

Notes of a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

With Impressions en route

—BY—

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AND you* in turn, when there was question of selecting a leader for your crusade, whose sole weapons are prayer and love, consulted the history of those who might have a claim to the honor of guiding you; and finding none who realized so perfectly the type of the Christian chevalier as our glorious St. Louis, you orthwith proclaimed him your patron.

"But what purpose has brought you to Jerusalem? To celebrate an anniversary? to glorify the courage of a man, the prowess of a hero? † This were indeed a noble object; but you pretend to more than this, for I read on your program the legend: *'To render a solemn tribute of homage to the divine Redeemer.'* And assuredly the place could not be more appropriate or the time better chosen for the accomplishment of this sublime purport, verging as we are on the two thousandth centenary of Christianity, and Jerusalem being the Holy City by excellence, because Jesus Christ sanctified it; and the 'City of God,' because purchased at the price of His Precious Blood. There he established His throne—the Cross, and there He left us His tomb. Let us venerate, then,

this holy city, and let us lay our homage at the feet of our Redeemer who has glorified her. May all the peoples of the earth turn their eyes towards this 'city upon the mountain,' and direct toward her the affection of their hearts; for out of her, salvation has come to them.

"But if all nations owe this homage to the divine Redeemer, our own is obliged in justice, and that by many titles, to render it to Him. 'If Jesus Christ,' cries out the eloquent Monseigneur Berteaud, 'willed that the French nation should be born on Christmas' night, at the time of His own entrance into the world. If Jesus Christ sent from on high a dove bearing the oil of unction with which the brow of our Kings was anointed and made France the eldest daughter of His Church, the protectrix of the Papacy, and a mighty nation. If He has confided to her in a special manner the mission of 'enlightening them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.' If he raised up a St. Louis who called himself the *Lieutenant of Christ*. And if for fourteen centuries He has accomplished His glorious works in great part through the instrumentality of our race, are not these so many powerful reasons why the children of our beloved country should, above all others, excel in piety and devotion to the Man-God? Fatherland, traditions,

* [The Very Reverend author of these Notes here continues the address delivered by the Vicar-Custodian of the Holy Land to the pilgrims assembled in the Basilica of St. Helena at Jerusalem.—Ed. C. R.]

† NOTE—An allusion to the centenary of the taking of Jerusalem by Geoffrey of Bouillon, mentioned at the opening of this address.