

**JACOB
ABBOTT**

RICHARD I

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Richard I Makers of History:

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Jacob Abbott

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PREFACE

The author of this series has made it his special object to confine himself very strictly, even in the most minute details which he records, to historic truth. The narratives are not tales founded upon history, but history itself, without any embellishment, or any deviations from the strict truth so far as it can now be discovered by an attentive examination of the annals written at the time when the events themselves occurred. In writing the narratives, the author has endeavored to avail himself of the best sources of information which this country affords; and though, of course, there must be in these volumes, as in all historical accounts, more or less of imperfection and error, there is no intentional embellishment. Nothing is stated, not even the most minute and apparently imaginary details, without what was deemed good historical authority. The readers, therefore, may rely upon the record as the truth, and nothing but the truth, so far as an honest purpose and a careful examination have been effectual in ascertaining it.

Chapter I.

King Richard's Mother

1137-1154

Richard the Crusader

A quarrelsome king

King Richard the First, the Crusader, was a boisterous, reckless, and desperate man, and he made a great deal of noise in the world in his day. He began his career very early in life by quarreling with his father. Indeed, his father, his mother, and all his brothers and sisters were engaged, as long as the father lived, in perpetual wars against each other, which were waged with the most desperate fierceness on all sides. The subject of these quarrels was the different possessions which the various branches of the family held or claimed in France and in England, each endeavoring to dispossess the others. In order to understand the nature of these difficulties, and also to comprehend fully

what sort of a woman Richard's mother was, we must first pay a little attention to the map of the countries over which these royal personages held sway.



Richard's kingdom

Union of England and Normandy

England was a possession of Normandy

We have already seen, in another volume of this series,¹ how the two countries of Normandy on the Continent, and of England, became united under one government. England, however, did not conquer and hold Normandy; it was Normandy that conquered and held England. The relative situation of these two countries is shown on the map. Normandy, it will be seen, was situated in the northern part of France, being separated from England by the English Channel. Besides Normandy, the sovereigns of the country held various other possessions in France, and this French portion of the compound realm over which they reigned they considered as far the most important portion. England was but a sort of appendage to their empire.

¹ History of William the Conqueror.

Eleanora of Aquitaine

You will see by the map the situation of the River Loire. It rises in the centre of France, and flows to the westward, through a country which was, even in those days, very fertile and beautiful. South of the Loire was a sort of kingdom, then under the dominion of a young and beautiful princess named Eleanora. The name of her kingdom was Aquitaine. This lady afterward became the mother of Richard. She was very celebrated in her day, and has since been greatly renowned in history under the name of Eleanora of Aquitaine.

The contemporaries of Eleanora

Royal match-making

Eleanora received her realm from her grandfather. Her father had gone on a crusade with his brother, Eleanora's uncle, Raymond, and had been killed in the East. Raymond had made himself master of Antioch. We shall presently hear of this Raymond again. The grandfather abdicated in Eleanora's favor when she was about fourteen years of age. There were two other powerful sovereigns in France at this time, Louis, King of

France, who reigned in Paris, and Henry, Duke of Normandy and King of England. King Louis of France had a son, the Prince Louis, who was heir to the crown. Eleanora's grandfather formed the scheme of marrying her to this Prince Louis, and thus to unite his kingdom to hers. He himself was tired of ruling, and wished to resign his power, with a view of spending the rest of his days in penitence and prayer. He had been a very wicked man in his day, and now, as he was growing old, he was harassed by remorse for his sins, and wished, if possible, to make some atonement for them by his penances before he died.

The conditions of the marriage

So he called all his barons together, and laid his plans before them. They consented to them on two conditions. One was, that Eleanora should first see Louis, and say whether she was willing to have him for her husband. If not, she was not to be compelled to marry him. The other condition was, that their country, Aquitaine, was not to be combined with the dominions of the King of France after the marriage, but was to continue a separate and independent realm, to be governed by Louis and Eleanora, not as King and Queen of France, but as Duke and Duchess of Aquitaine. Both these conditions were complied with. The interview was arranged between Louis and Eleanora, and Eleanora concluded that she should like the king for a husband very much. At least she said so, and the marriage was

concluded.

Apparent prosperity of Eleanora

Indeed, the match thus arranged for Eleanora was, in all worldly respects, the most eligible one that could be made. Her husband was the heir-apparent to the throne of France. His capital was Paris, which was then, as now, the great centre in Europe of all splendor and gayety. The father of Louis was old, and not likely to live long; indeed, he died very soon after the marriage, and thus Eleanora, when scarcely fifteen, became Queen of France as well as Duchess of Aquitaine, and was thus raised to the highest pinnacle of worldly grandeur.

Eleanora's accomplishments

She was young and beautiful, and very gay in her disposition, and she entered at once upon a life of pleasure. She had been well educated. She could sing the songs of the Troubadours, which was the fashionable music of those days, in a most charming manner. Indeed, she composed music herself, and wrote lines to accompany it. She was quite celebrated for her learning, on account of her being able both to read and write: these were rare accomplishments for ladies in those days.

The Crusades

She spent a considerable portion of her time in Paris, at the court of her husband, but then she often returned to Aquitaine, where she held a sort of court of her own in Bordeaux, which was her capital. She led this sort of life for some time, until at length she was induced to form a design of going to the East on a crusade. The Crusades were military expeditions which went from the western countries of Europe to conquer Palestine from the Turks, in order to recover possession of Jerusalem and of the sepulchre where the body of Christ was laid.

A monk preaching the Crusades

It had been for some time the practice for the princes and knights, and other potentates of France and England, to go on these expeditions, on account of the fame and glory which those who distinguished themselves acquired. The people were excited, moreover, to join the Crusades by the preachings of monks and hermits, who harangued them in public places and urged them to go. At these assemblages the monks held up symbols of the crucifixion, to inspire their zeal, and promised them the special favor of heaven if they would go. They said that whoever devoted himself to this great cause should surely be pardoned for all the

sins and crimes that he had committed, whatever they might be; and whenever they heard of the commission of any great crimes by potentates or rulers, they would seize upon the occasion to urge the guilty persons to go and fight for the cross in Palestine, as a means of wiping away their guilt.

The reasons why Louis and Eleanora undertook a crusade

One of these preachers charged such a crime upon Louis, the husband of Eleanora. It seems that, in a quarrel which he had with one of his neighbors, he had sent an armed force to invade his enemy's dominions, and in storming a town a cathedral had been set on fire and burned, and fifteen hundred persons, who had taken refuge in it as a sanctuary, had perished in the flames. Now it was a very great crime, according to the ideas of those times, to violate a sanctuary; and the hermit-preacher urged Louis to go on a crusade in order to atone for the dreadful guilt he had incurred by not only violating a sanctuary, but by overwhelming, in doing it, so many hundreds of innocent women and children in the awful suffering of being burned to death. So Louis determined to go on a crusade, and Eleanora determined to accompany him. Her motive was a love of adventure and a fondness for notoriety. She thought that by going out, a young and beautiful princess, at the head of an army of Crusaders, into the East, she would make herself a renowned heroine in the eyes of the whole world.

So she immediately commenced her preparations, and by the commanding influence which she exerted over the ladies of the court, she soon inspired them all with her own romantic ardor.

Amazons

The power of ridicule

The ladies at once laid aside their feminine dress, and clothed themselves like Amazons, so that they could ride astride on horseback like men. All their talk was of arms, and armor, and horses, and camps. They endeavored, too, to interest all the men – the princes, and barons, and knights that surrounded them – in their plans, and to induce them to join the expedition. A great many did so, but there were some that shook their heads and seemed inclined to stay at home. They knew that so wild and heedless a plan as this could end in nothing but disaster. The ladies ridiculed these men for their cowardice and want of spirit, and they sent them their distaffs as presents. "We have no longer any use for the distaffs," said they, "but, as you are intending to stay at home and make women of yourselves, we send them to you, so that you may occupy yourselves with spinning while we are gone." By such taunts and ridicule as this, a great many were shamed into joining the expedition, whose good sense made

them extremely averse to have any thing to do with it.

