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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PETER THE HERMIT: A TALE OF ENTHUSIASM ***

Men of the Kingdom

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Peter the Hermit

A STORY OF ENTHUSIASM

By

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CINCINNATI: JENNINGS AND GRAHAM

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PREFACE

Original material for a biography of Peter the Hermit either does not exist in this country, or, if here, does not yield itself readily to knowledge and use. The "Life of Peter the Hermit," by D'Outremant, and another by André Thevet, on which Michaud draws heavily, seem beyond reach, as are also the histories of the Crusades, by von Raumer and Maunbourg.

On examining a number of English and American "Histories of the Crusades," I found them to be largely abridgments or paraphrases of Michaud's monumental work.

It is, then, from Michaud and Milman chiefly that the writer has drawn the facts herein recorded, having often found it necessary to chasten the too pronounced Roman sympathies of Michaud by the equally pronounced Protestantism of Milman. To these authors I am so much indebted as to call for the fullest acknowledgment. The Rev. Dr. J. A. Faulkner, Professor in Drew Theological Seminary, has put me under great obligations by permitting me to use Hagenmeyer's "Life of Peter," especially valuable to the early and late parts of Peter's life.

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BROOKLINE, *June, 1906.*

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Peter the Hermit

CHAPTER I.

PETER THE HERMIT.

THE FOREGROUND.

The great movements called the Crusades followed the leading of universal religious instincts.

Wherever a great leader has been born, has taught, has suffered, died, or been buried, the feet of his followers have been glad to stand. At such spots religious emotions are revived, holy influences are believed to be absorbed, and a sense of nearness to the prophets of God acquired. Whatever the teacher wore, used, or even looked upon, became a treasure through its relation to him. In India pilgrimages to holy shrines, rivers, and cities have been works of merit, even from prehistoric times. The same is true of China as to temples, tombs, springs, and mountain summits. Devotees of later religions, like that of Mahomet, have their Meccas, as the Roman Church has her Loretto and her Lourdes. The murder of Thomas á Becket was followed by the Canterbury pilgrimages, immortalized by Chaucer. "From the lowest Fetichism up to Christianity itself this general and unconquerable propensity has either been sanctioned by religion or sprung up out of it."^[1] Humanity leans more readily on the Incarnate Savior than on Him who was "before the world was." To-day the devout Christian feels the impulse to walk where the Master walked, to behold the sea which He stilled, to sit by the well where He preached, to pray in the garden of His agony, and to stand on the summit above which He shone. And if his faith can be assured as to the site of Calvary, the great tragedy loses all historical dimness and is made real, visible, and present, though its story be read through penitent tears. The place suggests the man; the man suggests the Divine Man; He seems nearer when we worship where an apostle said, "My Lord and my God."

*The Cause of
Pilgrimages*

Belong to all Religions

The Impulse of To-day.

*Pilgrimages and
Historic Memory*

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The East has always been the fountain of religions to the European mind. To the westward flowed the stream of doctrines which sprang up in the Orient. We are beginning to see that Greece came to many of her gods through instruction from the Asiatic continent, and that her originality in religion lay chiefly in her refinement of nature worship and in the beautiful marble forms in which Greek genius enshrined her divinities. From Greece the stream reached Italy in Magna Græcia, and later by the adoption through Roman assimilation of the gods of the Greek Pantheon. The worship of Isis and Osiris came from Egypt to Rome, and became an influential cult there, as witness the abounding symbols of that worship still preserved in the Capitoline Museum.

*The East the Fountain
of Religions*

*Influence of Magna
Græcia*

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To the Christian no land could be so full of religious suggestions, remembrances, and associations as Judea. France, Spain, Italy, Britain were no sooner Christianized in any degree than pilgrims began to set out for the Jordan, for Bethlehem, for Jerusalem with its Gethsemane, its Calvary, and its Holy Sepulcher. Those who were taught that blessing came "by the work wrought," especially when the years prophesied a brief space of life left, eagerly sought to wash sin away in Jordan or to die near the hill of the atonement.

*The Charm of Judea to
Christians*

When Christianity became imperial by alliance with the State, and corrupt by the ascendancy of Constantine in its Councils, the number of pilgrims greatly increased. Ambitions as well as devotions drew men to Palestine. Constantine had evoked Jerusalem again as a name and as a city from the ruins of the preceding three centuries. The liberality of Constantine and Helena had identified the holy places sufficiently for the credulous faith of the time, and has decorated them with churches and colonnades. Michaud says: "An obscure cavern had become a marble temple paved with precious stones. To the east of

*Greater Number of
Pilgrims*

*Buildings by
Constantine and Helena*

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the Holy Sepulcher appeared the Church of the Resurrection, where the riches of Asia mingled with the arts of Greece and Rome."^[2]

The attraction of such buildings, however, was not so great a stimulus to pilgrimages as the security which the pilgrim might have, both on his journey and after his arrival, through the extended and effective authority of the Roman emperor. The pilgrim could now journey without fighting his way, could be housed without secrecy after his arrival, and could worship without stripes at any one of the many shrines which attracted his piety.

Security in Pilgrimages

It is doubtful if any pilgrims traveled so far at first in such numbers through unsympathetic and unfriendly people as those who went as palmers before the settlement of the roads by Constantine or just before the Crusades. During the stay of St. Jerome at Bethlehem, in the fourth century, the pilgrims were so numerous that he speaks of them as coming in crowds, and says that the praises of God could be heard there in many languages.

Dangers of the Earlier Journeys

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Some of the great leaders of the Church, Jerome himself with varying note, were wise enough to point out the evils of these pilgrimages, and to remind the faithful that the Christ might be honored by good deeds at home. Gregory of Nyssa wrote: "The Lord has not said, 'Go to the Orient and seek justice.' Travel even to the west and you shall receive pardon." St. Augustine said in the first sermon on the words of the Apostle Peter: "I am unwilling to consider a long journey. Where you believe, there you arrive."^[3] Jerome from Bethlehem itself writes, "Heaven is equally open to Britain and Jerusalem." He could not have advised against pilgrimages more strenuously if he had wished to keep Bethlehem for himself and for the Roman ladies drawn thither by his example.

Early Fathers and their Cautions

Warnings of St. Jerome

For several centuries the passion for the pilgrimage increased steadily. Roads were indicated, resting places pointed out, and wealth sought to buy salvation by building hospitals and providing for doles of bread and wine to those who made the sacred journey. Charlemagne made their case a tax on his subjects through whose bounds they passed. "Even in our entire kingdom neither rich nor poor shall dare to deny hospitality to the pilgrims... On account of the love of God and the salvation of our souls, no one shall deny them shelter, fire, or water."

Good Roads and Travelers' Homes

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In Jerusalem vast caravanseries were built for them, Gregory the Great building there one of the largest of all shelters.

Shelters in Jerusalem

The signs of the pilgrim—the staff, the wallet, and the scallop-shell—were blessed by priest or bishop before departure, and took on added sanctity, and even miracle-working power, if they had reached actual use in the Holy Land. It was not long before an indulgent Church guaranteed that bathing in Jordan should wash away all sin. And, as the Holy Land must be rich in the bones of martyrs and in the relics of Christ and His apostles, it was within the ambition of the pilgrims to possess a hair of the Virgin, a thread from the seamless coat, a nail which had pierced His hand, a splinter from the cross, or a thorn which had torn His brow. All these were believed to possess powers of healing, and their possession permanently increased the dignity of families and the wealth of Churches.

Washing Sins Away

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The demand for such relics from the Christian world was great and the supply was greater. Traffic in these was enriched by the purchase of the silks, spices, and other treasures of the East, and commercial greed came to move men under the cover of the cross.

Relics and Miracles

The stream of pilgrimage was full until the reign of Heraclius. Then the Persian king, Chosroes, carried his arms through Syria and Palestine to Egypt. The fire-worshippers defiled the holy city by their authority and their worship. They tainted and robbed the churches, and carried off what was believed to be the cross of the crucifixion, which had been guarded by the Church of the Resurrection.

Chosroes Conquers Syria

The wailing of the Christian world over this loss strengthened the courage of Heraclius through ten years of reverses, and aided in the late but full victory which not only brought back to Jerusalem the enslaved Christians but the Cross of Calvary, as the most glorious of trophies. The emperor himself bore this barefooted to the summit of Calvary, and at Constantinople received the congratulations of the Christian world.

Return of the Cross

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Jerusalem was soon, however, to feel the weight of a new and heavy hand.

In Arabia a religion arose with a singular power of advance, which it retains to this day. The union of the spiritual with the material, of the sensual with a fatalistic theology, made the followers of Mahomet eager for heaven by way of the battle-field. The Jews had now no unity; Christianity had become divided into sects cursing each other; the Persian Empire had exhausted itself; the Greek Empire was wasted with its own corruptions. The way was open for the stern, sober, and, in all respects but one, self-denying followers of Mahomet. Until they learned to navigate they swept the eastern and southern coasts of the Mediterranean.

Rise of Mahomet

Greek Empire Corrupt

They early overwhelmed Palestine. Becoming masters of maritime peoples, they conquered even to Spain; were held at bay for a while by Constantinople; came even under the walls of Vienna, and were at length beaten back by Charles Martel.

Jerusalem was almost as sacred a city to the Mohammedans as to the Christians. Their prophet had visited it, and had journeyed to heaven from it. Attacked by the soldiers of Omar shortly after the death of the prophet, the Christians endured the horrors of a siege for four months, resisting armies which claimed the city as theirs by the promises of God. Omar came to receive the keys of the exhausted city, and Christians cried out in agony as the chief infidel defiled by his presence the Holy Sepulcher. They were permitted to worship, but not openly to exhibit their crosses and sacred books. Their conqueror erected a mosque on the site of the temple. This was more than the breaking heart of the Christian patriarch could bear. He died bewailing the sorrows and desolation of the city of the Great King.

Jerusalem Sacred to Mohammedans

Jerusalem Taken by Omar

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While Omar lived the hand of persecution was in good measure stayed, but worked in full vigor as soon as he was dead. Christians were certain neither of their homes nor of their churches. Their taxes were increased to the point of exhaustion. They could not mount a horse nor bear a weapon. A leather girdle must always show their subjection. No Arabic word must fall from their lips, nor could they speak the name of their own Patriarch without permission.

Omar Checks Persecution

These hardships awakened the sympathy of the Christian world, and stimulated many to go to the Holy Land that they then might be "accounted worthy to suffer with Christ."

Hardships Stimulate Pilgrimages

Arculphus and Antoninus, of Plaisance, reached sainthood by making this journey and certifying to the Western Churches the persecutions of the Christians in the Holy Land.

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Yet truth compels the statement that the Mohammedans were not always unjust or unkind. Intervals of peace came to cheer those who wept, and the reign of Haroun al Raschid offered them the largest hope. The great Charles was now great enough, even in Eastern eyes, to secure liberty and peace to Christians in far-off Palestine, and was treated as an equal through embassies and presents by the great Caliph.

Haroun al Raschid Just

Never could a monarch have received a more welcome present than did Charlemagne when the Caliph sent him the keys of the Holy Sepulcher.

It is also to be remembered that prophecy had been interpreted to mean that in the year 1000 A. D. Christ would appear and set up His millennial kingdom. This greatly stimulated the pilgrimages to the Holy Land, as it did all other phases of devotion. Thousands felt that it would be well to be at the scene of the cross and of the resurrection when Christ came with His angels. It were well they should be near where He ascended, whether they were living or dead when He came.

Christ Expected 1000 A. D.

Persecutions followed the death of the great Caliph, particularly in the sultanate of Egypt. The Church of the Holy Sepulcher was destroyed. Other Christian buildings shared the same fate. Then as now, the Jews had to suffer from suspicions created by their voluntary segregation as well as by their forced isolation. The Christians in France heard that the French Jews had sent word to the Sultan Hakim that a great Christian invasion of the Holy Land was intended. This led to a revenge, the justice of which in any degree remains unsettled to this day.

Haroun Dead Persecution Follows

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Unexpected calm came to Palestine through the development of the maritime powers of Italy, which could fall on Hakim's dominions at will. The largest annoyance of the pilgrims for awhile was the enforced payment of a toll for entering Jerusalem, established near this time by the Mohammedan powers. In the cooler blood of historical inquiry to-day, we can not wonder at a tax which failed at its greatest height to meet the increased cost of government when thousands of pilgrims were added to the population of Jerusalem and its environs. But it was often gladly paid by those who could, and the gates of Jerusalem were opened by the richer pilgrims for those to whom it was an impossible or severe burden.

