a general crusade was concerned; but the Hospital received everywhere enormous accessions of property.@@1 Garin de Montaigu died in 1228, after consolidating by his statesmanlike attitude the position and power of his order, on the eve of Frederick II.'s crusade. In this crusade, conducted in spite of a papal excommunication, the Hospitallers took no part, being rewarded with the approval of Pope Gregory IX., who, in August 1229, issued a bull to the patriarch of Jerusalem ordering him to maintain the jurisdiction of the Hospital over the Teutonic knights, who had dared to assist the German emperor.@@2 In 1233, under the grand master Guerin, the Hospitallers took a leading part in the successful attack on the principality of Hamah. The motive of this, however—which was no more than the refusal of the emir to pay them the tribute due—seems to point to an increasing secularization of their spirit. In 1236 Pope Gregory IX. thought it necessary to threaten both them and the Templars with excommunication, to prevent their forming an alliance with the Assassins,@@3 and in 1238 issued a bull in which he inveighed against the scandalous lives and relaxed discipline of the Hospitallers.@@4

Events were soon to expose the order to fresh tests. Under the grand-mastership of Pierre de Vieille Bride@@5 occurred the brief “ crusade ” of Richard of Cornwall (11th of October 1240 to 3rd of May 1241). The truce concluded by Richard with the sultan of Egypt was accepted by the Hospitallers, rejected by the Templars, and after his departure something like a war broke out between the two bodies. In the midst of the strife of parties, in which Richard of Cornwall had recognized the fatal weakness of the Christian cause to lie, came the news of the invasion of the Chorasmians. On the 23rd of August the Tatar horde took and sacked Jerusalem. On the 17th of October, in alliance with the Egyptians under Bibars, it overwhelmed the Christian host at Gaza. Of the Hospitallers only sixteen escaped; 325 of the knights were slain; and among the prisoners was the grand master, Guillaume de Châteauneuf.@@6 Amid the general ruin that followed this defeat, the Hospitallers held out in the fortress of Ascalon, until forced to capitulate on the 15th of October 1247. Under the vice-master, the grand pre­ceptor Jean de Ronay, they took part in 1249 in the Egyptian expedition of St Louis of France, only to share in the crushing defeat of Mansurah (11th of February 1250). Of the knights present all were slain, except five who were taken prisoners, the vice-master and one other@@7 At the instance of St Louis, after the conclusion of peace, 25 Hospitallers, together with the grand master Guillaume de Châteauneuf, were released.@@8

On the withdrawal of St Louis from the Holy Land (April 1254), a war of aggression and reprisals broke out between Christians and Mussulmans; and no sooner was this ended by a precarious truce than the Christians fell to quarrelling among themselves. In the war between the Genoese and Venetians and their respective partisans, the Hospitallers and Templars fought on opposite sides. In spite of so great a scandal and of the hopeless case of the Christian cause, the posses- sions of the order were largely increased during Guillaume de Châteauneuf’s mastership, both in the Holy Land and in Europe.

Under the grand-mastership of Hugues de Revel, elected probably in 1255, the menace of a new Tatar invasion led to serious efforts to secure harmony in the kingdom. In 1258 the Templars, Hospitallers, and Teutonic knights decided to

