

night attacks, and forays, in ambushing the van or rear of the Christian armies, in cutting off convoys and detached parties, than were their irresistible invaders in the direct shock of the pitched battle.

Nor, although long intercourse and collision with the chivalry of Europe had softened somewhat the wild natures of the children of the desert, and taught them something of that high courtesy and noble though sometimes fantastic honour, on which the western warriors prided themselves so much, and which they practised ever toward the infidel—nor even yet had the Saracens learned to desist from underhand and secret efforts to rid themselves of enemies against whom open force seemed almost useless. Fountains and wells of water were often poisoned, envenomed arrows were discharged from the short bows and surbacanes of the light horse; and the assassin's dagger not seldom pierced the heart, in the safe and guarded tent, which in the field was fenced by plate and mail too strongly to be reached by the scimitar or the jerrid.

It was about noon, and the heat was intolerable—the full unclouded glare of the sun was streaming down directly into the crusaders' camp, which, lying on the southern slope of a low range of sandy hillocks, was quite exposed to the blazing rays. There was not a tree to cast even a solitary shadow; the long street of white canvas tents glared almost painfully upon the eye; and the hundreds of flags, streamers, and pennoncelles, and pennons, and square banners, which decked the summits of the several pavilions, and served to indicate the rank of their respective dwellers, drooped in the sultry calm, and clung to their staves silent and motionless. Many of these pavilions were large and sumptuously decorated and contained many separate apartments; but there was one of vast dimensions, made it is true of plain white canvas, but covering a space of ground nearly an acre in circumference, and surrounded by a wall or screen of canvas some six or seven feet in height. Before each of the entrances, for there were four, one in each side of this great tent, a sentinel was stationed in half armour, bearing a long, broadheaded partisan; and at about fifty yards distance from each was erected a long low pent-house, facing the curtained door, and having the front open, answering the purpose of a sort of guard-room for a yeoman's party of some twenty green-frocked archers, whose six feet bows and sheaves of cloth-yard arrows lay ready for immediate service. In

the middle of the area before the principal doorway was pitched a mighty staff, the topmast of the ship which had borne the heroic Edward to the land of war and glory and romance, from which was displayed a broad azure banner embroidered with three golden leopards, the cognizance of the royal house of England.

Within, the tent was divided into many separate apartments, the first of which was a large oblong hall, decorated with many shrouds of mail, helmets and shields and corselets hanging from the pillars which supported it. The furniture was scanty, and adapted to the heat of the climate, consisting of many stools and sofas of canework, and a large table at the centre, round which was collected a group of young gentlemen of birth, esquires and pages to the renowned and gallant prince.

Beyond this was another compartment of the same size, more sumptuously ornamented with silken hangings, and having all the woodwork tastefully carved and gilded, with several mirrors of highly burnished steel, and soft *divans* surrounding it—the audience chamber of the temporary court; and out of this there opened a small inner room, beyond which was the suite of apartments appropriated to the ladies in the train of Ellenore, the young and beautiful princess, who had insisted on accompanying her youthful lord on this perilous and wild adventure.

The inner room, which has been mentioned, was fitted as a sort of library or study, according to the notions of the day, when some few score of manuscripts were looked upon as an immense and rich collection; for it contained a set of portable shelves, supporting some sixteen or eighteen volumes of all sizes, from the minute velvet-covered duodecimo to the gigantic folio, with its rough calfskin binding and its brazen clasps. On either hand this little bookcase there hung from the pillars of the tent a complete suit of knightly armour—on a mail-shirt or hauberk of steel rings curiously intertwined with hose of the same material to protect the thighs and legs from the knee downward, while the joints and feet were guarded by splints of steel riveted to the mail. This suit had its peculiar helmet, conical in form, and having the *avantaille* or vizor of an imperfect fashion not wholly covering the face; a hood of mail was attached to it likewise for the safeguard of the neck and shoulders, with gauntlets beautifully wrought in scale, forming a complete panoply, though of a fashion that was already beginning to fall into disuse, and the more perfect coats of plate came gradually