

A HISTORY OF THE ORDER.

The Order of the Temple first originated on account of the Crusaders. Nine valiant and pious knights formed an association, uniting the character of monk and knight, devoting themselves to a life of piety and chastity at the tomb of our Saviour, and employing their swords in the protection of pilgrims on their visit to the Holy Shrine. Their resolution accorded with the spirit of the Crusades, and gained them the approbation of their king, Baldwin II., and the Patriarch. In the latter's presence they took three vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, and a fourth to fight incessantly in the cause of pilgrims in the Holy Land against the heathen. They bound themselves to live according to the rules of the canons of St. Augustine, and elected as first master Hugh de Payens. In 1119, they were assigned quarters in the temple and called Militia Templi and Templars. In 1120 Fulk, Count of Anjou, on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, to offer vows to the Holy Shrine, impressed with their sincerity, joined the society, and upon his return home, remitted thirty pounds of silver annually, which example was soon followed by many other noble princes of the West.

POVERTY OF THE EARLY TEMPLARS.

For nine years the Templars lived in poverty and gave all presents received toward ameliorating the condition of pilgrims, wore only such clothing as the hand of charity bestowed, and though constantly engaged in fighting the infidel, were so poor that Hugh de Payens and his friend, Godfrey of St. Omer, both rode the same war-horse. In 1158, the Order was confirmed by the Council of Troyes, and a white mantle prescribed as their habit to distinguish them from the Knights of St. John, or Hospitalers of Jerusalem, an Order differing from the Templars only in their mission, theirs being to minister to the sick.

THE RED CROSS.

In 1146, the Templars were ordered to wear constantly exposed on their breasts a red cross, as a symbol of their martyrdom, and to carry a banner bearing the humble inscription, "*Non nobis Domine, sed nomine tuo da gloriam!*" ("Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to Thy name give the glory!") Hugh de Payens also added a rule that no knight should be admitted to the Order, except he first settled all fends and amend his life. Now began the Templars' success. Valuable gifts came flowing in from all sides. In 1129, 300 knights, from the noblest families of Europe, enrolled themselves under the Templars' banner, and, followed Hugh de Payens to the Holy Land. From this time forward their history forms a prominent part of that of the Crusaders, and is familiar to most readers. Wherever the battle raged fiercest, or sword of Saracen threatened a Christian, there was found a Templar to avert the blow.

DEMORALIZED BY WEALTH.

In the latter part of the twelfth century, the Order became demoralized by excess of wealth obtained in successful wars against the heathen. Their annual income in 1175 is stated by Dugdale to have been \$20,000,000. The Christian power began to decline in the East. Saladin prepared to recover Jerusalem, and found discord in the Christian camp. The fight came—the terrible battle of Hittin—where the Templars and Hospitalers fought with desperation, where blood flowed like water, and 30,000 Christians laid down their lives.

JEALOUSY BETWEEN THE TEMPLARS AND HOSPITALERS.

A jealousy now arose between the Templars and Hospitalers, which terminated in open war. This jealousy was finally suppressed, in a great measure, by the Pope and the respective Grand Masters. The Turks soon after drove the whole Christian force from Palestine. The Templars held out to the last, taking refuge with their families in the fortress of St. Jean d' Acre. Here they had a terrible battle, which resulted in the almost extinction of the Order. Scarce ten knights survived this conflict, and they, with the remnants of the Hospitalers and other Orders, took refuge in Cyprus. Here they elected James de Molay, an estimable knight, Mas-