The plans and purposes of the female Crusaders

The expedition was at length organized and prepared to set forth. It was encumbered by the immense quantity of baggage which the queen and her party of women insisted on taking. It is true that they had assumed the dress of Amazons, but this was only for the camp and the field. They expected to enjoy a great many pleasures while they were gone, to give and receive a great many entertainments, and to live in luxury and splendor in the great cities of the East. So they must needs take with them large quantities of baggage, containing dresses and stores of female paraphernalia of all kinds. The king remonstrated against this folly, but all to no purpose. The ladies thought it very hard if, in going on such an expedition, they could not take with them the usual little comforts and conveniences appropriate to their sex. So it ended with their having their own way.

Antioch

Meeting the Saracens

The caprices and freaks of these women continued to harass

and interfere with the expedition during the whole course of it. The army of Crusaders reached at length a place near Antioch, in Asia Minor, where they encountered the Saracens. Antioch was then in the possession of the Christians. It was under the command of the Prince Raymond, who has already been spoken of as Eleanora's uncle. Raymond was a young and very handsome prince, and Eleanora anticipated great pleasure in visiting his capital. The expedition had not, however, yet reached it, but were advancing through the country, defending themselves as well as they could against the troops of Arab horsemen that were harassing their march.

Choosing an encampment

The result of the queen's generalship

The commanders were greatly perplexed in this emergency to know what to do with the women, and with their immense train of baggage. The king at last sent them on in advance, with all his best troops to accompany them. He directed them to go on, and encamp for the night on certain high ground which he designated, where they would be safe, he said, from an attack by the Arabs. But when they approached the place, Eleanora found a green and fertile valley near, which was very romantic and beautiful,

and she decided at once that this was a much prettier place to encamp in than the bare hill above. The officers in command of the troops remonstrated in vain. Eleanora and the ladies insisted on encamping in the valley. The consequence was, that the Arabs came and got possession of the hill, and thus put themselves between the division of the army which was with Eleanora and that which was advancing under the king. A great battle was fought. The French were defeated. A great many thousand men were slain. All the provisions for the army were cut off, and all the ladies' baggage was seized and plundered by the Arabs. The remainder of the army, with the king, and the queen, and the ladies, succeeded in making their escape to Antioch, and there Prince Raymond opened the gates and let them in.

A quarrel

As soon as Eleanora and the other ladies recovered a little from their fright and fatigue, they began to lead very gay lives in Antioch, and before long a serious quarrel broke out between Louis and the queen. The cause of this quarrel was Raymond. He was a young and handsome man, and he soon began to show such fondness for Eleanora that the king's jealousy was aroused, and at length the king discerned, as he said, proofs of such a degree of intimacy between them as to fill him with rage. He determined to leave Antioch immediately, and take Eleanora with him. She was very unwilling to go, but the king was so angry that he

compelled her to accompany him. So he went away abruptly, scarcely bidding Raymond good-by at all, and proceeded with Eleanora and nearly all his company to Jerusalem. Eleanora submitted, though she was exceedingly out of humor.

The queen at Jerusalem

A divorce proposed

The king, too, on his part, was as much out of humor as the queen. He determined that he would not allow her to accompany him any more on the campaign; so he left her at Jerusalem, a sort of prisoner, while he put himself at the head of his army and went forth to prosecute the war. By-and-by, when he came back to Jerusalem, and inquired about his wife's conduct while he had been gone, he learned some facts in respect to the intimacy which she had formed with a prince of the country during his absence, that made him more angry than ever. He declared that he would sue for a divorce. She was a wicked woman, he said, and he would repudiate her.

One of his ministers, however, contrived to appease him, at least so far as to induce him to abandon this design. The minister did not pretend to say that Eleanora was innocent, or that she did not deserve to be repudiated, but he said that if the

divorce was to be carried into effect, then Louis would lose all claim to Eleanora's possessions, for it will be recollected that the dukedom of Aquitaine, and the other rich possessions which belonged to Eleanora before her marriage, continued entirely separate from the kingdom of France, and still belonged to her.

The king and Eleanora had a daughter named Margaret, who was now a young child, but who, when she grew up, would inherit both her father's and her mother's possessions, and thus, in the end, they would be united, if the king and queen continued to live together in peace. But this would be all lost, as the minister maintained in his argument with the king, in case of a divorce.

"If you are divorced from her," said he, "she will soon be married again, and then all her possessions will finally go out of your family."

The failure of the crusade

Returning to France

So the king concluded to submit to the shame of his wife's dishonor, and still keep her as his wife. But he had now lost all interest in the crusade, partly on account of his want of success in it, and partly on account of his domestic troubles. So he left the Holy Land, and took the queen and the ladies, and the remnant

of his troops, back again to Paris. Here he and the queen lived very unhappily together for about two years.

The queen's new lover

A divorce again proposed

At the end of this time the queen became involved in new difficulties in consequence of her intrigues. The time had passed away so rapidly that it was now thirteen years since her marriage, and she was about twenty-eight years of age – old enough, one would think, to have learned some discretion. After, however, amusing herself with various lovers, she at length became enamored of a young prince named Henry Plantagenet, who afterward became Henry the Second of England, and was the father of Richard, the hero of this history. Henry was at this time Duke of Normandy. He came to visit the court of Louis in Paris, and here, after a short time, Eleanora conceived the idea of being divorced from Louis in order to marry him. Henry was a great deal younger than Eleanora, being then only about eighteen years of age; but he was very agreeable in his person and manners, and Queen Eleanora was quite charmed with him. It was not, however, to be expected that he should be so much charmed with her; for, although she had been very beautiful, she had now so

far passed the period of her youth, and had been subjected to so many exposures, that the bloom of her early beauty was in a great measure gone. She was now nearly thirty years old, having been married twelve or thirteen years. She, however, made eager advances to Henry, and finally gave him to understand, that if he would consent to marry her, she would obtain a divorce from King Louis, and then endow him with all her dominions.

The motives of Henry

Now there was a strong reason operating upon Henry's mind to accept this proposal. He claimed to be entitled to the crown of England. King Stephen was at this time reigning in England, but Henry maintained that he was a usurper, and he was eager to dispossess him. Eleanora represented to Henry that, with all the forces of her dominions, she could easily enable him to do that, and so at length the idea of making himself a king overcame his natural repugnance to take a wife almost twice as old as he was himself, and she, too, the divorced and discarded wife of another man. So he agreed to Eleanora's proposal, and measures were soon taken to effect the divorce.

Controversy among historians

The real motives in the divorce

There is some dispute among the ancient historians in respect to this divorce. Some say that it was the king that originated it, and that the cause which he alleged was the freedom of the queen in her love for other men, and that Eleanora, when she found that the divorce was resolved upon, formed the plan of beguiling young Henry into a marriage with her, to save her fall. Others say that the divorce was her plan alone, and that the pretext for it was the relationship that existed between her and King Louis, for they were in some degree related to each other; and the rules of the Church of Rome were very strict against such marriages. It is not improbable, however, that the real reason of the divorce was that the king desired it on account of his wife's loose and irregular character, while Eleanora wished for it in order to have a more agreeable husband. She never had liked Louis. He was a very grave and even gloomy man, who thought of nothing but the Church, and his penances and prayers, so that Eleanora said he was more of a monk than a king. This monkish turn of mind had increased upon the king since his return from the Crusades. He made it a matter of conscience to wear coarse and plain

clothes instead of dressing handsomely like a king, and he cut off the curls of his hair, which had been very beautiful, and shaved his head and his mustaches. This procedure disgusted Eleanora completely. She despised her husband herself, and ridiculed him to others, saying that he had made himself look like an old priest. In a word, all her love for him was entirely gone. Both parties being thus very willing to have the marriage annulled, they agreed to put it on the ground of their relationship, in order to avoid scandal.

A violent courtship and a narrow escape

At any rate, the marriage was dissolved, and Eleanora set out from Paris to return to Bordeaux, the capital of her own country. Henry was to meet her on the way. Her road lay along the banks of the Loire. Here she stopped for a day or two. The count who ruled this province, who was a very gay and handsome man, offered her his hand. He wished to add her dominions to his own. Eleanora refused him. The count resolved not to take the refusal, and, under some pretext or other, he detained her in his castle, resolving to keep her there until she should consent. But Eleanora was not a woman to be conquered by such a method as this. She pretended to acquiesce in the detention, and to be contented, but this was only to put the count off his guard; and then, watching her opportunity, she escaped from the castle in the night; and getting into a boat, which she had caused to be provided for the

purpose, she went down the river to the town of Tours, which was some distance below, and in the dominions of another sovereign.

