

sage with their bodies, and presenting a wall of steel to the advance of the enemy. Loud appeals to God and to Mahomet, to Heaven and the saints, were to be heard on all sides; and after an obstinate engagement from sunrise to sunset, darkness put an end to the slaughter. On the third day (the 18th) the Infidels made the final assault on the sixth next the gate of St. Anthony. The Grand Masters of the Temple and the Hospital fought side by side at the head of their knights, and for a time successfully resisted all the efforts of the enemy. They engaged hand to hand with the Mamlooks, and pressed like the meanest of the soldiers into the thickest of the battle. But as each knight fell beneath the keen scimitars of the Moslems, there were none in reserve to supply his place, whilst the vast hordes of the Infidels pressed on with untiring energy and perseverance.—The Marshal of the Hospital fell, covered with wounds; and William de Beaujeu, as a last resort, requested the Grand Master of that order to sally out of an adjoining gateway, at the head of five hundred horse, and attack the enemy's rear. Immediately after the Grand Master of the Temple had given these orders, he was himself struck down by the darts and the arrows of the enemy; the panic-stricken garrison fled to the port, and the Infidels rushed on with tremendous shouts of "Allah acbar! Allah acbar!" ('God is victorious.') Three hundred Templars, the sole survivors of their illustrious order in Acre, were now left alone to withstand the shock of the victorious Mamlooks. In a close and compact column they fought their way, accompanied by several hundred Christian fugitives, to the Temple, and shutting their gates, they again bade defiance to the advancing foe.

Their stronghold afforded them a refuge for a few days; when the Master and a chosen band, bearing the treasures of the order and ornaments of the church, sallied out of a secret postern, and reaching the harbour, embarked in a vessel and escaped to Cyprus. The remnant of the band retired into "the Tower of the Master," which they successfully defended against the flower of the Mahometan army. Find-

ing force unavailing, the Sultan resorted to military art. The place, we are told, was undermined; beams of wood propping the foundations as the workmen advanced; and when the whole excavation was completed, the wooden pillars were consumed by fire, and the last defenders of the Holy Land were buried in the ruins of their falling tower.

The loss of Palestine induced the downfall of the order, for which previous circumstances had prepared the way. Their ecclesiastical privileges exasperated the churchmen; the sovereigns and the nobility looked with an evil eye on the vast possessions which their superstitious ancestors had bestowed upon the order; men in general, now that the crusading fervour had passed away, begrudged the annual drain of treasure sent to Palestine; and reflecting minds, who had seen the insolence of the priesthood and the domination of the Popes, might well regard with suspicion an organised and ramified body like the Templars, uniting to a religious character a military force, which the clergy could not command. Had the necessity for their services continued, these things would scarcely have sufficed to cause their ruin, even coupled with their alleged pride, luxury, and irregularities; for much is always borne from men who supply a tangible want. Could they have retained a footing in Palestine, the Templars would have held their own in Europe; for the time had not yet arrived when its voluntary abandonment to the Infidels could have been openly recommended. But their enemies turned their failure into a crime, declaring that, had they been Christians, they would not lost the Holy Land; their occasional alliance with Mahometan powers, sometimes against a common enemy, but sometimes for the purpose of temporal conquest, did not escape animadversion, and Frederick the Second had commented upon it as a heavy offence: whilst, though containing in their institution the germs of an intellectual organ, they never seem to have thought of making a regular appeal to popular opinion,—unsupported by which, force falls, when opposed to a greater force.