

signifying sounds, and times, and cadences.—But, although from these marks of feminine accomplishment, it would seem that some lady had not long since shared the Prince's chamber. Edward was now alone and buried in deep meditation. He had that very morning received despatches from the dear distant island to the crown of which he was heir apparent—despatches that had aggrieved his spirit, and while they made him grave, and even melancholy, disposed him to thought rather than to action, and sent him to his own private chamber to meditate on the news he had received—news of a weak imbecile king, and that king his father—of turbulent and factious barons, many of them alone richer and mightier than their monarch—of a people harassed and driven into outlawry by the exactions and oppressions of the old feudal law—of tyranny, in short, and factious turbulence, soon to break out into rebellion. The prince's horses had been at the tent door, when the despatches were brought in, with hawks and hounds of the true English breed, and falconers and foresters and huntsmen, for there was at that moment a short truce existing between the Saracen and the crusaders; and, as the hills and dales of Palestine abounded with the wild goat and antelope, the bustard and the partridge, he had intended to exchange the dull limits of his guarded camp, for the free gallop over the lovely plains, with the barb bounding sprightly under him, and the keen falcon at his fist, and the staunch bloodhound running on the track of the wild game before him. Then the despatches came, and, as he broke the seals, a gloomy shadow fell upon his brow, and he dismissed his retinue, and even frowned upon Adam Hartley, his old gray-headed huntsman, who had taught him to ride when a boy, and he remarked half jocularly, half grumblingly, upon the changed mood of his royal master. Retiring instantly, he had remained all the morning buried in deep and gloomy thought; and when his own fair Princess, the beautiful and graceful Ellenore, had come in, lute in hand, to strive if she might not, even as David used to do with Saul, banish the evil spirit from the soul of her beloved by that gentle music to which he best liked to listen, he had replied to her so suddenly and sharply, that she was fain to quit the room in haste, leaving her mantle and her music there, lest he should see the tears which sprung to her bright eyes at his unwonted mood. He did not seem, however, to observe it, but continued buried in dark medita-

tion, reading occasionally from the closely written parchments, and occasionally casting them down, and brooding gloomily over the contents. The noonday meal was served in the knights' hall, as it was called, but Edward had refused briefly to attend it, and so clearly did his chamberlain perceive the distempered mood of the Prince, that he dared not offer any persuasion or remonstrance, as he would have done under ordinary circumstances. The feast was therefore of unusually brief duration, the ladies of the royal company remaining with their mistress in seclusion, and little merriment and no revelry enlivening the hurried and almost melancholy banquet.

At length, when the dinner had been long ago concluded, and most of those who had partaken it had withdrawn either to their respective duties or to the afternoon siesta, which the intense heat of the climate and the custom of its natives, had introduced among the hardier crusaders of the west, Edward called loudly for his chamberlain; and now it seemed that a part at least of the harshness of his humour had passed over, for he smiled as his officer entered, and said, in a pleasant tone,

"Ha! Wilford, these pestilent despatches have so engaged me all the morning, that I might not dine well until I had digested them, and now, I warrant you, I am a hungered. I pray you bid the pantler bring me a manchet and a cup of wine, so I can hold my stomach until supper."

The gentleman bowed low in answer, leaving the cabinet as he did so, but returned in a few minutes, accompanied by a servant, carrying a flask of Cyprus wine, two or three silver goblets, a manchet, as it was then styled, or flat cake of bread with a few dates and grapes. This done, Wilford addressed the Prince, informing him that Malech the Saracen had been in waiting for some time without, having as he averred, papers of great importance, and private intelligence from Jerusalem.

"Well! sir, admit him—admit him instantly. Malech, the Saracen spy! I know the fellow very well—a trusty fellow and a useful. Three times hath he brought me true tidings, and never once deceived me."

It seemed for a moment that the chamberlain was about to remonstrate, but Edward saw his hesitation, and speaking very shortly if not sharply, bade him begone and do his bidding!

"By St. George," he exclaimed, as the other half reluctantly departed,—*"By St. George!* one would think that a single Saracen was a