the rumour went abroad that they had sold a noble half­converted Egyptian prince, who had fallen into their hands, to chains and certain death for 60,000 aurei. In 1166 Amalric, the Latin king of Jerusalem, hanged twelve Templars on a charge of betraying a fortress beyond the Jordan to an emir of Núr al-Dín of Damascus. The military power of Núr al-Dín (1145-1173) was a standing menace to the Christian settlements in the East. Edessa had fallen to the prowess of his father (1144-45); Damas­cus was conquered by the son (1153), who four years earlier had carried his depredations almost to the walls of Antioch, and in 1157 laid siege to the Christian town of Paneas near the sources of the Jordan. In the disastrous fight that followed for the safety of the fortress of the Hospitallers, Bertrand de Blanquefort, the master of the Templars, and Odo de St Amand, one of his successors, were taken prisoners. Bertrand was released later when Manuel was preparing to march against Núr al-Dín. The Templars do not seem to have opposed Amalric’s early expeditions against Egypt. It was Geoffrey Fulcher, the Templar correspondent of Louis VII., who brought back (1167) to Jerusalem the glowing accounts of the splendour of the caliph’s court at Cairo with which Gibbon has en­livened his great work. Nor was the order less active at the northern limits of the Latin kingdom. Two English Templars, Gilbert de Lacy and Robert Mansel, “qui Galen- sibus præerat,” starting from Antioch, surprised Núr al- Dín in the neighbourhood of Tripoli and put him bare­footed to flight. But jealousy or honour led the Templars to oppose Amalric’s Egyptian expedition of 1168; and the wisdom of their advice became apparent when the renewed discord on the Nile led to the conquest of Egypt by Asad al-Dín Shírkúh, and thus indirectly to the accession of Saladin, in 1169. In 1170 they beat Saladin back from their frontier fortress of Gaza; and seven years later they shared in Baldwin IV.’s great victory at Ascalon.

Meanwhile Saladin had possessed himself of Emesa and Damascus (1174-75), and, as he was already lord of Egypt, his power hemmed in the Latin kingdom on every side. In July 1173 Amalric was succeeded by his son Baldwin IV., a boy of twelve. Raymond III., count of Tripoli, a man suspected of being in league with the Saracens, was appointed regent, although in 1176 the masters of the Templars and the Hospitallers united in offering this office to the newly arrived Philip of Flanders. The construction of the Templar fortress at Jacob’s ford on the upper Jordan led to a fresh Saracen invasion and the disastrous battle of Paneas (1179), from which the young king and the Holy Cross escaped with difficulty, while Odo de St Amand, the grand-master, was carried away captive and never returned.

During Odo’s mastership the Old Man of the Mountains sent to Amalric offering to accept the Christian faith if released from the tribute he had paid to the Templars since (according to the reckoning of Μ. Defrémery) some­where about 1149. The Templars murdered the envoys on their return (c. 1172). Amalric demanded that the offenders should be given up for justice. Odo refused to yield the chief culprit, though he was well known, and in­voked the protection of the pope. Amalric had to vindicate his right by force of arms at Sidon, and died while prepar­ing to take stronger measures. The connexion between the Templars and the Old Man was still vital eighty years later when the two grand-masters rebuked the insolence of the Assassin envoys in the presence of Louis IX. Odo de St Amand was succeeded by Arnold de Torroge, who died at Verona on his way to implore European succour for the Holy Land. The power of Saladin was now (1184) increasing daily ; Baldwin IV. was a leper, and his realm was a prey to rival factions. There were two claimants for the guardianship of the state,—Raymond III. of Tripoli and Guy de Lusignan, who in 1180 had married Sibylla, sister of the young king. Baldwin inclined to the former, against the patriarch and Arnold de Torroge.

There is something Homeric in the story of the fall of the Latin kingdom as related by the historians of the next century. A French knight, Gerard de Riderfort or Bide­ford, coming to the East in quest of fortune, attached himself to the service of Raymond of Tripoli, looking for the hand of some wealthy widow in reward. But on his claiming the hand of the lady of Botron he was met with a refusal. Angered at this, Gerard enrolled himself among the Templars, biding his time for revenge, and was elected grand-master on the death of Arnold. Baldwin IV. died (1185), leaving the throne to his young nephew Baldwin V., the son of Sibylla, under the guardianship of Raymond, whose office was not of long duration, as the little king died in September 1186. This was Gerard’s opportunity. The Templars carried the body of their dead sovereign to Jerusalem for burial ; and then, unknown to the barons of the realm, Gerard and the patriarch crowned Sibylla and her husband Guy. The coronation of Guy was the triumph of Reginald of Châtillon, once prince of Antioch, and Saladin’s deadliest foe. It was at the same time the overthrow of Raymond’s ambition ; and both Latin and Arabic writers are agreed that the Christian count and the Mohammedan sultan now entered into an alliance. To break this friendship and so save the kingdom, the two grand-masters were sent north to make terms with Raymond. But the rash valour of the Templars provoked a hopeless contest with 7000 Saracens. The grand-master of the Hospitallers was slain ; but Gerard made his escape with three knights to Nazareth (1st May 1187). In this emergency Raymond became reconciled with Guy ; and Gerard placed the temple treasures of Henry II. at his king’s disposal. Once more it was the Templars’ rashness that led to the disastrous battle of Hittin (4th July). Gerard and the king fell into the hands of Saladin, but were released about a year later; Raymond of Tripoli made his escape through treachery or fortune ; and 230 Templars fell in or after the battle, for the fight was scarcely over before Saladin ordered all the Templars and Hospitallers to be murdered in cold blood. One after another the Christian fortresses of Palestine fell into the hands of Saladin. Jerusalem surrendered on 2d-3d Octo­ber 1187, and the treasures of the temple coffers were used to purchase the redemption of the poorer Christians, part of whom the Templar warriors guarded on their sad march from the Holy City to Tripoli. Part of their wealth was expended by Conrad of Montferrat in the defence of Tyre ; but, when this prince refused to admit Guy to his city, both the Templars and the Hospitallers from the neighbouring parts flocked to the banner of their released king and accompanied him to the siege of Acre (22d August 1189). In his company they bore their part in the two years’ siege and the terrible famine of 1190-91 ; and their grand-master died in the great battle of 4th October 1189, refusing to survive the slaughter of his brethren.

On the fall of Acre Philip Augustus established himself in the palace of the Templars, who are, however, stated to have sympathized with Richard. This king sold them the island of Cyprus for 100,000 besants ; but, unable to pay the purchase money, they transferred the debt and the principality to Guy of Lusignan. The English king consulted them before deciding on any great military move­ment ; and in June 1192 they advocated the bold plan of an advance on Egypt rather than on Jerusalem. In the disputes for the Latin kingdom of the East the Templars seem to have supported Guy, and, like Richard, were credited with having had a hand in the murder of Conrad