

THE AMARANTH.

CONDUCTED BY ROBERT SHIVES.

DL. 3. }

SAINT JOHN, N. B., SEPTEMBER, 1843.

{ No. 9.

TRUE TALE OF THE CRUSADES.

THE heat was intolerable, even for Syria. It was about noon, and the sun was blazing high in its altitude in a sky, whereon not a speck of cloud could be discovered to cast a passing shadow over the parched and faintly green earth. Only on the horizon there was a thin, dry-looking, reddish haze, which, far from portending any thing of rain or moisture in the atmosphere, seemed to come up from the burning sands or arid mountains like the hot vapour from a seventimes heated furnace. There was not a breath of air abroad, and scarce a sound was to be heard, although there was the vast tramp of a numerous army, and not only that, but the walls of a populous city in full view, at scarcely a mile's distance from each other. But such was the oppressive sultriness of the climate and the hour, that except a few steel-clad sentinels, leaning upon their lances, in the outskirts of the Christian camp, and a few watchers on the tall minarets of the Moslem city, no human being, nor even animals, except here and there a gaunt and half-starved dog, were abroad in the intolerable sunshine. At times, indeed, the deep "all's well" of the English sentinel would rise from the tented street, recalling thoughts of scenes far different from the wild treeless plains, treeless save when at distant intervals tall, wild-looking palm towered against the deep blue sky, the barren slopes, and the occasional pools of brackish bitter water which were the principal features of that land, which was once spoken of, and truly, as a land of promise—a land flowing with milk and honey. At times again the shrill and long protracted cry of the watchers would go up from the minarets "there is no god but God, and Mahomet is his prophet," proclaiming hourly into those hands had fallen the possessions of

of that people who were once the favourites of the Lord—the chosen of the Most High.

The Saracens held all the Eastern shores of the Mediterranean sea, and daily were extending more and more the dominions of the crescent and the koran, in spite of the fiery zeal of those Christian Millions who had flocked from every shore of Europe to win the tomb of the Redeemer from its Moslem conquerors. Century after century new crusades had poured the mail-clad stream of Paladins and Princes into the sandy wastes of Araby and Syria, had swept for a little while each like a floodtide over the re-conquered land, and each in its turn receded like the ebb, leaving the sun-bleached bones of tens—hundreds of thousands to mark their progress and their fate.

And now Prince Edward, the gallant son of the imbecile tyrant Henry, was in the field again, with his splendid train of Norman chivalry and Saxon archers, to emulate the fame of Cœur de Lion, to win eternal honour to his name, and, as the priests of that day taught men to believe, salvation to his soul, by taking up the cross to drive the Paynimric from Palestine. Many a battle had been fought, many a sandy vale been watered by the noblest gore, and still, as ever in the open field, the thundering charge of the mailed Norman men-at-arms and their barbed horses, cased like their riders, in complete steel, which, in despite of the fierce heat of the Syrian sun, they never ceased to bear in the march, or storm, or battle-field, swept down the feeble opposition of the light armed eastern warriors. Nevertheless, the Saracens quailed not, nor ceased at all from desperate resistance—there was not on the face of the earth a braver people than the Moslem; and, by their armature, peculiarly adapted to the climate and the country, and their unrivalled steeds, they were scarcely less formidable or less successful in skirmishes, and