

CHARLES ADDISON

THE KNIGHTS
TEMPLARS

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Содержание

INTRODUCTION	10
CHAPTER I	14
CHAPTER II	40
CHAPTER III	66
CHAPTER IV	95
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	111

C. G. (Charles Greenstreet) Addison The Knights Templars

PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION

Having some years ago, during a pilgrimage to the Holy City of Jerusalem, gained admission to the courts of the ancient Temple of the Knights Templars, which still exists on Mount Moriah in a perfect state of preservation as a Mussulman Mosque, and having visited many of the ruined fortresses and castles of the ancient order of the Temple, whose shattered walls are still to be seen at intervals in Palestine and in Syria, from Gaza to Antioch, and from the mountains of the Dead Sea to the shores of the Mediterranean, I naturally became greatly interested in the history of the order, and in the numerous remains and memorials of the Knights Templars still to be met with in various stages of decay and ruin in almost every part of Europe. The recent restoration of the Temple Church at London, the most beautiful and the best preserved of all the ancient ecclesiastical edifices of

the western provinces of the Temple, first suggested to me the idea of writing a short historical account of the varied fortunes of that great religious and military fraternity of knights and monks by whom it was erected, and of their dark and terrible end.

Born during the first fervour of the Crusaders, the Templars were flattered and aggrandized as long as their great military power and religious fanaticism could be made available for the support of the Eastern church and the retention of the Holy Land; but when the crescent had ultimately triumphed over the cross, and the religious and military enthusiasm of Christendom had died away, they encountered the basest ingratitude in return for the services they had rendered to the Christian faith, and were plundered, persecuted, and condemned to a cruel death by those who ought in justice to have been their defenders and supporters.

The memory of these holy warriors is embalmed in all our recollections of the wars of the cross; they were the bulwarks of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem during the short period of its existence, and were the last band of Europe's host that contended for the possession of Palestine. To the vows of the monk and the austere life of the convent, they added the discipline of the camp, and the stern duties of the military life, joining "the fine vocation of the sword and lance" with the holy zeal and body-bending toil of a poor brotherhood. The vulgar notion that they were as wicked as they were fearless and brave, has not yet been entirely exploded; but it is hoped that the copious account of the proceedings against the order in this country given in the ensuing

volume, will dispel many unfounded prejudices still entertained against the fraternity, and excite emotions of admiration for their constancy and courage, and of pity for their unmerited and cruel fate.

The accounts, even of the best of the ancient historians concerning the Templars ought not to be implicitly relied upon. William of Tyre, for instance, tells us that Nassr-ed-deen, son of sultan Abbas, was taken prisoner by the Templars, and whilst in their hands became a convert to Christianity; that he had learned the rudiments of the Latin language, and earnestly sought to be baptized, but that the Templars were bribed with sixty thousand pieces of gold to surrender him to his enemies in Egypt, where certain death awaited him; and that they stood by to see him bound hand and foot with chains, and placed in an iron cage, to be conducted across the desert to Cairo. The Arabian historians, on the other hand, tell us that Nassr-ed-deen and his father murdered the caliph, threw his body into a well, and then fled into Palestine; that the sister of the murdered caliph wrote immediately to the commander of the garrison of the Knights Templars at Gaza, offering a handsome reward for the capture of the fugitives; that they were accordingly intercepted, and Nassr-ed-deen was sent to Cairo, where the female relations of the caliph caused his body to be cut into small pieces in the seraglio! The above act has constantly been made a matter of grave accusation against the Templars; but what a different complexion does the case assume on the testimony of

the Arabian authorities! It must be remembered that William, archbishop of Tyre, was hostile to the order on account of its vast powers and privileges, and carried his complaints to a general council of the Church at Rome. He is abandoned, in everything that he says to the prejudice of the fraternity, by James of Vitry, bishop of Acre, a learned and most talented prelate, who wrote in Palestine subsequently to William of Tyre, and has copied largely from the history of the latter. The bishop of Acre speaks of the Templars in the highest terms, and declares that they were universally loved by all men for their piety and humility.

The celebrated orientalist Von Hammer has recently brought forward various extraordinary and unfounded charges, destitute of all authority, against the Templars; and Wilcke, who has written a German history of the order, seems to have imbibed all the vulgar prejudices against the fraternity. I might have added to the interest of the ensuing work, by making the Templars horrible and atrocious villains; but I have endeavoured to write a fair and impartial account of the order, not slavishly adopting everything I find detailed in ancient writers, but such matters only as I believe, after a careful examination of the best authorities, to be true.

PREFACE

TO THE THIRD EDITION

The favourable reception given to the first edition of the ensuing work, and the interest that was taken in the extraordinary and romantic career of the Knights Templars, induced me to publish a second edition greatly enlarged, and to introduce various collateral matters of an antiquarian and local character, interesting only to a comparatively small number of readers. This enlarged edition having been exhausted, it occurred to me, in preparing a third edition for the press, that the work might be materially shortened and reduced in price without in anywise detracting from its value and interest as a record of the chief events of one of the most remarkable and interesting periods of history, and of the extraordinary and romantic achievements of the first and most ancient of the great religio-military orders of knights and monks established during the crusades.

The dry matters of detail, of local and partial interest, which interfered with the continuity of the main narrative, have been struck out of the body of the work, and the more striking incidents of the history have been thus brought into greater prominence. The long Latin and French extracts from the old

chronicles have also been discarded from the notes, but the historical references have been preserved to enable the reader, if he thinks fit, to study the quaint and curious language of the originals. By these means, and by enlarging the size of the page, the work has been compressed into a smaller compass, and the price reduced nearly one half.

It is hoped that these alterations will be found to be improvements.

Inner Temple, December 8, 1851.

INTRODUCTION

“Go forth to battle and employ your substance and your persons for the advancement of God’s religion. Verily, God loveth those who fight for his religion in battle array.” – Koran, *chapter 56, entitled Battle Array.*

“O Prophet, stir up the faithful to war! If twenty of you persevere with constancy they shall overcome two hundred, and if there be one hundred of you they shall overcome one thousand of those who believe not.” —*Chapter 8, entitled The Spoils.*

“Verily, if God pleased, he could take vengeance on the unbelievers without your assistance, but he commandeth you to fight his battles that he may prove the one of you by the other; and as to those who fight in defence of God’s true religion, God will not suffer their works to perish.” – Koran, *chapter 47, entitled War.*

To be propagated by the sword was a vital principle of Mahommedanism. War against infidels for the establishment and extension of the faith was commanded by the Prophet, and the solemn injunction became hallowed and perpetuated by success.

A century after the death of Mahomet, the Moslems had extended their religion and their arms from India to the Atlantic Ocean; they had subdued and converted, by the power of the sword, Persia and Egypt, and all the north of Africa, from the mouth of the Nile to the extreme western boundary of that vast

continent; they overran Spain, invaded France, and turning their footsteps towards Italy they entered the kingdoms of Naples and Genoa, threatened Rome, and subjected the island of Sicily to the laws and the religion of their Prophet. But at the very period when they were about to plant the Koran in the very heart of Europe, and were advancing with rapid strides to universal dominion, intestine dissensions broke out amongst them which undermined their power, and Europe was released from the dread and danger of Saracen dominion.

In the tenth century of the Christian era, however, the ferocious and barbarous Turcomans appeared as the patrons of Mahommedanism, and the propagators of the Koran. These were wild pastoral tribes of shepherds and hunters, who descended from the frozen plains to the north of the Caspian, conquered Persia, embraced the religion and the law of Mahomet, and became united under the standard of the Prophet into one great and powerful nation. They overran the greater part of the Asiatic continent, destroyed the churches of the Christians and the temples of the Pagans, and appeared (A. D. 1084) in warlike array on the Asiatic shore of the Hellespont in front of Constantinople. The terrified emperor Alexius sent urgent letters to the Pope and the christian princes of Europe, exhorting them to assist him and their common Christianity in the perilous crisis. The preachings of Peter the hermit, and the exhortations of the Pope, forthwith aroused Christendom; Europe was armed and precipitated upon Asia; the Turkish power was broken; the

Christian provinces of the Greek empire of Constantinople were recovered from the grasp of the infidels; and the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem was reared upon the ruins of the Turkish empire of sultan Soliman. The monastic and military order of the Temple was then called into existence for the purpose of checking the power of the infidels, and fighting the battles of Christendom in the plains of Asia. "Suggested by fanaticism," as Gibbon observes, but guided by an intelligent and far reaching policy, it became the firmest bulwark of Christianity in the East, and mainly contributed to preserve Europe from Turkish desolation, and probably from Turkish conquest.

Many grave and improbable charges have been brought against the Templars by monks and priests who wrote in Europe concerning events in the Holy Land, and who regarded the vast privileges of the order with indignation and aversion. Matthew Paris tells us that they were leagued with the infidels, and fought pitched battles with the rival order of Saint John; but as contemporary historians of Palestine, who describe the exploits of the Templars, and were eye-witnesses of their career, make no mention of such occurrences, and as no allusion is made to them in the letters of the Pope addressed to the Grand Master of the order of Saint John shortly after the date of these pretended battles, I have omitted all mention of them, feeling convinced, after a careful examination of the best authorities, that they never did take place.

At this distant day, when the times and scenes in which the

Templars acted are changed, and the deep religious fervour and warm fresh feelings of bygone ages have given way to a cold and calculating philosophy, we may doubt the sincerity of the military friars, exclaim against their credulity, and deride their zeal; but when we call to mind the hardships and fatigues, the dangers, sufferings, and death, to which they voluntarily devoted themselves in a far distant land, the sacrifice of personal comforts, of the ties of kindred, and of all the endearments of domestic life, which they made without any prospect of worldly gain or temporal advantage, for objects which they believed to be just, and noble, and righteous, we must ever rank the generous impulses by which they were actuated among the sublime emotions which can influence the human character in those periods when men feel rather than calculate, before knowledge has chilled the sensibility, or selfish indifference hardened the heart.

CHAPTER I

The pilgrimages to Jerusalem – Origin of the Templars – Their location in the Temple – Hugh de Payens chosen Master of the Temple – His introduction to the Pope – The assembling of the Council of Troyes – The formation of a rule for the government of the Templars – The most curious parts of the rule displayed – Visit of Hugh de Payens to England – The foundation of the Order in this country – Lands and money granted to the Templars – St. Bernard displays their valour and piety.

“Yet ’midst her towering fanes in ruin laid,
The pilgrim saint his murmuring vespers paid;
’Twas his to mount the tufted rocks, and rove
The chequer’d twilight of the olive grove;
’Twas his to bend beneath the sacred gloom,
And wear with many a kiss Messiah’s tomb.”

The natural desire of visiting those holy spots which have been sanctified by the presence, and rendered memorable by the sufferings, of the Son of God, drew, during the early ages of Christianity, crowds of devout worshippers and pilgrims to Jerusalem. Among the most illustrious and enthusiastic of the many wanderers to the Holy City was the empress Helena, the mother of Constantine, who, with the warm feelings of

a recent conversion, visited in person every place and every object in Palestine associated with the memory of him who died for mankind on the blessed cross. With a holy zeal and a lively enthusiasm, she attempted to fix by unquestionable tradition the scene of each memorable event in the gospel narrative; and Christendom is indebted to her for the real or pretended discovery (about two hundred and ninety-eight years after the death of Christ) of the Holy Sepulchre. Over this sacred monument the empress and her son Constantine caused to be erected the magnificent church of the Resurrection, or, as it is now called, the church of the Holy Sepulchre; and they adorned all those places in the Holy Land which remind us most forcibly of the earthly existence and death of Jesus Christ, with magnificent churches and religious houses.

The example of this pious princess, and the pretended discoveries made by her of holy relics, caused a great increase in the pilgrimages to Jerusalem. The conquest of Palestine by the Arabians, (A. D. 637,) stimulated rather than suppressed them; it added to the merit by increasing the danger and difficulty of the undertaking, whilst the enthusiasm which prompted the long and perilous journey was increased by the natural feelings of sorrow and indignation at the loss of the holy places, and the possession of them by the conquering infidels. Year after year, and century after century, hundreds and thousands of both sexes, of all ranks and every age, the monarch and the peasant, the noble and the beggar, flocked to the shrines and the altars of

Palestine. They visited, with pious affection, Bethlehem, where the Saviour first saw the light; they bathed in the waters of the river Jordan, wherein he was baptized, and wept and prayed upon Mount Calvary, where he was crucified.

On the conquest of Jerusalem by the Arabians, the security of the christian population had been provided for in a solemn guarantee given under the hand and seal of the caliph Omar, to Sophronius the patriarch. One fourth of the entire city, with the church of the Resurrection, the Holy Sepulchre, and the great Latin convent, had been left in the hands of the Christians and the pilgrims were permitted, on payment of a trifling tribute, freely to visit the various objects of their regard. When the sceptre was transferred from the family of the Abassides to the Fatimites, and the caliphs of Egypt obtained possession of Palestine, the same mild and tolerant government was continued. In the eleventh century, the zeal of pilgrimage had reached its height, and the caravans of pilgrims had become so numerous as to be styled *the armies of the Lord*. The old and the young, women and children, flocked in crowds to Jerusalem, and in the year 1064 the Holy Sepulchre was visited by an enthusiastic band of seven thousand pilgrims. The year following, however, Jerusalem was conquered by the wild Turcomans, three thousand of the citizens were massacred, and the command over the holy city and territory was confided to the emir Ortok, the chief of a savage pastoral tribe.

Under the iron yoke of these fierce northern strangers, the Christians were fearfully oppressed; they were driven from their

churches; divine worship was ridiculed and interrupted; and the patriarch of the Holy City was dragged by the hair of his head over the sacred pavement of the church of the Resurrection, and cast into a dungeon, to extort a ransom from the sympathy of his flock. The pilgrims who, through innumerable perils, had reached the gates of the Holy City, were plundered, imprisoned, and frequently massacred; a piece of gold, was exacted as the price of admission to the holy sepulchre, and many, unable to pay the tax, were driven by the swords of the Turcomans from the very threshold of the object of all their hopes, the bourne of their long pilgrimage, and were compelled to retrace their weary steps in sorrow and anguish to their distant homes. The intelligence of these cruelties aroused the religious chivalry of Christendom; “a nerve was touched of exquisite feeling, and the sensation vibrated to the heart of Europe.” Then arose the wild enthusiasm of the crusades, and men of all ranks, and even monks and priests, animated by the exhortations of the pope and the preachings of Peter the Hermit, flew to arms, and enthusiastically undertook “the pious and glorious enterprize” of rescuing the holy sepulchre of Christ from the foul abominations of the heathen.

When intelligence of the capture of Jerusalem by the Crusaders (A. D. 1099) had been conveyed to Europe, the zeal of pilgrimage blazed forth with increased fierceness: it had gathered intensity from the interval of its suppression by the wild Turcomans, and promiscuous crowds of both sexes, old men and children, virgins and matrons, thinking the road

then open and the journey practicable, successively pressed forwards towards the Holy City. The infidels had indeed been driven out of Jerusalem, but not out of Palestine. The lofty mountains bordering the sea coast were infested by warlike bands of fugitive Mussulmen, who maintained themselves in various impregnable castles and strongholds, from whence they issued forth upon the high-roads, cut off the communication between Jerusalem and the sea-ports, and revenged themselves for the loss of their habitations and property by the indiscriminate pillage of all travellers. The Bedouin horsemen, moreover, making rapid incursions from beyond the Jordan, frequently kept up a desultory and irregular warfare in the plains; and the pilgrims, consequently, whether they approached the Holy City by land or by sea, were alike exposed to almost daily hostility, to plunder, and to death.

To alleviate the dangers and distresses to which they were exposed, to guard the honour of the saintly virgins and matrons, and to protect the gray hairs of the venerable palmer, nine noble knights, who had greatly distinguished themselves at the siege and capture of Jerusalem, formed a holy brotherhood in arms, and entered into a solemn compact to aid one another in clearing the highways, and in protecting the pilgrims through the passes and defiles of the mountains to the Holy City. Warmed with the religious and military fervour of the day, and animated by the sacredness of the cause to which they had devoted their swords, they called themselves the *Poor Fellow-soldiers of Jesus Christ*.

They renounced the world and its pleasures, and in the holy church of the Resurrection, in the presence of the patriarch of Jerusalem, they embraced vows of perpetual chastity, obedience, and poverty, after the manner of monks. Uniting in themselves the two most popular qualities of the age, devotion and valour, and exercising them in the most popular of all enterprises, they speedily acquired a famous reputation.

At first, we are told, they had no church, and no particular place of abode, but in the year of our Lord 1118, (nineteen years after the conquest of Jerusalem by the Crusaders,) they had rendered such good and acceptable service to the Christians, that Baldwin the Second, king of Jerusalem, granted them a place of habitation within the sacred inclosure of the Temple on Mount Moriah, amid those holy and magnificent structures, partly erected by the Christian Emperor Justinian, and partly built by the Caliph Omar, which were then exhibited by the monks and priests of Jerusalem, whose restless zeal led them to practise on the credulity of the pilgrims, and to multiply relics and all objects likely to be sacred in their eyes, as the Temple of Solomon, whence the Poor Fellow-soldiers of Jesus Christ came thenceforth to be known by the name of “the Knighthood of the Temple of Solomon.”