Toll for Entering Jerusalem

Christianity had now attained a history of a thousand years. It had climbed to stately thrones and to cathedrals. Princes of great names, like Robert of Normandy, and bishops who were also secular princes made the pilgrimage and returned to speak with authority on the attractions of the holy places and on the shame of the infidel's domination.

Christianity now Wealthy

In the shrewd management of the Church at this time, pilgrimages were substituted for penances, and troublesome sinners were sent out of their country on a pious mission which promised forgiveness if it could not pledge reform. It at least secured a period of quiet to their families and of security to the neighborhoods from which they came.

Pilgrimage Guaranteed Pardon

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The Bollandist manuscripts afford many details of the pilgrim life at Jerusalem which had, however, to be enjoyed by permission of the infidel, always a bitter portion in the pilgrim's cup.

On arrival they prepared themselves by fasting and prayer. Then, covered by a mourning robe, they visited the Church of the Sepulcher. The robe thus attained such sanctity that it was preserved until death and enshrouded the owner at burial. They then visited, in turn, the sacred spots in and adjacent to the city. This accomplished, they sought the holy mountains of the Sermon, the Transfiguration, and Ascension. Then they washed their sins away in Jordan, and tore off palm-leaves near Jericho to attest on their homeward journey that the holy pilgrimage was complete.

Round of Pilgrim Duties

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The tenth and eleventh centuries thus kept by the thousands of pilgrims yearly, all Christian Europe became informed of the conditions which obtained in the land where Christ suffered for the sins of men.

Slowly there grew up a devotion which was nearly equal to a secondary religion. Service rendered to a pilgrim was almost the same as being a pilgrim. Nor did the pilgrims fail to profit by the reverence they inspired. Some of them paid their way by their prayers. There is record of one who paid his fare for a voyage from Alexandria to Palestine with a copy of the Evangelists.

Services to Pilgrims

On the St. Bernard, on Mt. Cenis, on the frontiers of Hungary, in Asia Minor, as well as in Palestine, hospitals and hostelries were built by the faithful as works of salvation.

No pious movement has ever long existed without drawing to itself some of impure and selfish motive. The rich had no surer way of advertising their generosity than by making the journey and aiding in the comfort of their poorer brethren. Some made the pilgrimage as many times as planet pilgrims now visit Europe. Yet to the credit of the pilgrim it must be said that no act of violence is recorded against any one who really made the whole journey. It is recorded of a Mussulman governor that he said of such, "They are not away from home with bad intent, but to keep their law."

Impure Accretions

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Confusing to the moral sense as we possess it, and destructive of true morality as we must hold it to be, we must further admit with astonishment that pilgrimage was held to be a cure for the most dreadful sin.

Confusion of Moral Sense

A Brittany lord who murdered his brother and his uncle was ordered to make the journey twice with humiliating conditions, and returned, after three years on Mount Sinai, to be received as a saint and to dignify a monastery by his narrations and his residence.

One journey was enough to free from further penalty a Roman prefect who had dragged a pope from his altar. Foulque-Nerra, Count of Anjou, pursued by the ghosts of those he had murdered, sought to quiet them through three unavailing journeys.

A Journey Condone Murder

For such reasons and for many others, some of which can hardly be brought within religious motives, thousands made the journey. Three thousand, beginning with the Bishop of Cambrai, were nearly all starved or murdered in Bulgaria, and the few who went on as far as Laodicea turned back or died there, while their leader went back to his diocese.

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One more band, or army rather, of ten thousand started ten years later with the Archbishop of Mayence and the Bishops of Spire, Cologne, Bamberg, and Utrecht. They were almost in sight of Jerusalem when the Bedouins besieged and captured them. Saved from death by a neighboring Emir, they followed the news of their tribulations to Jerusalem, where they were received with joy. They lost during the whole journey three thousand of their number, and went back to fire Europe with accounts of their impressions, their perils, and their undeserved dangers.

Bloody Welcome in Bulgaria

Three Thousand Killed

As the tolerance of the earlier caliphs was succeeded by the fanaticism of the Turks, the Christians of Jerusalem ceased to be treated with any other consideration than that accorded to despised slaves. Pilgrims were no longer guests, but intruders. No persecution, however, stopped the flow of pilgrims. The harder the way, the greater the cost, the greater the merit. The pilgrim might, under these later conditions, easily become a martyr. The martyr's crown was sure, by the faith of the times, to become a heavenly crown. Few now survived the journey. These often came back starved, cut, and mutilated. Their appearance and the great gaps in the ranks of those who returned, kindled a smoldering fire under all Europe. Such had been the pre-eminence of Constantinople and the Greek Empire that if the Greeks had retained their former quality, the Turks might have been driven back by those who sat on that famous throne. But when the corruption of decay was attacked by the vigor of an almost savage state, there could be but one result.

Rejoicing in Martyrdom

Fanaticism of Turks

Degenerate Greeks

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Among the Greeks the lowest qualities and the basest acts found justification under the name of policy. Courage in battle was supplanted by the shield and mechanism of bodily safety. They killed the men who tried to rouse them. They had wasted all their inheritance but great memories, and had acquired a truculent and factious spirit. While they were nearing the utter decay of their influence the infant West was found to have grown until all that was noble in character and all that was true in Christianity, all which could respond in courage and self-sacrifice to the call of Jerusalem for

Greeks Truculent

The Roman Curia, from its first date of political influence, had never ceased to enhance its authority by the use of the secular arm when it had none of its own, or by its own secular arm when it could command one. The disturbed conditions in the East, together with the decay of Greek influence and the cowardice and helplessness of the Byzantine emperors, had led Michael Ducas to appeal to Pope Gregory for help. The prize offered Gregory was the submission of the Greek to the Roman Church and the removal of all barriers. From the standpoint of ability, Gregory well deserves the title "Great." He seems as great in statecraft as in executive ability. The hope of being a universal pope led him to promise aid. He urged the faithful to take up arms against the Mussulmans, and promised to lead them himself. His letters were full of the loftiest ideas. Fifty thousand agreed to follow his lead. But he found the management of Europe more to his taste and perhaps to his need.

Papal Ambition

Greatness of Gregory

The decay of Byzantine power was wisely used for the development of pontifical authority and the spread of the Latin Church. And, again, the Eternal City through its popes, and particularly through Gregory, became the ruler of the world. Gregory summoned all monarchs to derive their authority and their enthronement from him, and endeavored to make laws for every country in which his Church had place. Resisted by some monarchs, his influence widened nevertheless, and while he forgot his pledge to deliver Jerusalem, he prepared the way for a final unity of action which he could not secure in his own lifetime.

In the pontificate of his successor, mingled religious and commercial motives led to a movement against the Saracens, which, while never numbered among the Crusades, almost deserved that name. The acquisition of maritime power by the Saracens had led to interference with Italian commerce.

Promising remission of sins to all who fought, Victor besought Christians to take up arms. Christians crossed to Africa and professed to have slain a hundred thousand Saracens; certainly did decorate Italian churches with the spoils of victory, and made a Moorish king pay tribute to the pope.

"Christian" Butchery

What kings, emperors, and popes could not do, a pilgrim accomplished. We pass from the Foreground to the Figure.

CHAPTER II.

THE MAN AND HIS MESSAGE.

The study of the Foreground of the Crusades exhibits the preparation for the man who was to be the great leader and, one might say, originator of these astonishing movements. Whatever part others played, or whatever the measure of the aid given, to Peter the Hermit is to be given the credit of the effective inspiration and active leadership.

Preparation for Peter

The leadership here claimed for Peter is challenged, it is only fair to say, by Von Sybil whose views are, in the main, accepted by Hagenmeyer. Von Sybil gives credit to the Pope alone for inspiration and direction. It seems more probable, however, that the Pope utilized and magnified the enthusiasm and influence of Peter; and directed it into channels more likely to permit the movement of the Roman Church Eastward and the growth of Pontifical supremacy. This is the view contained in these pages.

We know where Peter came from. Born in Picardy, the historians are not agreed whether of obscure or noble family. It makes little difference, since if this were known all their dignity and life in history would proceed from Peter. He was called Peter the Hermit because he was a hermit, and not, as some have maintained, because it was his surname. The weight of opinion favors his descent from humble parents.

Peter's Birth

All are agreed that he was of very ordinary appearance; one says "ignoble and vulgar." The sum of the statements of contemporaries as to his personality, is that he was of sharp understanding, energetic, decided; coarse and sometimes brutal; enthusiastic; of great imaginative power. If a Picard, then a Frank, and if a Frank, then a fighter, and very ready to fight for religion. His nationality, therefore, gave him access by speech to a most restless, gallant, and adventurous people. Born with courage, moral intensity, restlessness, and activity, he experimented for satisfaction in every direction.

It seems that neither celibacy nor marriage, study nor warfare, long attracted him. The conditions about him seemed beyond his remedy, and, like many others, he retired from a sinful world to the harshnesses and austerity of a hermit's life. Fasting did for him what it seems to do for all when excess is reached either by self-will or necessity. He became truly a "visionary." "He saw visions and dreamed dreams." His temperament and his religious exercises made him feel that, better than others he knew the will of God and that he

Chooses Hermit's Life

Effect of Self-confidence

was chosen to execute it. In this stage a man becomes capable of great things in a poor cause. The world is always impressed by the confident and the courageous. No great movement, however wrong in doctrine, defective in morals, or disastrous in results, has been without such leadership.

Like all orators of the Latin race, his fervor showed itself, not only in his tones, but in his gesticulation and his postures. He was a master of pantomime. If any were beyond his voice, they were not beyond his meaning. If he had lived in our time he would have been counted among the most "magnetic" of preachers. The reputation of his sanctity showered him with gifts. He kept nothing for himself. All went to the poor, and evil women were dowried by him that they might cease from evil in honorable marriage.

Peter was not stirred alone by the relations of returning pilgrims as to the ignominies heaped alike on the sacred places and on the religious by the Turks. He followed in the wake of the devotees who traversed the long road to the Holy City. That Peter actually made this journey is sufficiently attested by his contemporary, Anna Comnena. She probably met him while tarrying in Constantinople, and could easily know of his presence at the palace of her father, Alexius. From her we learn that he had to flee before the Turks and Saracens, and her narration makes it doubtful if he reached Jerusalem on his first attempt. By so much as he was more enthusiastic than others by nature, by so much was he fired with indignation, which to him was but the just expression of his zeal and his piety.

Generosity Self-Sacrifice

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He stood with agony on Calvary. He adored with tears the tomb of Christ. Then he sought speech with the Patriarch of Jerusalem. His name was Simeon, and like another, waited for "the salvation of God." Who is responsible for the report of this interview we do not know, but one more probable and pathetic is not on record outside the Bible.

Emotions in Jerusalem

Simeon had suffered much for his faith as well as for his leadership. The impatient enthusiasm of Peter was moved to tears by the patient enthusiasm of Simeon. "Is there no remedy?" cried Peter, weeping. And Simeon answered: "Is it not evident that our sins have shut us away from the mercy of the Lord? All Asia is in the power of the Mussulmans; all the East is enslaved; no power on earth can help us." Peter asked, "May not the warriors of the West come to your help?" "Yes," said Simeon, "when our cup is full, God will soften the princes of the West, and will send them to the help of the Holy City." This was Peter's thought, and, weeping with joy over a great hope, the patriarch and the pilgrim embraced. The patriarch pledged himself to appeal to Europe by letter and Peter by word of mouth.

Patriarch Simeon

Simeon's and Peter's Hope

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The plan of Peter was strengthened by his further devotions at the Holy Sepulcher. There are two ways in which men of strong will become sure that their will is the will of God.

