proceed to the Holy Land, after the Easter of 1190. Large bodies of crusaders were gathering in England; and, as they marched to the coast for embarkation, they exhibited the Christian spirit in which they proceeded upon their adventures, by inciting the people to plunder and murder the Israelites. At York, this persecuted race exhibited a sublime heroism, which could only have been inspired by the solemn remembrance of the faith and courage of the ancient children of Zion. A body of armed men entered the city, and commenced their work of plunder and massacre, by attacking the house of a Jew who had perished in the riot of London. All the Jews of York then claimed shelter in the castle. They were admitted, to the number of five hundred. The governor went away; and, upon his return, the Jews, alarmed for their safety, refused him re-admission. The fortress was attacked on all sides, and ran-

* Hoveden.

soms were refused. Then the desperate race, all except a few, put their wives and children to death, and stabbed each other, that they might not fall into the hands of their cruel enemies. The few who shrank from this terrible self-sacrifice were murdered. The Jews had deposited their bonds with the officers of the cathedral; but the authors of this catastrophe obtained possession of these documents, and burnt them in the nave of the church. One great object of the persecution was accomplished. A load of debt was wiped off the estates of many a servant of the Cross, by the destruction of his victims, and, with them, the evidence of his own obligations was destroyed. Dr. Lingard writes, "In narrating so many horrors, it is a consolation to find them uniformly reprobated by the historians of the time."* Has Dr. Lingard overlooked Richard of Devizes, who, in a few sentences, exhibits the horrible fanaticism with which the monkish chroniclers too often spoke of the remnant of the Israelites? This Carthusian says, "A sacrifice of the Jews to their father the devil was commenced in the city of London, and so long was the duration of this famous mystery, that the holocaust could scarcely be accomplished the ensuing day. The other cities and towns emulated the faith of the Londoners." In the blasphemous words which follow, he calls the murdered people "blood-suckers."

Under such auspices was the third crusade commenced. Richard whom the monk of Devizes calls "a king worthy of the name of king," exhibited his royal spirit in one universal swoop of extortion and corruption, to raise money for his great adventure in the East. In his father's treasury he found a hundred thousand marks; but this sum was a trifle for his extravagant purposes. He put up the crown demesnes for sale. He sold the public offices. He sold earldoms. He sold the claim which Henry had asserted to the right of homage for the crown of Scotland. He has no shame in thus degrading the king for the ambition of the crusader. "I would sell London, if I could find a chapman," he exclaimed. "Richard's presence-chamber was a market overt, in which all that the king could bestow—all that could be derived from the bounty of the crown or imparted by the royal prerogative,—was disposed of to the best chapman."† When the wholesale dealer returned, after an absence of four years, he forcibly resumed the lands which he had sold, and turned out the officers who had purchased their places.

* History, vol. ii., 8vo, p. 447.

† Sir F. Palgrave, "Introduction to Rotuli Curie Regis."

"His generosity and his virtuous endowments," says an enthusiastic chronicler of the crusades, "the ruler of the world should have given to ancient times."* From the hour when William I. set his foot on the shores of Pevensey, there was not one of the Norman race who manifested so much indifference for the real duties of a king, knew so little of England, regarded it so wholly as a country to plunder, was so entirely absorbed by personal motives, as this "lion-hearted" Richard. He had one large, passionate idea, which he carried out with surpassing bravery, and with the loftiest contempt of danger and privation. But in this rash and proud warrior, we see little of a wise ruler, and nothing of a patriotic ruler of England. He was Richard of Normandy. In the enterprise of the Crusades, he could not lead his island soldiers without making their progress, as well as his own, famous. But he was the unconscious instrument of a more lasting good. By his prodigal expenditure, and his destruction of life, in objects that were in very small degree national, he advanced the time when England would become a nation, without sympathy for Norman dukes; and, self-reliant, without the encumbered dominion of the jarring feudatories of France.

