

to rout the Saracen troops, Saladin reproached his officers for having fled before a single man: "Nobody," answered one of them, "can withstand him; his approach is frightful, his shock is irresistible, his feats of arms are superhuman." And, it is said, that a century after, his name was used to check the impetuosity of the Saracen horse, and quiet the restlessness of the Saracen child. But were they ever so ambitious, those kings and princes and knights and soldiers, were they ever so covetous and curious, is it likely they would start on so great, so momentous an expedition without some greater provocation than the desire to seek an uncertain satisfaction for their own natural propensities? No, the true and proper cause of the war cannot be found on the side of the Christians, it must then be sought on the side of the Saracens. Nor is it a very difficult task to prove, that the Saracens, by their outrageous moral maxims and their unrelenting oppression of the people of the East, as well as by their aggressive attitude towards Christendom, forced the nations of Europe to buckle on their armor and to go forth to battle. Their religion was a monstrous compound of Judaism, Christianity, heresies and fancies. Mahomet used to say: "The sword is the key of heaven; one night spent under arms is worth two months of prayer. He who falls in battle is absolved! The heavens are open to him! His wounds are as bright as vermillion and sweet-smelling as amber." Moreover he taught his followers to believe in fatalism or absolute predestination. Of what efforts then were not men capable whose minds had been thus impressed with the dogma of absolute predestination, whose souls had been inflamed with all the ardor of religious fanaticism, and who, in fine, had been taught to look upon themselves as bound to conquer or die on the field of battle for the propagation of their sect? And, without knowing a word of history, does it seem probable that such men as they would be content with the possession of Asia and Africa, when there yet remained the rich domains, the opulent states and the wealthy castles of Europe to goad on their ambition, to excite their sensual appetites and to enkindle the flame of their religious fanaticism? No, the love of plunder and murder had sunk too deeply into the heart of the Saracen to permit