One is to make a plan, and then submit it to God in prayer. The other, and the truer, is to ask God's help in the making of the plan as in its execution. The first, as was probable from Peter's intellectual and moral constitution, seems to have been the way in which he came to certainty as to his life mission. There is no reason to doubt that in his exiled state, moved at once by piety and peril, he saw the vision, though inwardly, which inspired his return. At the Sepulcher he thought he heard the voice of Christ commanding him to proclaim the sorrows of Christ's land and of Christ's people. The best account of this vision and commission is that of the *Historia Belli Sacri*: "One evening as Peter went to rest the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him in a vision, saying, 'Peter, stand up. Go back quickly into the West. Betake thyself to Pope Urban with this commission from Me that he get all My brothers as quickly as possible to hasten to Jerusalem, in order to purge the city of unbelievers. All who do this from love to Me, to them stand open the doors of the kingdom of heaven.'" This became to him a daily commission from on high. Bearing letters from Simeon, he went to Italy by sea, and sought the presence and aid of Urban II, then pope.

Peter's Mental Constitution

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Urban felt that this call, recognized by his predecessors, was more fully and loudly given to him.

Pope Urban

The refusal of Hagenmeyer to credit this vision and its influence on Pope Urban seems to be the result of an ultra critical spirit. When a pope speaks, after argument and urging, he is not likely to think it consonant with his dignity to give credit in allocution or bull to those who urged him. Holding that all men are properly servants of the Holy See, he speaks as if he was the original source of knowledge and impulse. Urban does not, in his famous speech at the Council of Clermont, give Peter's vision or Peter's urgency as a ground for his utterance or action. But he followed Peter on that occasion, and it may well be that if Peter mentioned his vision as the inspiration of his mission, the pope would not speak of its influence on himself.

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The Roman pontiffs, whatever their own ability or lack of it, have always been distinguished for the wise use of enthusiasm. If not able to make the wise direction of it themselves, some one of the Curia has always been at their service to value the force and direct it into channels of wider influence for the Church. There can be little doubt that Urban was moved by a true and generous feeling. It would have been almost impossible for any one to have simulated the grief he manifested at the Council of Clermont.

Urban's Emotions

But there can be as little doubt that, as the proposed movement must inevitably aggrandize Roman Catholicity and make her the leader of the Christian world, Urban was happier and stronger by the coincidence and collaboration of both forces. There was a rival pope, and there were sovereigns who were his enemies. What a God-given opportunity to humble the Antipope and bring the unfriendly kings to his feet!

Mixed Motives

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The pope gave Peter his commission and sent him forth with his blessing. Mounting a mule, which soon attained in the thought of the people something of its master's sanctity, he passed through Italy, crossed the Alps, was in every part of France, and stirred the larger part of Europe. With a crucifix in his hand, his body girdled with a rope, clothed in a long cassock of the coarsest stuff, and a hermit's hood, he could not have had, from the standpoint of public attention, a better appearance. He kept himself free from monkish evils in habits and conduct, and as he preached the loftiest morality by word as by life, the people honored holiness in him.

Peter's Garb

Like all who have been great reformers, he was indifferent as to where he preached so that he could get a hearing. When the pulpits were open and could reach the multitude, he was glad to preach in the sacred inclosures; when his mission could reach more minds on the high roads and public squares, he as gladly preached there. He knew how to use apostrophes and personifications, and made the holy places themselves clamor for help. He sometimes showed a letter which he said had fallen from heaven wherein God called upon all Christendom to drive the heathens out of Jerusalem and possess it forever. His favorite prophecy was "Jerusalem shall be destroyed till the time of the heathen shall be fulfilled." The agonies endured by the Christians of Palestine he described with such accuracy of language and appropriateness of gesture, that his hearers seemed to see them writhe under the lash and to hear them groan in their wounds.

Ready to Preach Anywhere

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When he had exhausted his vocabulary and was exhausted by his emotions, he would wave the image of Christ suffering on the cross before his sobbing and wailing hearers.

Waving his Crucifix

The news of such preaching and of such scenes travels fast and far. Wherever the Hermit went he was received as a saint, and if the people could not obtain a thread of his garment they contented themselves with a hair from the tail of his mule!

Whatever the modern mind may see of credulity among the people or of fanaticism in Peter, contemporary annals show that his preaching was followed by the results promised to the Gospel. Michaud says: "Differences in families were reconciled, the poor were comforted, the debauched blushed at their errors. His discourses were repeated by those who heard to those who did not. His austerities and his miracles were widely known and credited. When Peter found those who had been in Palestine, or confessed to have been there, he used them as living examples, and made their rags speak of the barbarities they had suffered, or claimed to have suffered, at Turkish hands."

Effect of His Preaching

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Additional strength was given to the cry for relief from Palestine by the perils of Constantinople. This city, under nominally Christian emperors, had become a museum of sacred relics. Alexius Comnena threatened by the same warriors who had subjected the Holy City, offered his sacred treasures and his secular riches to the leaders who would rescue his capital. The poor esteem in which the haughty but, when in danger, servile Greek held the Franks, as to everything but warlike power, is indicated by his promising the Frank warriors the beauty of the Greek women. As if these warriors were of the same tastes as the Turks! To pass under the Mussulman yoke was infinitely more degrading than to hand his scepter to the Latins.

Constantinople in Peril

Urban now found it a suitable time to attempt to concentrate opinion and prepare for action by summoning a Council at Plaisance. There was a great response to the papal summons. Two hundred bishops and archbishops, four thousand ecclesiastics, thirty thousand of the laity came to the Council which had to meet, on account of its size, outside the city wall.

Urban Concentrates Opinion

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The tone of the Eastern emperors had long been so haughty that the presence of their ambassadors at a Latin Council was a sufficient proof of their humiliation. The pope seconded their requests and prayers with all the force of speech and authority; yet the Council concluded nothing. It seems probable that the astute pope passed the word that no conclusion should be formulated, as he was not yet ready to indicate all that was in his mind. It may well be that the danger to Constantinople was not yet so evident to Alexius and to all as to indicate the hour for absolute submission to the Roman authority.

Ambassadors of Alexius Humble

It is more probable, however, that Urban could not yet command Italian aid and unity. Commerce had so developed that religion, where it interfered with it, could not command undivided allegiance. The Italians, too, were near enough to know the limitations of Urban's power, his failures and disgraces, and could not be summoned to action as successfully as those who were farther away from knowledge of the weakness of the papal grip. So the second Council met at Clermont in Auvergne, and was equally weighty in the numbers attending and the authority represented. "The cities and villages of the neighborhood were so

Italy not yet Roused

Opening of the Council

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filled that tents and pavilions were erected in the meadows, although the weather was very cold." [4]

Various matters of Church and social discipline were first considered and determined. The purposed delay in reaching the real object of the Council seemed to whet the appetites for the consideration of the wrongs of the East. Enthusiasm grew to fanaticism, and a grand and universal impatience of other topics finally brought the greater matter before the body.

The opening of the subject was had in the great square before the cathedral. A throne had been prepared there for the pope, who approached it followed by his cardinals and accompanied by Peter the Hermit in the garb now known to the Christian world everywhere.

Artful Delay

Peter was put forward to speak first. His countenance was cast down with humiliation, and his voice expressed his inward agony as he told what he had seen of the sufferings of Christians at the scene of the world's redemption. He told how they had been chained, beaten, harnessed like brutes; how their bread had been taken away; how they had been compelled to pay from the poverty of the pilgrim's wallet for approach to the sacred shrines; how Christian ministers had, like their Lord, known the rod, and met their death.

Describes Sufferings of Christians

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It is not needful to suppose that the growth of Peter's emotion, as he told this tale of horrors, was simulated. In the cooler blood of to-day the narrative stirs a sluggish heart. He ceased to speak because choked with sobs.

The speech of Urban, who followed Peter, was one of the greatest ever spoken in its effect on the history of the world. Delivered undoubtedly in French, it survives only in ecclesiastical Latin. He was in France. He wished to stir the French. He could not have moved them through an interpreter as he moved them in his own tongue and theirs. He began in the language of compliment.

Urban's Great Speech

"Nation beloved of God, it is in your courage that the Christian world has placed its hope. Because I am well acquainted with your piety and your bravery, I have crossed the Alps to preach to you.... You have not forgotten that but for the exploits of Charles Martel and Charlemagne France would have been under the rule of Mahomet.... Your fathers saved the West from slavery. More noble triumphs await you. Under the guidance of the God of Armies you will deliver Europe and Asia, you will rescue the City of Jesus Christ from whence the Lord has come to us. Whose soul does not melt? Whose bowels are not stirred with shame and sorrow? The holy place has become not only a den of thieves, but the dwelling place of devils. Even the Church of the Holy Sepulcher has become a stable for cattle. Men have been massacred and women ravished within those blessed walls. European Christians are warring on each other when they ought to be rescuing their brethren from the yoke, and from the unbeliever's sword."

Urban Compliments Franks

Describes Desecration of Palestine

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He appealed to every passion by captivating prophecies. "The wealth of the unbelievers shall be yours. You shall plunder their treasuries. Your commander, Christ, will not permit you to want bread or deny you a just reward. There is no crime which may not be absolved by this act of obedience to God. I offer absolutions for all sins; absolution without penance to all who for this cause will take up arms.... I promise eternal life to all who die on the battle-field or on the way to it. The crusader shall pass at once to Paradise. I myself must stand aloof, but, like Moses, I will be fervently and successfully praying while you are slaughtering the Amalekites. I will not seek to dry the tears which images so painful for a Christian and for the father of the faithful draw from you. Let us weep over the sins which have withdrawn the favor of God from us, but let us also weep over the calamities of the Holy City. But if tears be all, we shall leave the heritage of the Lord in the hands of the wicked. How can we sleep in comfort when the children of Jesus Christ live in torments? Christian warriors, eager for pretexts to unsheath your swords, rejoice that to-day you have found a just cause for war. You mercenaries who have hitherto sold your valor for money, go now and merit an eternal reward.... If you must have blood, bathe your sword in the blood of infidels. Soldiers of Hell become soldiers of the living God. Remember that 'he who loves father and mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me.' Thus speaks Christ to you to-day."

Offers Rewards for Crusading

Pathetic Closing

Further Appeals

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Long before this final sentence, Urban's hearers had been lifted to indescribable enthusiasm. A mighty shout as from a single throat answered him: "God wills it. God wills it. We will join the army of God!"

Spread of Enthusiasm

Urban commands the bishops to rouse their dioceses by preaching the instant duty of war for the Holy Sepulcher. The enthusiasm spread everywhere like an infection under ripe conditions. France took the lead; Germany with slower step; the Italians slowest of all, except the Normans who dwelt among them. England contributed least of all, the Normans being still busy in holding what they had won, and Anglo-Saxons too discouraged over their own defeats. Spain had her own anti-Mohammedan battle to fight. Some noblemen, unable to prevent their vassals from going, joined them and took command that they might not wholly lose their authority over them. Many had fought notwithstanding papal prohibition. So many had sins to expiate that they were happy that they could find forgiveness

Pardon by Fighting

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while indulging their chief passion, and could wash away their sins by shedding blood.

Here again contemporary chronicles prove that humanity is seldom governed by other than mixed motives. Bishops who were also barons bore the skill in warfare which they had gained in defending their bishoprics in the Crusades. Some of the priests, whose eyes were upon the rich bishoprics of the East, found hope enlarged by arming for the war. "Knights of God and Beauty" found a new field in the march to Jerusalem.

The distresses due to scanty harvests in 1094-95 contributed in some measure to the easy gathering of the hosts of the first crusade. Famine seemed so close at hand that those who left their homes had little to lose and much to gain. Nor were the masses unwilling to fly from the oppressions and exactions of rulers who claimed the privilege to do wrong by Divine Right.

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Apulia and Sicily had been wrested from the Saracens by a few hundred Normans. This bred confidence in the final result of the war. One of the most curious of the fanaticisms, which developed from the larger fanaticism, was that of the sign of the cross in the flesh. Women and children imprinted crosses on their limbs. A monk who made a large cross on his forehead kept it from healing and colored the gash with prepared juices. He declared it was a miraculous stigma done by an angel, and his lie served him well in abundant help. It is further related that a company of Crusaders being shipwrecked near Brundisium all the bodies had a cross imprinted on their flesh just under where the cross had been sewed on their clothes. Perhaps they had done what the monk did; perhaps poor dyes soaked through. A miracle was in those days the easiest explanation of all marvels.

Normans and Saracens

Marvels Begin

Yet all this was no more than the earth which clings for awhile to all plants which spring from the soil. The essence of the movement as to the masses was truly religious and the duties of religion released the doer of "the will of God" from all other obligations. The monk from his cloister and the hermit from his cave declared they had heard God's call.