By the Mussulmen, the site of the great Jewish temple on Mount Moriah has always been regarded with peculiar veneration. Mahomet, in the first year of the publication of the Koran, directed his followers, when at prayer, to turn their faces

towards it, and pilgrimages have constantly been made to the holy spot by devout Moslems. On the conquest of Jerusalem by the Arabians, it was the first care of the Caliph Omar to rebuild “the Temple of the Lord.” Assisted by the principal chieftains of his army, the Commander of the Faithful undertook the pious office of clearing the ground with his own hands, and of tracing out the foundations of the magnificent mosque which now crowns with its dark and swelling dome the elevated summit of Mount Moriah.

This great house of prayer, the most holy Mussulman Temple in the world after that of Mecca, is erected over the spot where “Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.” It remains to this day in a state of perfect preservation, and is one of the finest specimens of Saracenic architecture in existence. It is entered by four spacious doorways, each door facing one of the cardinal points; the *Bab el D’Jannat*, or gate of the garden, on the north; the *Bab el Kebla*, or gate of prayer, on the south; the *Bab ib’n el Daoud*, or the gate of the son of David, on the east; and the *Bab el Garbi*, on the west. By the Arabian geographers it is called *Beit Allah*, the house of God, also *Beit Almokaddas*, or *Beit Almacdes*, the holy house. From it Jerusalem derives its Arabic name, *el Kods*, the holy, *el Schereef*, the noble, and *el Mobarek*, the blessed.

The crescent had been torn down by the crusaders from

the summit of this great Mussulman Temple, and replaced by an immense golden cross, and the edifice was consecrated to the services of the christian religion, but retained its simple appellation of “The Temple of the Lord.” William, Archbishop of Tyre and Chancellor of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, gives an interesting account of the building as it existed in his time during the Latin dominion. He speaks of the splendid mosaic work on the walls; of the Arabic characters setting forth the name of the founder, and the cost of the undertaking; and of the famous rock under the centre of the dome, which is to this day shown by the Moslems as the spot whereon the destroying angel stood, “with his drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem.”¹

This rock, he informs us, was left exposed and uncovered for the space of fifteen years after the conquest of the holy city by the crusaders, but was, after that period, cased with a handsome altar of white marble, upon which the priests daily said mass.

To the south of this holy Mussulman temple, on the extreme edge of the summit of Mount Moriah, and resting against the modern walls of the town of Jerusalem, stands the venerable christian church of the Virgin, erected by the Emperor Justinian, whose stupendous foundations, remaining to this day, fully justify the astonishing description given of the building by Procopius. That writer informs us that in order to get a level surface for the erection of the edifice, it was necessary, on the

¹ *Will. Tyr. lib. i. cap. 2, lib. viii. cap. 3. Jac. de Vit. Hist. Hierosol. cap. lxii. p. 1080. D'Herbelot Bib. Orient. p. 270, 687, ed. 1697.*

east and south sides of the hill, to raise up a wall of masonry from the valley below, and to construct a vast foundation, partly composed of solid stone and partly of arches and pillars. The stones were of such magnitude, that each block required to be transported in a truck drawn by forty of the emperor's strongest oxen; and to admit of the passage of these trucks it was necessary to widen the roads leading to Jerusalem. The forests of Lebanon yielded their choicest cedars for the timbers of the roof, and a quarry of variegated marble, in the adjoining mountains, furnished the edifice with superb marble columns.² The interior of this interesting structure, which still remains at Jerusalem, after a lapse of more than thirteen centuries, in an excellent state of preservation, is adorned with six rows of columns, from whence spring arches supporting the cedar beams and timbers of the roof, and at the end of the building is a round tower, surmounted by a dome. The vast stones, the walls of masonry, and the subterranean colonnade raised to support the south-east angle of the platform whereon the church is erected, are truly wonderful, and may still be seen by penetrating through a small door, and descending several flights of steps at the south-east corner of the enclosure. Adjoining the sacred edifice, the emperor erected hospitals, or houses of refuge, for travellers, sick people, and mendicants of all nations, the foundations whereof, composed of handsome Roman masonry, are still visible on either side of the southern end of the building.

² *Procopius de ædificiis Justiniani*, lib. 5.

On the conquest of Jerusalem by the Moslems, this venerable church was converted into a mosque, and was called *D'Jamé al Acsa*; it was enclosed, together with the great Mussulman Temple of the Lord erected by the Caliph Omar, within a large area by a high stone wall, which runs around the edge of the summit of Mount Moriah, and guards from the profane tread of the unbeliever the whole of that sacred ground whereon once stood the gorgeous temple of the wisest of kings. When the Holy City was taken by the crusaders, the *D'Jamé al Acsa*, with the various buildings constructed around it, became the property of the kings of Jerusalem: and is denominated by William of Tyre “the palace,” or “royal house to the south of the Temple of the Lord, vulgarly called the Temple of Solomon.” It was this edifice or temple on Mount Moriah which was appropriated to the poor fellow-soldiers of Jesus Christ, as they had no *church* and no particular place of abode, and from it they derived their name of Knights Templars.³ The canons of the Temple of the Lord conceded to them the large court extending between that building and the Temple of Solomon; the king, the patriarch, and the prelates of Jerusalem, and the barons of the Latin kingdom, assigned them various gifts and revenues for their maintenance and support, and the order being now settled in a regular place of abode, the knights soon began to entertain more extended views, and to seek a larger theatre for the exercise of their holy

³ *Will. Tyr. lib. xii. cap. 7, lib. viii. cap. 3. Hist. Orient. Jac. de Vit. apud Thesaur. Nov. Anecd. Martene, tom. iii. col. 277. Phocæ descript. Terr. Sanct. cap. 14, col. 1653.*

profession.

Their first aim and object had been, as before mentioned, simply to protect the poor pilgrims, on their journey backwards and forwards, from the sea-coast to Jerusalem; but as the hostile tribes of Mussulmen, which everywhere surrounded the Latin kingdom, were gradually recovering from the terror into which they had been plunged by the successful and exterminating warfare of the first crusaders, and were assuming an aggressive and threatening attitude, it was determined that the holy warriors of the Temple should, in addition to the protection of pilgrims, make the defence of the christian kingdom of Jerusalem, of the eastern church, and of all the holy places, a part of their particular profession. The two most distinguished members of the fraternity were Hugh de Payens and Geoffrey de St. Aldemar, or St. Omer, two valiant soldiers of the cross, who had fought with great credit and renown at the siege of Jerusalem. Hugh de Payens was chosen by the knights to be the superior of the new religious and military society, by the title of "The Master of the Temple;" and he has, consequently, generally been called the founder of the order.

Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, foreseeing that great advantages would accrue to the Latin kingdom by the increase of the power and numbers of these holy warriors, despatched two Knights Templars to St. Bernard, the holy Abbot of Clairvaux, with a letter, telling him that the Templars whom the Lord had deigned to raise up, and whom in a wonderful manner he

preserved for the defence of Palestine, desired to obtain from the Holy See the confirmation of their institution, and a rule for their particular guidance, and beseeching him “to obtain from the Pope the approbation of their order, and to induce his holiness to send succour and subsidies against the enemies of the faith.”⁴ Shortly afterwards Hugh de Payens himself proceeded to Rome, accompanied by Geoffrey de St. Aldemar, and four other brothers of the order, who were received with great honour and distinction by Pope Honorius. A great ecclesiastical council was assembled at Troyes, (A. D. 1128,) which Hugh de Payens and his brethren were invited to attend, and the rules to which the Templars had subjected themselves being there described, the holy Abbot of Clairvaux undertook the task of revising and correcting them, and of forming a code of statutes fit and proper for the governance of the great religious and military fraternity of the Temple.

Regula Pauperum Commilitonum Christi et Templi Salomonis

“The rule of the poor fellow soldiers of Jesus Christ and of the Temple of Solomon,” arranged by St. Bernard, and sanctioned by the Holy Fathers of the Council of Troyes, for the government and regulation of the monastic and military society

⁴ *Chrysost. Henriq. de Priv. Cist.* p. 477.

of the Temple, is principally of a religious character, and of an austere and gloomy cast. It is divided into seventy-two heads or chapters, and is preceded by a short prologue, addressed “to all who disdain to follow after their own wills, and desire with purity of mind to fight for the most high and true king,” exhorting them to put on the armour of obedience, and to associate themselves together with piety and humility for the defence of the holy catholic church; and to employ a pure diligence, and a steady perseverance in the exercise of their sacred profession, so that they might share in the happy destiny reserved for the holy warriors who had given up their lives for Christ.

The rule enjoins severe devotional exercises, self-mortification, fasting, and prayer, and a constant attendance at matins, vespers, and on all the services of the church, that “being refreshed and satisfied with heavenly food, instructed and stablished with heavenly precepts, after the consummation of the divine mysteries,” none might be afraid of the *fight*, but be prepared for the *crown*. The following extracts from this rule may be read with interest.

“VIII. In one common hall, or refectory, we will that you take meat together, where, if your wants cannot be made known by signs, ye are softly and privately to ask for what you want. If at any time the thing you require is not to be found, you must seek it with all gentleness, and with submission and reverence to the board, in remembrance of the words of the apostle, *Eat thy bread in silence*, and in emulation of the psalmist, who says, *I have set a*

watch upon my mouth; that is, I have communed with myself that I may not offend, that is, with my tongue; that is, I have guarded my mouth, that I may not speak evil.

“XI. Two and two ought in general to eat together, that one may have an eye upon another. . .

“XVII. After the brothers have once departed from the hall to bed, it must not be permitted any one to speak in public, except it be upon urgent necessity. But whatever is spoken must be said in an under tone by the knight to his esquire. Perchance, however, in the interval between prayers and sleep, it may behove you, from urgent necessity, no opportunity having occurred during the day, to speak on some military matter, or concerning the state of your house, with some portion of the brethren, or with the Master, or with him to whom the government of the house has been confided: this, then, we order to be done in conformity with that which hath been written: *In many words thou shalt not avoid sin*; and in another place, *Life and death are in the hands of the tongue*. In that discourse, therefore, we utterly prohibit scurrility and idle words moving unto laughter, and on going to bed, if any one among you hath uttered a foolish saying, we enjoin him, in all humility, and with purity of devotion, to repeat the Lord’s Prayer.

“XX. . . To all the professed knights, both in winter and summer, we give, if they can be procured, WHITE GARMENTS, that those who have cast behind them a dark life may know that they are to commend themselves to their Creator by a pure and white life. For what is whiteness but perfect

chastity, and chastity is the security of the soul and the health of the body. And unless every knight shall continue chaste, he shall not come to perpetual rest, nor see God, as the apostle Paul witnesseth: *Follow after peace with all men, and chastity, without which no man shall see God...*

“XXI. ... Let all the esquires and retainers be clothed in *black* garments: but if such cannot be found, let them have what can be procured in the province where they live, so that they be of one colour, and such as is of a meaner character, viz. brown.

“XXII. It is granted to none to wear WHITE habits, or to have WHITE mantles, excepting the above-named knights of Christ.

“XXXVII. We will not that gold or silver, which is the mark of private wealth, should ever be seen on your bridles, breastplates, or spurs, nor should it be permitted to any brother to buy such. If, indeed, such like furniture shall have been charitably bestowed upon you, the gold and silver must be so coloured, that its splendour and beauty may not impart to the wearer an appearance of arrogance beyond his fellows.

“XLI. It is in no wise lawful for any of the brothers to receive letters from his parents, or from any man, or to send letters, without the license of the Master, or of the procurator. After the brother shall have had leave, they must be read in the presence of the Master, if it so pleaseth him. If, indeed, anything whatever shall have been directed to him from his parents, let him not presume to receive it until information has been first given to the Master. But in this regulation the Master and the procurators of

the houses are not included.

“XLII. We forbid, and we resolutely condemn, all tales related by any brother, of the follies and irregularities of which he hath been guilty in the world, or in military matters, either with his brother or with any other man. It shall not be permitted him to speak with his brother of the irregularities of other men, nor of the delights of the flesh with miserable women; and if by chance he should hear another discoursing of such things, he shall make him silent, or with the swift foot of obedience he shall depart from him as soon as he is able, and shall lend not the ear of the heart to the vender of idle tales.

“XLIII. If any gift shall be made to a brother, let it be taken to the Master or the treasurer. If, indeed, his friend or his parent will consent to make the gift only on condition that he useth it himself, he must not receive it until permission hath been obtained from the Master. And whosoever shall have received a present, let it not grieve him if it be given to another. Yea, let him know assuredly, that if he be angry at it, he striveth against God.

“XLVI. We are all of opinion that none of you should dare to follow the sport of catching one bird with another: for it is not agreeable unto religion for you to be addicted unto worldly delights, but rather willingly to hear the precepts of the Lord, constantly to kneel down to prayer, and daily to confess your sins before God with sighs and tears. Let no brother, for the above especial reason, presume to go forth with a man following such diversions with a hawk, or with any other bird.

“XLVII. Forasmuch as it becometh all religion to behave decently and humbly without laughter, and to speak sparingly but sensibly, and not in a loud tone, we specially command and direct every professed brother that he venture not to shoot in the woods either with a long-bow or a cross-bow; and for the same reason, that he venture not to accompany another who shall do the like, except it be for the purpose of protecting him from the perfidious infidel; neither shall he dare to halloo, or to talk to a dog, nor shall he spur his horse with a desire of securing the game.

“LI. Under Divine Providence, as we do believe, this new kind of religion was introduced by you in the holy places, that is to say, the union of WARFARE with RELIGION, so that religion, being armed, maketh her way by the sword, and smiteth the enemy without sin. Therefore we do rightly adjudge, since ye are called Knights of the Temple, that for your renowned merit, and especial gift of godliness, ye ought to have lands and men, and possess husbandmen and justly govern them, and the customary services ought to be specially rendered unto you.

“LV. We permit you to have married brothers in this manner, if such should seek to participate in the benefit of your fraternity; let both the man and his wife grant, from and after their death, their respective portions of property, and whatever more they acquire in after life, to the unity of the common chapter; and, in the interim, let them exercise an honest life, and labour to do good to the brethren: but they are not permitted to appear in the white habit and white mantle. If the husband dies first, he must

leave his portion of the patrimony to the brethren, and the wife shall have her maintenance out of the residue, and let her depart therewith; for we consider it most improper that such women should remain in one and the same house with the brethren who have promised chastity unto God.

“LVI. It is moreover exceedingly dangerous to join sisters with you in your holy profession, for the ancient enemy hath drawn many away from the right path to paradise through the society of women: therefore, dear brothers, that the flower of righteousness may always flourish amongst you, let this custom from henceforth be utterly done away with.

“LXIV. The brothers who are journeying through different provinces should observe the rule, so far as they are able, in their meat and drink, and let them attend to it in other matters, and live irreproachably, that they may get a good name out of doors. Let them not tarnish their religious purpose either by word or deed; let them afford to all with whom they may be associated, an example of wisdom, and a perseverance in all good works. Let him with whom they lodge be a man of the best repute, and, if it be possible, let not the house of the host on that night be without a light, lest the dark enemy (from whom God preserve us) should find some opportunity.

“LXVIII. Care must be taken that no brother, powerful or weak, strong or feeble, desirous of exalting himself, becoming proud by degrees, or defending his own fault, remain unchastened. If he showeth a disposition to amend, let a stricter

system of correction be added: but if by godly admonition and earnest reasoning he will not be amended, but will go on more and more lifting himself up with pride, then let him be cast out of the holy flock in obedience to the apostle, *Take away evil from among you*. It is necessary that from the society of the Faithful Brothers the dying sheep be removed. But let the Master, who *ought to hold the staff and the rod in his hand*, that is to say, the staff that he may support the infirmities of the weak, and the rod that he may with the zeal of rectitude strike down the vices of delinquents; let him study, with the counsel of the patriarch and with spiritual circumspection, to act so that, as blessed Maximus saith, The sinner be not encouraged by easy lenity, nor hardened in his iniquity by immoderate severity. Lastly. We hold it dangerous to all religion to gaze too much on the countenance of women; and therefore no brother shall presume to kiss neither widow, nor virgin, nor mother, nor sister, nor aunt, nor any other woman. Let the knighthood of Christ shun *feminine kisses*, through which men have very often been drawn into danger, so that each, with a pure conscience and secure life, may be able to walk everlastingly in the sight of God.”

After the confirmation by a Papal bull of the rules and statutes of the order, Hugh de Payens proceeded to France, and from thence he came to England, and the following account is given of his arrival, in the Saxon chronicle. “This same year, (A. D. 1128,) Hugh of the Temple came from Jerusalem to the king in Normandy, and the king received him with much honour, and

gave him much treasure in gold and silver, and afterwards he sent him into England, and there he was well received by all good men, and all gave him treasure, and in Scotland also, and they sent in all a great sum in gold and silver by him to Jerusalem, and there went with him and after him so great a number as never before since the days of Pope Urban.”⁵ Grants of lands, as well as of money, were at the same time made to Hugh de Payens and his brethren, some of which were shortly afterwards confirmed by King Stephen on his accession to the throne, (A. D. 1135.) Among these is a grant of the manor of Bistelesham made to the Templars by Count Robert de Ferrara, and a grant of the church of Langeforde in Bedfordshire made by Simon de Wahull, and Sibylla his wife, and Walter their son.