Geoffrey's designs upon Eleanora

Customs of old times

In going on from Tours toward her own home, she encountered and narrowly escaped another danger. It seems that Geoffrey Plantagenet, the brother of Henry, whom she had engaged to marry, conceived the design of seizing her and compelling her to marry him instead of his brother. It may seem strange that any one should be so unprincipled and base as to attempt thus to circumvent his own brother, and take away from him his intended wife; but it was not a strange thing at all for the members of the royal and princely families of those days to act in this manner toward each other. It was the usual and established condition of things among these families that the different members of them should be perpetually intriguing and manœuvring one against the other, brother against sister, husband against wife, and father against son. In a vast number of instances these contentions broke out into open war, and the wars thus waged between the nearest relatives were of the most desperate and merciless character.

Eleanora eluded Geoffrey

It was therefore a very moderate and inconsiderable deed of brotherly hostility on the part of Geoffrey to plan the seizure of his brother's intended wife, in order to get possession of her dominions. The plan which he formed was to lie in wait for the boat which was to convey Eleanora down the river, and seize her as she came by. She, however, avoided this snare by turning off into a branch of the river which came from the south. You will see the course of the river and the situation of this southern branch on the map.² The branch which Eleanora followed not only took her away from the ambush which Geoffrey had laid for her, but conducted her toward her own home, where, after meeting with various other adventures, she arrived safely at last. Here Henry Plantagenet soon joined her, and they were married. The marriage took place only six weeks after her divorce from her former husband. This was considered a very scandalous transaction throughout, and Eleanora was now considered as having forfeited all claims to respectability of character. Still she was a great duchess in her own right, and was now wife of the heir-apparent of the English throne, and so her character made little difference in the estimation in which she was held by the world.

² See page 14

She is married to Henry

From the time of her first engagement with Henry nearly two years had elapsed before all the proceedings in relation to the divorce had been completed so as to prepare the way for the marriage, and now Eleanora was about thirty-two years of age, while Henry was only twenty. Henry seems to have felt no love for his wife. He had acceded to her proposal to marry him only in order to obtain the assistance which the forces of her dominions might supply him in gaining possession of the English throne.

Henry's expedition to England

His final coronation

Accordingly, about a year after the marriage, a military expedition was fitted out to proceed to England. The expedition consisted of thirty-six ships, and a large force of fighting men. Henry landed in England at the head of this force, and advanced against Stephen. The two princes fought for some time without any very decisive success on either side, when at length they concluded to settle the quarrel by a compromise. It was agreed that Stephen should continue to hold the crown as long as

he lived, and then that Henry should succeed him. When this arrangement had been made, Henry returned to Normandy; and then, after two or three years, he heard of Stephen's death. He then went immediately to England again, and was universally acknowledged as king. Eleanora went with him as queen, and very soon they were crowned at Westminster with the greatest possible pomp and parade.

Eleanora Queen of England

And thus it was that Eleanora of Aquitaine, the mother of Richard, in the year eleven hundred and fifty-four, became queen-consort of England.

Chapter II.

Richard's early Life

1154-1184

The sons and daughters of King Henry

Rebellions and family quarrels

Almost all the early years of the life of our hero were spent in wars which were waged by the different members of his father's family against each other. These wars originated in the quarrels that arose between the sons and their father in respect to the family property and power. Henry had five sons, of whom Richard was the third. He had also three daughters. The king held a great variety of possessions, having inherited from his father and grandfather, or received through his wife, a number of distinct and independent realms. Thus he was duke of one country, earl of another, king of a third, and count of a fourth. England was his kingdom, Normandy was his great dukedom,

and he held, besides, various other realms. He was a generous father, and he began early by conveying some of these provinces to his sons. But they were not contented with the portions that he voluntarily assigned them. They called for more. Sometimes the father yielded to these unreasonable demands, but yielding only made the young men more grasping than before, and at length the father would resist. Then came rebellions, and leagues formed by the sons against the father, and the musterings of armies, and battles, and sieges. The mother generally took part with the sons in these unnatural contests, and in the course of them the most revolting spectacles were presented to the eyes of the world – of towns belonging to a father sacked and burned by the sons, or castles beleaguered, and the garrisons reduced to famine, in which a husband was defending himself against the forces of his wife, or a sister against those of a brother. Richard himself, who seems to have been the most desperate and reckless of the family, began to take an active part in these rebellions against his father when he was only seventeen years old.

These wars continued, with various temporary interruptions, for many years, and whenever at any time a brief peace was made between the sons and the father, then the young men would usually fall to quarreling among themselves. Indeed, Henry, the oldest of them, said that the only possible bond of peace between the brothers seemed to be a common war against their father.

The appearance of the Queen Eleanora in London

Nor did the king live on much better terms with his wife than he did with his children. At the time of Eleanora's marriage with Henry, her prospects were bright indeed. The people of England, notwithstanding the evil reports that were spread in respect to her character, received her as their queen with much enthusiasm, and on the occasion of her coronation they made a great deal of parade to celebrate the event. Her appearance at that time attracted unusual attention. This was partly on account of her personal attractions and partly on account of her dress. The style of her dress was quite Oriental. She had brought home with her from Antioch a great many Eastern fashions, and many elegant articles of dress, such as mantles of silk and brocade, scarfs, jeweled girdles and bands, and beautiful veils, such as are worn at the East. These dresses were made at Constantinople, and when displayed by the queen in London they received a great deal of admiration.

Illuminated portraits

The queen's attire

We can see precisely how the queen looked in these dresses by means of illuminated portraits of her contained in the books written at that time. It was the custom in those days in writing books – the work of which was all executed by hand – to embellish them with what were called illuminations. These were small paintings inserted here and there upon the page, representing the distinguished personages named in the writing. These portraits were painted in very brilliant colors, and there are several still remaining that show precisely how Eleanora appeared in one of her Oriental dresses. She wears a close head-dress, with a circlet of gems over it. There is a gown made with tight sleeves, and fastened with full gathers just below the throat, where it is confined by a rich collar of gems. Over this is an elegant outer robe bordered with fur. The sleeves of the outer robe are very full and loose, and are lined with ermine. They open so as to show the close sleeves beneath. Over all is a long and beautiful gauze veil.

The king's attire

The dress of the king was very rich and gorgeous too; and so, indeed, was that of all the ecclesiastics and other dignitaries that took part in the celebration. All London was filled with festivity and rejoicing on the occasion, and the queen's heart overflowed with pride and joy.

The palace at Bermondsey

Scenes of festivity

After the coronation, the king conducted Eleanora to a beautiful country residence called Bermondsey, which was at a short distance from London, toward the south. Here there was a palace, and gardens, and beautiful grounds. The palace was on an elevation which commanded a fine view of the capital. Here the queen lived in royal state. She had, however, other palaces besides, and she often went to and fro among her different residences. She contrived a great many entertainments to amuse her court, such as comedies, games, revels, and celebrations of all sorts. The king joined with her in these schemes of pleasure. One of the historians of the time gives a curious

account of the appearance of the king and the court in their excursions. "When the king sets out of a morning, you see multitudes of people running up and down as if they were distracted – horses rushing against horses, carriages overturning carriages, players, gamesters, cooks, confectioners, morrice-dancers, barbers, courtezans, and parasites – making so much noise, and, in a word, such an intolerable tumultuous jumble of horse and foot, that you can imagine the great abyss hath opened and poured forth all its inhabitants."

The palace at Oxford

Its present appearance

It was about three years after Eleanora was crowned Queen of England that Richard was born. At the time of his birth, the queen was residing at a palace in Oxford. The palace has gone pretty much to ruin. The building is now used in part as a work-house. The room where Richard was born is roofless and uninhabitable. Nothing even of the interior of it remains except some traces of the fire-place. The room, however, though thus completely gone to ruin, is a place of considerable interest to the English people, who visit it in great numbers in order that they may see the place where the great hero was born; for, desperate

and reckless as Richard's character was, the people of England are quite proud of him on account of his undaunted bravery.

