

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

ON TO JERUSALEM

HE TO whom the door of success has been opened must take his opportunity and enter in, for he knows not when the door may be shut upon him."

Saladin was not the one to forget these words of the Prophet. A true oriental, and carrying in the very marrow of his bones the significance of Kismet, he had risen to his opportunity at the crisis in Egypt and now, more than twenty years later, he was not less ready to make the most of a favorable turn in events.

The great victory had opened to the Moslem arms the whole of Palestine, and its great cities and strongholds were waiting like ripe fruit for the mighty conqueror to come and pluck. Their rulers were either dead or captive, their usual defenders likewise. At best only a few strong, isolated fortresses could hope to withstand a siege, and there was no heart in the population, a large part of which had never been enamored of its masters, to fight a hopeless war of defense. In the end Tyre, through a strange combination of fortuitous circumstances, was saved to the Franks, to their great advantage later, but one after another the other cities and castles along the coast