Hugh de Payens, before his departure, placed a Knight Templar at the head of the order in this country, who was called the Prior of the Temple, and was the procurator and vicegerent of the Master. It was his duty to manage the estates granted to the fraternity, and to transmit the revenues to Jerusalem. He was also delegated with the power of admitting members into the order, subject to the control and direction of the Master, and was to provide means of transport for such newly-admitted brethren to the far east, to enable them to fulfil the duties of their profession. As the houses of the Temple increased in number in England, sub-priors came to be appointed, and the superior of the order in this country was then called the Grand Prior, and afterwards

⁵ See also Hoveden apud X script. page 479. Hen. Hunting. ib. page 384.

Master of the Temple.

An astonishing enthusiasm was excited throughout Christendom in behalf of the Templars; princes and nobles, sovereigns and their subjects, vied with each other in heaping gifts and benefits upon them, and scarce a will of importance was made without an article in it in their favour. Many illustrious persons on their deathbeds took the vows, that they might be buried in the habit of the order; and sovereign princes, quitting the government of their kingdoms, enrolled themselves amongst the holy fraternity, and bequeathed even their dominions to the Master and the brethren of the Temple. St. Bernard, at the request of Hugh de Payens, took up his powerful pen in their behalf. In a famous discourse “In praise of the New Chivalry,” the holy abbot sets forth, in eloquent and enthusiastic terms, the spiritual advantages and blessings enjoyed by the military friars of the Temple over all other warriors. He draws a curious picture of the relative situations and circumstances of the *secular* soldiery and the soldiery of Christ, and shows how different in the sight of God are the bloodshed and slaughter perpetrated by the one, from that committed by the other. Addressing himself to the secular soldiers he says “Ye cover your horses with silken trappings, and I know not how much fine cloth hangs pendent from your coats of mail. Ye paint your spears, shields, and saddles; your bridles and spurs are adorned on all sides with gold, and silver, and gems, and with all this pomp, with a shameful fury and a reckless insensibility, ye rush on to death. Are these

military ensigns, or are they not rather the garnishments of women? Can it happen that the sharp-pointed sword of the enemy will respect gold, will it spare gems, will it be unable to penetrate the silken garment? Lastly, as ye yourselves have often experienced, three things are indispensably necessary to the success of the soldier; he must be bold, active, and circumspect; quick in running, prompt in striking; ye, however, to the disgust of the eye, nourish your hair after the manner of women, ye gather around your footsteps long and flowing vestures, ye bury up your delicate and tender hands in ample and wide-spreading sleeves. Among you, indeed, nought provoketh war or awakeneth strife, but either an irrational impulse of anger, or an insane lust of glory, or the covetous desire of possessing another man's lands and possessions. In such causes it is neither safe to slay nor to be slain.

“And now we will briefly display the mode of life of the Knights of Christ, such as it is in the field and in the convent, by which means it will be made plainly manifest to what extent the soldiery of God and the soldiery of the WORLD differ from one another... The soldiers of Christ live together in common in an agreeable but frugal manner, without wives, and without children; and that nothing may be wanting to evangelical perfection, they dwell together without separate property of any kind, in one house, under one rule, careful to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. You may say, that to the whole multitude there is but one heart and one soul, as each

one in no respect followeth after his own will or desire, but is diligent to do the will of the Master. They are never idle nor rambling abroad, but when they are not in the field, that they may not eat their bread in idleness, they are fitting and repairing their armour and their clothing, or employing themselves in such occupations as the will of the Master requireth, or their common necessities render expedient. Among them there is no distinction of persons; respect is paid to the best and most virtuous, not the most noble. They participate in each other's honour, they bear one another's burthens, that they may fulfil the law of Christ. An insolent expression, a useless undertaking, immoderate laughter, the least murmur or whispering, if found out, passeth not without severe rebuke. They detest cards and dice, they shun the sports of the field, and take no delight in that ludicrous catching of birds, (hawking,) which men are wont to indulge in. Jesters, and soothsayers, and storytellers, scurrilous songs, shows and games, they contemptuously despise and abominate as vanities and mad follies. They cut their hair, knowing that, according to the apostle, it is not seemly in a man to have long hair. They are never combed, seldom washed, but appear rather with rough neglected hair, foul with dust, and with skins browned by the sun and their coats of mail. Moreover, on the approach of battle they fortify themselves with faith within, and with steel without, and not with gold, so that armed and not adorned, they may strike terror into the enemy, rather than awaken his lust of plunder. They strive earnestly to possess strong and swift horses, but not

garnished with ornaments or decked with trappings, thinking of battle and of victory, and not of pomp and show, and studying to inspire fear rather than admiration. . .

“There is a Temple at Jerusalem in which they dwell together, unequal, it is true, as a building, to that ancient and most famous one of Solomon, but not inferior in glory. For truly, the entire magnificence of that consisted in corrupt things, in gold and silver, in carved stone, and in a variety of woods; but the whole beauty of this resteth in the adornment of an agreeable conversation, in the godly devotion of its inmates, and their beautifully-ordered mode of life. That was admired for its various external beauties, this is venerated for its different virtues and sacred actions, as becomes the sanctity of the house of God, who delighteth not so much in polished marbles as in well-ordered behaviour, and regardeth pure minds more than gilded walls. The face likewise of this Temple is adorned with arms, not with gems, and the wall, instead of the ancient golden chapiters, is covered around with pendent shields. Instead of the ancient candelabra, censers, and lavers, the house is on all sides furnished with bridles, saddles, and lances, all which plainly demonstrate that the soldiers burn with the same zeal for the house of God, as that which formerly animated their great leader, when, vehemently enraged, he entered into the Temple, and with that most sacred hand, armed not with steel, but with a scourge which he had made of small thongs, drove out the merchants, poured out the changers’ money, and overthrew the

tables of them that sold doves; most indignantly condemning the pollution of the house of prayer, by the making of it a place of merchandize.”

St. Bernard then congratulates Jerusalem on the advent of the soldiers of Christ, “Be joyful, O Jerusalem,” says he, in the words of the prophet Isaiah, “and know that the time of thy visitation hath arrived. Arise now, shake thyself from the dust, &c., &c. Hail, O holy city, hallowed by the tabernacle of the Most High! Hail, city of the great King, wherein so many wonderful and welcome miracles have been perpetually displayed. Hail, mistress of the nations, princess of provinces, possession of patriarchs, mother of the prophets and apostles, initiatress of the faith, glory of the christian people, whom God hath on that account always from the beginning permitted to be visited with affliction, that thou mightest thus be the occasion of virtue as well as of salvation to brave men. Hail, land of promise, which, formerly flowing only with milk and honey for thy possessors, now stretchest forth the food of life, and the means of salvation to the entire world. Most excellent and happy land, I say, which, receiving the celestial grain from the recess of the paternal heart, in that most fruitful bosom of thine, has produced such rich harvests of martyrs from the heavenly seed, and whose fertile soil has no less manifoldly engendered fruit a thirtieth, sixtieth, and a hundredfold in the remaining race of all the faithful throughout the entire world. Whence most agreeably satiated, and most abundantly crammed with the great store of

thy pleasantness, those who have seen thee diffuse around them in every place the remembrance of thy abundant sweetness, and tell of the magnificence of thy glory to the very end of the earth to those who have not seen thee, and relate the wonderful things that are done in thee.

“Glorious things are spoken concerning thee, city of God!”

CHAPTER II

Hugh de Payens returns to Palestine – His death – Robert de Craon made Master – The second Crusade – The Templars assume the Red Cross – Lands, manors, and churches granted them in England – Bernard de Tremelay made Master – He is slain by the Infidels – Bertrand de Blanquefort made Master – He is taken prisoner, and sent in chains to Aleppo – the Pope confers vast privileges upon the Templars – The knights, priests, and serving brethren of the order – Their religious and military enthusiasm – Their war banner called *Beauseant*– Rise of the rival religio-military order of the Hospital of St. John – Contests between Saladin and the Templars – Imprisonment and death of the Grand Master – The new Master and the Patriarch go to England for succour – Consecration of the Temple church at London.

“We heard the *tecbir*, so the Arabs call
Their shout of onset, when with loud appeal
They challenge *heaven*, as if commanding conquest.”

Hugh de Payens, having now laid in Europe the foundations of the great monastic and military institution of the Temple, which was destined shortly to spread its ramifications to the remotest quarters of Christendom, returned to Palestine at the head of a

valiant band of newly-elected Templars, drawn principally from England and France. On their arrival at Jerusalem they were received with great distinction by the king, the clergy, and the barons of the Latin kingdom. Hugh de Payens died, however, shortly after his return, and was succeeded (A. D. 1136) by the Lord Robert, surnamed the Burgundian, (son-in-law of Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury,) who, after the death of his wife, had taken the vows and the habit of the Templars.⁶ At this period the fierce religious and military enthusiasm of the Mussulmen had been again aroused by the warlike Zinghis, and his son Nouredin, two of the most famous chieftains of the age. The one was named *Emod-ed-deen*, "Pillar of religion;" and the other *Nour-ed-deen*, "Light of Religion," vulgarly, Nouredin. The Templars were worsted by overpowering numbers. The latin kingdom of Jerusalem was shaken to its foundations, and the oriental clergy in trepidation and alarm sent urgent letters to the Pope for assistance.

The Lord Robert, Master of the Temple, had at this period (A. D. 1146) been succeeded by Everard des Barres, Prior of France, who convened a general chapter of the order at Paris, which was attended by Pope Eugenius the Third, Louis the Seventh, king of France, and many prelates, princes, and nobles, from all parts of Christendom. The second crusade was there arranged, and the Templars, with the sanction of the Pope, assumed the blood-red cross, the symbol of martyrdom, as the distinguishing

⁶ *Will. Tyr.* lib. xiii. cap. 26; *Anselmus*, lib. iii. epistolarum, epist. 43, 63, 66, 67.

badge of the order, which was appointed to be worn on their habits and mantles on the left side of the breast over the heart, whence they came afterwards to be known by the name of the *Red Friars* and the *Red Cross Knights*. At this famous assembly various donations were made to the Templars, to enable them to provide more effectually for the defence of the Holy Land. Bernard Baliol, through love of God and for the good of his soul, granted them his estate of Wedelee, in Hertfordshire, which afterwards formed part of the preceptory of Temple Dynnesley. This grant is expressed to be made at the chapter held at Easter, in Paris, in the presence of the Pope, the king of France, several archbishops, and one hundred and thirty Knights Templars clad in white mantles.⁷

Brother Everard des Barres, the newly-elected Master of the Temple, having collected together all the brethren from the western provinces, joined the second crusade to Palestine. During the march through Asia Minor, the rear of the christian army was protected by the Templars, who greatly signalized themselves on every occasion. Odo of Deuil, or Diagolum, the chaplain of King Louis, and his constant attendant upon this expedition, informs us that the king loved to see the frugality and simplicity of the Templars, and to imitate it; he praised their union and disinterestedness, admired above all things the attention they paid to their accoutrements, and their care in husbanding and preserving their equipage and munitions of war,

⁷ *Reg. Cart. S. Joh. Jerus. in Bib. Cotton. Nero E. b.* No. xx. fo. 118.

and proposed them as a model to the rest of the army.⁸

Conrad, emperor of Germany, had preceded King Louis at the head of a powerful army, which was cut to pieces by the infidels in the north of Asia; he fled to Constantinople, embarked on board some merchant vessels, and arrived with only a few attendants at Jerusalem, where he was received and entertained by the Templars, and was lodged in the Temple in the Holy City. Shortly afterwards King Louis arrived, accompanied by the new Master of the Temple, Everard des Barres; and the Templars now unfolded for the first time the red-cross banner in the field of battle. This was a white standard made of woollen stuff, having in the centre of it the blood-red cross granted by Pope Eugenius. The two monarchs, Louis and Conrad, took the field, supported by the Templars, and laid siege to the magnificent city of Damascus, “the Queen of Syria,” which was defended by the great Nouredin, “Light of religion,” and his brother *Saif-eddin*, “Sword of the faith.”

The services rendered by the Templars are thus gratefully recorded in the following letter sent by Louis, the French king, to his minister and vicegerent, the famous Suger, abbot of St. Denis: “I cannot imagine how we could have subsisted for even the smallest space of time in these parts, had it not been for their (the Templars’) support and assistance, which have never failed me from the first day I set foot in these lands up to the time of my despatching this letter – a succour ably afforded and

⁸ *Odo de Diogilo de Ludov. vii. profectioe in Orientem*, p. 67.

generously persevered in. I therefore earnestly beseech you, that as these brothers of the Temple have hitherto been blessed with the love of God, so now they may be gladdened and sustained by our love and favour. I have to inform you that they have lent me a considerable sum of money, which must be repaid to them quickly, that their house may not suffer, and that I may keep my word... ”⁹

Among the English nobility who enlisted in the second crusade were the two renowned warriors, Roger de Mowbray and William de Warrenne. Roger de Mowbray was one of the most powerful and warlike of the barons of England, and was one of the victorious leaders at the famous battle of the standard: he marched with King Louis to Palestine; fought under the banners of the Temple against the infidels, and, smitten with admiration of the piety and valour of the holy warriors of the order, he gave them, on his return to England, many valuable estates and possessions. Among these were the manors of Kileby and Witheley, divers lands in the isle of Axholme, the town of Balshall in the county of Warwick, and various places in Yorkshire: and so munificent were his donations, that the Templars conceded to him and to his heirs various special privileges. About the same period, Stephen, King of England, granted and confirmed “to God and the blessed Virgin Mary, and to the brethren of the Knighthood of the Temple of Solomon at Jerusalem, all the manor of Cressynge, with the advowson of

⁹ *Duchesne hist. franc. scrip.* tom. iv. p. 512; epist. 58, 59.

the church of the same manor, and also the manors of Egle and Witham." Queen Matilda, likewise, granted them the manor of Covele or Cowley in Oxfordshire, two mills in the same county, common of pasture in Shotover forest, and the church of Stretton in Rutland. Ralph de Hastings and William de Hastings also gave to the Templars, in the same reign, (A. D. 1152,) lands at Hurst and Wyxham in Yorkshire, afterwards formed into the preceptory of Temple Hurst. William Asheby granted them the estate whereon the house and church of Temple Bruere were afterwards erected; and the order continued rapidly to increase in power and wealth in England and in all parts of Europe, through the charitable donations of pious Christians.¹⁰

After the miserable failure of the second crusade, brother Everard des Barres, the Master of the Temple, returned to Paris, with his friend and patron Louis, the French king; and the Templars, deprived of their chief, were now left, alone and unaided, to withstand the victorious career of the fanatical Mussulmen. Their miserable situation is pourtrayed in a melancholy letter from the treasurer of the order, written to the Master, Everard des Barres, during his sojourn at the court of the king of France, informing him of the slaughter of the prince of Antioch and all his nobility. "We conjure you," says he, "to bring with you from beyond sea all our knights and serving brothers capable of bearing arms. Perchance, alas! with all your diligence,

¹⁰ *Dugd. Monast.* vol. vii. p. 838; vol. ii. p. 820, 843, ed. 1830. Baronage, tom. i. p. 122.

you may not find one of us alive. Use, therefore, all imaginable celerity; pray forget not the necessities of our house: they are such that no tongue can express them. It is also of the last importance to announce to the Pope, to the king of France, and to all the princes and prelates of Europe, the approaching desolation of the Holy Land, to the intent that they succour us in person, or send us subsidies.”

The Master of the Temple, however, instead of proceeding to Palestine, abdicated his authority, and entered into the monastery of Clairvaux, where he devoted the remainder of his days to the most rigorous penance and mortification. He was succeeded (A. D. 1151) by Bernard de Tremelay, a nobleman of an illustrious family in Burgundy, in France, and a valiant and experienced soldier.¹¹

Shortly after his accession to power, the infidels crossed the Jordan, and advanced within sight of Jerusalem. Their banners waved on the summit of the Mount of Olives, and the warlike sound of their kettle-drums and trumpets was heard within the sacred precincts of the holy city. They encamped on the mount over against the Temple; and had the satisfaction of regarding from a distance the *Beit Allah*, or Temple of the Lord, their holy house of prayer; but in a night attack they were defeated with terrible slaughter, and were pursued all the way to the Jordan, five thousand of their number being left dead on the plain.

On the 20th of April, A. D. 1153, the Templars lost their

¹¹ *Will. Tyr.* lib. xvii. cap. 21, cap. 9.

great patron Saint Bernard, who died in the sixty-third year of his age. On his deathbed he wrote three letters in behalf of the order. The first was addressed to the patriarch of Antioch, exhorting him to protect and encourage the Templars, a thing which the holy abbot assures him will prove most acceptable to God and man. The second was written to Melesinda, queen of Jerusalem, praising her majesty for the favour shown by her to the brethren of the order; and the third, addressed to Brother André de Montbard, a Knight Templar, conveys the affectionate salutations of St. Bernard to the Master and brethren, to whose prayers he recommends himself.