Geoffrey de Vinsauf has described Richard as tall of stature; in figure graceful; his hair between red and auburn; his arms and legs long; his strength excelling all men. The same interesting chronicler records a discourse, in 1192, between the bishop of Salisbury and Saladin, in which the bishop extols Richard's valour and liberality. The discreet Saladin, in acknowledging Richard's chivalric honour and bravery, said, that he would rather have wealth, with wisdom and moderation, than display immoderate valour and rashness. Taking "wealth" in the sense in which Saladin used it, Saladin is the civilised statesman in his views, and Richard the fighting barbarian. By the aid of the troubadours, Richard has been installed in ancient romance as the great hero of chivalry. In later times we have been compelled to sympathise with the "black knight" of "Ivanhoe," and the "lion-heart" of "The Talisman." But we must read history with other eyes; and, with all love and veneration for the great novelist, we must presume to doubt whether the name of Richard is, or ought to be, "so dear to Englishmen" as Scott implies.† It will be convenient rapidly

* "Geoffrey de Vinsauf's Itinerary of Richard I. to the Holy Land," p. 155. Bohn's edit.

† Preface to "The Talisman."

to follow the narratives of the third crusade for a little while, without interrupting the story with reference to the internal condition of England.

It was midsummer in 1190, before Richard and Philip set out on their great expedition. Richard proceeded from Tours, Philip from Paris. They met at Vezelay, and thence marched to Lyons. The arrowy Rhone was with difficulty crossed. The pavilions of the associated armies were at length pitched in the meadows on its bank. The leaders and their followers here separated. Richard took the road to Marseilles. His fleet had not appeared. His impatience drove him onward; and he left his army, coasting along the Italian shores, till he reached Messina. His fleet was there before him. At Messina he engaged in a quarrel with the prince and the people. The king of France, who had arrived before Richard, wisely kept aloof from these differences. It was Richard's personal quarrel about the dower of his sister; and it was at last ended by the payment of forty thousand ounces of gold by Tancred, the king of Sicily, and by the betrothal of Arthur of Bretagne, the nephew of Richard, to the daughter of the Sicilian king. From this period Philip Augustus saw in Richard the haughty assertor of his private interests; and he devoted himself to the advancement of his own rival interests, which finally expelled the kings of England from Normandy.

Richard, the crusader, has been, as yet, a long while absent from the scenes of the crusades. He waits at Messina, in company with the French king. The followers of both leaders complain of the individual cost of this strange delay. Richard offers to advance money to all who are in want. He gives Philip a half of the large sum that he has raised from the king of Sicily. But they have a quarrel about matrimonial projects. Adelais, sister to the king of France, was in some manner betrothed to Richard; but Richard now refuses her and proffers his hand to Berengaria, daughter of the king of Navarre. The difference is reconciled by money, and Philip departs for Syria. Richard's mother and bride arrive at Messina. The Holy Land was within a few days' sail; but, after he leaves Sicily, he is engaged in another episode of war, before he reaches his destination. Some of his vessels had been stranded at Cyprus, and had been subjected to the barbarous inhospitality which was not uncommon in those times. Richard is ardent for revenge. He engages in a contest with Isaac, emperor of Cyprus; subjects him to a heavy tribute; binds him "in silver chains," and

keeps him in captivity till he is released by death. The conquest of Cyprus was useful to the crusaders; and Richard exhibited, perhaps unconsciously, some of the policy of a wise commander in his attack upon it. At Lymasol, in Cyprus, Richard married Berengaria.