True Religion in the Movement

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Men do not part with property for what they do not deem a valuable consideration. Many at this time surrendered their castles, their lands, their cottages, to "leave all and follow Him." Small sums sufficient to eke out the alms of the pilgrimage, were accepted as pay, and, if not forthcoming, the property was abandoned to him who might remain to use it. It seemed as if all Europe was to emigrate to Palestine.

Sacrifices for the Cause

The Crusaders have been ordered to march on the Feast of the Assumption in the year following the November of the Council. The whole winter was given to preparation.

The warmth of spring rekindled the fires of crusading zeal, if indeed they anywhere burned more slowly during the winter cold. Those who had been at first indifferent to the movement now became in large numbers as enthusiastic as those first influenced. Both classes set out to the appointed camping places. On horseback, in carts, and on foot, the multitudes marched. Sin marched with purity, and indulgence with penitence. Prostitutes in arms appeared with the warrior and dragged down many whom devotion sought to uplift. Secular and warlike music was sometimes overcome by psalms and other religious songs.

Spring Revives Enthusiasm

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More pitiful sights could be occasioned only by a famine or pestilence. Men who had dependent families were followed by the wives and children who could not afford to be separated from their natural protectors. Old men, helpless as to livelihood, dragged after their strong-armed sons. There was no joy over staying at home. Happiness seemed to abide only with those who were going to war. A stream starting from a village drew other streams from the villages and towns through which it passed until a river of humanity rushed on. They did not know the length of their journey, and could not conceive of the dangers they must approach and pass. Some had been so steadfast in residence as to have no idea of the size of the world even as it was known to other men. Great lords with hounds in front, and falcon on wrist, went out as if the chief aim was to hunt and fish. All were crazed, and at first no sane mind was left to point out the dangers, or prepare a commissariat, or plan a campaign.

Crazy Enthusiasm

Ignorance of the Crusaders

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CHAPTER III.

THE MARCH AND THE BATTLE.

There seems, at first, just one trace of common sense, one semblance of a plan for the movement of the hordes and mobs toward the Holy Land. Some who had had a taste of war agreed that, as the numbers were great enough for several armies, they should not start at the same time nor traverse the same route, and that the rallying-place should be Constantinople.

Trace of Common Sense

Those who had followed Peter from place to place, eager to be the first to start, chose the Hermit for their general. It would seem as if Peter had

Peter Chosen General

seen enough of war to know that his undisciplined mob could meet but one fate. It is very probable that he had become a monomaniac before he began to preach the Crusade, and that, for the greater part of his career, he had lost whatever balance of judgment he had had. It is sometimes very hard to distinguish between the unbalanced and the enthusiast, between the enthusiast and the fanatic, and between the fanatic and the monomaniac. Men can certainly be sane on every point but one. Peter in accepting the military command, passed the bounds of reason. A monk might well think himself called to preach on a great theme, to arouse the nations to a great duty. He might easily and properly feel himself competent to be the prophet of God in denouncing the sluggish and the time-serving. But to accept military command without experience of war except as an observer, and to lead an untrained and unprepared mob from Western Europe to Palestine through difficulties of which, as a pilgrim, he had had experience, connotes insanity, or, at the best, "zeal without knowledge."

A Monomaniac

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He did not assume a new uniform. He wore his old one. It was still his coarse woolen cassock, his hood, his sandals, and his rope, and he rode the same old mule with which his wanderings began. His army was not less than eighty thousand strong. But the camp followers were almost as many, made up of old men, women, and children. Peter's crazy faith promised food to all. They had joined him from Northern France, and as he approached Germany great numbers from Southern and Central France swelled his ranks. A gleam of sense appears in the division of his rabble into two bands, one to be led by himself; the other by Walter the Penniless, who appears, from some points of view, like a twin of Peter. Historians have little to say of Walter's origin. Some say he was of gentle birth and had exchanged his all for his title of "Penniless;" others that Walter was not put in command until his uncle died. The only certain thing seems to be that his poverty and enthusiasm were equal to those of his followers.

Wore Old Cassock

Walter the Penniless

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All goes well while the Crusaders march through loyal and liberal France. Help was literally poured into their laps; nor did the Germans, from the earliest historic days easily touched by noble sentiments, fail to respond both to the plea for the Holy Land and for practical sympathy. The Rhine people smoothed the pilgrims' way. They were, however, to meet trouble on the banks of the Danube.

France Helps Crusaders

The expectation that the end of the world was to come about the year 1000 was, for a century before that date, well-nigh universal and dominant. As that year approached the condition apparently confirmed the prophetic warnings of the New Testament. Western Christendom seemed to be hopelessly disordered. It was at this time that a worse invasion than that of the Turks threatened Europe. The Magyars, or Huns, were barbarous, irresponsible, undrilled, and rapacious; less responsible to authority and less moved by pity than the Turks had ever been. In their love for indiscriminate massacre they seem to have been the wild Indians of Europe. They came, nobody anticipating them, nobody knowing from whence. Their ranks were filled up and increased, nobody knew how. Rumors of cannibalism preceded them, and they were believed to be less than human in form and mind. A Finn might have partly understood their talk, but, to the people they attacked, their speech was gibberish.

Western Christendom Disordered

Rumors of Cannibalism

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The weakness and divisions of Christendom invited their approach and palsied resistance. At almost the same date Bremen on the Baltic and Constance on the lake, felt their power. They swarmed over the Alps. They menaced Southern France, and peered from the Pyrenees at Spain. Italy felt their heaviest hand, and Rome saw their devastating flames almost under its walls. For fifty years Christendom quaked and fell before them, and halted them for the first time in A. D. 936 by the hands of Henry the Fowler. Gradually they were restrained to the limits of modern Hungary, and in the eleventh century they were Christianized and the worst enemies of Christianity became guides and caterers to the Crusaders, while not sharing largely in their enthusiasms.

Huns in Europe

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It was very different with the Bulgarians south of the Danube over whose great plain of Sophia a smoother path would be found if the Crusaders could reach it. Sometimes protecting, sometimes robbing Constantinople, their chiefs drank from the gold-banded skull of a Byzantine emperor. Basil conquered them only to show himself more barbarous by putting out the eyes of fifteen thousand Bulgarian captives.

The Bulgarians

At the beginning of the Crusades Bulgaria was nominally subject to the Greek Empire, but held that authority in contempt. Heavy forests then grew to the southern edge of the Danube where now there are bare hills. This mingling of forest and hill gave to the Bulgarians a security in self-rule which was only, in general, ineffectively interrupted by the army of the empire. The Bulgarian type of Christianity did not extend the idea of brotherhood beyond its own borders. They could cheerfully make themselves, without the least trouble of conscience, the terror of their Christian brethren who were making their way to Jerusalem.

Bulgarian Allegiance

Queer Christianity

The march, which began in piety and was conducted for a time with due consideration for the rights of others, soon, almost of necessity, became a raid on the property of the people through whose lands they passed. Bulgarian authority not being able to supply provisions to Walter's army, they foraged along their lines of march, and, when resisted, burned houses and slew their

Bulgars Attack Crusaders

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inmates. The Bulgars answered in kind; attacked the Crusaders when loaded down with booty; penned some scores of them in a church to which fire was promptly put, and one hundred and forty were cremated. Walter did not stop to attempt to revenge, but dragged after him a starving and diminishing army.

The Governor of Nissa, moved by their condition, refreshed them with food, warmed them with clothing, and strengthened them with arms. Taught by the Bulgarian lesson, they passed through Thrace without thieving, and came at last, worn and miserable, to the walls of Constantinople, where Alexius permitted them to await the arrival of Peter and his army.

Crusaders Learn Something

Peter and his army passed safely through Germany, but behaved worse and fared worse than Walter and his following. The frontiers of Hungary were decorated with the bodies of Crusaders hanging at the gates of Semlin. Immediately Peter ordered war. The people of the city fled to a hill, with the Danube on one side and a forest on the other. They were driven into the river, four thousand being put to the sword. Belgrade first knew of the battle by the corpses floating past her walls. Naturally, on penetrating further into Bulgaria, the Crusaders found only abandoned cities, food carried away, and as much as was possible, the road bereft of support of any kind. At Nissa they found a well-fortified city, where Bulgarians looked down from the walls on the Crusaders, and these last did not dare to try their strength on such an obstacle.

Peter's Brave Follies

A Devastated Country

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At Nissa they seemed to have obtained supplies and marched on. Some Germans paid off real or fancied scores by burning some mills on the Nissava River. The Nissans fell on Peter's rear guard, killed all who fought, captured two thousand carriages and many prisoners. Peter turned back immediately, and flamed with wrath as he saw the dead who lay near Nissa.

A Great Loss

Peter cooled down enough to send messengers to the city and ask, on the ground of a common Christianity, for the restoration of the prisoners and spoil taken from the Crusaders. The governor of the city tartly reminded the messengers that Christian conduct alone proved men to be Christians, and that the Crusaders having made the first attack, he could only count them as enemies.

A Tart Answer

This answer fired the Crusaders to fight. Peter, apparently growing in wisdom by experience, tried to hold the warriors back and begged them to negotiate. To wrath opposition is always treason, and Peter found himself regarded as a coward and placarded as a traitor.

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While Peter was parleying with the Governor of Nissa, two thousand Crusaders tried to scale the city walls and carry the city by assault. The Bulgarians drove them back. A general fight began even while the two chiefs were negotiating. Peter proved his courage by waving his crucifix between the combatants and demanding that the fighting should cease. The uproar of battle gave no heed to his voice. His army was utterly routed and cut to pieces. They had fought without command, and were beaten into death and disorder. The Bulgarians captured horses, equipages, the chest which held the offerings of the faithful, and the women and children. The greater skill and strength of the Bulgars won the fight which the unreasoning fury of Peter's followers had provoked.

Fighting and Negotiations

On the top of a hill near by Peter bemoaned his losses and, it is said, his foolhardiness. At that moment but five hundred men answered his call. The next day seven thousand who had been put to flight rejoined him at the call of his trumpet. They came in day by day until thirty thousand were mustered. The rest had perished.

Peter's Five Hundred

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The survivors had small stomach or ability for fighting. They made their way toward Thrace in a humble and peaceable frame, and seemed to feel the mistake of rebellion against authority. Pity came to their relief. Their thin bodies, their staggering gait, their rags, and their tears brought them the aid denied to their arms. None seemed to have turned back. The combatants who were not killed still kept their faces toward the Holy City.

Penitent Rebels

There seems good evidence that the Greeks would have met them differently had they been less helpless. The aversion of the Greeks to the Latins had grown now for centuries. The Latins were tolerable to the Greeks only when the Greeks needed their aid. The Latins had arrived. For the present they could do no harm. The emperor, Alexius, intending to complain, sent messengers to Peter. These returned with tales of weakness and suffering. They were permitted to journey on, and, with palms waving, came at last to Constantinople.

A Greek Welcome

Peter, an object of universal curiosity, if not of admiration, had audience with the emperor, captivated the monarch as he captivated all, and went forth loaded with help for his army and some good advice. This last was to the effect that Peter had better await the arrival of the military princes and generals who had pledged themselves to the Crusade. But these, perhaps with calculated delay, lingered at home while other bodies of Crusaders as ill prepared, as troublesome, and as ill-fated as those which had followed the lead of Peter, marched away.

Peter Captivates Alexius

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Two notable instances may be given. Gottschalk, a German priest, had

gathered fifteen thousand Crusaders, who made him their leader. His army arrived in Hungary near the end of summer. Here they gave themselves up to every kind of wrong-doing. They left behind them daily a trail of outraged women, robbery, and arson. The Germans were good fighters and checked the punitive expeditions of the Hungarian ruler. What was not possible to valor was accomplished by trickery. The Crusaders admitted the Hungarian chiefs to their camps and fraternized with them. They yielded to promises and allowed themselves to be disarmed. Promptly they were attacked and slaughtered.

Roving Crusaders

Incidentally the Jews suffered from the Crusading craze. One band of rascally and ungovernable Germans, who had many sins to be washed away and who availed themselves of the hope for absolution in the promise of the pope to those who fought for the Holy Tomb, thought it ridiculous to attack the Unitarian Mussulman so far away, when the Unitarian Jew who had slain the Lord was close at hand. Then, as now, the commerce of the world was in Jewish hands, and it was felt that so much wealth ought not to be in such hands. That element which still exists in the Jewish character of being purse-proud and offensively familiar in prosperity, is reported to have twitted the Christians with the worship of a Jewish prophet as a God.