An early marriage

The reason for marrying children four years old

It is very curious that the first important event of Richard's childhood was his marriage. He was married when he was about four years old – that is, he was regularly and formally affianced, and a ceremony which might be called the marriage ceremony was duly performed. His bride was a young child of Louis, King of France. The child was about three years old. Her name was Alice. This marriage was the result of a sort of bargain between Henry, Richard's father, and Louis, the French king. They had had a fierce dispute about the portion of another of Louis's children that had been married in the same way to one of Richard's brothers named Henry. The English king complained that the dowry was not sufficient, and the French king, after a long discussion, agreed to make it up by giving another province with his daughter Alice to Richard. The reason that induced the King of England to effect these marriages was, that the provinces that were bestowed with their infant wives as their dowries came into his hands as the guardian of their husbands while they were

minors, and thus extended, as it were, his own dominions.

Vice-regencies

The rebellions of Richard

By this time the realms of King Henry had become very extensive. He inherited Normandy, you will recollect, from his ancestors, and he was in possession of that country before he became King of England. When he was married to Eleanor, he acquired through her a large addition to his territory by becoming, jointly with her, the sovereign of her realms in the south of France. Then, when he became King of England, his power was still more extended, and, finally, by the marriages of his sons, the young princes, he received other provinces besides, though, of course, he held these last only as the guardian of his children. Now, in governing these various realms, the king was accustomed to leave his wife and his sons in different portions of them, to rule them in his absence, though still under his command. They each maintained a sort of court in the city where their father left them, but they were expected to govern the several portions of the country in strict subjection to their father's general control. The boys, however, as they grew older, became more and more independent in feeling; and the queen,

being a great deal older than her husband, and having been, before her marriage, a sovereign in her own right, was disposed to be very little submissive to his authority. It was under these circumstances that the family quarrels arose that led to the wars spoken of at the beginning of the chapter. Richard himself, as was there stated, began to raise rebellions against his father when he was about seventeen years old.

Whenever, in the course of these wars, the young men found themselves worsted in their contests with their father's troops, their resource was to fly to Paris, in order to get King Louis to aid them. This Louis was always willing to do, for he took great pleasure in the dissensions which were thus continually breaking out in Henry's family.

Eleanora's time of suffering comes

The queen's flight

Besides these wars, Queen Eleanora had one great and bitter source of trouble in a guilty attachment which her husband cherished for a beautiful lady more nearly of his own age than his wife was. Her name was Rosamond. She is known in history as Fair Rosamond. A full account of her will be given in the next chapter. All that is necessary to state here is that Queen Eleanora

was made very wretched by her husband's love for Rosamond, though she had scarcely any right to complain, for she had, as it would seem, done all in her power to alienate the affections of her husband from herself by the levity of her conduct, and by her bold and independent behavior in all respects. At last, at one time while she was at Bordeaux, the capital of her realm of Aquitaine, she heard rumors that the king was intending to obtain a divorce from her, in order that he might openly marry Rosamond, and she determined to go back to her former husband, Louis of France. The country, however, was full of castles, which were garrisoned by Henry's troops, and she was afraid that they would prevent her going if they knew of her intention; so she contrived a plan of disguising herself in man's clothes, and undertook to make her escape in that way. She succeeded in getting away from Bordeaux, but her flight was soon discovered, and the officers of the garrison immediately sent off a party to pursue her. The pursuers overtook her before she had gone far, and brought her back. They treated her quite roughly, and kept her a prisoner in Bordeaux until her husband came. When Henry arrived he was quite angry with the queen for having thus undertaken to go back to her former husband, whom he considered as his greatest rival and enemy, and he determined that she should have no opportunity to make another such attempt; so he kept a very strict watch over her, and subjected her to so much restraint that she considered herself a prisoner.

The captivity in Winchester

The king had a quarrel also at this time with one of his daughters-in-law, and he made her a prisoner too. Soon after this he went back to England, taking these two captives in his train. In a short time he sent the queen to a certain palace which he had in Winchester, and there he kept her confined for sixteen years. It was during this period of their mother's captivity that the wars between the father and his sons was waged most fiercely.

The message from Henry

His death

At length, in the year eleven hundred and eighty-two, in the midst of one of the most violent wars that had raged between the king and his sons, a message came to the king that his son Henry was very dangerously sick, and that he wished his father to come and see him. The king was greatly at a loss what to do on receiving this communication. His counselors advised him not to go. It was only a stratagem, they said, on the part of the young prince, to get his father into his camp, and so take him prisoner. So the king concluded not to go. He had, however, some

misgivings that his son might be really sick, and accordingly dispatched an archbishop to him with a ring, which he said he sent to him as a token of his forgiveness and of his paternal affection. Very soon, however, a second messenger came to the king to say that Prince Henry had died. These sad tidings overwhelmed the heart of the king with the most poignant grief. He at once forgot all the undutiful and disobedient conduct of his son, and remembered him only as his dearly-beloved child. He became almost broken-hearted.

Remorse

The agonies of a wicked man's death

The prince himself, on his death-bed, was borne down with remorse and anguish in thinking of the crimes that he had committed against his father. He longed to have his father come and see him before he died. The ring which the archbishop was sent to bring to him arrived just in time, and the prince pressed it to his lips, and blessed it with tears of frantic grief. As the hour of death approached his remorse became dreadful. All the attempts made by the priests around his bed to soothe and quiet him were unavailing, and at last his agony became so great that he compelled them to put a rope around him and drag him from

his bed to a heap of ashes, placed for the purpose in his room, that he might die there. A heap of ashes, he said, was the only fit place for such a reprobate as he had been.

So will it be with all undutiful children; when on their death-beds, they reflect on their disobedient and rebellious conduct toward the father and the mother to whom they owe their being.

Affliction reconciles hostile relatives

It is remarkable how great an effect a death in a family produces in reconciling those who before had been at enmity with each other. There are many husbands and wives who greatly disagree with each other in times of health and prosperity, but who are reconciled and made to love each other by adversity and sorrow. Such was the effect produced upon the minds of Henry and Eleanora by the death of their son and heir. They were both overwhelmed with grief, for the affection which a parent bears to a child is never wholly extinguished, however undutiful and rebellious a child may be; and the grief which the two parents now felt in common brought them to a reconciliation. The king seemed disposed to forgive the queen for the offenses, whether real or imaginary, which she had committed against him. "Now that our dear son is dead and gone," said he, "let us no longer quarrel with each other." So he liberated the queen from the restraint which he had imposed upon her, and restored her once more to her rank as an English queen.

Another quarrel

This state of things continued for about a year, and then the old spirit of animosity and contention burned up once more as fiercely as ever. The king shut up Eleanora again, and a violent quarrel broke out between the king and his son Richard.

Richard's long engagement

The cause of this quarrel was connected with the Princess Alice, to whom it will be recollected Richard had been betrothed in his infancy. Richard claimed that now, since he was of age, his wife ought to be given to him, but his father kept her away, and would not allow the marriage to be consummated. The king made various excuses and pretexts for the delay. Some thought that the real reason was that he wished to continue his guardianship and his possession of the dower as long as possible, but Richard thought that his father was in love with Alice himself, and that he did not intend that he, Richard, should have her at all. This difficulty led to new quarrels, in which the king and Richard became more exasperated with each other than ever. This state of things continued until Richard was thirty-four years old and his bride was thirty. Richard was so far bound to her that he could not marry any other lady, and his father obstinately persisted in

preventing his completing the marriage with her.

The sad death of Geoffrey

Dividing the inheritance

In the mean time Prince Geoffrey, another of the king's sons, came to a miserable end. He was killed in a tournament. He was riding furiously in the tournament in the midst of a great number of other horsemen, when he was unfortunately thrown from his steed, and trodden to death on the ground by the hoofs of the other horses that galloped over him. The only two sons that were now left were Richard and John. Of these, Richard was now the oldest, and he was, of course, his father's heir. King Henry, however, formed a plan for dividing his dominions between his two sons, instead of allowing Richard to inherit the whole. John was his youngest son, and, as such, the king loved him tenderly. So he conceived the idea of leaving to Richard all his possessions in France, which constituted the most important part of his dominions, and of bestowing the kingdom of England upon John; and, in order to make sure of the carrying of this arrangement into effect, he proposed crowning John king of England forthwith.

Richard's resistance to his father's plans

Richard, however, determined to resist this plan. The former king of France, Louis the Seventh, was now dead, and his son, Philip the Second, the brother of Alice, reigned in his stead. Richard immediately set off for Paris, and laid his case before the young French king. "I am engaged," said he, "to your sister Alice, and my father will not give her to me. Help me to maintain my rights and hers."

