

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

COMING TO TERMS

RICHARD is remembered as one of the great kings of England, as a brilliant soldier, as a daring adventurer, and even his verse has been thought not unworthy. He was evidently also a man of wit, of a certain character. That he was so regarded by his contemporaries and those who lived not too long after to have lost touch with the reputation he had gained in this respect is evidenced by the poem of the Fourteenth Century describing the jolly trick he played upon Saladin's ambassadors after the fall of Acre. According to this Richard had demanded some pork while ill and, there being none obtainable in this Mohammedan country, his chef, at his wit's end, had conceived the brilliant idea of having a Moslem prisoner decapitated and preparing his head with many sauces in the semblance of a pig's head. This came to the King's knowledge later on and he thought it so good an idea he determined to repeat it for the benefit of the ambassadors.

As these were negotiating for the release of certain eminent emirs, Richard thought it particularly appropriate to have the heads of the latter served at the