The same year the Master of the Temple perished at the head of his knights whilst attempting to carry the important city of Ascalon by storm. Passing through a breach made in the walls, he penetrated into the centre of the town, and was there surrounded and overpowered. The dead bodies of the Master and his ill-fated knights were exposed in triumph from the walls; and, according to the testimony of an eye-witness, not a single Templar escaped.

De Tremelay was succeeded (A. D. 1154) by Brother Bertrand de Blanquefort, a knight of a noble family of Guienne, called by William of Tyre a pious and God-fearing man. On Tuesday, June 19, A. D. 1156, the Templars were drawn into an ambushade whilst marching with Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, near Tiberias, three hundred of the brethren were slain on the field of battle, and eighty-seven fell into the hands of the enemy, among whom was Bertrand de Blanquefort himself, and Brother

Odo, marshal of the kingdom. Shortly afterwards, a small band of them captured a large detachment of Saracens; and in a night attack on the camp of Nouredin, they compelled that famous chieftain to fly, without arms and half-naked, from the field of battle. In this last affair the name of Robert Mansel, an Englishman, and Gilbert de Lacy, preceptor of the Temple of Tripoli, are honourably mentioned.¹²

The fiery zeal and warlike enthusiasm of the Templars were equalled, if not surpassed, by the stern fanaticism and religious ardour of the followers of Mahomet. "Nouredin fought," says his oriental biographer, "like the meanest of his soldiers, saying, 'Alas! it is now a long time that I have been seeking martyrdom without being able to obtain it.' The Imaum Koteb-ed-din, hearing him on one occasion utter these words, exclaimed, 'In the name of God do not put your life in danger, do not thus expose Islam and the Moslems. Thou art their stay and support, and if (but God preserve us therefrom) thou shouldest be slain, we are all undone.' 'Ah! Koteb-ed-deen,' said he, 'what hast thou said, who can save *Islam* and our country, but that great God who has no equal?' 'What,' said he, on another occasion, 'do we not look to the security of our houses against robbers and plunderers, and shall we not defend RELIGION?'"¹³ Like the Templars, Nouredin fought constantly with spiritual and with carnal weapons. He resisted the world and its temptations, by

¹² *Registr. epist.* apud *Martene*, tom. ii. col. 647.

¹³ *Will. Tyr.* lib. xvii. cap. 27; lib. xviii. cap. 14; lib. xix. cap. 8.

fasting and prayer, and by the daily exercise of the moral and religious duties and virtues inculcated in the Koran. He fought with the sword against the foes of Islam, and employed his whole energies, to the last hour of his life in the enthusiastic and fanatic struggle for the recovery of Jerusalem.¹⁴ In his camp, all profane and frivolous conversation was severely prohibited; the exercises of religion were assiduously practised, and the intervals of action were employed in prayer, meditation, and the study of the Koran. “The sword,” says the prophet Mahomet, in that remarkable book, “is the key of heaven and of hell; a drop of blood shed in the cause of God, a night spent in arms, is of more avail than two months of fasting and of prayer. Whosoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven him. At the day of judgment his wounds will be resplendent as vermillion, and odoriferous as musk, and the loss of limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and cherubims.”

Among the many instances of the fanatical ardour of the Moslem warriors, are the following, extracted from the history of *Abu Abdollah Alwakidi*, Cadi of Bagdad. “Methinks,” said a valiant Saracen youth, in the heat of battle – “methinks I see the black-eyed girls looking upon me, one of whom, should she appear in this world, all mankind would die for love of her; and I see in the hand of one of them a handkerchief of green silk, and a cap made of precious stones, and she beckons me, and calls out,

¹⁴ Keightley’s Crusaders. The virtues of Nouredin are celebrated by the Arabic Historian *Ben-Schunah*, by *Azzeddin Ebn-al-athir*, by *Khondemir*, and in the work entitled, “The flowers of the two gardens,” by *Omadeddin Kateb*. See also *Will. Tyr.* lib. xx. cap. 33.

Come hither quickly, for I love thee.” With these words, charging the Christian host, he made havoc wherever he went, until at last he was struck down by a javelin. “It is not,” said another dying Arabian warrior, when he embraced for the last time his sister and mother – “it is not the fading pleasure of this world that has prompted me to devote my life in the cause of RELIGION, I seek the favour of God and his APOSTLE, and I have heard from one of the companions of the prophet, that the spirits of the martyrs will be lodged in the crops of green birds who taste the fruits and drink of the waters of paradise. Farewell: we shall meet again among the groves and fountains which God has prepared for his elect.”¹⁵

The Master of the Temple, Brother Bertrand de Blanquefort, was liberated from captivity at the instance of Manuel Comnenus, Emperor of Constantinople. After his release, he wrote several letters to Louis VII., king of France, describing the condition and prospects of the Holy Land: the increasing power and boldness of the infidels; and the ruin and desolation caused by a dreadful earthquake, which had overthrown numerous castles, prostrated the walls and defences of several towns, and swallowed up the dwellings of the inhabitants. “The persecutors of the church,” says he, “hasten to avail themselves of our misfortunes; they gather themselves together from the ends of the earth, and come forth as one man against the sanctuary of God.”

It was during his mastership, that Geoffrey, the Knight

¹⁵ *Alwakidi*, translated by Ockley, *Hist. Saracen. Cinnamus*, lib. iv. num. 22.

Templar, and Hugh of Cæsarea, were sent on an embassy into Egypt, and had their famous interview with the Caliph. They were introduced into the palace of the Fatimites through a series of gloomy passages and glittering porticos, amid the warbling of birds and the murmur of fountains; the scene was enriched by a display of costly furniture and rare animals; and the long order of unfolding doors was guarded by black soldiers and domestic eunuchs. The sanctuary of the presence chamber was veiled with a curtain, and the vizier who conducted the ambassadors laid aside his scimitar, and prostrated himself three times on the ground; the veil was then removed, and they saw the Commander of the Faithful.¹⁶

Brother Bertrand de Blanquefort, in his letters to the king of France, gives an account of the military operations undertaken by the order of the Temple in Egypt, and of the capture of the populous and important city of Belbeis, the ancient Pelusium.¹⁷ During the absence of the Master with the greater part of the fraternity on that expedition, the sultan Nouredin invaded Palestine; he defeated with terrible slaughter the serving brethren and Turcoples, or light horse of the order, who remained to defend the country, and sixty of the knights who commanded them were left dead on the plain. Amalric, king of Jerusalem, the successor of Baldwin the Third, in a letter “to his dear friend and father,” Louis the Seventh, king of France, beseeches the good

¹⁶ His. de Saladin, per *M. Marin*, tome i. p. 120, 1. *Gibbon*, cap. 59.

¹⁷ *Hist. Franc. Script.* tom. iv. p. 692, 693. *Gesta Dei*, epist. xiv. p. 1178, 9.

offices of that monarch in behalf of all the devout Christians of the Holy Land; “but above all,” says he, “we earnestly entreat your Majesty constantly to extend to the utmost your favour and regard to the Brothers of the Temple, who continually render up their lives for God and the faith, and through whom we do the little that we are able to effect, for in them indeed, after God, is placed the entire reliance of all those in the eastern regions who tread in the right path.”¹⁸ The Master, Brother Bertrand de Blanquefort, was succeeded, (A. D. 1167,) by Philip of Naplous, the first Master of the Temple who had been born in Palestine. He had been Lord of the fortresses of Krak and Montreal in Arabia Petræa, and took the vows and the habit of the order of the Temple after the death of his wife.¹⁹

We must now pause to take a glance at the rise of another great religio-military institution which, from henceforth, takes a leading part in the defence of the Latin kingdom. In the eleventh century, when pilgrimages to Jerusalem had greatly increased, some Italian merchants of Amalfi, who carried on a lucrative trade with Palestine, purchased of the Caliph *Monstasserbillah*, a piece of ground in the Christian quarter of the Holy City, near the church of the Resurrection, whereon two hospitals were constructed, the one being appropriated for the reception of male pilgrims, and the other for females. Several pious and

¹⁸ *Martene*, vet. Script., tom. ii. col. 846, 847, 883. *Gesta Dei*, tom. i. p. 1181-1184. *Duchesne*. Hist. Franc. script. p. 698.

¹⁹ *Will. Tyr.* lib. xxii. cap. 5.

charitable Christians, chiefly from Europe, devoted themselves in these hospitals to constant attendance upon the sick and destitute. Two chapels were erected, the one annexed to the female establishment being dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene, and the other to St. John the Eleemosynary, a canonized patriarch of Alexandria, remarkable for his exceeding charity. The pious and kind-hearted people who here attended upon the sick pilgrims, clothed the naked and fed the hungry, were called "The Hospitallers of St. John." On the conquest of Jerusalem by the Crusaders, these charitable persons were naturally regarded with the greatest esteem and reverence by their fellow-Christians from the west; many of the soldiers of the cross, smitten with their piety and zeal, desired to participate in their good offices, and the Hospitallers, animated by the religious enthusiasm of the day, determined to renounce the world, and devote the remainder of their lives to pious duties and constant attendance upon the sick. They took the customary monastic vows of obedience, chastity, and poverty, and assumed as their distinguishing habit a *black* mantle with a *white* cross on the breast. Various lands and possessions were granted them by the lords and princes of the Crusade, both in Palestine and in Europe, and the order of the hospital of St. John speedily became a great and powerful institution.

Gerard, a native of Provence, was at this period at the head of the society, with the title of "Guardian of the Poor." He was succeeded (A. D. 1118) by Raymond Dupuy, a knight

of Dauphiné, who drew up a series of rules for the direction and government of his brethren. In these rules no traces are discoverable of the military spirit which afterwards animated the order of the Hospital of St. John. The first authentic notice of an intention on the part of the Hospitallers to occupy themselves with military matters, occurs in the bull of Pope Innocent the Second, dated A. D. 1130. This bull is addressed to the archbishops, bishops, and clergy of the church universal, and informs them that the Hospitallers then retained, at their own expense, a body of horsemen and foot soldiers, to defend the pilgrims in going to and returning from the holy places; the pope observes that the funds of the hospital were insufficient to enable them effectually to fulfil the pious and holy task, and he exhorts the archbishops, bishops, and clergy, to minister to the necessities of the order out of their abundant property. The Hospitallers consequently at this period had resolved to add the task of *protecting* to that of tending and relieving pilgrims.

After the accession (A. D. 1168) of Gilbert d'Assalit to the guardianship of the Hospital – a man described by De Vertot as “bold and enterprising, and of an extravagant genius” – a military spirit was infused into the Hospitallers, which speedily predominated over their pious and charitable zeal in attending upon the poor and the sick. Gilbert d'Assalit was the friend and confidant of Amalric, king of Jerusalem, and planned with that monarch a wicked invasion of Egypt in defiance of treaties. The Master of the Temple being consulted concerning the expedition,

flatly refused to have anything to do with it, or to allow a single brother of the order of the Temple to accompany the king in arms: "For it appeared a hard matter to the Templars," says William of Tyre, "to wage war without cause, in defiance of treaties, and against all honour and conscience, upon a friendly nation, preserving faith with us, and relying on our own faith." Gilbert d'Assalit consequently determined to obtain for the king from his own brethren that aid which the Templars denied; and to tempt the Hospitallers to arm themselves generally as a great military society, in imitation of the Templars, and join the expedition to Egypt, Gilbert d'Assalit was authorised to promise them in the name of the king, the possession of the wealthy and important city of Belbeis, the ancient Pelusium, in perpetual sovereignty.

According to De Vertot, the senior Hospitallers were greatly averse to the military projects of their chief: "They urged," says he, "that they were a religious order, and that the church had not put arms into their hands to make conquests;" but the younger and more ardent of the brethren, burning to exchange the monotonous life of the cloister for the enterprise and activity of the camp, received the proposals of their superior with enthusiasm, and a majority of the chapter decided in favour of the plans and projects of their Guardian. They authorised him to borrow money of the Florentine and Genoese merchants, to take hired soldiers into the pay of the order, and to organize the Hospitallers as a great military society.

It was in the first year of the government of Philip of Naplous (A. D. 1168) that the king of Jerusalem and the Hospitallers marched forth upon their memorable and unfortunate expedition. The Egyptians were taken completely by surprise; the city of Belbeis was carried by assault, and the defenceless inhabitants were barbarously massacred. The cruelty and the injustice of the Christians, however, speedily met with condign punishment. The king of Jerusalem was driven back into Palestine; Belbeis was abandoned with precipitation; and the Hospitallers fled before the infidels in sorrow and disappointment to Jerusalem. There they vented their indignation and chagrin upon the unfortunate Gilbert d'Assalit, their superior, who had got the order into debt to the extent of 100,000 pieces of gold; they compelled him to resign his authority, and the unfortunate guardian of the hospital fled from Palestine to England, and was drowned in the Channel. From this period, however, the character of the order of the Hospital of St. John was entirely changed: the Hospitallers appear henceforth as a great military body; their superior styles himself Master, and leads in person the brethren into the field of battle. Attendance upon the poor and the sick still continued, indeed, one of the duties of the fraternity, but it must have been feebly exercised amid the clash of arms and the excitement of war.²⁰

The Grand Master of the Temple, Philip of Naplous, resigned

²⁰ *Will. Tyr.* lib. xviii. cap. 4, 5. lib. xx. cap. 5. *Hoveden* in Hen. 2, p. 622. *De Vertot*, *Hist. des Chevaliers de Malte*, liv. ii. p. 150 to 161, ed. 1726.

his authority after a short government of three years, and was succeeded (A. D. 1170) by Brother Odo de St. Amand, a proud and fiery warrior, of undaunted courage and resolution; having, according to William, Archbishop of Tyre, the fear neither of God nor of man before his eyes.²¹ It was during his Grand Mastership (A. D. 1172) that the Knight Templar Walter du Mesnil slew an envoy or minister of the assassins. These were an odious religious sect, settled in the fastnesses of the mountains above Tripoli, and supposed to be descended from the Ismaelians of Persia. They devoted their souls and bodies in blind obedience to a chief who is called by the writers of the Crusades “the old man of the mountain,” and were employed by him in the most extensive system of murder and assassination known in the history of the world. Both Christian and Moslem writers enumerate with horror the many illustrious victims that fell beneath their daggers. They assumed all shapes and disguises for the furtherance of their deadly designs, and carried, in general, no arms except a small poniard concealed in the folds of their dress, called in the Persian tongue *hassissin*, whence these wretches were called *assassins*, their chief the prince of the assassins; and the word itself, in all its odious import, has passed into most European languages.²²

Raimond, son of the count of Tripoli, had been slain by these fanatics whilst kneeling at the foot of the altar in the church of

²¹ *Will. Tyr.* lib. xxi. cap. 29.

²² Académie des Inscriptions, tom. xvii. p. 127, 170.

the Blessed Virgin at Carchusa or Tortosa; the Templars flew to arms to avenge his death; they penetrated into the fastnesses and strongholds of “the mountain chief,” and at last compelled him to purchase peace by the payment of an annual tribute of two thousand crowns into the treasury of the order. In the ninth year of Amalric’s reign, *Sinan Ben Suleiman*, imaun of the assassins, sent a trusty counsellor to Jerusalem, offering, in the name of himself and his people, to embrace the christian religion, provided the Templars would release them from the tribute money. The proposition was favourably received; the envoy was honourably entertained for some days, and on his departure he was furnished by the king with a guide and an escort to conduct him in safety to the frontier. The Ismaelite had reached the borders of the Latin kingdom, and was almost in sight of the castles of his brethren, when he was slain by the Knight Templar Walter du Mesnil, who attacked the escort with a body of armed followers. The king of Jerusalem assembled the barons of the kingdom at Sidon to determine on the best means of obtaining satisfaction for the injury; and it was determined that two of their number should proceed to Odo de St. Amand to demand the surrender of the criminal. The haughty Master of the Temple bade them inform his majesty the king, that the members of the order were not subject to his jurisdiction, nor to that of his officers; that the Templars acknowledged no earthly superior except the pope; and that to the holy pontiff alone belonged the cognizance of the offence. He declared, however, that the

crime should meet with due punishment: that he had caused the criminal to be arrested and put in irons, and would forthwith send him to Rome, but till judgment was given in his case, he forbade all persons of whatsoever degree to meddle with him.²³

The Templars were now destined to meet with a more formidable opponent than any they had hitherto encountered in the field, one who was again to cause the *crescent* to triumph over the CROSS, and to plant the standard of the prophet upon the walls of the holy city. When the Fatimite caliph had received intelligence of king Amalric's invasion of Egypt, (ante [p. 36](#)) he sent the hair of his women, one of the greatest tokens of distress known in the East, to the pious Nouredin, who immediately despatched a body of troops to his assistance, headed by Sheerkoh, and his nephew, *Youseef-Ben-Acoub-Ben-Schadi* the famous Saladin. Sheerkoh died immediately after his arrival, and Youseef succeeded to his command, and was appointed vizier of the caliph. He had passed his youth in pleasure and debauchery, sloth and indolence, but as soon as he grasped the power of the sword, and obtained the command of armies, he renounced the pleasures of the world, and assumed the character of a saint. His dress was a coarse-woollen garment; water was his only drink; and he carefully abstained from everything disapproved of by the Mussulman religion. Five times each day he prostrated himself

²³ Adjecit etiam et alia *a spiritu superbiæ*, quo ipse plurimum abundabat, dictata, quæ præsentî narrationi non multum necessarium est interserere. — *Will. Tyr.* lib. xx. cap. 32.

in public prayer, surrounded by his friends and followers, and his demeanour became grave, serious, and thoughtful. His nights were often spent in watching and meditation, he was diligent in fasting and in the study of the Koran, and his admiring brethren gave him the name of *Salah-ed-deen*, "Integrity of Religion," vulgarly called Saladin.