Richard at length set sail from Cyprus, on the 5th of June, 1191. A year had nearly passed since he and Philip had met on the plains of Vezelay. During that period, and for a year previous, Acre had been in vain besieged by the Christian host. On his voyage, Richard fell in with an enormous galley, bearing ammunition and stores for the relief of Acre. As his smaller vessels attacked the great Saracen dromond, as it was called, the Greek fire, that terrible liquid flame which was unknown to Richard's men, was poured down upon them from the high deck; and they would have been beaten off but for Richard's threat—"I will crucify all my soldiers if she is not taken." The vessel, with many hundred men, was at length sunk. As the English fleet approached Acre, Richard gazed upon the high tower of the city, and then the smaller fortresses showed him their formidable fronts. There he saw the Christian hosts encamped in the plain; but on the distant hills, beyond the besiegers, was the mighty army of Saladin, whose standard waved amongst innumerable tents, the bright colours of his pavilions glittering in that summer sun. As Richard landed, a shout of joy went up from the crusader's camp, with the clang of trumpets, and the loud chorus of national songs; and the night was passed in dance and revelry, amidst an illumination of waxen torches which lighted up the whole valley. The English king having heard that the king of France had made liberal donations to his soldiers, proclaimed a higher rate of pay for every one in his service, of whatever nation. But an intermitting fever checked his activity, and he waited for the arrival of some more men from England. Philip led his troops to an assault of the city, and was repulsed. As Richard regained his strength the attacks were more vigorous. The battering-ram was brought up to shake the massive walls; and amidst its heavy strokes, the Turks shouted, and filled the air with the noise of their gongs, so that Saladin, on the distant hills, should hear the signal, and come to their relief. The crusaders had to assail the city, and to defend themselves. Day by day there were desperate battles in the trenches. But still the siege went on. The Greek fire was rained from the walls of Acre on the besiegers; and the besiegers cast large stones amongst the besieged from their cumbrous machines. It is amusing in these

our days of the mightiest artillery, to read in the chronicles of those times of the feeble operations of the petraria, the balista, and the mangonel. The king of France had a petraria, for casting large stones, which the Turks called "Bad Neighbour;" and with one which they called "Bad Kinsman," they often broke "Bad Neighbour" to pieces. There was another engine called "the petraria of God," by which a priest constantly preached, and exhorted the bringers of stone and the engineers, to persevere in their holy labours. All the various machines were plied night and day. But more formidable than the mangonels of Richard, which hurled stones even to the inner rows of the city market-place, or his scorpions, which sent their long arrows to the distant battlements, was the approach of famine. Saladin could not penetrate the lines of the Crusaders to supply the brave defenders of Acre with new stores. After long negotiation it was agreed that the city should be surrendered, a certain portion of the garrison being left as hostages, for the performance of the conditions of capitulation, the most important in the eyes of the Crusaders being, that Saladin should restore the Holy Cross. The Turks were also to pay a large sum of money, and set at liberty fifteen hundred Christian captives. During the siege, the loss of human life was enormous. Geoffrey de Vinsauf estimates that three hundred thousand Christians perished from the time of its commencement to the surrender of the city.

Philip of France, after the capture of Acre, resolved to return home. A furious bigot, who had, in the beginning of his reign, banished every one from his dominions who dared to gainsay the laws of the Church, he was yet the craftiest of politicians. He had measured himself with Richard, and had found that the subtlety of the fox might be as effectual as the rage of the lion. He had borne indignities from him. He was jealous that amongst all the host of the Crusaders, "there was not of him a word, but all of Richard the king."* He had his own schemes to pursue in the absence of Richard from his continental dominions. The duke of Normandy bound his feudal superior by the customary oaths, not to make war upon his territories, while he was not there to defend them; and the king of France left ten thousand soldiers under the command of Richard. But they parted in anger and mutual hatred. The Crusaders regarded Philip as a deserter. If he had remained, perhaps his policy, if not his religion, might have saved the Christian character from the eternal disgrace of one of the atrocities of the

* Robert of Gloucester.

“lion-hearted.” We shall not trust ourselves to narrate this crowning horror of the siege of Acre, in any other words than in those of the chronicler, Geoffrey de Vinsauf, who was himself a crusader. Saladin had delayed to restore the cross, within the time agreed; and he had asked further time. “When it became clearly evident to king Richard that a longer period had elapsed than had been fixed, and that Saladin was obdurate, and would not give himself trouble to ransom the hostages, he called together a council of the chiefs of the people, by whom it was resolved that the hostages should all be hanged, except a few nobles of the higher class, who might ransom themselves, or be exchanged for some Christian captives. King Richard, aspiring to destroy the Turks root and branch, and to punish their wanton arrogance, as well as to abolish the law of Mahomet, and to vindicate the Christian religion, on the Friday after the Assumption of the blessed Virgin Mary, ordered 2700 of the Turkish hostages to be led forth from the city and hanged; his soldiers marched forward with delight to fulfil his commands, and to retaliate, with the assent of the Divine Grace, by taking revenge upon those who had destroyed so many of the Christians with missiles from bows and arbalasts.”