Assistance from Philip

King Henry's reproach of his son John

Philip, like his father, was always ready to do any thing in his power to foment dissensions in the family of Henry. So he readily took Richard's part in this new quarrel, and he, somehow or other, contrived means to induce John to come and join in the rebellion. King Henry was overwhelmed with grief when he learned that John, his youngest, and now his dearest child, and the last that remained, had abandoned him. His grief was mingled with resentment and rage. He invoked the bitterest curses on his children's heads, and he caused a device to be painted for

John and sent to him, representing a young eaglet picking out the parent eagle's eyes. This was to typify to him his own undutiful and unnatural behavior.

Lady Rosamond

Thus the domestic life which Richard led while he was a young man was imbittered by the continual quarrels between the father, the mother, and the children. The greatest source of sorrow to his mother, however, was the connection which subsisted between the king and the Lady Rosamond. The nature and the results of this connection will be explained in the next chapter.

Chapter III.

Fair Rosamond

1184

The mystery surrounding Fair Rosamond's history

During his lifetime King Henry did every thing in his power, of course, to keep the circumstances of his connection with Rosamond a profound secret, and to mislead people as much as possible in regard to her. After his death, too, it was for the interest of his family that as little as possible should be known respecting her. Thus it happened that, in the absence of all authentic information, a great many strange rumors and legends were put in circulation, and at length, when the history of those times came to be written, it was impossible to separate the false from the true.

The valley of the Wye

The truth, however, so far as it can now be ascertained, seems

to be something like this: Rosamond was the daughter of an English nobleman named Clifford. Lord Clifford lived in a fine old castle situated in the valley of the Wye, in a most romantic and beautiful situation. The River Wye is in the western part of England. It flows out from among the mountains of Wales through a wild and romantic gorge, which, after passing the English frontier, expands into a broad, and fertile, and most beautiful valley. The castle of Lord Clifford was built at the opening of the gorge, and it commanded an enchanting view of the valley below.

The clandestine marriage

It was here that Rosamond spent her childhood, and here probably that Henry first met her while he was yet a young man. She was extremely beautiful, and Henry fell very deeply in love with her. This was while they were both very young, and some time before Henry thought of Eleanora for his wife. There is some reason to believe that Henry was really married to Rosamond, though, if so, the marriage was a private one, and the existence of it was kept a profound secret from all the world. The real and public marriages of kings and princes are almost always determined by reasons of state; and when Henry at last went to Paris, and saw Eleanora there, and found, moreover, that she was willing to marry him, and to bring him as her dowry all her possessions in France, which would so greatly extend his

dominions, he determined to accede to her desires, and to keep his connection with Rosamond, whatever the nature of it might have been, a profound secret forever.

So he married Eleanora and brought her to England, and lived with her, as has already been described, in the various palaces which belonged to him, sometimes in one and sometimes in another.

The palace of Woodstock

Among these palaces, one of the most beautiful was that of Woodstock. The engraving on the opposite page represents the buildings of the palace as they appeared some hundreds of years later than the time when Rosamond lived.

Rosamond's concealed cottage

The construction of a labyrinth

Deceptive paths

In the days of Henry and Rosamond the palace of Woodstock was surrounded with very extensive and beautiful gardens and

grounds. Somewhere upon these grounds the story was that Henry kept Rosamond in a concealed cottage. The entrance to the cottage was hidden in the depths of an almost impenetrable thicket, and could only be approached through a tortuous and intricate path, which led this way and that by an infinite number of turns, forming a sort of maze, made purposely to bewilder those attempting to pass in and out. Such a place was often made in those days in palace-grounds as a sort of ornament, or, rather, as an amusing contrivance to interest the guests coming to visit the proprietor. It was called a labyrinth. A great many plans of labyrinths are found delineated in ancient books. The paths were not only so arranged as to twist and turn in every imaginable direction, but at every turn there were several branches made so precisely alike that there was nothing to distinguish one from the other. Of course, one of these roads was the right one, and led to the centre of the labyrinth, where there was a house, or a pretty seat with a view, or a garden, or a shady bower, or some other object of attraction, to reward those who should succeed in getting in. The other paths led nowhere, or, rather, they led on through various devious windings in all respects similar to those of the true path, until at length they came to a sudden stop, and the explorer was obliged to return.

The paths were separated from each other by dense hedges of thorn, or by high walls, so that it was impossible to pass from one to another except by walking regularly along.

It was in a house, entered through such a labyrinth as this,

that Rosamond is said to have lived, on the grounds of the palace of Woodstock, while Queen Eleanora, as the avowed wife and queen of King Henry, occupied the palace itself. Of course, the fact that such a lady was hidden on the grounds was kept a profound secret from the queen. If this story is true, there were probably other labyrinths on the grounds, and this one was so surrounded with trees and hedges, which connected it by insensible gradations with the groves and thickets of the park, that there was nothing to attract attention to it particularly, and thus a lady might have remained concealed in it for some time without awakening suspicion.

How Rosamond's concealment was discovered by the queen

The subterranean passage

At any rate, Rosamond did remain, it is supposed for a year or two, concealed thus, until at length the queen discovered the secret. The story is that the king found his way in and out the labyrinth by means of a clew of floss silk, and that the queen one day, when riding with the king in the park, observed this clew, a part of which had, in some way or other, become attached to his spur. She said nothing, but, watching a private opportunity, she

followed the clew. It led by a very intricate path into the heart of the labyrinth. There the queen found a curiously-contrived door. The door was almost wholly concealed from view, but the queen discovered it and opened it. She found that it led into a subterranean passage. The interest and curiosity of the queen were now excited more than ever, and she determined that the mystery should be solved. So she followed the passage, and was finally led by it to a place beyond the wall of the grounds, where there was a house in a very secluded spot surrounded by thickets. Here the queen found Rosamond sitting in a bower, and engaged in embroidering.

Uncertainties of the story

She was now in a great rage both against Rosamond and against her husband. It was generally said that she poisoned Rosamond. The story was, that she took a cup of poison with her, and a dagger, and, presenting them both to Rosamond, compelled her to choose between them, and that Rosamond chose the poison, and, drinking it, died. This story, however, was not true, for it is now known that Rosamond lived many years after this time, though she was separated from the king. It is thought that her connection with the king continued for about two years after his marriage with Eleanor. She then left him. It may be that she did not know before that time that the king was married. She may have supposed that she was herself his lawful

wife, as, indeed, it is possible that she may actually have been so. At any rate, soon after she and Eleanora became acquainted with each other's existence, Rosamond retired to a convent, and lived there in complete seclusion all the rest of her days.

Rosamond retires to the convent of Godestow

The name of this convent was Godestow. It was situated near Oxford. Rosamond became a great favorite with the nuns while she remained at the convent, which was nearly twenty years. During this time the king made many donations to the convent for Rosamond's sake, and the jealousy of the queen against her beautiful rival, of course, continued unabated. It was, indeed, this difficulty in respect to Rosamond that was one of the chief causes of the domestic trouble which always existed between Henry and the queen. The world at large have always been most disposed to sympathize with Rosamond in this quarrel. She was nearly of the king's own age, and his attachment to her arose, doubtless, from sincere affection; whereas the queen was greatly his senior, and had inveigled him, as it were, into a marriage with her, through motives of the most calculating and mercenary character.

Then, moreover, Rosamond either was, or was supposed to be, a lady of great gentleness and loveliness of spirit. She was very kind to the poor, and while in the convent she was very assiduously devoted to her religious duties. Eleanora, on the other hand, was a very unprincipled and heartless woman, and she had

been so loose and free in her own manner of living too, as every body said and believed, that it was with a very ill grace that she could find any fault with her husband.

The world's sympathy with Rosamond rather than with Eleanora

Thus, under the circumstances of the case, the world has always been most inclined to sympathize with Rosamond rather than with the queen. The question which we ought to sympathize with depends upon which was really the wife of Henry. He may have been truly married to Rosamond, or at least some ceremony may have been performed which she honestly considered as a marriage. If so, she was innocent, and Henry was guilty for having virtually repudiated this marriage in order to connect himself with Eleanora for the sake of her kingdom. On the other hand, if she were not married to Henry, but used her arts to entice him away from his true wife, then she was deeply in fault. It is very difficult now to ascertain which of these suppositions is the correct one. In either case, Henry himself was guilty, toward the one or the other, of treacherously violating his marriage vows – the most solemn vows, in some respects, that a man can ever assume.