Having aroused the religious enthusiasm of the Moslems he proceeded to take vengeance upon the Christians for their perfidious invasion of Egypt. He assembled an army of forty thousand horse and foot, crossed the desert and besieged the fortified city of Gaza, which belonged to the Knights Templars, and was considered to be the key of Palestine towards Egypt. The luxuriant gardens, the palm and olive groves of this city of the wilderness were destroyed by the wild cavalry of the desert, and the innumerable tents of the Arab host were thickly clustered on the neighbouring sand-hills. The warlike monks of the Temple in their turn fasted and prayed, and invoked the aid of the God of battles; they made a desperate defence, and in an unexpected sally upon the enemy's camp, they performed such prodigies of valour, that Saladin, despairing of being able to take the place, abandoned the siege, and retired into Egypt.²⁴

On the death of Nouredin, sultan of Damascus, (A. D. 1175,) Saladin raised himself to the sovereignty both of Egypt and of Syria. He again levied an immense army, crossed the desert, and planted the standard of Mahomet upon the sacred

²⁴ *Will. Tyr.* lib. xx. xxi. xxii.

territory of Palestine. His forces were composed of twenty-six thousand light infantry, eight thousand horsemen, a host of archers and spearmen mounted on dromedaries, eighteen thousand common soldiers, and a body-guard of a thousand Mamlook emirs, clothed in yellow cloaks, worn over their shirts of mail. In the great battle fought near Ascalon, (Nov. 1, A. D. 1177,) Odo de St. Amand, the Master of the Temple, at the head of eighty of his knights, broke through the guard of Mamlooks, slew their commander, and penetrated to the imperial tent, from whence Saladin escaped with great difficulty, almost naked, upon a fleet dromedary. The year following, the Templars, in order to protect and cover the road leading from Damascus to Jerusalem, commenced the erection of a strong fortress on the northern frontier of the Latin kingdom, close to Jacob's ford on the river Jordan, at the spot where now stands *Djiss'r Beni Yakoob*, "the bridge of the sons of Jacob." Saladin advanced at the head of his forces to oppose the progress of the work, and the king of Jerusalem and all the chivalry of the Latin kingdom were gathered together in the plain to protect the Templars and their workmen. In a general action the entire army of the cross was defeated with immense slaughter. The Templars and the Hospitallers, with the count of Tripoli, stood firm on the summit of a small hillock, and for a long time presented a bold and undaunted front to the victorious enemy. The count of Tripoli at last cut his way through the infidels, and fled to Tyre; the Master of the Hospital, after seeing most of his brethren slain,

swam across the Jordan, and fled, covered with wounds, to the castle of Beaufort; and the Templars after fighting with their accustomed zeal and fanaticism around the red-cross banner, which waved to the last over the field of blood, were all killed or taken prisoners, and the Master, Odo de St. Amand, fell alive into the hands of the enemy. Saladin then laid siege to the newly-erected fortress, which was defended by thick walls, flanked with large towers furnished with military engines, and after a gallant resistance on the part of the garrison, it was set on fire, and then stormed. "The Templars," says Abulpharadge, "flung themselves some into the fire, where they were burned, some cast themselves into the Jordan, some jumped down from the walls on to the rocks, and were dashed to pieces: thus were slain the enemy." The fortress was reduced to a heap of ruins, and the enraged sultan, it is said, ordered all the Templars taken in the place to be sawn in two, excepting the most distinguished of the knights, who were reserved for a ransom, and were sent in chains to Aleppo. Saladin offered Odo de St. Amand his liberty in exchange for the freedom of his own nephew, who was a prisoner in the hands of the Templars; but the Master of the Temple haughtily replied, that he would never, by his example, encourage any of his knights to be mean enough to surrender, that a Templar ought either to vanquish or die, and that he had nothing to give for his ransom but his girdle and his knife. The proud spirit of Odo de St. Amand could but ill brook confinement; he languished and died in the dungeons of Damascus, and was succeeded (A. D. 1180) by

Brother Arnold de Torroge, who had filled some of the chief situations of the order in Europe.

The affairs of the Latin Christians were at this period in a deplorable situation. Saladin encamped near Tiberias, and extended his ravages into almost every part of Palestine. His light cavalry swept the valley of the Jordan to within a day's march of Jerusalem, and the whole country as far as Panias on the one side, and Beisan, D'Jeneen, and Sebaste, on the other, was destroyed by fire and the sword. The houses of the Templars were pillaged and burnt; various castles belonging to the order were taken by assault; but the immediate destruction of the Latin power was arrested by some partial successes obtained by the Christian warriors, and by the skilful generalship of their leaders. Saladin was compelled to retreat to Damascus, after he had burnt Naplous, and depopulated the whole country around Tiberias. A truce was proposed, (A. D. 1184,) and as the attention of the sultan was then distracted by the intrigues of the Turcoman chieftains in the north of Syria, and he was again engaged in hostilities in Mesopotamia, he agreed to a suspension of the war for four years, in consideration of the payment by the Christians of a large sum of money.²⁵

Immediate advantage was taken of this truce to secure the safety of the Latin kingdom. A grand council was called together at Jerusalem, and it was determined that Heraclius, the patriarch of the Holy City, and the Masters of the Temple and Hospital,

²⁵ *Will. Tyr. lib. xx-xxii. Abulpharadge Chron. Syr. p. 379-381.*

should forthwith proceed to Europe, to obtain succour from the western princes. The sovereign mostly depended upon for assistance was Henry the Second, king of England, grandson of Fulk, the late king of Jerusalem, and cousin-german to Baldwin, the then reigning sovereign. Henry had received absolution for the murder of Saint Thomas à Becket, on condition that he should proceed in person at the head of a powerful army to the succour of Palestine, and should, at his own expense, maintain two hundred Templars for the defence of the holy territory. The patriarch and the two Masters landed in Italy, and after furnishing themselves with the letters of the pope, threatening the English monarch with the judgments of heaven if he did not forthwith perform the penance prescribed him, they set out for England. At Verona, the Master of the Temple fell sick and died, but his companions proceeding on their journey, landed in safety in England at the commencement of the year 1185. They were received by the king at Reading, and throwing themselves at the feet of the English monarch, they with much weeping and sobbing saluted him in behalf of the king, the princes, and the people of the kingdom of Jerusalem. They explained the object of their visit, and presented him with the pope's letters, with the keys of the holy sepulchre, of the tower of David, and of the city of Jerusalem, together with the royal banner of the Latin kingdom. Their eloquent and pathetic narrative of the fierce inroads of Saladin, and of the miserable condition of Palestine, drew tears from king Henry and all his court. The

English sovereign gave encouraging assurances to the patriarch and his companions, and promised to bring the whole matter before the parliament, which was to meet the first Sunday in Lent.²⁶

The patriarch, in the mean time, proceeded to London, and was received by the Knights Templars at the Temple in that city, the chief house of the order in Britain, where, in the month of February, he consecrated the beautiful Temple church, dedicated to the blessed Virgin Mary, which had just then been erected.²⁷

²⁶ *Hemingford*, cap. 33. *Hoveden*, ad ann. 1185; *Radulph de Diceto*, p. 622-626. *Concil. Mag. Brit.* tom. iv, p. 788. *Matt. West.* ad ann. 185; *Guill. Neubr.* tom. i. lib. iii. cap. 12, 13.

²⁷ *Speed.* Hist. Britain, p. 506. A. D. 1185.

CHAPTER III

The Temple at London – The vast possessions of the Templars in England – The territorial divisions of the order – The different preceptories in this country – The privileges conferred on the Templars by the kings of England – The Masters of the Temple at London – Their power and importance.

Li fiere, li Mestre du Temple
Qu'estoient rempli et ample
D'Or et d'argent et de richesse,
Et qui menoient tel noblesse,
Ou sont-il? que sont devenu?
Que tant ont de plait maintenu,
Que nul a elz ne s'ozoit prendre
Tozjors achetoient sans vendre
Nul riche a elz n'estoit de prise;
Tant va pot a eue qu'il brise.

Chron. à la suite du Roman de Favel.

The Knights Templars first established the chief house of their order in England, without Holborn Bars, on the south side of the street, where Southampton House formerly stood, adjoining to which Southampton Buildings were afterwards erected: and it is stated, that about a century and a half ago, part of the

ancient chapel annexed to this establishment, of a circular form, and built of Caen stone, was discovered on pulling down some old houses near Southampton Buildings in Chancery Lane.²⁸ This first house of the Temple, established by Hugh de Payens himself, before his departure from England, on his return to Palestine, was adapted to the wants and necessities of the order in its infant state, when the knights, instead of lingering in the preceptories of Europe, proceeded at once to Palestine, and when all the resources of the society were strictly and faithfully forwarded to Jerusalem, to be expended in defence of the faith; but when the order had greatly increased in numbers, power, and wealth, and had somewhat departed from its original purity and simplicity, we find that the superior and the knights resident in London began to look abroad for a more extensive and commodious place of habitation. They purchased a large space of ground, extending from the White Friars westward to Essex House without Temple Bar, and commenced the erection of a convent on a scale of grandeur commensurate with the dignity and importance of the chief house of the great religio-military society of the Temple in Britain. It was called the *New Temple*, to distinguish it from the original establishment at Holborn, which came thenceforth to be known by the name of the *Old Temple*. This *New Temple* was adapted for the residence of numerous military monks and novices, serving brothers, retainers, and

²⁸ *Stowe's Survey. Tanner, Notit. Monast. Dugd. Orig. Jurid. Herbert, Antiq. Inns of Court.*

domestics. It contained the residence of the superior and of the knights, the cells and apartments of the chaplains and serving brethren, the council chamber where the chapters were held, and the refectory or dining-hall, which was connected, by a range of handsome cloisters, with the magnificent church, consecrated by the patriarch. Alongside the river extended a spacious pleasure ground for the recreation of the brethren, who were not permitted to go into the town without the leave of the Master. It was used also for military exercises and the training of horses.

The year of the consecration of the Temple Church, Geoffrey, the superior of the order in England, caused an inquisition to be made of the lands of the Templars in this country, and the names of the donors thereof,²⁹ from which it appears, that the larger territorial divisions of the order were then called bailiwicks, the principal of which were London, Warwic, Couele, Meritune, Gutege, Westune, Lincolnschire, Lindeseie, Widine, and Eboracisire (Yorkshire). The number of manors, farms, churches, advowsons, demesne lands, villages, hamlets, windmills, and watermills, rents of assize, rights of common and free warren, and the amount of all kinds of property possessed by the Templars in England at the period of the taking of this inquisition, are astonishing. Upon the great estates belonging to the order, prioral houses had been erected, wherein dwelt the procurators or stewards charged with the management of the manors and farms in their neighbourhood, and with the collection

²⁹ *Dugd. Monast. Angl.* vol vi. part ii. p. 820.

of the rents. These prioral houses became regular monastic establishments, inhabited chiefly by sick and aged Templars, who retired to them to spend the remainder of their days, after a long period of honourable service against the infidels in Palestine. They were cells to the principal house at London. There were also under them certain smaller administrations established for the management of the farms, consisting of a Knight Templar, to whom were associated some serving brothers of the order, and a priest who acted as almoner. The commissions or mandates directed by the Master of the Temple to the officers at the head of these establishments were called precepts, from the commencement of them, "*Præcipimus tibi,*" we enjoin or direct you, &c. &c. The knights to whom they were addressed were styled *Præceptores Templi*, or Preceptors of the Temple, and the districts administered by them *Præceptoria*, or preceptories.

**The ancient inscription on the Temple Church
as it stood over the door leading into the cloister**

ON THE 10th OF FEBRUARY,

IN

**THE YEAR FROM THE
INCARNATION OF OUR LORD, 1185,**

**THIS CHURCH WAS CONSECRATED
IN HONOUR OF THE BLESSED MARY**

BY THE LORD HERACLIUS,

BY

possessions and organization of the order both in Europe and Asia, “whose circumstances,” saith William, archbishop of Tyre, writing from Jerusalem about the period of the consecration at London of the Temple Church, “are in so flourishing a state, that at this day they have in their convent (the Temple on Mount Moriah) more than three hundred knights robed in the white habit, besides serving brothers innumerable. Their possessions indeed beyond the sea, as well as in these parts, are said to be so vast, that there cannot now be a province in Christendom which does not contribute to the support of the aforesaid brethren, whose wealth is said to equal that of sovereign princes.”³⁰

The eastern provinces of the order were, 1. Palestine, the ruling province. 2. The principality of Antioch. 3. The principality of Tripoli. In Palestine the Templars possessed, in addition to the Temple at Jerusalem, the chief house of the order, and the residence of the Master, the fortified city of Gaza, the key of the kingdom of Jerusalem on the side next Egypt, which was granted to them in perpetual sovereignty, by Baldwin king of Jerusalem; also the Castle of Saphet, in the territory of the ancient tribe of Naphtali; the Castle of the Pilgrims, in the neighbourhood of Mount Carmel; the Castle of Assur near Jaffa, and the house of the Temple at Jaffa; the fortress of Faba, or La Feue, the ancient Aphek, not far from Tyre, in the territory of the ancient tribe of Asher; the hill-fort Dok between Bethel and Jericho; the castles of La Cave, Marle, Citerne

³⁰ *Will. Tyr. lib. xii. cap. 7.*

Rouge, Castel Blanc, Trapesach, Sommellera of the Temple, in the neighbourhood of Acca, now St. John d'Acre; Castrum Planorum, and a place called Gerinum Parvum.³¹ The Templars, moreover, purchased the castle of Beaufort and the city of Sidon; they also got into their hands a great part of the town of St. Jean d'Acre, where they erected a famous TEMPLE, and almost all the sea coast of Palestine was in the end divided between them and the Hospitallers of St. John. The principal houses of the Temple in the Province of Antioch were at Antioch itself, at Aleppo, and Haram; and in the Principality of Tripoli, at Tripoli, Tortosa, the ancient Antaradus; Castel Blanc in the same neighbourhood; Laodicea and Beyrout.

In the western province of Apulia and Sicily, the Templars possessed numerous houses, viz., at Palermo, Syracuse, Lentini, Butera, and Trapani. The house of the Temple at this last place has been appropriated to the use of some monks of the order of St. Augustin. In a church of the city is still to be seen the celebrated statue of the Virgin, which Brother Guerrege and three other Knights Templars brought from the East, with a view of placing it in the Temple Church on the Aventine hill in Rome, but which they were obliged to deposit in the island of Sicily. This statue is of the most beautiful white marble, and represents the Virgin with the infant Jesus reclining on her left arm; it is of about the natural height, and, from an inscription on the foot of the

³¹ *Will. Tyr.* lib. xx. cap. 21. *Rob. de Monte*, appen. ad chron. Sig. p. 631. *Marin, Sanut.* p. 221. *Bernard*, Thesaur. p. 768. *Matt. Par.* p. 142.

figure, it appears to have been executed by a native of the island of Cyprus, A. D. 733. The Templars possessed valuable estates in Sicily, around the base of Mount Etna, and large tracts of land between Piazza and Calatagirone, in the suburbs of which last place there was a Temple house, the church whereof, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, still remains. They possessed also many churches in the island, windmills, rights of fishery, of pasturage, of cutting wood in the forests, and many important privileges and immunities. The chief house was at Messina, where the Grand Prior resided.³²

Upper and Central Italy also contained numerous preceptories of the order of the Temple, all under the immediate superintendence of the grand Prior or Preceptor of Rome. There were large establishments at Lucca, Milan, and Perugia, at which last place the arms of the Temple are still to be seen on the tower of the holy cross. At Placentia there was a magnificent and extensive convent, called Santa Maria del Tempio, ornamented with a very lofty tower. At Bologna there was also a large Temple house, and on a clock in the city is the following inscription, "*Magister Tosseolus de Miolâ me fecit ... Fr. Petrus de Bon, Procur. Militiæ Templi in curiâ Romanâ, MCCCIII.*" In the church of St. Mary in the same place, which formerly belonged to the Knights Templars, is the interesting marble monument of Peter de Rotis, a priest of the order.

