

CHAPTER XX

BERTHA AND SIR JOHN OF JERUSALEM

Now, when all had been done duly and faithfully by those two in leal observance of their oath and promise to that poor restless soul Mad Mallory, Sir Andrew would have bade farewell and departed for his own country forthwith, for such of the friars as had gone with them were dead and the rest disbanded. But Jock was loath to part with so true-hearted a comrade, and persuaded him to accept for a short time the hospitality which the Canon offered him in the Prebend House. So it was that in the summer evening after the burial at Fountains they were gathered in the great hall of the Canon's house, to which, through the open windows, came distant sounds of the mirth and merry-making of the feast of St. Wilfrid. And there were present the Lord and Lady Markenfield, Bertha of Clotheram and Edmund Brown, eagerly waiting to hear the full tale of the Holy Land adventure.

And Edmund Brown said that for his part, having thought deeply, he believed the Devil had made a powerful and determined effort to extend his dominion in and about Rippon; and that amongst his