

who, with the sword in one hand and the koran in the other, were preparing to make a descent upon the nations of Christendom and force them to bow before the standard of Mahomet, or meet a martyr's death. Distressing, too, were the reports which the pilgrims spread abroad, on their return from Jerusalem, of the sufferings and hardships which they had endured whilst endeavoring to visit the land rendered dear and sacred to every Christian heart by the tears, the blood, and the agony of our Redeemer. There were men, too, who thought that this holy place, the true Mecca of every Christian, should not be allowed to remain longer in the polluted hands of the infidels; who thought that when a person, be he knight or peasant, had voluntarily renounced the ease that wealth bestows, or the contentment that honorable poverty gives, and donning the garb of a pilgrim had gone forth to weep and pray on Calvary's mount, or linger with tender devotion over the spot bedewed with a Saviour's blood, he should not be robbed, maltreated or murdered with impunity. Urged on by these powerful motives the princes and knights of Europe took up arms and obeyed with such alacrity the summons of the sovereign Pontiff that, in a short while, the din and clash of the armorer and the tramp of mailed legions resounded throughout all Europe, from the bleak highlands of Scotia and the green fields of Britain, to the olive groves of Italy and the vine-clad hills of France. Warriors, whose renown antiquity has scarce equalled, flocked to the banner of the Cross, and, fighting beneath that glorious standard of love on the burning sands of Asia or the plains of Africa, left it crimsoned with as noble and generous blood as ever throbb'd in human heart.

The first and most successful expedition, composed of about seven or eight hundred thousand men, under the leadership of Godfrey of Bouillon, set out in 1096; and, after capturing many towns and fortresses, and defeating repeatedly the numerous armies of Turks, Persians and Arabs that opposed them, arrived before the walls of Jerusalem. But their ranks were woefully emaciated; and amid the flower of Europe's chivalry battle, pestilence, and famine had made such a fearful havoc that scarce forty thousand men remained to besiege Jerusalem; still, though their numbers were few, each warrior was a host in himself; and, tried by battles, sieges and the thousand ills and hardships that beset an invading army, knew not what it was to fear. The Holy City was stormed, and after exertions the most incredible and feats of valor that amazed the civilized world, was finally taken. Godfrey was chosen king of Jerusalem, and of the other leaders of the crusade some became rulers of neighboring principalities and states, or received appointments as governors of provinces from the Greek emperor, whilst many returned home to enjoy the well-earned fruits of their glorious achievement. Fifty years

had scarce elapsed, when the indignation of the Latins was again aroused by reports of the barbarity and inhuman treatment inflicted on the Asiatic Christians. The various Christian states of the East, no longer sustained by the powerful arms of the crusaders, had gradually grown old and decrepid, and in order to crumble into dust awaited but the Damocles-like swords of Zenghi and Nouradin to hang over their heads. A second crusade, under king Louis of Franco and the Emperor Conrad of Germany, took the field; but, owing to bad generalship in the beginning and jealousies and quarrels in the end, the second crusade proved a failure. Meanwhile Jerusalem fell into the hands of the Saracens; and the third crusade which followed was productive of very little advantage, and was mainly distinguished by some exploits of Richard the Lion-Hearted and Saladin, the Mahometan Sultan, which savor very strongly of the romantic. There now followed in rapid succession the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth crusades, in which the Christians fought, as they always did, bravely and nobly; but, not only had they a powerful enemy to contend against, but even disadvantages arising from a difference of climate and the scarcity of provisions, as well as excessive heat and malignant fevers, so that they never succeeded in obtaining any permanent advantage. Lethargy, at length, took the place of the former zeal and intrepidity that had animated the first crusaders, and all endeavors to renew these expeditions proved fruitless. Men were no longer to be found equal to Godfrey of Bouillon, Tancred, Baldwin and those other dauntless knights who had imperilled their lives to wrest Jerusalem from the grasp of infidelity, who had wielded their swords so valiantly amid the din and crash of battle as to win the admiration and elicit the praise of their very enemies, and yet who could throw off their warrior-habit and go in the garb of pilgrims to the sepulchre of our Lord, and, strong men though they were, weep over that ground rendered forever sacred by the footprints of a God.

When the history of these expeditions is examined the facts are strikingly presented to view that they were composed of the most valiant and war-like men of all nations, that they fought with a bravery of which history affords few parallels, and yet they failed to compass their principal object—the recovery of Jerusalem. Nevertheless, they were highly advantageous to the whole world and to Europe in particular. They had succeeded in destroying the power of the Saracens and the Seljukian Turks; and thus, in preventing an eruption of these nations into the heart of Christendom, they had procured the temporary absence of several petty chieftains from Europe, which afforded the people a cessation from those constant strifes and feuds which the nobles waged incessantly among themselves, and enabled many towns and cities to obtain their enfran-