In the Province of Portugal, the military power and resources

³² *Roccus Pyrrhus, Sicil. Antiq. tom. iii. col. 1000, 1093, 4, 5, 6, 7, &c.*

of the order were exercised in almost constant warfare against the Moors, and Europe derived essential advantage from the enthusiastic exertions of the warlike monks in that quarter against the infidels. In every battle, indeed, fought in the south of Europe, after the year 1130, against the enemies of the cross, the Knights Templars are to be found taking an active and distinguished part. They were extremely popular with all the princes and sovereigns of the great Spanish peninsula, and were endowed with cities, villages, lordships, and splendid domains. The Grand Prior or Preceptor of Portugal resided at the castle of Tomar. It is seated on the river Narboan, in Estremadura, and is still to be seen towering in gloomy magnificence on the hill above the town. The castle at present belongs to the order of Christ, and was lately one of the grandest and richest establishments in Portugal. It possessed a splendid library, and a handsome cloister, the architecture of which was much admired. The houses or preceptories of the Temple in the province of Castile and Leon were those of Cuenca, and Guadalfagiara; Tine and Aviles in the diocese of Oviedo, and Pontevreda in Galicia. In Castile alone the order is said to have possessed twenty-four bailiwicks.

In Aragon the Templars possessed the castles of Dumbel, Cabanos, Azuda, Granena, Chalonere, Remolins, Corbins, Lo Mas de Barbaran, Moncon, and Montgausi, with their territories and dependencies. They were lords of the cities of Borgia and Tortosa; they had a tenth part of the revenues of the kingdom, the taxes of the towns of Huesca and Saragossa, and

houses, possessions, privileges, and immunities in all parts.³³ They possessed likewise lands and estates in the Balearic Isles, which were under the management of the Prior or Preceptor of the island of Majorca, who was subject to the Grand Preceptor of Aragon.

In Germany and Hungary the houses and preceptories most known were at Homburg, Assenheim, Rotgen in the Rhingau, Mongberg in the Marché of Brandenburg, Nuitz on the Rhine, Tissia Altmunmunster near Ratisbon in Bavaria, Bamberg, Middleburgh, Hall, and Brunswick. The Templars possessed the fiefs of Rorich, Pausin and Wildenheuh in *Pomerania*, an establishment at Bach in *Hungary*, several lordships in *Bohemia* and *Moravia*, and lands, tithes, and large revenues, the gifts of pious German crusaders.³⁴ In Greece the Templars also possessed lands and establishments. Their chief house was at Constantinople, in the quarter called Ὀμόνοια, where they had an oratory dedicated to the holy martyrs Marin and Pentaleon.³⁵ In France the principal preceptories were at Besançon, Dole, Salins, à la Romagne, à la ville Dieu, Arbois in *Franche Comté*. Dorlesheim near Molsheim, where their still remains a chapel called Templehoff, Fauverney, where a chapel dedicated to the Virgin still preserves the name of the Temple, Des Feuilles, situate in the parish of Villett, near the chateau de Vernay, and

³³ *Mariana*, de. reb. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 23.

³⁴ *Script. rer. Germ.* tom. ii. col. 584.

³⁵ *Constantinop.* Christ. lib. iv. p. 157.

Rouen, where there were two houses of the Temple; one of them occupied the site of the present *maison consulaire*, and the other stood in the street now called *La Rue des Hermites*. The preceptories and houses of the Temple in France, indeed, were so numerous, that it would be a wearisome and endless task to repeat the names of them. Between Joinville and St. Dizier may still be seen the remains of Temple Ruet, an old chateau surrounded by a moat; and in the diocese of Meaux are the ruins of the great manorial house of Choisy le Temple. Many interesting tombs are there visible, together with the refectory of the knights, which has been converted into a sheepfold. The chief house of the order for France, and also for Holland and the Netherlands, was the Temple at Paris, an extensive and magnificent structure, surrounded by a wall and a ditch. It extended over all that large space of ground, now covered with streets and buildings, which lies between the Rue du Temple, the Rue St. Croix, and the environs de la Verrerie, as far as the walls and the fossés of the port du Temple. It was ornamented with a great tower, flanked by four smaller towers, erected by the Knight Templar Brother Herbert, almoner to the king of France, and was one of the strongest edifices in the kingdom.³⁶ Many of the modern streets of Paris which now traverse the site of this interesting structure, preserve in the names given to them some memorial of the ancient Temple. For instance, *La rue du Temple*, *La rue des fossés*

³⁶ Hist. Gen. de Languedoc. Hist. de la ville de Paris, tom. i. p. 174. Gall. christ. nov. tom. vi., tom. vii. col. 853.

du Temple, Boulevard du Temple, Faubourg du Temple, rue de Faubourg du Temple, Vieille rue du Temple, &c., &c.

All the houses of the Temple in Holland and the Netherlands were under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Temple at Paris. The preceptories in these kingdoms were very numerous, and the property dependent upon them was of great value.

In England there were in bygone times the preceptories of Aslakeby, Temple Bruere, Egle, Malteby, Mere, Wilketon, and Witham, in *Lincolnshire*. North Feriby, Temple Hurst, Temple Newsom, Pafflete, Flaxflete, and Ribstane, in *Yorkshire*. Temple Cumbe, in *Somersetshire*. Ewell, Strode and Swingfield, near Dover, in *Kent*. Hadescoe, in *Norfolk*. Balsall and Warwick, in *Warwickshire*. Temple Rothley, in *Leicestershire*. Wilburgham Magna, Daney, and Dokesworth, in *Cambridgeshire*. Halston, in *Shropshire*. Temple Dynnesley, in *Hertfordshire*. Temple Cressing and Sutton, in *Essex*. Saddlescomb and Chapelay, in *Sussex*. Schepeley, in *Surrey*. Temple Cowley, Sandford, Bistelesham, and Chalesey, in *Oxfordshire*. Temple Rockley, in *Wiltshire*. Upleden and Garwy, in *Herefordshire*. South Badesley, in *Hampshire*. Getinges, in *Worcestershire*. Giselingham and Dunwich, in *Suffolk*.

There were also several smaller administrations established, as before mentioned, for the management of the farms and lands, and the collection of rent and tithes. Among these were Liddele and Quiely in the diocese of Chichester; Eken in the diocese

of Lincoln; Adingdon, Wesdall, Aupledina, Cotona, &c. The different preceptors of the Temple in England had under their management lands and property in every county of the realm.³⁷

In *Leicestershire* the Templars possessed the town and the soke of Rotheley; the manors of Rolle, Babbegrave, Gaddesby, Stonesby, and Melton; Rothely wood, near Leicester; the villages of Beaumont, Baresby, Dalby, North and South Mardefeld, Saxby, Stonesby, and Waldon, with land in above *eighty* others! They had also the churches of Rotheley, Babbegrave, and Rolle; and the chapels of Gaddesby, Grimston, Wartnaby, Cawdwell, and Wykeham.³⁸

In *Hertfordshire* they possessed the town and forest of Broxbourne, the manor of Chelsin Templars, (*Chelsin Templariorum*,) and the manors of Laugenok, Broxbourne, Letchworth, and Temple Dynnesley; demesne lands at Stanho, Preston, Charlton, Walden, Hiche, Chelles, Levecamp, and Benigho; the church of Broxbourne, two watermills, and a lock on the river Lea; also property at Hichen, Pyrton, Ickilford, Offeley Magna, Offeley Parva, Walden Regis, Furnivale, Ipolitz, Wandsmyll, Watton, Therleton, Weston, Gravele, Wilien, Leccheworth, Baldock, Datheworth, Russenden, Codpeth, Summershale, Buntynford, &c., &c., and the Church of

³⁷ *Dugd. Monast. Angl.* vol. vi. part 2, p. 800 to 817. *Concil. Magnæ Britanniaë*, tom. iii. p. 333 to 382. *Acta Rymeri*, tom iii. p. 279, 288, 291, 295, &c.

³⁸ *Nichol's Hist. of Leicestershire.*

Weston.³⁹ In the county of *Essex* they had the manors of Temple Cressynge, Temple Roydon, Temple Sutton, Odewell, Chingelford, Lideleye, Quarsing, Berwick, and Witham; the church of Roydon, and houses, lands, and farms, both at Roydon, at Rivenhall, and in the parishes of Prittlewall and Great and Little Sutton; an old mansion-house and chapel at Sutton, and an estate called Finchinfelde in the hundred of Hinckford.⁴⁰ In *Lincolnshire* the Templars possessed the manors of La Bruere, Roston, Kirkeby, Brauncewell, Carleton, Akele, with the soke of Lynderby, Aslakeby, and the churches of Bruere, Asheby, Akele, Aslakeby, Donington, Ele, Swinderby, Skarle, &c. There were upwards of thirty churches in the county which made annual payments, to the order of the Temple, and about forty windmills. The order likewise received rents in respect of lands at Bracebrig, Brancestone, Scapwic, Timberland, Weleburne, Diringhton, and a hundred other places; and some of the land in the county was charged with the annual payment of sums of money towards the keeping of lights eternally burning on the altars of the Temple church. William Lord of Asheby gave to the Templars the perpetual advowson of the church of Asheby in Lincolnshire, and they in return agreed to find him a priest to sing for ever twice a week in his chapel of St. Margaret.

In *Yorkshire* the Templars possessed the manors of Temple

³⁹ *Clutterbuck's Hist. of Hertfordshire. Acta Rymeri, tom. iii. p. 133, 134. Dodsworth, MS. vol. xxxv.*

⁴⁰ *Morant's Hist. Essex. Rymer, tom. iii. p. 290 to 294.*

Werreby, Flaxflete, Etton, South Cave, &c.; the churches of Whitcherche Keluntune, &c.; numerous windmills and lands and rents at Nehus, Skelture, Pennel, and more than sixty other places besides. In *Warwickshire* they possessed the manors of Barston, Shirburne, Balshale, Wolfhey, Cherlecote, Herbebure, Stodleye, Fechehampstead, Cobington, Tysho and Warwick; lands at Chelverscoton, Herdwicke, Morton, Warwick, Hetherburn, Chesterton, Aven, Derset, Stodley, Napton, and more than thirty other places, the several donors whereof are specified in Dugdale's history of Warwickshire (p. 694) also the churches of Sireburne, Cardington, &c., and more than thirteen windmills. In 12 Hen. II., William Earle of Warwick built a new church for them at Warwick.⁴¹ In *Kent* they had the manors of Lilleston, Hechewayton, Saunford, Sutton, Dartford, Halgel, Ewell, Cocklescomb, Strode, Swinkfield Mennes, West Greenwich, and the manor of Lydden, which now belongs to the archbishop of Canterbury; the advowsons of the churches of West Greenwich and Kingeswode juxta Waltham; extensive tracts of land in Romney marsh, and farms and assize rents in all parts of the county. In *Sussex* they had the manors of Saddlecomb and Shipley; lands and tenements at Compton and other places; and the advowsons of the churches of Shipley, Wodmancote, and Luschwyke.

In *Surrey* they had the manor farm of Temple Elfand

⁴¹ Inquis. terrar. ut sup. *Peck's MS.* in Museo Britannico, vol. iv. fol. 95. *Dodsworth, MS.* vol. xx. p. 65, 67. *Dugd. Baron*, tom. i. p. 70.

or Elfant, and an estate at Merrow in the hundred of Woking. In *Gloucestershire*, the manors of Lower Dowdeswell, Pegsworth, Amford, Nishange, and five others which belonged to them wholly or in part, the church of Down Ammey, and lands in Frampton, Temple Guting, and Little Rissington. In *Worcestershire*, the manor of Templars Lawern, and lands in Flavel, Temple Broughton, and Hanbury. In *Northamptonshire*, the manors of Asheby, Thorp, Watervill, &c., &c.; they had the advowson of the church of the manor of Hardwicke in Orlington hundred, and we find that “Robert Saunford, Master of the soldiery of the Temple in England,” presented to it in the year 1238.⁴² In *Nottinghamshire*, the Templars possessed the church of Marnham, lands and rents at Gretton and North Carleton; in *Westmoreland*, the manor of Temple Sowerby; in the Isle of Wight, the manor of Uggeton, and lands in Kerne. But it would be tedious further to continue with a dry detail of ancient names and places; sufficient has been said to give an idea of the enormous wealth of the order in this country, where it is known to have possessed some hundreds of manors, the advowson or right of presentation to churches innumerable, and thousands of acres of arable land, pasture, and woodland, besides villages, farm-houses, mills, and tithes, rights of common, of fishing, of cutting wood in forests, &c., &c. There were also several preceptories

⁴² Monast. Angl. *Hasted*. Hist. Kent. *Manning's Surrey*. *Atkyn's Gloucestershire*; and see the references in *Tanner*. *Nash's Worcestershire*. *Bridge's Northamptonshire*, vol. ii. p. 100.

in Scotland and Ireland, which were dependent on the Temple at London.

The annual income of the order in Europe has been roughly estimated at six millions sterling! According to Matthew Paris, the Templars possessed *nine thousand* manors or lordships in Christendom, besides a large revenue and immense riches arising from the constant charitable bequests and donations of sums of money from pious persons.⁴³ The Templars, in imitation of the other monastic establishments, obtained from pious and charitable people all the advowsons within their reach, and frequently retained the tithes and the glebe in their own hands, deputing a priest of the order to perform divine service and administer the sacraments. The manors of the Templars produced them rent either in money, corn, or cattle, and the usual produce of the soil. By the custom in some of these manors, the tenants were annually to mow three days in harvest, one at the charge of the house, and to plough three days, whereof one at the like charge; to reap one day, at which time they should have a ram from the house, eight pence, twenty-four loaves, and a cheese of the best in the house, together with a pailful of drink. The tenants were not to sell their horse-colts if they were foaled upon the land belonging to the Templars, without the consent of the fraternity, nor marry their daughters without their licence. There were also various regulations concerning the cocks and hens and

⁴³ *Thoroton's Nottinghamshire. Burn and Nicholson's Westmoreland. Worsley's Isle of Wight. Mat. Par.* p. 615, ed. Lond. 1640.

young chickens.

King Henry the Second, for the good of his soul and the welfare of his kingdom, granted the Templars a place situate on the river Fleet, near Bainard's Castle, with the whole current of that river at London, for erecting a mill; also a messuage near Fleet-street; the church of St. Clement, "quæ dicitur Dacorum extra civitatem Londoniæ;" and the churches of Elle, Swinderby and Skarle in Lincolnshire, Kingeswode juxta Waltham in Kent, the manor of Stroder in the hundred of Skamele, the vill of Kele in Staffordshire, the hermitage of Flikeamstede, and all his lands at Lange Cureway, a house in Brosal, and the market at Witham; lands at Berghotte, a mill at the bridge of Pembroke Castle, the vill of Finchinfelde, the manor of Rotheley, with its appurtenances, and the advowson of the church and its several chapels, the manor of Blalcolvesley, the park of Halshall, and three *fat bucks* annually, either from Essex or Windsor Forest. He likewise granted them an annual fair at Temple Bruere, and superadded many rich benefactions in Ireland.⁴⁴

The Templars, in addition to their amazing wealth, enjoyed vast privileges and immunities within this realm. They were freed from all americiaments in the Exchequer, and obtained the privilege of not being compelled to plead except before the king or his chief justice. By special grant from the kings of England, they enjoyed free warren in all their demesne lands, also the power of holding courts to judge their villains and vassals, and

⁴⁴ *Dugd. Monast. Angl.* p. 838.

to try thieves and malefactors; they were relieved from all the customary feudal suits and services, from the works of parks, castles, bridges, the building of royal houses, and all other works; and also from waste regard and view of foresters, and from toll in all markets and fairs, and at all bridges, and upon all highways throughout the kingdom. They had also the chattels of felons and fugitives, and all waifs within their fee.⁴⁵ In addition to the particular privileges conceded to them by the kings of England, the Templars enjoyed, under the authority of divers Papal bulls, various immunities and advantages, which gave great umbrage to the clergy. They were freed, as before mentioned, from the obligation of paying tithes, and might, with the consent of the bishop, receive them. No brother of the Temple could be excommunicated by any bishop or priest, nor could any of the churches of the order be laid under interdict except by virtue of a special mandate from the holy see. When any brother of the Temple, appointed to make charitable collections for the succour of the Holy Land, should arrive at a city, castle, or village, which had been laid under interdict, the churches, on their welcome coming, were to be thrown open, (once within the year,) and divine service was to be performed in honour of the Temple, and in reverence for the holy soldiers thereof. The privilege of sanctuary was thrown around their dwellings; and by various papal bulls it is solemnly enjoined that no person shall lay violent hands either upon the persons or the property of those flying for

⁴⁵ *Dugd. Monast.* p. 844.

refuge to the Temple houses.⁴⁶

Sir Edward Coke, in the second part of the Institute of the Laws of England, observes, that “the Templars did so overspread throughout Christendome, and so exceedingly increased in possessions, revenues, and wealth, and specially in England, as you will wonder to reade in approved histories, and withall obtained so great and large privileges, liberties, and immunities for themselves, their tenants, and farmers, &c., as no other order had the like.” He further observes, that the Knights Templars were *cruce signati*, and as the cross was the ensign of their profession, and their tenants enjoyed great privileges, they did erect crosses upon their houses, to the end that those inhabiting them might be known to be the tenants of the order, and thereby be freed from many duties and services which other tenants were subject unto; “and many tenants of other lords, perceiving the state and greatnesse of the knights of the said order, and withall seeing the great privileges their tenants enjoyed, did set up crosses upon their houses, as their very tenants used to doe, to the prejudice of their lords.”