Crusaders Practice on Jews

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Commerce in Jewish Hands

Whatever was the proportion of motive, it is certain that this mob fell on the Jews and robbed and killed all they found in the cities of the Rhine and the Moselle. It is said that many perished by kindling flames they felt to be more merciful than their Christian persecutors. Others, with stones tied to their necks, drowned themselves and their treasures in the adjacent rivers. Let us be thankful that there was pity somewhere and that the Bishops of Worms, Treves, Mayence, and Spire gave asylum to the persecuted race and denounced the marauding bands as beyond the pale of the Church.

Slaughter of Jews

This band set out for Jerusalem in pious rapture that the soldiers of God had been given victory and had been supplied by the God of Battles with money for the journey! Blinded with superstition, they measure themselves to us by what they did. Albert of Aix tells us that they found a goose "filled with the Holy Ghost," which they made leader in equal authority with a goat not less filled with the same Spirit (*et capellam non minus eodem repletam*)! Fear of such maniacs closed the gates of Hungarian cities. The city now known among Germans as Ungarish-Altenburg, situated in the marshy embouchure of the Leytha, was attacked by them by means of a causeway made of the trunks of trees. Ladders were built, and walls, defended by darts, arrows, and boiling oil, were almost scaled and won, when the breaking of ladders caused a panic and the plain was soon covered by fugitives who had, like all panicky soldiers, thrown away their arms. Multitudes of these were butchered without resistance while others died hopelessly mired in the marshes.

A Goose for a Leader

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Fear of such Maniacs

Surely these are enough to show the horrors of such marches in the name of Christ. A sentence may express the fate of those who survived. The Bulgarians almost finished what the Huns began. The Greeks received the news with joy.

Horrors of the March

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At length Peter and Walter, between them, could muster an army of one hundred thousand men, when the re-enforcements from Italian cities were counted. Still under the walls of Constantinople it was not long before they forgot the lessons of their defeats and began again to rob and murder. Alexius soon found it expedient to ferry them across the Bosphorus. The subjects of Alexius suffered worse than the Turks at first. Anna Comnena, perhaps prejudiced, yet quoted by Michaud, declares that the Normans in Peter's army when near Nicea, chopped children to pieces, stuck others on spits, and harried old people. The Germans, stung by Norman gibes, took a fort in the mountain near Nicea, killed the garrison and there met the attack of the Turks only to be slain by the sword. Their commander purchased his life by apostasy and a treasonable oath.

Forget Their Lessons

Once again the army sets forward, against the protest of the Penniless Walter, but by his forced consent. Once again they meet the reward of ignorance and undisciplined courage.

Cruelties of Crusaders

The ruler of Nicea, concealing a part of his army in the woods, waited for the Crusaders at the foot of a hill. The Turks pretended flight, but suddenly turned, surrounded the Crusaders on all sides, routed them, and slew them with dreadful carnage. Walter died of seven arrow wounds. The whole army found refuge in a castle close to the sea. The Chronicler says, "Their monument was a heap of bones piled upon the plain of Nicea."

Walter Killed at Nicea

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The two results in the East were intense prejudice among the Greeks against the whole movement and contempt of the Turks for Christian warriors.

Turkish Contempt for Crusaders

But where was Peter? Losing all authority among the Crusaders he went back, before the battle of Nicea, to Constantinople and turned the batteries of his abusive eloquence on those he had lately commanded. He called them robbers and brigands, and said that their sins shut them out of the Holy Land. In this he follows the sad habit of all, or almost all, of

Peter Belabors His Followers

Peter's Failure as

those who lead their followers into trouble. It is probable that he had at this moment led three hundred thousand to death. It may be that his conscience troubled him a little, though in general the fanatic is superior to such pangs. At any rate Peter calmed himself by the consideration that his army was chiefly a rascally crowd. This was the final proof that he was not of the stuff of which leaders are made. The verdict of the historian is just: "He had neither the prudence, the coolness, nor the firmness of the commander." He could rouse but not control. He could preach, but could not conserve the results of his preaching. Hereafter we shall see him as a preacher chiefly or in kindred work. Others supply true leadership.

Leader

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Those who lingered at home, when the armies of Peter the Hermit and Walter the Penniless started for Jerusalem, may have been of the wiser sort, and certainly seemed to have profited by the calamities of their brethren, both in the matter of preparation and in the treatment of the nations through which they passed. The first army was led by enthusiasm almost wholly. The second had true military leadership.

Later Leadership Wiser

It is interesting to observe how the two great dominant forces, Christianity and the military spirit, co-operated, and even coalesced, yet allowed neither to govern in its proper sphere. The early Crusaders had piety enough to hold them to the march, notwithstanding the awful trail of death. They did not have enough to prevent their behaving on the way more like devils than Christians. They had sufficient military spirit to make them willing to fight, but not enough to make adequate preparation. The Christianity of that time had devotional but not humanizing power. It carried along faith, obedience to ceremonial, abundant prayers, personal humility; but it had little restraint for passion whether corporal or revengeful. Its hand was powerless to restrain fury or prevent or relieve misery "The knight before the battle was as devout as the bishop; the bishop in the battle as ferocious as the knight." [5] Little better fate availed the women when Christians prevailed than when Turks won the day. Whatever mourning there was for individuals, the failure to win the Holy City appears to have given more sorrow to Europe than the death of three hundred thousand men.

Christianity Coalesces With Military Spirit

Defects of Crusading Christianity

Europe Callous as to Losses

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One might gather up at this point the remaining appearances of Peter, and call his work done. But while he ceased to be a military leader, his work continued, his spiritual influence remained. We shall see him at one time arguing with Turks, and at another praying for victory over them. His strength and his weakness can only be brought out by briefly sketching some of the men who took up leadership after his failure, and with whose victories he was identified as priest, prophet, and participant.

Peter Ceases to be General

The noblest, greatest of the leaders was Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lower Lorraine. Born in Brabant, the blood of Charlemagne was in his veins through his mother. He had fought for the antipope, and was the first to enter Rome when captured by the army of Henry. His sentiments changed until he was ready to expiate his sacrilege by a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and as a warrior for her deliverance. A giant in strength, a hero in bravery, his simplicity was that of a hermit. He was wise enough not to be reckless, and courageous enough never to shrink from the supreme moment of danger. The common soldier was his friend. His word to all was his bond. Men felt braver and safer under his lead. Others might seem by name to be weightier than he in leadership, but in fact he composed quarrels and compelled unity by his wisdom, and, in moments of peril, what he thought prevailed.

Godfrey of Bouillon

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A Great Character

When his leadership was known, France and the Rhine country gave him of their best in treasure, of men, arms, and money. Women denied their amiable vanities that their jewels might furnish outfit for husbands and sons. The Abbe Guibert^[6] declares that what avarice and war had hidden, now came leaping in marvelous abundance into the hands of the chiefs of the army. Heaps of gold were visible in their tents, as if fruits had been carried there instead of untold wealth. Yet some robbed their vassals that they might be ready. Godfrey sold his dominions chiefly to the bishops so that it was well said that the secular princes stripped themselves for the Crusaders while the bishops enriched themselves by the enthusiasm of the laity.

Accessions to His Leadership

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Yet here again we must see mixed motives. To regain Jerusalem was also to be enriched by Saracenic spoils. To give up a petty government or heritage in Europe might lead to dominion in Asia. These things were promised by the authority of pope and general. Many great names acceded to Godfrey's roster, and aided in leading a fairly disciplined and restrained army toward Palestine. The Huns and Bulgars who had slain the hosts of Peter welcomed the army of Godfrey, and sped them on their way with food and prayers. He sent to the East more than eighty thousand men. Their advance made it easier for the pope to put the dominion of unfriendly kings in peril by excommunications and other ecclesiastical penalties. He trimmed the talons of princes while their defenders were absent. Papal authority rose as secular authority went down. It gave the people peace at home at the expense of national independence.

Mixed Motives Again

Godfrey Welcome

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How much science has done for humanity in relieving it of evil signs and omens we may know by this, that the reddened moon under eclipse and

Fear of Eclipse

the waving streamers of the Aurora combined to persuade the people that the war was of God. The indifferent were stirred by these prodigies, and joined the Crusade, and Italy was moved as never before. More princes, knights, and bishops than can be recorded joined in the march. Alexius, the craven emperor, who had invited Latin help, trembled with good reason at the hundreds of thousands now headed toward his capital. He was a true Greek in sending ambassadors to greet them and in hiding his troops where they could harass them.

No one can untangle the tracks of the many bands as described by the annalists of each expedition. Some went the ruggedest way; some the smoothest. Alexius made a prisoner of a shipwrecked count, only to have Godfrey shake him into frenzies of fear by attacking one of his provinces. He purchased allegiance from his prisoner only to make himself and his prisoner objects of contempt. He tried to starve Godfrey's army by refusing provisions, only to have that army bring the fear of famine to his capital through the energy with which it helped itself. The approach of Christmas was used as a basis of peace. The foraging ceased, and Alexius provided food.

Confused Tracks

A Mean Emperor

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The spectacle of disagreement and of growing contempt for each other is painful to any who this day bear the Christian name. The Greeks had the same contempt for the Latins which the Chinese have for the foreign devil. Unable to resist their arms, they took refuge in the futilities of philosophy as their proof of superiority, and in the trickery which, at some periods, had helped them well. But nothing could meet or restrain the skill, courage, and discipline of the forces pledged to the cross, and no complacency was proof against the contempt of the Latins for the Greeks, who, calling themselves Christians, were indifferent to the cry of the oppressed city of the Savior's passion.

Christians Quarreling

Alexius did succeed in blinding Godfrey, and possibly Bohemond, who was coming toward Constantinople through Macedonia. He obtained pledges from both for the integrity of his empire, and apparent submission. Alexius used money because he could not use force, to create dissensions and to win over the venial. His temporary success would be astonishing were it not almost always the case that the craft of an old civilization at first befools the inexperience of more youthful, more rugged, and more trusting nations. Alexius finally got all to the other side of the Bosphorus, but failed to wheedle all who came near his throne.

*Alexius Deceives
Godfrey*

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At this point, as the army marched through Bulgaria, traces of Peter and his army begin to appear. Refugees who had hidden in the woods came to the camps in rags and emaciation. The castle where Rinaldo sought refuge was pointed out to the new comers as the tomb of all his companions. The mountain at the foot of which Walter's army had died was indicated with tears. The site of the camp where Walter had left the women and the sick, and which was captured by the Turks at the supreme moment of the mass, only that the venerable might be slain and the women and children carried into slavery, roused the indignation of the Crusaders beyond any other spot. It had one good effect. In bringing on a much needed unity, it brought also a discipline enforced by the calamities whose evident cause was the lack of it.

On the Track of Peter

*The Crusaders'
Discipline*

The spring brought the opportunity of battle to the Crusaders, and a strong foe met them in the person of the Turk David and his army. He had fortified Nicea, a city famous for two Councils and now the capital of David's kingdom. Nature defended it by high mountains and a lake, and art by walls, towers, and flooded ditches. Garrisoned by the best of David's troops, one hundred thousand more waited near by to their help. Five hundred thousand foot-soldiers and one hundred thousand horsemen came at length in sight of the city for the first real battle of their Crusade against the infidel. These, in camping before the city, divided their allotments by walls piled from the bones of the Crusaders who had fallen on that field. Nineteen languages were heard in the camp, and each nation fought as it would. Clash and clang soon came, and the Turks, routed, fled to the hills, only to return the next day and to be beaten a second time. Three thousand Turkish heads were hurled by catapults into the city by way of information.

Arrive at Nicea

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The records paint an awful picture of the siege. Whatever of mechanism or method was known to Greeks or Romans was employed by besiegers and besieged. Stones, fireballs, bunches of arrows, heavy beams were fired into the city by ballista and catapult, and were fired back with equal skill and abundance. The battering-rams breached the wall and found new walls rising just within. The besieged fished with iron hooks from the top of the walls, and hauled the captured Crusaders alive to their death at the summit. Stripped, they were used as stones for catapults, and stark naked were fired back into the Christian camp. A Goliath among the Saracens being killed, the Crusaders were greatly heartened, and, having gained some advantages, redoubled their attack. The enemy's supplies by way of the lake were cut off, and their resistance grew feebler. A tower was undermined, and the thunder of its fall in the night alarmed both Christians and Turks.