The question of the validity of the marriage

Rosamond had two children, named William and Geoffrey, and at one time in the course of his life Henry seemed to acknowledge that they were his only two children, thus admitting the validity of his marriage with Rosamond. This admission was contained in an expression which he used in addressing William on a field of battle when he came toward him at the head of his troop. "William," said he, "you are my true and legitimate son. The rest are nobodies." He may, it is true, have only intended to speak figuratively in saying this, meaning that William was the only one worthy to be considered as his son, or it may be that it was an inadvertent and hasty acknowledgment that Rosamond, and not Eleanora, was his true wife. As time rolled on, however, and the political arrangements arising out of the marriage with Eleanora and appointment of her sons to high positions in the state became more and more extended, the difficulties which the invalidation of the marriage with Eleanora would produce became very great, and immense interests were involved in sustaining it. Rosamond's rights, therefore, if she had any, were wholly overborne, and she was allowed to linger and die in her nunnery as a private person.

Burial of Rosamond

The bishop orders the remains to be removed

When at length she died, the nuns, who had become greatly attached to her, caused her to be interred in an honorable manner in the chapel, but afterward the bishop of the diocese ordered the remains to be removed. He considered Rosamond as having never been married to the king, and he said that she was not a proper person to be the subject of monumental honors in the chapel of a society of nuns; so he sent the remains away, and ordered them to be interred in the common burying-ground. If Rosamond was what he supposed her to be, and if he removed the remains in a proper and respectful manner, he was right in doing what he did. His motive may have been, however, merely a desire to please the authorities of his time, who represented, of course, the heirs of Eleanora, by sealing the stamp of condemnation on the character and position of her rival.

The nuns bring back the remains to the chapel again

But, though the authorities may have been pleased with the bishop's procedure, the nuns were not at all satisfied with it.

They not only felt a strong personal affection for Rosamond, but, as a sisterhood, they felt grateful to her memory on account of the many benefactions which the convent had received from Henry on account of her residence there. So they seized the first opportunity to take up the remains again, which consisted now of dry bones alone, and, after perfuming them and inclosing them again in a new coffin, they deposited them once more under the pavement of the chapel, and laid a slab, with a suitable inscription, over the spot to mark the place of the grave.

Rosamond's chamber

Restoration of the house

The house where Rosamond was concealed at Woodstock was regarded afterward with great interest, and there was a chamber in it that was for a long time known as Rosamond's Chamber. There remains a letter of one of the kings of England, written about a hundred years after this time, in which the king gives directions to have this house repaired, and particularly to have the chamber restored to a perfect condition. His orders are, that "the house beyond the gate in the new wall be built again, and that same chamber, called Rosamond's Chamber, be restored as before, and crystal plates" – that is, glass for the windows – "and

marble, and lead be provided for it."

From that day to this the story of Rosamond has been regarded as one of the most interesting incidents of English history.

Chapter IV.

Accession of Richard to the Throne

1189

The reverses of King Henry

Richard was called to the throne when he was about thirty-two years of age by the sudden and unexpected death of his father. The death of his father took place under the most mournful circumstances imaginable. In the war which Richard and Philip, king of France, had waged against him, he had been unsuccessful. He had been defeated in the battles and outgeneraled in the manœuvres, and his barons, one after another, had abandoned him and taken part with the rebels. King Henry was an extremely passionate man, and the success of his enemies against him filled him with rage. This rage was rendered all the more violent by the thought that it was through the unnatural ingratitude of his own son, Richard, that all these calamities came upon him. In the anguish of his despair, he cursed the day of his birth, and uttered dreadful maledictions against his children.

Negotiating a peace

At length he was reduced to such an extremity that he was obliged to submit to negotiations for peace, on just such terms as his enemies thought fit to impose. They made very hard conditions. The first attempt at negotiating the peace was made in an open field, where Philip and Henry met for the purpose, on horseback, attended by their retainers. Richard had the grace to keep away from this meeting, so as not to be an actual witness of the humiliation of his father, and so Philip and Henry were to conduct the conference by themselves.

The thunder-storm

Henry's horsemanship

The hard conditions of peace imposed by Philip and Richard

The meeting was interrupted by a thunder-storm. At first the two kings did not intend to pay any heed to the storm, but to go on with their discussions without regarding it. Henry was a

very great horseman, and spent almost his whole life in riding. One of his historians says that he never sat down except upon a saddle, unless it was when he was taking his meals. At any rate, he was almost always on horseback. He hunted on horseback, he fought on horseback, he traveled on horseback, and now he was holding a conference with his enemies on horseback, in the midst of a storm of lightning and rain. But his health had now become impaired, and his nerves, though they had always seemed to be of iron, were beginning to give way under the dreadful shocks to which they had been exposed, so that he was now far less able to endure such exposures than he had been. At length a clap of thunder broke rattling immediately over his head, and the bolt seemed to descend directly between him and Philip as they sat upon their horses in the field. Henry reeled in the saddle, and would have fallen if his attendants had not seized and held him. They found that he was too weak and ill to remain any longer on the spot, and so they bore him away to his quarters, and then Philip and Richard sent him in writing the conditions which they were going to exact from him. The conditions were very humiliating indeed. They stripped him of a great portion of his possessions, and required him to hold others in subordination to Philip and to Richard. Finally, the last of the conditions was, that he was to give Richard the kiss of peace, and to banish from his heart all sentiments of animosity and anger against him.

The sick king

Among other articles of the treaty was one binding him to pardon all the barons and other chief men who had gone over to Richard's side in the rebellion. As they read the articles over to the king, while he was lying sick upon his bed, he asked, when they came to this one, to see the list of the names, that he might know who they were that had thus forsaken him. The name at the head of the list was that of his son John – his darling son John, to defend whose rights against the aggressions of Richard had been one of his chief motives in carrying on the war. The wretched father, on seeing this name, started up from his bed and gazed wildly around.

His distress at the conduct of John

"Is it possible," he cried out, "that John, the child of my heart – he whom I have cherished more than all the rest, and for love of whom I have drawn down on mine own head all these troubles, has verily betrayed me?" They told him that it was even so.

"Then," said he, falling back helplessly on his bed, "then let every thing go as it will; I care no longer for myself or for any thing else in this world."

The palace at Chinon

The imprecations of the dying king

All this took place in Normandy, for it was Normandy that had been the chief scene of the war between the king and his son. At some little distance from the place where the king was now lying sick there was a beautiful rural palace, at a place called Chinon, which was situated very pleasantly on the banks of a small branch of the Loire. This palace was one of the principal summer resorts of the dukes of Normandy, and the king caused himself now to be carried there, in order to seek repose. But instead of being cheered by the beautiful scenes that were around him at Chinon, or reinvigorated by the comforts and the attentions which he could there enjoy, he gradually sank into hopeless melancholy, and in a few days he began to feel that he was about to die. As he grew worse his mind became more and more excited, and his attendants from time to time heard him moaning, in his anguish, "Oh, shame! shame! I am a conquered king – a conquered king! Cursed be the day on which I was born, and cursed be the children that I leave behind me!"

The priests at his bedside endeavored to remonstrate with him against these imprecations. They told him that it was a dreadful

thing for a father to curse his own children, and they urged him to retract what he had said. But he declared that he would not. He persisted in cursing all his children except Geoffrey Clifford, the son of Rosamond, who was then at his bedside, and who had never forsaken him. The king grew continually more and more excited and disordered in mind, until at length he sank into a raving delirium, and in that state he died.

The heartless conduct of the courtiers of the dead king

A dead king is a very helpless and insignificant object, whatever may have been the terror which he inspired while he was alive. As long as Henry continued to breathe, the attendants around him paid him great deference, and observed every possible form of obsequious respect, for they did not know but that he might recover, to live and reign, and lord it over them and their fortunes for fifteen or twenty years to come; but as soon as the breath was out of his body, all was over. Richard, his son, was now king, and from Henry nothing whatever was any longer to be hoped or feared. So the mercenary and heartless courtiers – the ministers, priests, bishops and barons – began at once to strip the body of all the valuables which the king had worn, and also to seize and appropriate every thing in the apartments of the palace which they could take away. These things were their perquisites, they said; it being customary, as they alleged, that the personal

effects of a deceased king should be divided among those who were his attendants when he died. Having secured this plunder, these people disappeared, and it was with the utmost difficulty that assistance enough could be procured to wrap the body in a winding-sheet, and to bring a hearse and horses to bear it away to the abbey where it was to be interred. Examples like this – of which the history of every monarchy is full – throw a great deal of light upon what is called the principle of loyalty in the hearts of those who attend upon kings.