submit their disputes in Syria, Cyprus and Armenia to arbitration, a decision which bore fruit in 1260 in the settlement of their differences in Tripoli and Margat. The satisfactory arrangement was possibly affected by the result of a combined attack made in 1259 on the Hospitallers by the Templars and the brethren of St Lazarus and St Thomas, which had resulted in the practical extermination of the aggressors, possibly also by the crushing defeat of the Templars and the Syrian barons by the Turcomans at Tiberias in 1260. However achieved, the concord was badly needed; for Bibars, having in 1260 driven back the Tatars and established himself in the sultanate of Egypt, began the series of campaigns which ended in the destruction of the Latin kingdom. In 1268 Bibars conquered Antioch, and the Christian power was confined to Acre, Chateau Pélerin, Tyre, Sidon, and the castles of Margat, Krak and Belda (Baldeh), in which the Hospitallers still held out. The respite afforded by the second crusade of St Louis was ended by his death at Tunis in 1270. On the 30th of March 1271 the great fortress of Krak, the key to the county of Tripoli, surrendered after a short siege. The crusade of Prince Edward of England did little to avert the ultimate fate of the kingdom, and with it that of the Hospitallers in the Holy Land. This was merely delayed by the preoccupa­tions of Bibars elsewhere, and by his death in 1277. In 1280 the Mongols overran northern Syria; and the Hospitallers distinguished themselves by two victories against enormous odds, one over the Turcomans and one over the emir of Krak (February 1281). The situation, however, was desperate, and the grand master Nicolas Lorgne, who had succeeded Hugues de Revel in 1277, wrote despairing letters of appeal to Edward I. of England. On the 25th of May 1285, Margat surrendered to the sultan Kalaun (Mansur Saifaldin). Not even the strong character and high courage of Jean de Villiers, who succeeded Nicolas Lorgne as grand master in 1285, could do more than stave off the ultimate disaster. The Hospitallers assisted in the vain defence of Tripoli, which fell on the 26th of April 1289. On the 18th of May 1291 the Mussulmans stormed Acre, the last hope of the Christians in the Holy Land. Jean de Villiers, wounded, was carried on board a ship, and sailed to Limisso in Cyprus, which became the headquarters of the order. For the remaining two years of his life Jean de Villiers was occupied in attempting the reorganization of the shattered order. The demoralization in the East was, however, too profound to admit a ready cure. The knights, represented by the grand dignitaries, addressed a petition to Pope Boniface VIII. in 1295 asking for the appointment of a permanent council of seven *diflnitores* to control the grand master, who had become more and more autocratic. The pope did not consent; but in a severe letter to the new grand master, Eudes de Pin, he sternly reproved him for the irregularities of which he had been guilty@@9 In 1296 Eudes was succeeded by Guillaume de Villaret, grand prior of St Gilles, who for three years after his election remained in Europe, regulating the affairs of the order. In 1300, in response to the urgent remonstrances of the knights, he appeared in Cyprus. In 1299 an unnatural alliance of the Christians and Mongols gave a momentary prospect of regaining the Holy Land; in 1300 the Hospitallers took part in the raid of King Henry II. (de Lusignan) of Cyprus in Egypt, and gained some temporary successes on the coast of Syria. Of more advantage for the prestige of the order, however, were the immense additions of property and privileges which Guillaume de Villaret had secured in Europe from the pope and many kings and princes,@@10 and the reform of the rule and drastic reorganization of the order promulgated in a series of statutes between 1300 and 1304, the year of Guillaume’s death.@@11 Of these changes the most significant was the definition of the powers and status of the admiral, a new great dignitary created in 1299.

The grand-mastership of Foulques de Villaret, Guillaume’s

@@@1 Detailed by Le Roulx, *Hospitaliers,* pp. 149-156.

@@@2 *Cartul.* ii. No. 1944. The Teutonic knights refused to obey. In January 1240 Gregory called on them to explain their insubordination (No. 2247) and in March 1241 again ordered them to submit (No. 2270).

@@@3 *Cartul.* ii. No. 2149.

@@@*4 Cartul.* ii. No. 2186.

@@@5 Not Villebride. The name is a corruption of *Vieille Brioude* (Le Roulx, *Hosp.* p. 183).

@@@6 It has been generally supposed, on the authority of the *chronica majora* of Matthew of Paris (iv. 307-311), that the grand-master was killed at Gaza.

@@@7 See the contemporary letter, *Cartulaire,* ii. No. 2521.

*@@@8 Cartul.* ii. Nos. 2540-2541.

*@@@9 Cartulaire,* iii. Nos. 4267, 4293; cf. the letter of the chapter- general to Guillaume de Villaret, iii. No. 4310.

@@@10 Le Roulx, *Hospitaliers,* p. 259 sqq.

@@@11 These statutes are printed in the *Cartulaire,* iii. Nos. **4515,** iv. Nos. 4549, 4574, 4612.