Awful Scenes

Bodies Hurlled into City

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After a siege of seven weeks, and when the city was ready to fall, Alexius succeeded in putting his emissary into the city, who persuaded the Turks to surrender to him, and the besiegers found the standard of Alexius floating from the walls. The indignation of some was stayed by presents, and craft brought

The Trick of Alexius

Tancred to a slow oath of allegiance. But the mass understood the treachery, and henceforth good feeling between Latin and Greek was impossible.

Resting awhile near Nicea, the Crusaders in two bodies at length resumed their march through Asia Minor. One was led by Godfrey, the other by Bohemond and Tancred. Both were equally ignorant of the perils of the mountains and of the arid plains which were in their way. Bohemond's army was surprised near a river by which they were encamped. Wave after wave of Turks rolled over them and were driven back. Their women were captured by the Turks when they did not first prefer death at their own hands.

Resumes March

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The different leaders—Bohemond, Robert the Duke of Normandy, Tancred, Richard of Salerno, Stephen, Count of Blois—threw themselves into the fight, drove the Turks back, but yielded ground, through exhaustion, to fresh Turkish re-enforcements. All seemed lost when Raymond and Godfrey appeared with the other division of the Christian army. These chased the Turks into the mountains, flanked them on both sides, got into their rear, and met them as they fled down the mountain. The wearied ranks which had despaired had joined in the charge. The Turks were routed; twenty thousand fell on the field, and the enemy's camp fell into Crusading hands. Returning to bury their four thousand dead, they stripped off the Saracen robes and swords and seem little less than barbarians in their orgies of joy.

Bravery of the Leaders

Rout of the Turks

The Turks now gave up direct battle, and devastated the country through which the Christians must pass. Determined to separate no more, the Crusaders became by their numbers more exposed to the dangers of pestilence and famine. Almost all the horses perished in the desolated country. The knights laden with armor found it impossible to march, and some rode asses and oxen when they could be found. The lowliest animals, even hogs were made burden-bearers until these, too, perished and left their loads to be wasted on the road. After unmentionable horrors of birth and death, the army was rescued by the finding of water by the dogs, who, however, exposed by their finding it many incautious drinkers to death from too quickly filling themselves with water. The fair and fertile Pisidia reached, the Crusaders were in comfort, plenty, and peace.

Pestilence and Famine

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The news of their victories preceding them opened the timid cities to their entrance, and brought them abundant supplies. Brought into despair by the apparent death of Raymond of Toulouse and the serious wounding of Godfrey by a bear, they rejoiced in the recovery of both as a miracle in the camp.

Victory Opens Road

How childish these and other giants in warfare were, appeared by the breaking out of rivalries and quarrels even in the face of the enemy.

These details multiplied as they passed on until Baldwin forgot the cross entirely, and became king in Edessa, which served as a city of help and refuge to later Crusaders.

Baldwin Forgets the Cross

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A dreadful mountain passage where men must march in single file, and where pack-horses were crowded off precipices, introduces them at length to Syria, within whose bounds the Palestine of their desire was included. Antioch lay in their way, and was besieged with many difficulties and dangers; some from the presumption of a foolish faith; others from the thoroughness with which supplies had been destroyed by the Turks. Famine came on through the lack of foresight, and pestilence quickly followed. The winter rains inundated the camps, and the dead in the general distress were left unburied. The foraging parties could repulse the Turks and even capture their camps, but could not find within practicable range food enough for the army. Their communications were cut off by sea through the withdrawal of the Italian and Flemish fleets, and the army settled down to abject misery, despair, and death, as they heard that Swerro, King of Denmark, with his promised bride and fifteen hundred warriors, had been slain by the Turks while marching to join the main army. Almost for the first time soldiers began to desert, hopeless of capturing Antioch or of reaching the Holy Land.

Famine and Pestilence Again

Bad News and Desertions

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Peter the Hermit, who appears to have marched silently with the army, now, of all men, shrinking under the criticisms of the army, flees secretly from the camp. They had lost the Duke of Normandy, Tatius, William of Melun, by temporary or permanent desertion, but the flight of Peter made the most noise and caused the greatest scandal. He was punished by Tancred and brought back in disgrace, and was compelled to swear on the Bible that he would never run away again.

Peter Reappears

Perhaps he ran from the awful wickedness of the camp as well as from the famine and pestilence. The soldiers, expecting soon to die, gave themselves up to gambling, every phase of lust, and to drunkenness, when the means thereof could be obtained. A good element of the clergy, notably the Bishop of Puy, by word and example sought to stay the full flood of wickedness. It happened then, as in every age, that a sign, something seen of the eye, had more power than words addressed to the conscience. An Aurora, a rare phenomenon to most, was claimed by the preachers to be a warning from God. Processions of penitents began to march about the camp. Penalties for drunkenness were devised, the hair being cut off in drunken sleep. Blasphemers were branded. Turks and Syrians were spitted and roasted by Bohemond, who thus

A Wicked Camp

Remedy for Wickedness

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rid the camp of unfriendly mouths and dangerous spies. The good bishop who preached against sin wrought practical godliness by compelling the soldiers to plant the fields about Antioch. This provided food and persuaded the Turks of the indomitable spirit of the Crusaders. Provisions began to come in greater abundance, and pestilence was stayed by the opening of spring.

It is a curious fact that at this time an alliance, wisely rejected for the most part, was sought by the Egyptians with the Christians as against the Turks. This condition would have put the Christians wholly in the hands of the Caliph of Egypt the moment the allied armies had possessed Jerusalem. The spirits of the Crusaders were greatly raised by a victory over twenty thousand Turks who came to the relief of Antioch. Two thousand men and one thousand horses were killed. The "gentleness" of the Crusaders' conception of Christianity was shown by loading two hundred Turkish heads on four camels and sending them as a present to the departing Egyptian envoys, and two hundred more Turkish heads were thrown into the city of Antioch, while many more were stuck on pikes around the walls.

*Egyptians Seek
Reliance with
Crusaders*

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But they met disaster as well, because nothing seemed to make them see the importance of discipline and of precaution against surprise. Going unarmed in great numbers to St. Simeon to bring provisions from the Italian fleets, they were dispersed by the Turks. Godfrey, whose great figure is always seen when disaster is to be retrieved, follows the Turks, heavy with their plunder, routs them, and, having made wise disposition of troops, prevents the retreating army from re-enforcing Antioch.

*Carlessness Brings
Attack*

The besieged in Antioch witnessed the awful battle from their walls, and the river Orontes drowned two thousand who escaped from the Crusaders' swords. A great picture of personal valor is seen when, in hand-to-hand battle with a Saracen leader, Robert of Normandy salutes him with the words, "I devote thy impure soul to the powers of hell," and splits his skull to the shoulders with a single blow. Even a greater tale of ferocious strength is told of Godfrey, who, when his shield had been broken by a great Saracen, raised himself on his stirrups and cut with such appalling strength that one part of the Saracen remained on the horse and the other fell to the ground. The Mohammedans having buried most of their number who died near their walls in their arms and robes, camp followers of Christian name dug them up, stripped off all valuables, and paraded through the Christian camps two thousand Turkish heads, which were thrown, when the procession was over, into the Orontes.

Slaughter of the Turks

Details of Valor

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These details are surely enough to show the diabolical cruelty with which the siege of Antioch was carried on by both sides. The wily governor of Antioch decrees a truce, and breaks it as soon as he has provisioned the city. What would possibly have been refused to arms was given, after seven months' siege to policy and stratagem. Bohemond found an Armenian, a renegade Christian, among the commanders of the army of Antioch, managed to meet him, and baited him with great promises. The project to buy the way into the city was rejected by the noble minds, but Bohemond took advantage of the approach of a great Turkish army, then only seven days distant, to fill the camp with dread of surrender and of safety only in talk. Phirous, the Armenian, had been well trained by Bohemond, and offered to surrender his corner of the city only to Bohemond. Fear of destruction brought all the leaders to Bohemond's idea except Raymond. The defenders of Antioch suspected treason through Phirous, and almost defeated the plans of that scoundrel. But the renegade, keeping an inscrutable face under question, and being dismissed with praises, stabbed his own brother to the heart when he refused to aid the traitorous plan, and in the blackness of a night storm admitted one and another by means of a leather ladder until there were enough to take the city and put the surprised and awakened Mussulmans to the sword. The morning light showed the flag of Bohemond waving over Antioch, but at the expense of six thousand defenders dead.

An Armenian Scoundrel

*Antioch Taken by
Treachery*

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Phirous received great wealth for his treachery; followed the Crusaders to Jerusalem; remained Christian for two years; then turned Mohammedan again, and died detested and abhorred by Mohammedan and Christian alike.

The fall of Antioch was quickly followed by new dangers for the Christians. The army whose approach brought them to acquiesce in the treachery of Phirous was soon at hand, and the Christians were soon besieged in front of and within the city they had just won. Famine once more was on them. Horses were eaten first, and then hogs and dogs; finally the leather of their boots and the corpses of Saracens. The usual desertions followed, and starvation brought all the horrors of frenzy and blasphemy from those who believed God ought to correct human follies by miraculous power. Alexius, who had begun a march to the relief of Antioch, stopped when deserters told him the situation of the Latins. Perhaps he was not ill-pleased over the news.

*Attacked by Egyptian
Army*

Famine Once More

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The historians of the time say that the courage of the Crusaders was revived through their superstitions. At the moment of the greatest despair and when the infidel general had refused their terms of surrender, prodigies and visions came for their encouragement. St. Ambrose, the Virgin, Jesus Himself, were seen by some in the churches. The leaders bound themselves anew by oath not to desert the cause, and the army finally followed the example of their captains. New

*Encouraged by
Prodigies*

wonders were reported to confirm their resolve. A priest in his sleep saw St. Andrew three times, who told him to dig near the principal altar of St. Peter's church, and he would find the head of the spear which pierced the Redeemer's side. This should lead them to victory. After three days of prayer twelve of the clergy and knights dug in silence, and had gone down twelve feet without avail. At night, when the twelve witnesses were at prayers, Barthelmi jumped into the hole and climbed out with the iron in his hands!

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Whether the Christian leaders felt that they could better spare Peter than a general we do not know, but we do know that, with the great revival of courage, challenge was sent to the Saracens for general engagement or single combat, and Peter the Hermit was the messenger. He was in his element when he could talk. Though treated contemptuously by his audience, he spoke as if he was the greatest ruler of the earth. It is a wonder that they did not promptly kill him for his insolence. He told them that Asia Minor properly belonged to Christians, that God had permitted it to fall into Turkish hands on account of Christian sins, but God was now arisen to fight on the Christian side. "Now," he says, "leave and go to your own country. We will not humble you. We will pray for your conversion to the true faith. If you will not go, and will not become Christians, let us decide all matters by battle by a few knights, or by one, or by a general fight."

Peter Delivers Challenge

Peter's Boldness

The perilous situation of the Christians was known to Kerbogha, the Mohammedan general, and he was enraged at the impudence of Peter. "You are as good as conquered and come to me to dictate terms. Go back and tell them they must receive conditions, and not make them. If you will acknowledge Mohammed, I will feed and clothe you, and may leave Antioch in your hands. If not, we shall see what the sword will do!" Peter and his escort were driven off, and were several times in danger of death on the way back. Battle was ordered for the next day by the Christian captains.

Embassy Driven Away

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During the night a hidden supply of provisions was found. The Crusaders strengthened themselves by a meal and the offices of religion, and day coming, the Christian army, representing the twelve apostles, marched out in twelve divisions.

Raymond D'Agiles carried the lance-head and fixed their attention on it. Some of the priests chanted a warlike psalm in the front rank, while others blessed the outgoing army from the walls. The walls and the hills echoed the cry, "God wills it! God wills it!" The appearance of the army was such as to fill the Mussulmans with contempt. Ragged, thin, and weak, mounted on asses and camels, on anything which could carry them, they deployed to meet the fifteen masses of Saracens. The Crusaders soon cut to pieces the two thousand who guarded the bridge of Antioch, and ranged themselves where the mountain protected them from surprise. The great names commanded the wings and the center, with Bohemond in reserve. The early hours were friendly to the Christians. Later they were sorely hurt by a surprise from a body of Saracens who had passed around the mountain and had attacked their rear. The grass was fired in front of the Christians by the sultan of Nicea, a fact which was near ruining the prospects of the Christians.