This abuse led to the passing of the statute of Westminster, the second, *chap. 33*, which recites, that many tenants did set up crosses or cause them to be set up on their lands in prejudice of their lords, that the tenants might defend themselves against the chief lord of the fee by the privileges of Templars, and enacts that such lands shall be forfeited to the chief lords or to the king. Sir

⁴⁶ Acta Rymeri, tom. i. p. 30-32, 54, 298, 574, 575.

Edward Coke observes, that the Templars were freed from tenths and fifteenths to be paid to the king; that they were discharged of purveyance; that they could not be sued for any ecclesiastical cause before the ordinary, *sed coram conservatoribus suorum privilegiorum*; and that of ancient time they claimed that a felon might take to their houses, having their crosses for his safety, as well as to any church. And concerning these conservers or keepers of their privileges, he remarks, that the Templars and Hospitallers “held an ecclesiasticall court before a canonist, whom they termed *conservator privilegiorum suorum*, which judge had indeed more authority than was convenient, and did daily, in respect to the height of these two orders, and at their instance and direction, incroach upon and hold plea of matters determinable by the common law, for *cui plus licet quam par est, plus vult quam licet*; and this was one great mischief. Another mischief was, that this judge likewise at their instance, in cases wherein he had jurisdiction, would make general citations as *pro salute animæ*, and the like, without expressing the matter whereupon the citation was made, which also was against law, and tended to the grievous vexation of the subject.”⁴⁷ To remedy these evils, another act of parliament was passed, prohibiting the Templars from bringing any man in plea before the keepers of their privileges, for any matter the knowledge whereof belonged to the king’s court, and commanding such keepers of their privileges thenceforth to grant no citation at the instance of the

⁴⁷ 2 Inst. p. 432, 465.

Templars, before it be expressed upon what matter the citation ought to be made.⁴⁸

The Grand Master of the Temple ranked in Europe as a sovereign prince, and had precedence of all ambassadors and peers in the general councils of the church. He was elected to his high office by the chapter of the kingdom of Jerusalem, which was composed of all the knights of the East and of the West who could manage to attend. The western nations or provinces of the order were presided over by the provincial Masters, otherwise Grand Priors or Grand Preceptors, who were originally appointed by the Chief Master at Jerusalem, and were in theory mere trustees or bare administrators of the revenues of the fraternity, accountable to the treasurer-general at Jerusalem, and removeable at the pleasure of the Chief Master. The superior of the Temple at London is always styled "Master of the Temple," and holds his chapters and has his officers corresponding to those of the Chief Master in Palestine. The latter, consequently, came to be denominated *Magnus Magister*, or Grand Master. The titles given indeed to the superiors of the different nations or provinces into which the order of the Temple was divided, are numerous and somewhat perplexing. In the East, these officers were known only, in the first instance, by the title of Prior, as Prior of England, Prior of France, Prior of Portugal, &c., and afterwards Preceptor of England, Preceptor of France, &c.; but in Europe they were called Grand Priors, and Grand Preceptors,

⁴⁸ Stat. Westr. 2, cap. 43, 13 Ed. I.

to distinguish them from the Sub-priors and Sub-preceptors, and also Masters of the Temple. The Prior and Preceptor *of* England, therefore, and the Grand Prior, Grand Preceptor, and Master of the Temple *in* England, were one and the same person. There were also at the New Temple at London, in imitation of the establishment at the chief house in Palestine, in addition to the Master, the Preceptor of the Temple, the Prior of London, the Treasurer, and the Guardian of the church, who had three chaplains under him called readers.

The Master at London had his general and particular, or his ordinary and extraordinary chapters. The first were composed of the grand preceptors of Scotland and Ireland, and all the provincial priors and preceptors of the three kingdoms, who were summoned once a year to deliberate on the state of the Holy Land, to forward succour, to give an account of their stewardship, and to frame new rules and regulations for the management of the temporalities.⁴⁹ The ordinary chapters were held at the different preceptories, which the Master of the Temple visited in succession. In these chapters new members were admitted into the order; lands were bought, sold, and exchanged; and presentations were made by the Master to vacant benefices. Many of the grants and other deeds of these chapters, with the seal of the order of the Temple annexed to them, are to be met with in the public and private collections of manuscripts in this country. One of the most interesting and best preserved, is

⁴⁹ Concil. Mag. Brit. tom. ii. p. 335, 339, 340, 355, 356. Monast. Angl. p. 818.

the Harleian charter, (83, c. 39,) in the British Museum, which is a grant of land made by Brother William de la More THE MARTYR, the last Master of the Temple in England, to the Lord Milo de Stapleton. It is expressed to be made by him, with the common consent and advice of his chapter, held at the Preceptory of Dynneslee, on the feast of Saint Barnabas the Apostle, and concludes, "In witness whereof, we have to this present indenture placed the seal of our chapter." A facsimile of this seal is given at the head of the present chapter. On the reverse of it is a man's head, decorated with a long beard, and surmounted by a small cap, and around it are the letters TESTIS SVM AGNI. The same seal is to be met with on various other indentures made by the Master and Chapter of the Temple.⁵⁰ The more early seals are surrounded with the words, *Sigillum Militis Templi*, "Seal of the *Knight* of the Temple;" as in the case of the deed of exchange of lands at Normanton in the parish of Botisford, in Leicestershire, entered into between Brother Amadeus de Morestello, Master of the chivalry of the Temple in England, and his chapter, of the one part, and the Lord Henry de Coleville Knight, of the other part. The seal annexed to this deed has the addition of the word *Militis*, but in other respects it is similar to the one above delineated.⁵¹

The Master of the Temple in England sat in parliament as first

⁵⁰ *Peck's MS.* in Museo Britannico, vol. iv. p. 65.

⁵¹ *Nicholl's Hist. Leicestershire*, vol. iii. pl. cxxvii. fig. 947, p. 943; vol. ii. pl. v. fig. 13.

baron of the realm, but that is to be understood among priors only. To the parliament holden in the twenty-ninth year of King Henry the Third, there was summoned sixty-five abbots, thirty-five priors, and the Master of the Temple.⁵² The oath taken by the grand priors, grand preceptors, or provincial Masters in Europe, on their assumption of the duties of their high administrative office, was drawn up in the following terms: – “I A. B., Knight of the Order of the Temple, just now appointed Master of the knights who are in – , promise to Jesus Christ my Saviour, and to his vicar the sovereign pontiff and his successors, perpetual obedience and fidelity. I swear that I will defend, not only with my lips, but by force of arms and with all my strength, the mysteries of the faith; the seven sacraments, the fourteen articles of the faith, the creed of the Apostles, and that of Saint Athanasius; the books of the Old and the New Testament, with the commentaries of the holy fathers, as received by the church; the unity of God, the plurality of the persons of the holy Trinity; and the doctrine that Mary, the daughter of Joachim and Anna, of the tribe of Judah, and of the race of David, remained always a virgin before her delivery, during and after her delivery. I promise likewise to be submissive and obedient to the Master-general of the order, in conformity with the statutes prescribed by our father Saint Bernard; that I will at all times in case of need pass the seas to go and fight; that I will always afford succour against the infidel kings and princes; that in the presence of three

⁵² Rot. claus. 49. H. III. m. xi. d. Acta *Rymeri*, tom. iii. p. 802.

enemies I will fly not, but cope with them, if they are infidels; that I will not sell the property of the order, nor consent that it be sold or alienated; that I will always preserve chastity; that I will be faithful to the king of – ; that I will never surrender to the enemy the towns and places belonging to the order; and that I will never refuse to the religious any succour that I am able to afford them; that I will aid and defend them by words, by arms, and by all sorts of good offices; and in sincerity and of my own free will I swear that I will observe all these things.”⁵³

Among the earliest of the Masters, or Grand Priors, or Grand Preceptors of England, whose names figure in history, is Richard de Hastings, who was at the head of the order in this country on the accession of King Henry the Second to the throne, (A. D. 1154,) and was employed by that monarch in various important negotiations. He was the friend and confidant of Thomas à Becket, and vainly endeavoured to terminate the disputes between that haughty prelate and the king.⁵⁴ Richard de Hastings was succeeded by Richard Mallebeench, who confirmed a treaty of peace and concord which had been entered into between his predecessor and the abbot of Kirkested; and the next Master of the Temple appears to have been Geoffrey son of Stephen, who received the patriarch Heraclius as his guest at the new Temple on the occasion of the consecration of the Temple

⁵³ L'Histoire des Citeaux, *Chrisost Henriques*, p. 479.

⁵⁴ *Lord Littleton's Life of Henry II.* tom. ii. p. 356. *Hoveden*, 453. *Chron. Gervasii*, p. 1386, apud X. script.

church. He styles himself “*Minister* of the soldiery of the Temple in England.”⁵⁵

In consequence of the high estimation in which the Templars were held, and the privilege of sanctuary enjoyed by them, the Temple at London came to be made “a storehouse of treasure.” The wealth of the king, the nobles, the bishops, and of the rich burghers of London, was generally deposited therein, under the safeguard and protection of the military friars. The money collected in the churches and chapels for the succour of the Holy Land was also paid to the treasurer of the Temple, to be forwarded to its destination: and the treasurer was at different times authorised to receive the taxes imposed upon the moveables of the ecclesiastics, also the large sums of money extorted by the rapacious popes from the English clergy, and the annuities granted by the king to the nobles of the kingdom.⁵⁶ The money and jewels of Hubert de Burgh, earl of Kent, the chief justiciary, and at one time governor of the king and kingdom of England, were deposited in the Temple, and when that nobleman was disgraced and committed to the Tower, the king attempted to lay hold of the treasure. Matthew Paris gives the following curious account of the affair: – “It was suggested,” says he, “to the king, that Hubert had no small amount of treasure deposited in the New Temple, under the custody of the Templars. The king accordingly, summoning to his presence the Master of

⁵⁵ *Lansdowne MS.* 207 E. fol. 467. *Ibid.* fol. 201.

⁵⁶ *Acta Rymeri*, tom. i. p. 442, 4, 5. *Wilkins. Concilia*, tom. ii. p. 230.

the Temple, briefly demanded of him if it was so. He indeed, not daring to deny the truth to the king, confessed that he had money of the said Hubert, which had been confidentially committed to the keeping of himself and his brethren, but of the quantity and amount thereof he was altogether ignorant. Then the king endeavoured with threats to obtain from the brethren the surrender to him of the aforesaid money, asserting that it had been fraudulently subtracted from his treasury. But they answered to the king, that money confided to them in trust they would deliver to no man without the permission of him who had intrusted it to be kept in the Temple. And the king, since the above-mentioned money had been placed under their protection, ventured not to take it by force. He sent, therefore, the treasurer of his court, with his justices of the Exchequer, to Hubert, who had already been placed in fetters in the Tower of London, that they might exact from him an assignment of the entire sum to the king. But when these messengers had explained to Hubert the object of their coming, he immediately answered that he would submit himself and all belonging to him to the good pleasure of his sovereign. He therefore petitioned the brethren of the chivalry of the Temple that they would, in his behalf, present all his keys to his lord the king, that he might do what he pleased with the things deposited in the Temple. This being done, the king ordered all that money, faithfully counted, to be placed in his treasury, and the amount of all the things found to be reduced into writing and exhibited before him. The king's clerks,

indeed, and the treasurer acting with them, found deposited in the Temple gold and silver vases of inestimable price, and money and many precious gems, an enumeration whereof would in truth astonish the hearers.”⁵⁷

The kings of England frequently resided in the Temple, and so also did the haughty legates of the Roman pontiffs, who there made contributions in the name of the pope upon the English bishoprics. Matthew Paris gives a lively account of the exactions of the nuncio Martin, who resided for many years at the Temple, and came there armed by the pope with powers such as no legate had ever before possessed. “He made,” says he, “whilst residing at London in the New Temple, unheard of extortions of money and valuables. He imperiously intimated to the abbots and priors that they must send him rich presents, desirable palfreys, sumptuous services for the table, and rich clothing; which being done, that same Martin sent back word that the things sent were insufficient, and he commanded the givers thereof to forward him better things, on pain of suspension and excommunication.”⁵⁸

The convocations of the clergy and the great ecclesiastical councils were frequently held at the Temple, and laws were there made by the bishops and abbots for the government of the church and monasteries in England.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ *Matt. Par.* p. 381.

⁵⁸ *Matt. Par.* p. 253, 645.

⁵⁹ *Wilkins.* *Concilia Magnæ Britanniae*, tom. ii. p. 19, 26, 93, 239, 253, 272, 292.

CHAPTER IV

The patriarch Heraclius quarrels with the king of England – He returns to Palestine without succour – The disappointment and gloomy forebodings of the Templars – They prepare to resist Saladin – Their defeat and slaughter – The valiant deeds of the Marshal of the Temple – The fatal battle of Tiberias – The captivity of the Grand Master and the true cross – The captive Templars are offered the Koran or death – They choose the latter, and are beheaded – The fall of Jerusalem – The Moslems take possession of the Temple – They purify it with rose-water, say prayers, and hear a sermon – The Templars retire to Antioch – Their letters to the king of England and the Master of the Temple at London – Their exploits at the siege of Acre.

“The foes of the Lord break into his holy city, even into that glorious tomb where the virgin blossom of Mary was wrapt up in linen and spices, and where the first and greatest flower on earth rose up again.” —*S. Bernardi*, epist. cccxxii.

The Grand Master, Arnold de Torroge, who died on his journey to England, as before mentioned, was succeeded by Brother Gerard de Riderfort.⁶⁰

On the 10th of the calends of April, a month after the consecration by the patriarch Heraclius of the Temple church, the grand council or parliament of England, composed of

⁶⁰ *Muratori script. rer. Ital.* p. 792. *Cotton MS. Nero E. vi.* p. 60, fol. 466.

the bishops, earls, and barons, assembled in the house of the Hospitallers at Clerkenwell in London. It was attended by William king of Scotland and David his brother, and many of the counts and barons of that distant land. The august assembly was acquainted, in the king's name, with the object of the solemn embassy just sent to him from Jerusalem, and with the desire of the royal penitent to fulfil his vow and perform his penance; but the barons were at the same time reminded of the old age of their sovereign, of the bad state of his health, and of the necessity for his presence in England. They accordingly represented to King Henry that the solemn oath taken by him on his coronation was an obligation antecedent to the penance imposed on him by the pope; that by that oath he was bound to stay at home and govern his dominions, and that, in their opinion, it was more wholesome for the king's soul to defend his own country against the barbarous French, than to desert it for the purpose of protecting the distant kingdom of Jerusalem.⁶¹

Fabian, in his chronicle, gives the following quaint account of the king's answer to the patriarch, taken from the Chron. Joan Bromton: "Lasteley the kynge gaue answer, and sayde that he myghte not leue hys lande wythoute keypyng, nor yet leue yt to the praye and robbery of Frenchemen. But he wolde gyue largely of hys own to such as wolde take upon theym that vyge. Wyth thys answer the patryarke was dyscontente, and sayde, 'We seke a man, and not money; welnere euery crysten regyon sendyth

⁶¹ *Radulph de Diceto*, p. 626. *Matt. Par.* ad ann. 1185. *Hoveden*, p. 636, 637.

unto us money, but no land sendyth to us a prince. Therefore we aske a prynce that nedeth money, and not money that nedeth a prynce.’ But the kynge layde for hym suche excuses, that the patryarke departed from hym dyscontentyd and comforteless, whereof the kynge beyng aduertysed, entendynge somewhat to recomforte hym with pleasaunte words, folowed hym to the see syde. But the more the kynge thought to satisfye hym with hys fayre speche, the more the patryarke was dyscontentyd, in so myche that at the last he sayde unto hym, ‘Hytherto thou haste reigned gloriously, but here after thou shalt be forsaken of hym whom thou at thys tyme forsakeste. Thynke on hym what he hath gyuen to thee, and what thou haste yelden to him agayne: howe fyrste thou were false unto the kynge of Fraunce, and after slewe that holy man Thomas of Caunterburye, and lastely thou forsakeste the proteccyon of Crystes faith.’ The kynge was amoued wyth these wordes, and sayde unto the patryarke, ‘Though all the men of my lande were one bodye, and spake with one mouth, they durste not speke to me such wordys.’ ‘No wonder,’ sayde the patryarke, ‘for they loue thyne and not the; that ys to meane, they loue thy goodes temporall, and fere the for losse of promocyon, but they loue not thy soule.’ And when he hadde so sayde, he offeryd hys hedde to the kynge, sayenge, ‘Do by me ryghte as thou dydest by that blessed man Thomas of Caunterburye, for I had leur to be slayne of the, then of the Sarasyns, for thou art worse than any Sarasyn.’ But the kynge kepte hys paycence, and sayde, ‘I may not wende oute of my

lande, for myne own sonnes wyll aryse agayne me when I were absente.’ ‘No wonder,’ sayde the patryarke, ‘for of the deuyll they come, and to the deuyll they shall go,’ and so departyd from the kynge in great ire.”⁶²

According to Roger de Hoveden, however, the patriarch, on the 17th of the calends of May, accompanied King Henry into Normandy, where a conference was held between the sovereigns of France and England concerning the proposed succour to the Holy Land. Both monarchs were liberal in promises and fair speeches; but as nothing short of the presence of the king of England, or of one of his sons, in Palestine, would satisfy the patriarch, that haughty ecclesiastic failed in his negotiations and returned in disgust and disappointment to the Holy Land. On his arrival at Jerusalem with intelligence of his ill success the greatest consternation prevailed amongst the Latin Christians: and it was generally observed that the true cross, which had been recovered from the Persians by the Emperor Heraclius, was about to be lost under the pontificate, and by the fault of a patriarch of the same name. A cotemporary writer of Palestine tells us that the patriarch was a very handsome person, and, in consequence of his beauty, the mother of the king of Jerusalem fell in love with him, and made him archbishop of Cæsarea. He then describes how he came to be made patriarch, and how he was suspected to have poisoned the archbishop of Tyre. After his return from

⁶² The above passage is almost literally translated from the *Chron. Joan. Bromton*, abbatis Jornalensis, script. X. p. 1144, ad ann. 1185.