Richard following the funeral train to the Abbey Fontevraud

While the procession was on the way to the abbey where the body was to be buried, it was met by Richard, who, having heard of his father's death, came to join in the funeral solemnities. Richard followed the train until they arrived at the abbey. It was the Abbey Fontevraud, the ancient burial-place of the Norman princes. Arrived at the abbey, the body was laid out upon the bier, and the face was uncovered, in order that Richard might once more look upon his father's features; but the countenance was so distorted with the scowling expression of rage and resentment which it had worn during the sufferer's last hours, that Richard turned away in horror from the dreadful spectacle.

Richard immediately secures the succession to the throne

But Richard soon drove away from his mind the painful thoughts which the sight of his father's face must have awakened, and turned his attention at once to the business which now pressed upon him. He, of course, was heir both to the crown of England and also to all his father's possessions in Normandy, and he felt that he must act promptly, in order to secure his rights. It is true that there was nobody to dispute his claim, unless it was his brother John, for the two sons of Rosamond, Geoffrey and William Clifford, did not pretend to any rights of inheritance. Richard had some fears of John, and he thought it necessary to take decisive measures to guard against any plots that John might be disposed to form. He sent at once to England, and ordered that his mother should be released from her imprisonment, and invested her with power to act as regent there until he should come. In the mean time, he himself remained in Normandy, and devoted himself to arranging and regulating the affairs of his French possessions. This was the wisest course for him to pursue, for there was no one in England to dispute his claims to that kingdom. On the Continent the case was different. His neighbor, Philip, King of France, was ready to take advantage of any opportunity to get possession of such provinces on the Continent as might be within his reach.

Sorrow often results in happiness

It was certainly a good deed in Richard to liberate his mother from her captivity, and to exalt her as he did to a position of responsibility and honor. Eleanora fulfilled the trust which he reposed in her in a very faithful and successful manner. The long period of confinement and suffering which she had endured seems to have exerted a very favorable influence upon her mind. Indeed, it is very often the case that sorrow and trouble have this effect. A life of prosperity and pleasure makes us heartless, selfish, and unfeeling, while sorrow softens the heart, and disposes us to compassionate the woes of others, and to do what we can to relieve them.

Eleanora queen regent

Her change of character

Eleanora was queen regent in England for two months, and during that time she employed her power in a very beneficent manner. She released many unhappy prisoners, and pardoned many persons who had been convicted of political crimes. The truth is that probably, as she found herself drawing toward

the close of life, and looked back upon her past career, and remembered her many crimes, her unfaithfulness to both her husbands, and especially her unnatural conduct in instigating her sons to rebel against their father, her heart was filled with remorse, and she found some relief from her anguish in these tardy efforts to relieve suffering which might, in some small degree, repair the evils that she had brought upon the land by the insurrections and wars of which she had been the cause. She bitterly repented of the hostility that she had shown toward her husband, and of the countless wrongs that she had inflicted upon him. While he was alive, and she was engaged in her contests with him, the excitement that she was under blinded her mind; but now that he was dead, her passion subsided, and she mourned for him with bitter grief. She distributed alms in a very abundant manner to the poor to induce them to pray for the repose of his soul. While doing these things she did not neglect the affairs of state. She made all the necessary arrangements for the immediate administration of the government, and she sent word to all the barons, and also to the bishops, and other great public functionaries, informing them that Richard was coming to assume the government of the realm, and summoning them to assemble and make ready to receive him. In about two months Richard came.

Richard's return to England

Richard's proposed crusade

Before Richard arrived in England, however, he had formed the plan, in connection with Philip, the King of France, of going on a crusade. Richard was a wild and desperate man, and he loved fighting for its own sake; and inasmuch as now, since his father was dead, and his claim to the crown of England, and to all his possessions in Normandy, was undisputed, there seemed to be nobody for him to fight at home, he conceived the design of organizing a grand expedition to go to the Holy Land and fight the Saracens.

John was very much pleased with this idea. "If Richard goes to Palestine," said he to himself, "ten to one he will get killed, and then I shall be King of England."

John's dissimulation

So John was ready to do every thing in his power to favor the plan of the crusade. He pretended to be very submissive and obedient to his brother, and to acknowledge his sovereign power as king. He aided the king as much as he could in making his

arrangements and in concocting all his plans.

A delusion

The first thing was to provide funds. A great deal of money was required for these expeditions. Ships were to be bought and equipped for the purpose of transporting the troops to the East. Arms and ammunition were to be provided, and large supplies of food. Then the princes, and barons, and knights who were to accompany the expedition required very expensive armor, and costly trappings and equipments of all sorts; for, though the pretense was that they were going out to fight for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre under the influence of religious zeal, the real motive which animated them was love of glory and display. Thus it happened that the expense which a sovereign incurred in fitting out a crusade was enormous.

The treasures of the crown

Accordingly, King Richard, immediately on his arrival in England, proceeded at once to Winchester, where his father, King Henry, had kept his treasures. Richard found a large sum of money there in gold and silver coin, and besides this there were stores of plate, of jewelry, and of precious gems of great value. Richard caused all the money to be counted in his presence, and

an exact inventory to be made of all the treasures. He then placed the whole under the charge of trusty officers of his own, whom he appointed to take care of them.

Circumstances alter cases

Accomplices ill rewarded

The next thing that Richard did was to discard and dismiss all his own former friends and adherents – the men who had taken part with him in his rebellions against his father. "Men that would join me in rebelling against my father," thought he to himself, "would join any body else, if they thought they could gain by it, in rebelling against me." So he concluded that they were not to be trusted. Indeed now, in the altered circumstances in which he was placed, he could see the guilt of rebellion and treason, though he had been blind to it before, and he actually persecuted and punished some of those who had been his confederates in his former crimes. A great many cases analogous to this have occurred in English history. Sons have often made themselves the centre and soul of all the opposition in the realm against their father's government, and have given their fathers a great deal of trouble by so doing; but then, in all such cases, the moment that the father dies the son immediately places himself at the head of

the regularly-constituted authorities of the realm, and abandons all his old companions and friends, treating them sometimes with great severity. His eyes are opened to the wickedness of making opposition to the sovereign power now that the sovereign power is vested in himself, and he disgraces and punishes his own former friends for the crime of having aided him in his undutiful behavior.

Chapter V.

The Coronation

1189

The massacre of the Jews

It was now time that the coronation should take place, and arrangements were accordingly made for performing this ceremony with great magnificence in Westminster Abbey. The day of the ceremony acquired a dreadful celebrity in history in consequence of a great massacre of the Jews, which resulted from an insurrection and riot that broke out in Westminster and London immediately after the crowning of the king. The Jews had been hated and abhorred by all the Christian nations of Europe for many ages. Since they were not believers in Christianity, they were considered as little better than infidels and heathen, and the government that oppressed and persecuted them the most was considered as doing the greatest service to the cause of religion.

Their social position

The history of the commercial character of the Jews

One very curious result followed from the legal disabilities that the Jews were under. They could not own land, and they were restricted also very much in respect to nearly all the avocations open to other men. They consequently learned gradually to become dealers in money and in jewels, this being almost the only reputable calling that was left open to them. There was another great advantage, too, for them, in dealing in property of this kind, and that was, that comprising, as such property does, great value in small bulk, it could easily be concealed, and removed from place to place whenever it was specially endangered by the edicts of governments or the hostility of enemies.

From these and similar reasons the Jews became bankers and money-lenders, and they are to this day the richest bankers and the greatest money-lenders in the world. The most powerful emperors and kings often depend upon them for the supplies that they require to carry on their great undertakings or to defray the expenses of their wars.

The persecution of the Jews in France

The Jews had gradually increased in numbers and influence in France until the time of the accession of Philip, and then he determined to extirpate them from the realm; so he issued an edict by which they were all banished from the kingdom, their property was confiscated, and every person that owed them money was released from all obligation to pay them. Of course, a great many of their debtors would pay them, notwithstanding this release, from the influence of that natural sense of justice which, in all nations and in all ages, has a very great control in human hearts; still, there were others who would, of course, avail themselves of this opportunity to defraud their creditors of what was justly their due; and being obliged, too, at the same time, to fly precipitately from the country in consequence of the decree of banishment, the poor Jews were reduced to a state of extreme distress.