Carrying the Lance-Head

Disposition for Battle

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Once again a prodigy is reported. A squadron descends from the mountains, led by three white horsemen. A bishop, perhaps himself the inventor of this pious fraud, cries out to the wavering Crusaders: "Behold, heavenly succor has come!" Instantly the Christians revive and renew the attack, and the Saracens were put to rout. Failing even to rally on the other side of the river, they left behind them their arms and their baggage. Their general had only a small body-guard as he fled toward the Euphrates. With horses captured on the field, the Christians kept up the pursuit. A hundred thousand of the infidels died, and four thousand Christians won the martyr's crown. The battle enriched the Crusaders beyond any hope or experience, and Antioch was filled with the captured booty. The historian declares, "Horrors had made the Christians invincible. This was the only miracle."

Prodigy of Horsemen

Hundred Thousand Turks Killed

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With this astounding victory the march of the Crusaders almost ceased to meet armed resistance. The mass of the army clamored to march on to Jerusalem. The leaders were divided. Some said, "Let us march before the enemy recovers from the terror of our arms." The majority of the leaders forgot the Holy City in the pleasures, securities, and conquests of Syria. This gave strength to their arguments to wait for the re-enforcements of men and horses for which they asked the home authorities.

Disputes Follow Victory

Pestilence was the penalty of delay, and fifty thousand old and new warriors died in and near Antioch. Yet in such times Christians could quarrel, and Bohemond was denied by the Count of Toulouse the full possession of Antioch. They were ready to fight. Others followed their example, and all important time was wasted by quarrels and recriminations. At the very foot of the altar some of the leaders lied and quarreled to gain power. Bands roamed over Syria wherever there was a chance to loot; fighting over it when taken, and dying of starvation and thirst whenever they met unexpected resistance.

Fifty Thousand Christians die of Pestilence

The world has never seen a greater mixture of piety and villainy than among these Crusaders. They could rape, rob, and murder with a good conscience, yet must be numbered among the most heroic of men. They endured uncomplainingly long marches in heat and cold, in hunger, thirst, and pestilence. They

Piety and Villainy

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fought superior numbers with amazing courage. The one supreme virtue was valor against man and beast.

The long wait for orders to march to Jerusalem sent some leaders out to take cities over which they might rule, and others to visit the Christian leaders who had already won thrones. But most remained in a demoralizing inactivity until a prodigy of electrical balls of light, or possibly a meteoric shower, started, by various interpretations, the mass into securing their rear by the capture and subjugation of several Syrian cities. In one of these sieges the Saracens threw something like Greek fire down on the besiegers, and followed this with hives of bees. Always the Crusaders seemed to be without a proper preparation for food, and before more than one city the Christian soldiers cooked and ate the bodies of their enemies; and it is even reported that human flesh was sold in the shambles of their camp, as the flesh of dogs certainly was.

Excursions While Waiting

Careless Again

In all this horror the spirits of the Crusaders were fortified by the outrages of the Saracens on the symbol of Christianity. They erected crosses on their walls, covered them with filth, and reviled the worshipers. It was poor policy for the besieged. It infuriated the natural passions and inflamed the religious zeal of the besiegers. Constructing engines which shattered the walls, the Crusaders made themselves masters of the fortifications. In the dusk they did not dare to enter the city. In the morning it appeared to be deserted, but the inhabitants were discovered in subterranean refuges. They were soon smoked out, and were slaughtered without regard to age or sex. Thus fell the city of Maarah, of which no stone was left. Awful as this was for men wearing the cross of Christ, it spread such terror that life may have been saved thereby, since other cities willingly opened their gates.

Saracens Defile the Cross

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The common soldiers refused longer to interest themselves in the quarrels of their leaders, and, hearing that the Egyptians had taken Jerusalem, demanded to be led on, and threatened to choose new leaders unless their old ones showed the way to Jerusalem. Raymond finding that he must lead or be left behind, forsook his ambition, led in a procession of penitence, and gave the signal for departure.

Soldiers Desire Attack

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CHAPTER IV.

THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM.

During the six months after the capture of Antioch most of the leaders seemed to have contemplated no forward step.

But the orders of Raymond to march filled many with enthusiasm, and, under the lead of Raymond, Tancred, and the Duke of Normandy, the army traversed the territories of Syrian Cæsarea, Hamath, and Edessa. They were welcomed by Moslem and Christian alike. Fear pleaded for this with the first, and sympathy with the last. Protection was sought at the hands of the invaders, and presents and food were abundantly provided. They were surprised and delighted by the return of Christian prisoners believed to have perished on the battle-field. A portion of the army reached Laodicea, and welcomed there re-enforcements from England. But the main object was still postponed, and the army under separate leaders attacked neighboring cities. Raymond sat down before Archas, and was firmly resisted. Godfrey went to lay siege to Gibel, and Raymond of Turenne to Tortosa. This period of delay and of excursions for the sake of loot, was chiefly occupied by those who remained in camp, with disgraceful quarrels when not engaged in inventing miracles, and noising them abroad. The first seem to have been largely checked by the appearance of an ambassador from the Emperor Alexius of Constantinople, who proved himself, while professing friendship, about the worst enemy the Crusaders had. Just now he reproached them with gentleness, being afraid of them, for not putting the cities they had captured under his dominion. He promised to follow them with an army into Jerusalem if the Crusaders would give him time to prepare. Sick of his treacheries, and feeling only contempt for him personally, his new complaints and promises served only to cement and unify them and make them the more ready to march on. As to the miracles, they ceased when, in the ordeal by fire, Barthelemi, the author of the Holy Lance, came through the flames mortally injured. The Caliph of Cairo, with whom it was believed Alexius was in league, had already possessed himself of Jerusalem, and, fearing for his authority there, sent ambassadors to treat with the Christian army. Rich presents were brought to the leaders sufficient to tempt the avarice which had grown by conquest. The announcement by the ambassadors that the gates of Jerusalem would be opened only to unarmed Christians—a proposition which the leaders had rejected when in the miseries of the siege of Antioch—enraged those in authority.

Raymond Orders March

Re-enforcements from England

Quarrels and Miracles

Alexius and His Craft

Egyptian Bribes

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The answer of the Christian leaders was an order to prepare to march and a threat to carry the war into Egypt itself. The Emir of Tripoli attacked them with fearful loss, and was mulcted heavily in tribute and provisions.

The Crusaders' Answer

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All headed toward Jerusalem with the way cleared by fear of Christian arms, except Raymond, who was finally compelled to march also by the threatened rebellion of his soldiers. Late May found the Crusading army in the field. They passed through a rich country, whose harvests were finished and whose orchards bore abundantly oranges, pomegranates, and olives.

Yet as they marched they were mindful that battle and pestilence had reduced their numbers by two hundred thousand. Some had returned home, unable to endure the hardships, and many had remained in the conquered cities through which they had passed. The army numbered scarcely fifty thousand real soldiers. Yet much that was gone was a relief to their camp-chests and their commissary. One historian thinks this fifty thousand to have been really stronger than the horde which besieged Nicea.

A Rich Country

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The line of march was along the seacoasts that the sea might furnish them provisions through the Flemish and Italian fleets. They reach Accon, the modern Acre, to find the Emir promising everything but immediate surrender, and that also when Jerusalem was occupied. A wounded pigeon, picked up by the Bishop of Apt, had under its wing a letter from the Emir of Accon to the Emir of Cæsarea which said, "The accursed Christians have just passed through my territories, and will soon be in yours. Let the Mussulman rulers be warned, and let our enemies be crushed!" The Crusaders naturally believed this a providence of great assurance and value, and presently moved inland and took possession of Lydda and Ramla.

Along the Sea Coasts

They were now but sixteen miles from Jerusalem. A stronger desire to march on Egypt led some to counsel delay. But agreement to march to Jerusalem was had, and, with temporary desertions and cautious advances and the marking houses and towns as private possessions, they came at last near Emmaus. Terrified by a lunar eclipse, some are panic-stricken, but the phenomenon is well explained and held to be a sign of victory.

Near Jerusalem

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Now, those who slept that night could hope, could know that, with the climbing of a hill, daylight would reveal Jerusalem. On the 10th of June, 1099, the first who reached the summit at break of day, cried out, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem," and the crowd rushing after cried, "God wills it!" as they looked upon the Mount of Olives and the Holy City. Riders climbed down from their horses and marched on foot; many knelt, and multitudes kissed the ground. The sense of the sin for whose forgiveness Christ had died, brought many to tears of honest penitence and some to conscious pardon. As they looked on the height where His profaned tomb must be, they wept bitter tears and vowed again to deliver the city.

Jerusalem from the Hill

Before the Christians could invest the city its ruler took care to ravage the adjacent territory, poison the wells, and thus belted the walls with a desert. He provisioned the city against a siege, and fashioned all known engines of war. The garrison of forty thousand was increased by twenty thousand arm-bearing citizens.

Country Laid Waste

On the day after arrival, the various leaders distributed the territory and laid siege to the city. Egress from the city was possible only through the valley of Gihon and the valley of Jehoshaphat. Christians from the city, driven out for fear of treason and to burden the resources of the besiegers, quickened the ardor of the Christian army by an account of the wrongs they had suffered at Mussulman hands. Churches had been robbed for the benefit of infidel soldiers, and the most sacred buildings were threatened with destruction by the unbelievers. All these conditions led to a determination of an early assault. They had made no adequate provision for scaling walls or battering gates, but expected Divine intervention in their favor. The assault was repulsed, and their losses brought the victory of reason.

Plan for Attack

[Pg 87]

Finding some large beams, they demolished churches and houses to obtain other material. The drought of summer came on; the cisterns had been filled up or poisoned; Kedron ran dry, and thirst added its horrors. The intermitting fountain of Siloam was insufficient. The soldiers were reduced to licking the dew from the stones. Animals died in great numbers. The loot of great cities was exchanged for a few draughts of fowl water. Fear alone prevented the sortie from the city which would have nearly extinguished the Christian army. Some fled. The wonder is that so many remained and saw that the only remedy for their evils lay in the capture of the city.

Constructing Engines of War

[Pg 88]

As if a sudden gift from God, a German fleet reached Jaffa. It was well unloaded before capture by a Saracen fleet, and the detachment sent from the besiegers to open communication, searched Jaffa, and the provisions and instruments and material for war were carried to the Crusaders' camp. Desiring yet more, a native led the Duke of Normandy to a forest thirty miles from the city, and this timber was dragged to the city. Regular expeditions to find water were successfully organized, and lines of women and children quickly passed it to the camp. Bunches of faggots were rapidly accumulated and machines of war grew each day, and were planted for the next attack. They made three towers higher than the walls of the city, with a draw-bridge, over which the besiegers might reach the top of the walls.

Aided by German Fleet

Scarcity of Water

All being ready, they fortified their courage by religious exercises, and

with the clergy leading, marched around the city. From the valley which faces Calvary, the Crusaders set out, passing by the reputed tomb of Mary, the Garden of Gethsemane, and the Mount of Olives. They halted on the Mount of the Ascension to reconcile all differences and seal pardon with mutual prayer. The Saracens raised crosses on the walls, and denied them in every way which could be devised by a foul imagination. After a long silence, Peter the Hermit once more finds voice: "You hear them! You hear their threats and blasphemies! Christ dies again on Calvary for your sins. Swear, swear to defend them. The army of infidels will soon disappear. The mosques shall be temples of the true God." And much more did Peter say after his old eloquent fashion, and with results which were wholly like those which followed his early preaching. The soldiers fell on each other's necks, praised God, and pledged themselves to finish the holy work they had begun. They passed the night after their return to camp in prayer and in the reception of the holy sacrament.

Religious Processions

Peter's Address

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The Mohammedans spent their time also in exercises of their religion, and thus both sides were animated by the extreme of devout zeal.

The Christian leaders resolved to make the attack before the courage of their army could diminish by longer contemplation of the difficulties and dangers of the assault. The Saracens had built up their machines opposite those of the Christians, and to the last determined, as their mechanism seemed more movable, to change their locality and attack at a less prepared spot. During the night Godfrey moved his quarters to the gate of Kedar. With the greatest difficulty the tower on wheels and other machines were moved. Tancred got his machines ready between the gate of Damascus and the angular tower known later as the Tower of Tancred.

