

# CHAPTER SIXTEEN

## THE BATTLE OF HATTIN

NEVER before was any triumph of Saladin so complete, or so fruitful of consequences, as that achieved on the field of Hattin, and never was victory more certainly the result of superior planning and generalship. He had prepared long and carefully, had been quick to take advantage of the mistakes of the enemy and had chosen his own time and place to make the fight. Sanguine of victory from the beginning, his judgment was vindicated from start to finish.

Arab and Christian chroniclers are at one in describing the events of the day, but the latter are more explicit in telling what led up to it. Raymond of Tripoli was a pivotal figure, both in his friendly attitude towards the Sultan and in the animosity he had provoked in Gerard de Ridefort, Grand Master of the Templars. It was more to spite Raymond, apparently, than because he admired Guy de Lusignan that Gerard had conspired to make the latter King of Jerusalem. His bitter enmity had not been appeased with this triumph, even though the evil consequences to the Christian cause in alienating so powerful and able a soldier and statesman were apparent enough.