Conciliating the king

Now the Jews of England, when Henry died and Richard succeeded him, began to be afraid that the new king would follow Philip's example, and in order to prevent this, and to conciliate Richard's favor, they determined to send a delegation to him at

Westminster, at the time of his coronation, with rich presents which had been procured by contributions made by the wealthy. Accordingly, on the day of the coronation, when the great crowds of people assembled at Westminster to honor the occasion, these Jews came among them.

A description of the ceremony of coronation

The ceremony of the coronation was performed in the following manner: The king, in entering the church and proceeding up toward the high altar, walked upon a rich cloth laid down for him, which had been dyed with the famous Tyrian purple. Over his head was a beautifully-wrought canopy of silk, supported by four long lances. These lances were borne by four great barons of the realm. A great nobleman, the Earl of Albemarle, bore the crown, and walked with it before the king as he advanced toward the altar. When the earl reached the altar he placed the crown upon it. The Archbishop of Canterbury stood before the altar to receive the king as he approached, and then administered the usual oath to him.

The oath was in three parts:

1. That all the days of his life he would bear peace, honor, and reverence to God and the Holy Church, and to all the ordinances thereof.
2. That he would exercise right, justice, and law on the people unto him committed.

3. That he would abrogate wicked laws and perverse customs, if any such should be brought into his kingdom, and that he would enact good laws, and the same in good faith keep, without mental reservation.

The ampulla

Having taken this oath, the king removed his upper garment, and put golden sandals upon his feet, and then was anointed by the archbishop with the holy oil on his head, breast, and shoulders. This oil was poured from a rich vessel called an *ampulla*.³

The coronation

The anointing having been performed, the king received various articles of royal dress and decoration from the hands of the great nobles around him, who officiated as servitors on the occasion, and with their assistance put them on. When thus robed and adorned, he advanced up the steps of the altar. As he went up, the archbishop adjured him in the name of the living God not to assume the crown unless he was fully resolved to keep the oaths that he had sworn. Richard again solemnly called

³ The ampulla used now for anointing the English sovereigns is in the form of an eagle. It is made of the purest chased gold, and weighs about ten ounces. It is deposited in the Tower of London.

God to witness that he would faithfully keep them, and then advancing to the altar, he took the crown and put it into the hands of the archbishop, who then placed it upon his head, and thus the coronation ceremony was completed.

Presents

Hostility and jealousy of the people

The people who had presents for the king now approached and offered them to him. Among them came the Jews. Their presents were very rich and valuable, and the king received them very gladly, although in announcing the arrangements for the ceremony he had declared that no Jew and no woman was to be allowed to be present. Notwithstanding this prohibition, the Jewish deputation had come in and offered their presents among the rest. There was, however, a great murmuring among the crowd in respect to them, and a great desire to drive them out. This crowd consisted chiefly, of course, of barons, earls, knights, and other great dignitaries of the realm, for very few of the lower ranks would be admitted to see the ceremony; and these people, in addition to the usual religious prejudice against the Jews, had many of them been exasperated against the bankers and money-lenders on account of difficulties that they had had with them in

relation to money that they had borrowed, and to the high interest which they had been compelled to pay. Some wise observer of the working of human passions has said that men always hate more or less those to whom they owe money. This is a reason why there should ordinarily be very few pecuniary transactions between friends.

An altercation

At length, as one of the Jews who was outside was attempting to go in, a by-stander at the gate cried out, "Here comes a Jew!" and struck at him. This excited the passions of the rest, and they struck and pushed the poor Jew in order to drive him back; and at the same time a general outcry against the Jews arose, and spread into the interior of the hall. The people there, glad of the opportunity afforded them by the excitement, began to assault the Jews and drive them out; and as they came out at the door beaten and bruised, a rumor was raised that they had been expelled by the king's orders. This rumor, as it spread through the streets, was soon changed into a report that the king had ordered all the unbelievers to be destroyed; and so, whenever a Jew was found in the street, a riot was raised about him, he was assaulted with sticks and stones, cruelly beaten, and if he was not killed, he was driven to seek refuge in his home, wounded and bleeding.

Hunting out the Jews

In the mean time, the news that the king had ordered all the Jews to be killed spread rapidly over the town, and in the evening crowds collected, and after murdering all the Jews that they could find in the streets, they gathered round their houses, and finally broke into them and killed the inhabitants. In some cases where the houses were strong, the Jews barricaded the doors and the mob could not get in. In such cases they brought combustibles, and piled them up before the windows and doors, and then, setting them on fire, they burned the houses to the ground, and men, women, and children were consumed together in the flames. If any of the unhappy wretches burning in these fires attempted to escape by leaping from the windows, the mob below held up spears and lances for them to fall upon.

The terrors of the massacre

There were so many of these fires in the course of the night that the whole sky was illuminated, and at one time there was danger that the flames would spread so as to produce a general conflagration. Indeed, as the night passed on, the excitement became more and more violent, until at length the streets, in all the quarters where Jews resided, were filled with the shouts of

the mob, raving in demoniacal phrensy, and with the screams of the terrified and dying sufferers, and the crackling of the lurid flames in which they were burning.

Indifference of the king

The mob unchecked

The king, in the mean time, was carousing with his lords and barons in the great banqueting-hall at Westminster, and for a time took no notice of these disturbances. He seemed to consider them as of very little moment. At length, however, in the course of the night, he sent an officer and a few men to suppress the riot. But it was too late. The mob paid no heed to remonstrances which came from the leader of so small a force, but, on the other hand, threatened to kill the soldiers too, if they did not go away. So the officer returned to the king, and the riot went on undisturbed until about two o'clock of the next day, when it gradually ceased from the mere weariness and exhaustion of the people.

The impunity of the rioters

A few of the men who had been engaged in this riot were afterward brought to trial, and three were hung, not for

murdering Jews, but for burning some Christian houses, which, either by mistake or accident, took fire in the confusion and were burned with the rest. This was all that was ever done to punish this dreadful crime.

King Richard's edict

In justice to King Richard, however, it must be stated that he issued an edict after this forbidding that the Jews should be injured or maltreated any more. He took the whole people, he said, thenceforth under his special protection, and all men were strictly forbidden to harm them personally, or to molest them in the possession of their property.

And this was the terrible coronation scene which signaled the investiture of Richard with the crown and the royal robes of England.

Chapter VI.

Preparations for the Crusade

1189

Richard was thirty-two years of age at his accession

At the time of his accession to the throne, Richard, as has already been remarked, was about thirty-two years of age. On the following page you have a portrait of him, with the crown upon his head.

This portrait is taken from a sculpture on his tomb, and is undoubtedly a good representation of him as he appeared when he was alive.

His ardent desires for distinction in crusades

Motives of the crusaders

A strange delusion

The first thing that Richard turned his attention to, when he found himself securely seated on his throne, was the preparation for a crusade. It had been the height of his ambition for a long time to lead a crusade. It was undoubtedly through the influence of his mother, and of her early conversations with him, that he imbibed his extraordinary eagerness to seek adventures in the Holy Land. She had been a crusader herself during her first marriage, as has already been related in this volume, and she had undoubtedly, in Richard's early life, entertained him with a thousand stories of what she had seen, and of the romantic adventures which she had met with there. These stories, and the various conversations which arose out of them, kindled Richard's youthful imagination with ardent desires to go and distinguish himself on the same field. These desires had been greatly increased as Richard grew up to manhood by observing the exalted military glory to which successful crusaders attained.

And then, besides this, Richard was endued with a sort of reckless and lion-like courage, which led him to look upon danger as a sport, and made him long for a field where there were plenty of enemies to fight, and enemies so abhorred by the whole Christian world that he could indulge in the excitement of hatred and rage against them without any restraint whatever. He could there satiate himself, too, with the luxury of killing men without any misgiving of conscience, or, at least, without any condemnation on the part of his fellow-men, for it was understood throughout Christendom that the crimes committed against the Saracens in the Holy Land were committed in the name of Christ. What a strange delusion! To think of honoring the memory of the meek and lowly Jesus by utterly disregarding his peaceful precepts and his loving and gentle example, and going forth in thousands to the work of murder, rapine, and devastation, in order to get possession of his tomb.

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