Saracen Machines

[Pg 90]

A ravine which needed to be filled delayed Raymond, who succeeded, by paying a small sum to every one who would throw three stones, in building, in three days, a good path across the ravine. This done, the signal was given for a general attack.

Filling a Ravine

The camp of the Christians was summoned to arms by the trumpets on the 14th of July, 1099. Men and machines began their awful task. The air was full of flints hurled to the walls by ballistas and mangonels. Under large shields and covered galleries, the battering-rams approached the walls. A cloud of arrows swept the ramparts, and the ladders were erected at the most promising points. Northeast and south the rolling towers were pushed to the walls, and Godfrey set the example of being first to open the battle from their tops. The resistance was as vigorous as the attack. Arrows, spears, boiling oil, Greek fire, and the missiles from the besieged machines repulsed the attack. Through a hole made by the besiegers the besieged attacked the machines of the Christians, hoping to burn them. Night came on after a twelve hours' fight without victory to either side.

The Fight Begins

[Pg 91]

The next day, after a night spent in repairing the attacking machines on the one hand and the guardian walls on the other, the order to attack was early given after heartening speeches by the Christian leaders and tent-to-tent visitations by the clergy. An Egyptian army was reported as approaching and the report greatly encouraged the besieged. The besiegers were infuriated by a damaging resistance, whose strength and energy they had underrated. The battle opened with a fierceness unparalleled. Javelins, stones, and beams were hurled in such numbers that some met in the air and both fell on the besiegers. Flaming torches and firepots were hurled from the walls. The Christian towers did their work in the midst of flames, particularly the Tower of Godfrey, on whose roof a golden cross shone. The leaders fought amidst piles of their dead and seemed to be invulnerable themselves. Breaches were made in the walls behind which stood a living barricade of Saracens. An Egyptian emissary was caught, his message to the besieged squeezed from him, and his body was then hurled from a catapult into the city. The wooden machines of the Christians began to burn, as well as the battering-rams and their roofs, while their guards and operators were crushed and buried under their ruins. The attacking force was fought to a standstill, and was reviled for their worship of a helpless God.

Battle of Second Day

Saracens Attempt to Burn Towers

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A vision of a knight waving his buckler above the Mount of Olives, and signaling that the Christians should advance, renewed the attack. It is said women and children defied all dangers, brought food and helped push the towers against the walls. Godfrey's Tower got near enough to lower its gangway on the walls. Fire now came to the aid of the Crusaders, being carried by a favoring wind to the bags of hay, straw, and wool which made the last inner defense. Godfrey, preceded by two and followed by many, pursued the smoke-driven enemy and entered the city. They killed as they went. Tancred, encouraged by another apparition, entered the city from another point; some through a breach; others by ladders; others from the top of the towers. The enemy at length fled, and the cry heard first under Peter's preaching, "God wills it!" was echoed in the streets of the Holy City. While these were in the city, Raymond still met with resistance which led them to abandon their tower and machines, and to attack with the sword. They scaled the walls by ladders, and were soon the victors.

Body Hurlled From Catapult

Inspiring Vision

Crusaders Enter City

[Pg 93]

The Saracens made a brave rally and charged the Christians, who had already begun to pillage. These were, however, soon led to victory by Everard de Puysaie, and the infidels were finally

routed.

Where prodigies are so constantly related and truth sacrificed to marvels, we can not be certain that the statement is true that the Christians entered Jerusalem on a Friday at three, at the same hour at which Christ died for all men. The Crusaders forgot the teaching of the hour; remembered only their wounds, losses, and sufferings, and put to death without mercy all who came in their way and all they could ferret out.

Christians Possess the City on Friday

Death by jumping from the walls seemed more desirable to many than appeal to Christian mercy. Their last resort was to the mosques, and particularly the Mosque of Omar. Into this the Christians rode on horseback and trampled the heaps of dead and dying laid low by "Christian" swords. An eyewitness, Raymond d'Agiles, says that in the porch of this mosque blood rose to the knees and bridles of the horses! Ten thousand were slain there. The authority cited above declares that bodies floated in the blood, and arms and hands were tossed by sanguine waves. An Arabian author says, "Seventy thousand were killed in the Mosque of Omar." God alone knows the truth. Only once before in human history can be found a record of such slaughter, and that was when Titus conquered the city centuries before.

Christians Murder Saracens

[Pg 94]

The fame of Peter the Hermit was such that the Christians of the city coming from their hiding-places to greet their deliverers had no eyes for anybody but the eloquent monk, nor praises for any other. He was the sole cause of their deliverance as he was the prophet of their cause.

Peter Object of Great Interest

The nobility of Godfrey appears in this, that, refraining from revenge, as soon as the battle was over he laid aside his weapons, bared his feet, and went to pray at the Holy Sepulcher. This was the signal for the cessation of bloodshed as soon as known. The bloody garments were thrown aside, and, barefooted and bareheaded, the Crusaders marched to the Church of the Resurrection.

Godfrey Goes to Holy Sepulcher

In this sudden change from fiends to the penitence and devoutness of Christians, we note a constantly recurring fact. These changes of mood are characteristic of fanaticism, which is always possessed by its ideas, and never rules over them. Elijah stepped down from the exaltation of the God-accepted prophet on Carmel to be the murderer of the prophets of Baal, and was left to cowardice, to melancholy, and to wandering in the desert until taught by the fire, the wind, and the earthquake that he was not to bring human passion into God's work.

[Pg 95]

The Crusaders seem to have learned no permanent lesson of pity. They soon returned to the sword. Fearing the care of too many prisoners; dreading that, if released, they would have to fight them again, and feeling that they must make ready to meet an Egyptian army whose arrival was daily expected, they decreed the death of all the unbelievers who remained in the city. Passion energized policy. They compelled the Saracens to leap from the walls or into flames, and heaped up their corpses as altars on which others were sacrificed. The city was everywhere strewn with corpses, even, as one remarks, "the very place where Christ forgave His enemies." The habit of killing was now so inveterate that such sights distressed none except as the odors and dangers of pestilence. A few Mussulmans, saved chiefly from the fortress of David, were compelled to remove for burial the bodies of their kindred and people beyond the walls. The soldiers of Raymond aided them, not from motives of humanity, but because being the last to enter the city, they hoped to secure what they had missed in pillage by robbing the bodies of the dead.

Crusaders Again Butcher Saracens

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The city was soon cleaned, and, as all respected the marks of private ownership upon which the Crusaders had agreed, they were enriched and soon contributed to the life of a most orderly city.

Heaps of Corpses

It will be recalled that when Heraclius conquered Chosroes he claimed to have brought back the true cross to Jerusalem. During the Saracenic occupation the Christians had concealed it and now brought it forth for the adoration of the faithful. With triumph they bore it to the Church of the Resurrection.

Exhibition of True Cross

The question of government was settled, after debate, fasting, some ceremony and prayer, by a special Council of Ten. Godfrey of Bouillon was chosen king with acclamation, all but universal, yet he refused to receive a diadem because his Savior had in that city worn a crown of thorns, and would receive no other title beyond "Defender of the Holy Sepulcher."

Godfrey Refuses Crown

The effort to organize the Church admittedly was less successful in putting wise and holy men in high places than the attempt to elect a suitable king. The bishops of the Latin Church, then as now, took high ground, claimed to be above the civil power, and demanded that the bulk of the captured wealth be put into their hands. The Greek priests had the right of possession, but were sacrificed. Simeon, who had invited the Crusaders, and who from Cypress had repeatedly sent the Latins succor, died while a Latin bishop was claiming his patriarchate. Arnold, believed by most to be tainted, was made pastor of Jerusalem.

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The Saracens, much as they had suffered, were not ready to abandon the field. Such as were left joined the Caliph of Cairo who was advancing to

Arrogance of the Latin

attack Jerusalem. Godfrey, deserted by some of his colleagues, went out to meet him; the deserters following after when the peril became more visible and imminent. Peter led the clergy and prayed for a final success. They numbered not more than twenty thousand, yet they won a great victory, some of their enemies being driven to the mountains, others perishing in the sea. They dropped their arms in terror, and were literally mowed down. Thus ended the battle of Askalon, and it was the last victory of the first Crusade.

Bishops

A New Peril

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Peter returned to Europe, resumed a quiet life in a monastery, which was built at Huy on the right bank of the Meuse, in pursuance of a vow made when in danger at sea by Peter's fellow voyager, the Count de Montaigne. It was dedicated in 1130. Peter died there at a great age, and was buried at his request outside the church on the ground of humility. One hundred and thirty years later the abbot removed (in 1242) his bones to a shrine before the Altar of the Apostles in the Abbey Church. His life was ended, "but his works followed him."

Peter and His End

The church where he was buried was wasted and wrecked during the French Revolution and Peter's coffin destroyed. His gravestone still exists.

Other Crusades followed, of which mere mention must suffice. Their results, however, in part remain to this day, and deserve to be here recorded.

As we have seen, the first Crusade had in the minds of its originators, as at least a secondary object, the reconciliation of the Greek and Latin Church. But the result was directly opposite. Their relations were submitted, and the gap is as wide open to-day as then. The Saracens were less dangerous to the Eastern Church and empire than the Latins proved to be. The Latins conquered for themselves. It must be admitted that the treachery of Alexius gave large justification if not full warrant.

Greek and Latin Church

[Pg 99]

The strength and wealth of the papacy were greatly increased. It attached all who went to its authority by its dispensation, not only from purgatorial pains but from the penalty of sin here and hereafter. It made freemen of all who wore the sign of the cross, and absolved from all allegiance except to itself. By persuading departing lords to make over their sovereignty to him, the pope became the arbiter and consecrator of all sovereignty, and at length obtained the right to release from allegiance the subjects of two independent sovereigns.

Power of Papacy Augmented

No pope led an army. The shock of defeat to a "Vicar of Christ" would have been very great. So legates were sent and upheld in his name the supremacy of the Church.

The vow to crusade was irrevocable, and sovereigns took it to obtain pardon, to secure glory, and propitiate favor. The pope alone could release the votary, and he took good care to make the price heavy in the acknowledgment of his authority.

Reasons for Irrevocable Vow

By sending legates to every country to preach the Crusades, the authority of the pope was also greatly advertised and augmented. Through these the pope acquired a right to tax for his purposes within the domain of independent States.

[Pg 100]

The clergy and the Church grew rich because unable to alienate their own estates, they bought in the property and domains of princes, dukes, and counts, who sold all to enter upon the Holy War. For two centuries this went on among the most fruitful of the many methods by which the Church added to her temporal substance. The Church, by the Crusade, established the principle that religious wars were just, and for five centuries the principle was indorsed with blood. Incidentally the hurling back of the Mohammedan advance occurred, but the hunger for papal dominion spurred on the popes to bless those who fought. Called defensive at first, they quickly became aggressive, and many a Crusading band hacked at the Jews before carving a path through to Mohammedans.

How Clergy Grew Rich

Papal Ambitions

Chivalry took on a more religious tone through the Crusades, if indeed it was not in some countries directly born of the wars of the cross.

Most of the principles of chivalry were Christian in the quality of conduct, if not always of motive. To be just, generous, brave, the defender of weakness, and to be pure in life were certainly Christian duties. The Crusades gave a great field for such virtues. But, alas! it was only to Christians that these virtues were obligatory. The knight often became a devil ranging over lands wrested from Saracen control.

Principles of Chivalry

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But respect for women, undoubtedly enhanced by chivalry, took high ground in the reverence for the Virgin, and, while it did not secure chastity, gave some check to the master passion of the human race.

And, finally, the Crusade, introduced the notation, the science, the manufactures, and the medical skill of the Arabs into Europe,—all of which aided the coming of the light to the Dark Ages.

Debt to Arabic Learning

Of all these results, Peter the Hermit was the unconscious forerunner and prophet.

FOOTNOTES:

- [1] Milman, *Hist. Latin Christianity*, Book VII, p. 16.
- [2] *Hist. Crusades*, Vol. I, p. 1.
- [3] Cf. Milman, *Book VII*, p. 17.
- [4] Aubert's *History of the Conquest of Jerusalem*, quoted by Michaud.
- [5] Milman.
- [6] See Michaud.

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