In the guilt of Richard, the duke of Burgundy participated, by massacring the prisoners which had been taken under the banner of France. Saladin retaliated by the decapitation of his Christian prisoners. After this mutual slaughter, Richard led his army, now reduced to thirty thousand men, by the line of the coast to Jaffa. They marched, as in the time of king Stephen, with a high standard on a waggon. Pack-horses and loaded wains went slowly on by this difficult path on the side of the sea; and the Saracens, who hovered round their march, often attacked the troops and plundered the baggage. The Crusaders were moving on amidst sacred localities, and Capernaum and Cæsarea were familiar names, at least to the priests who marched with them. At night-fall, before the soldiers lay down to rest, a voice was heard in the middle of the camp, crying, “Help! help! for the holy sepulchre!” Then the whole army took up the words; and the herald again and again repeated them, and the men again and again cried, “Help! help! for the holy sepulchre!” During the night they were stung by venomous reptiles; and when again on their march, the troops of the indefatigable Saladin hovered around them—Turks and Bedouins—darkening the air with their showers of arrows. “The strength of all paganism,” says Vinsauf, “had gathered together from Damascus to Persia, from the Mediterranean to the East.”

CHAPTER XXII.

Victory of Richard over Saladin.—News from England.—Deposition of the Chancellor Longchamp.—Folk-mote in London.—Assassination of the Marquis of Montferrat.—Last Campaign for the Recovery of Jerusalem.—Richard retreats.—Battle of Jaffa.—Truce; and Death of Saladin.—Captivity of Richard.—Prince John's Proceedings in England.—Release of the King.—Condition of the English People.—William Fitz-Osbert.—Oppression of the Poor by the Civic Authorities of London.—The Cities and Great Towns.—The Outlaws of the Forests.—The Troubadours and the Ballad-singers.—The Industrious Classes.—Sports.—Richard, the King, leaves England.—His Wars in Normandy.—Richard's last Fight.—His Death.

A MOST signal victory was obtained by Richard over Saladin, on the 7th of September, 1191, which is briefly described in a letter of the king to the abbot of Clairval: “Our vanguard having gone before and pitched their tents at Assur, Saladin with a mighty host of Saracens made an attack upon our rear-guard; on which, by the favouring grace of the Divine mercy, he was put to flight by only four battalions who faced about against him, and for a whole league was pursued in his flight by the entire troop of the Christians; in consequence of which, such a slaughter took place of the more noble Saracens whom Saladin had with him, namely, in the vicinity of Assur, on the vigil of the Nativity of Saint Mary the Virgin, being Saturday, that Saladin had experienced none like thereto on any one day in the preceding forty years * Vinsauf is rapturous in admiration of the prowess of “the king, the fierce, the extraordinary king,” who, on this day, “wherever he turned, brandishing his sword, carved a wide path for himself.” In pitched fight, or in sudden skirmish, Richard was always foremost.

The “Melech Ric,” as the Turks called him, was as rash as he was dauntless. He goes hawking, leaving the line of his march, with a small escort; falls asleep on the ground; and is only saved from captivity by one of his companions, with the true heart of a noble soldier, calling out, “I am the Melech,” and so surrendered himself. † Richard was constantly exhorted to be more careful; but says Vinsauf, “the king's nature still broke out.” Jaffa was reached,

* This letter is given by Coveden.

† Richard did common justice to his faithful follower, by redeeming him at the price of the ransom of ten noble Turks, before he left Palestine.