Rome he fell in love with the wife of a haberdasher who lived at Naplous, twelve miles from Jerusalem. He went to see her very often, and, not long after the acquaintanceship commenced, the husband died. Then the patriarch brought the lady to Jerusalem, clothed her in rich apparel, bought her a house, and furnished her with an elegant retinue.⁶³

Baldwin the fourth, who was the reigning sovereign of the Latin kingdom at the period of the departure of the patriarch Heraclius and the Grand Master of the Temple for Europe, was afflicted with a frightful leprosy, which rendered it unlawful for him to marry, and he was consequently deprived of all hope of having an heir of his body to inherit the crown. Sensible of the dangers and inconvenience of a female succession, he selected William V. marquis of Montferrat, surnamed "Long-sword," as a husband for his eldest sister Sibylla. Shortly after his marriage the marquis of Montferrat died, leaving by Sibylla an infant son named Baldwin. Sibylla's second husband was Guy de Lusignan, a nobleman of a handsome person, and descended of an ancient family of Poitou in France. Her choice was at first approved of by the king, who received his new brother-in-law with favour, loaded him with honours, and made him regent of the kingdom. Subsequently, through the intrigues of the count of Tripoli, the king was induced to deprive Guy de Lusignan of the regency, and to set aside the claims of Sibylla to the throne, in favour of her son the young Baldwin, who was then about five years of

⁶³ Contin. hist. apud *Martene*, tom. v. col. 606.

age. He gave orders for the coronation of the young prince, and resigned his authority to the count of Tripoli, who was appointed regent of the kingdom during the minority of the sovereign, whilst all the fortresses and castles of the land were committed to the safe keeping of the Templars and Hospitallers. The youthful Baldwin was carried with vast pomp to the great church of the Holy Sepulchre, and was there anointed and crowned by the patriarch in the presence of the Grand Masters of the Temple and the Hospital. According to ancient custom he was taken, wearing his crown, to the Temple of the Lord, to make certain offerings, after which he went to the Temple of Solomon, where the Templars resided, and was entertained at dinner, together with his barons, by the Grand Master of the Temple and the military friars. Shortly after the coronation (A. D. 1186) the ex-king, Baldwin IV., died at Jerusalem, and was buried in the church of the Resurrection, by the side of Godfrey de Bouillon, and the other Christian kings. His death was followed, in the short space of seven months, by that of the infant sovereign Baldwin V., and Sibylla thus became the undoubted heiress to the throne. The count of Tripoli refused, however, to surrender the regency, accusing Sibylla of the horrible and improbable crime of poisoning her own child. But Gerard de Riderfort, the Grand Master of the Temple, invited her to repair to Jerusalem, and gave orders for the coronation. He sent letters, in the queen's name, to the count of Tripoli and the rebellious barons who had assembled with their followers in arms at Naplous, (the

ancient Shechem,) requiring them to attend at the appointed time to do homage, and take the oath of allegiance, but the barons sent back word that they intended to remain where they were; and they despatched two Cistercian abbots to the Grand Master of the Temple, and the patriarch Heraclius, exhorting them for the love of God and his holy apostles to refrain from crowning Isabella countess of Jaffa, as long as she remained the wife of Guy de Lusignan. They represented that the latter had already manifested his utter incapacity for command, both in the field and in the cabinet; that the kingdom of Jerusalem required an able general for its sovereign; and they insisted that Sibylla should be immediately divorced from Guy de Lusignan, and should choose a husband better fitted to protect the country and undertake the conduct of the government.

As soon as this message had been received, the Grand Master of the Temple directed the Templars to take possession of all the gates of the city of Jerusalem, and issued strict orders that no person should be allowed to enter or withdraw from the Holy City without an express permission from himself. Sibylla and Guy de Lusignan were then taken, guarded by the Templars, to the great church of the Resurrection, where the patriarch Heraclius and all his clergy were in readiness to receive them. The crowns of the Latin kingdom were kept in a large chest in the treasury, fastened with two locks. The Grand Master of the Temple kept the key of one of these locks, and the Grand Master of the Hospital had the other. On their arrival at the church, the key of the Grand Master

of the Temple was produced, but the key of the Grand Master of the Hospital was not forthcoming, nor could that illustrious chieftain himself anywhere be found. Gerard de Riderfort and Heraclius at last went in person to the Hospital, and after much hunting about they found the Grand Master, and immediately demanded the key in the queen's name.

The powerful Superior of the Hospitallers at first refused to produce it, but being pressed by many arguments and entreaties, he at last took out the key and flung it upon the ground, whereupon the patriarch picked it up, and proceeding to the treasury, speedily produced the two crowns, one of which he placed upon the high altar of the church of the Resurrection, and the other by the side of the chair upon which the countess of Jaffa was seated. Heraclius then performed the solemn ceremony of the coronation, and when he had placed the crown on the queen's head, he reminded her that she was a frail and feeble woman, but ill fitted to contend with the toil and strife in which the beleaguered kingdom of Palestine was continually involved, and he therefore exhorted her to make choice of some person to govern the kingdom in conjunction with herself; whereupon her majesty, taking up the crown which had been placed by her side, and calling for her husband, Guy de Lusignan, thus addressed him: – "Those whom God hath joined, let no man put asunder. Sire, receive this crown, for I know none more worthy of it than yourself." And immediately Guy de Lusignan was crowned king of Jerusalem, and received the blessing of the patriarch.

Great was the indignation of the count of Tripoli and the barons, when they received intelligence of these events. They raised the standard of revolt, and proclaimed the princess Isabella, the younger sister of Sibylla, who had been married, at the early period of eight years, to Humphrey de Thoron, queen of Jerusalem. As soon as Humphrey de Thoron heard of the proceedings of the count of Tripoli and the barons, he hurried with the princess to Jerusalem, and the two, throwing themselves at the feet of the king and queen, respectfully tendered to them their allegiance. This loyal and decisive conduct struck terror and dismay into the hearts of the conspirators, most of whom now proceeded to Jerusalem to do homage; whilst the count of Tripoli, deserted by his adherents, retired to the strong citadel of Tiberias, of which place he was the feudal lord, and there remained, proudly defying the royal power.⁶⁴

The king at first sought to avail himself of the assistance of the Templars against his rebellious vassal, and exhorted them to besiege Tiberias; but they refused, as it was contrary to their oaths, and the spirit of their institution, for them to undertake an aggressive warfare against any christian prince. The king then gave orders for the concentration of an army at Nazareth; the count of Tripoli prepared to defend Tiberias, and it appears unquestionable that he sent to Saladin for assistance, and entered

⁶⁴ Contin. Hist. *Will. Tyr.* apud *Martene*, tom. v. col. 585, 593-596. This valuable old chronicle appears to have been written by a resident in Palestine. It was translated into Latin by Francis Piper and published by Muratori *inter rer Italicar. script.* tom. vii. as the chronicle of Bernard the treasurer. *Assizes de Jerusalem*, cap. 287, 288.

into a defensive and independent alliance with that monarch. The citadel of Tiberias was a place of great strength, the military power of the count was very considerable, and the friends of the king, foreseeing that the infidels would not fail to take advantage of a civil war, earnestly besought his majesty to offer terms of reconciliation to his powerful vassal. It was accordingly agreed that the Grand Masters of the Temple and the Hospital should proceed with the archbishop of Tyre, the Lord Balian d'Ibelin, and the Lord Reginald of Sidon, to Tiberias, and attempt to bring back the count to his allegiance. These illustrious personages set out from Jerusalem, and slept the first night at Naplous, of which town Balian d'Ibelin was the feudal lord, and the next day they journeyed on towards Nazareth. As they drew near that place, the Grand Master of the Temple proceeded to pass the night at a neighbouring fortress of the Knights Templars, called "the castle of La Feue," and was eating his supper with the brethren in the refectory of the convent, when intelligence was brought to him that a strong corps of the Mussulman cavalry, under the command of Malek al Afdal, one of Saladin's sons, had crossed the Jordan at sunrise, and was marching through the territories of the count of Tripoli.

The chronicle of the Holy Land, written by Radolph, abbot of the monastery of Coggeshale in Essex, forms the most important and trustworthy account now in existence of the conquest of Jerusalem by Saladin, for the writer was, as he tells us, an eye-witness of all the remarkable events he relates. Radolph was

an English monk of the Cistercian order, and a man of vast learning and erudition. He went on a pilgrimage to Palestine, and was there on the breaking out of the war which immediately preceded the loss of the Holy City. He was present at the siege of Jerusalem, and was wounded by an arrow, "which," says the worthy abbot, "pierced through the nose of the relator of these circumstances; the wood was withdrawn, but a part of the iron barb remains to this day." His chronicle was published in 1729, by the fathers Martene and Durand, in their valuable collection of ancient chronicles and manuscripts. It commences in the year 1187, and finishes in 1191.

As soon as the Grand Master of the Temple heard that the infidels had crossed the Jordan and were ravaging the christian territories, he sent messengers to a castle of the Templars called "The Convent of Caco," situate four miles distant from La Feue, commanding all the knights that could be spared from the garrison at that place to mount and come to him with speed. The knights had retired to rest when the messengers arrived, but they arose from their beds, and at midnight they were encamped with their horses around the walls of the castle of La Feue. The next morning, as soon as it was light, the Grand Master, at the head of ninety of his knights, rode over to Nazareth, and was joined at that place by the Grand Master of the Hospital and forty knights of the garrison of Nazareth. The Templars and Hospitallers were accompanied by four hundred of their foot soldiers, and the whole force, under the command of the two Grand Masters,

amounted to about six hundred men. With this small but valiant band, they set out in quest of the infidels, and had proceeded about seven miles from Nazareth in the direction of the Jordan, when they came suddenly upon a strong column of Mussulman cavalry amounting to several thousand men, who were watering their horses at the brook Kishon. Without waiting to count the number of their enemies, the Templars raised their war cry, unfolded the blood-red banner, and dashed into the midst of the astonished and terrified Mussulmen, dealing around them, to use the words of Abbot Cogglesdale, "death and damnation." The infidels, taken by surprise, were at first thrown into confusion, discomfited, and slaughtered; but when the smallness of the force opposed to them became apparent, they closed in upon the Templars, overwhelmed them with darts and missiles, and speedily thinned their ranks with a terrific slaughter. An eye-witness tells us that the military friars were to be seen bathed with blood and sweat; trembling with fatigue; with their horses killed under them, and with their swords and lances broken, closing with the Mussulman warriors, and rolling headlong with them in the dust. Some tore the darts with which they had been transfixed from their bodies, and hurled them back with a convulsive effort upon the enemy; and others, having lost all their weapons in the affray, clung around the necks of their opponents, dragged them from their horses, and endeavoured to strangle them under the feet of the combatants. Jacqueline de Mailly, Marshal of the Temple, performed prodigies of valour. He was mounted on a

white horse, and clothed in the white habit of his order, with the blood-red cross, the symbol of martyrdom, on his breast; he became, through his gallant bearing and demeanour, an object of admiration, even to the Moslems. Radolph compares the fury and the anger of this warlike monk, as he looked around him upon his slaughtered brethren, to the wrath of the lioness who has lost her whelps; and his position and demeanour in the midst of the throng of infidels, he likens to that of the wild boar when surrounded by dogs whom he is tearing with his tusks. Every blow of this furious man, says the worthy abbot, “despatched an infidel to hell;” but with all his valour Jacqueline de Mailly was slain.

In this bloody battle perished the Grand Master of the Hospital and all the Templars excepting the Grand Master, Gerard de Riderford, and two of his knights, who broke through the dense ranks of the Moslems, and made their escape to Nazareth. The Mussulmen severed the heads of the slaughtered Templars from their bodies, and attaching them with cords to the points of their lances, they marched off in the direction of Tiberias. This disastrous engagement was fought on Friday, the 1st of May, the feast of St. James and St. Philip. “In that beautiful season of the year,” says Abbot Cogglesdale, “when the inhabitants of Nazareth were wont to seek the rose and the violet in the fields, they found only the sad traces of carnage, and the lifeless bodies of their slaughtered brethren. With mourning and great lamentation they carried them into the burial-ground of the

blessed Virgin Mary at Nazareth, crying aloud, 'Daughters of Galilee, put on your mourning clothes, and ye daughters of Zion, bewail the misfortunes that threaten the kings of Judah.'"

Whilst this bloody battle was being fought, the Lord Balian d'Ibelin was journeying with another party of Templars from Naplous to join the Grand Master at Nazareth, and the following interesting account is given of their march towards that place. "When they had travelled two miles, they came to the city of Sebaste. It was a lovely morning, and they determined to march no further until they had heard mass. They accordingly turned towards the house of the bishop and awoke him up, and informed him that the day was breaking. The bishop accordingly ordered an old chaplain to put on his clothes and say mass, after which they hastened forwards. Then they came to the castle of La Feue, (a fortress of the Templars,) and there they found, outside the castle, the tents of the convent of Caco pitched, and there was no one to explain what it meant. A varlet was sent into the castle to inquire, but he found no one within but two sick people who were unable to speak. Then they marched towards Nazareth, and after they had proceeded a short distance from the castle of La Feue, they met a brother of the Temple on horseback, who galloped up to them at a furious rate, calling out, 'Bad news, bad news;' and he informed them how that the Master of the Hospital had had his head cut off, and how of all the brothers of the Temple there had escaped but three, the Master of the Temple and two others, and that the knights whom the king had placed in garrison at

Nazareth, were all taken and killed.” “If Balian d’Ibelin,” says the chronicler, “had marched straight to Nazareth, with his knights, instead of halting to hear mass at Sebaste, he would have been in time to have saved his brethren from slaughter.” As it was, he arrived just in time to hear the funeral service read over their dead bodies by William, archbishop of Tyre.⁶⁵

The Grand Master of the Temple, who was at Nazareth, suffering severely from his wounds, hastened to collect together a small force at that place to open the communications with Tiberias, which being done, the Lord Balian d’Ibelin and the archbishop of Tyre proceeded to that place to have their interview with the count of Tripoli. The Grand Master accompanied them as far as the hill above the citadel, but not liking to trust himself into the power of the count, he then retraced his steps to Nazareth. Both the Moslem and the Christian writers agree in asserting that the count of Tripoli had at this period entered into an alliance with Saladin; nevertheless, either smitten with remorse for his past conduct, or moved by the generous overtures of the king, he consented to do homage and become reconciled to his sovereign, and for this purpose immediately set out from Tiberias for Jerusalem. The interview and reconciliation between the king and the count took place at Joseph’s well, near Naplous, in the presence of the Templars and Hospitallers, and the bishops and barons. The count knelt upon one knee and did homage, whereupon the king raised him up and

⁶⁵ *Rad. Cogg.* apud *Martene*, tom. v. col. 550-552. *Contin. Hist.*, ib. col. 599, 600.

kissed him, and they then both returned together to Naplous to take measures for the protection of the country.

Saladin, on the other hand, was concentrating together a large army and rapidly maturing his plans for the reconquest of the Holy City – the long-cherished enterprise of the Mussulmen. Whilst discord and dissensions had been gradually undermining the strength of the Christian empire, Saladin had been carefully extending and consolidating his power. He had reduced the various independent chieftains of the north of Syria to submission to his throne and government; he had conquered the cities of Mecca and Medina, and the whole of Arabia Felix; and his vast empire now extended from Tripoli, in Africa, to the Tigris, and from the Indian Ocean to the mountains of Armenia. The Arabian writers enthusiastically recount his pious exhortations to the true believers to arm in defence of Islam, and describe with vast enthusiasm his glorious preparations for the holy war. Bohadin, son of Sjedjadi, his friend and secretary, and great biographer, before venturing upon the sublime task of describing his famous and sacred actions, makes a solemn confession of faith, and offers up praises to the one true God. “Praise be to God,” says he, “who hath blessed us with *Islam*

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