

### "God Wills It!": A Tale of the First Crusade

William Stearns Davis

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"God Wills It!" By William Stearns Davis THE CRUSADES The First Crusade was the sacrifice of France for the sins of the Dark Ages. Alone of all the Crusades it succeeded, despite its surrender of countless lives. No Richard of England, no St. Louis led; its heroes were the nobles and peasants of France and Norman Italy, who endured a thousand perils and hewed their victorious way to Jerusalem. In this Crusade united Feudalism and Papacy won their greatest triumph. Notwithstanding the self-seeking of a few, the mass of the Crusaders were true to their profession,—they sought no worldly gain, but to wash out their sins in infidel blood. In this Crusade also the alien civilizations of Christendom and Islam were brought into a dramatic collision which has few historic counterparts. Except in Scott's "Count Robert of Paris," which deals wholly with the Constantinople episode, I believe the First Crusade has not been interpreted in fiction. Possibly, therefore, the present book may have a slight value, as seeking to tell the story of the greatest event of a great age. I have sometimes used modern spellings instead of unfamiliar eleventh-century names. The Crusade chronicles often contradict one another, and once or twice I have taken trifling liberties. To Mr. S. S. Drury and Mr. Charles Hill, University friends who have rendered kind aid on several historical details, I owe many thanks. W. S. D. Harvard University.



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