

SALADIN

Prince of Chivalry

CHAPTER ONE

THE KNIGHTING OF SALADIN

IN THE year 1167 two men of consequence met in the camp of King Amalric of Jerusalem, outside of Alexandria. One was the Christian knight, Humphrey of Toron. The other was Saladin, son of Ayub, ruler of Damascus, and at the moment lieutenant to his Uncle Shirkuh, commander of the Turcoman soldiers opposed to the Christians. For seventy-five days Saladin had been holding Alexandria against the assaults of Amalric, but now a truce had been arranged, and it was as the guest of the King he had come into the Christian camp.

He was not yet thirty, Humphrey somewhat older. Unlike most of his companions in arms, the latter was acquainted with the speech and the customs of the people represented by the visitor, and had been on terms of friendship with some of them. The amenities of the occasion called for a show of courtesy on his part, and this was returned with such good will by his guest that