Hans Eberhard Mayer, The Crusades, translated by John Gillingham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 96-109.

5 · THE SECOND CRUSADE, 1145–1149

THE news of the fall of Edessa caused a considerable stir in the West, but though it saddened men it did not immediately spur them on to a spontaneous crusade.[25] A Frankish embassy led by Bishop Hugh of Jabala arrived at the papal curia at Viterbo shortly after Eugenius III (1145–53) had ascended the pontifical throne. A little later on an Armenian delegation appeared. Eugenius listened receptively to their pleas and on 1 December 1145 he issued the first crusading bull, known from its opening words as *Quantum praedecessores*. But at first it met with no response at all. Indeed although it was addressed to the king and nobility of France, there is no evidence to show that it was, as yet, promulgated there. Eugenius's plan, however, clashed with certain ideas which King Louis VII (1137–80) himself developed, though it is not clear whether or not he knew of the papal bull when he formulated them. They were in any case not acceptable to the Church. The king held court at Bourges at Christmas 1145 and there he declared that he was planning to lead an expedition to the East. Various motives were attributed to him by contemporaries. But Louis was probably thinking in terms of a purely French armed pilgrimage which might also be of some assistance to the Holy Land rather than a crusade in the style of 1095. Thus at Bourges, after describing the plight of the crusader states, Bishop Godfrey of Langres called upon the nobles to fight for God at the side of their king; no mention was made of the pope, of the indulgence, or even of the papal bull. The appeal met with a cold response; the nobles were just not interested. When even his own chief counsellor, Abbot Suger of St. Denis, spoke against the scheme, Louis VII had no choice but to postpone a decision until Easter 1146 and, meanwhile, to lay the whole matter before Abbot Bernard of Clairvaux.

Unquestionably Bernard, (1115–53) was at that time the most distinguished figure in the intellectual and political life of the West. It was he who had given impetus to the new Cistercian order

which aimed at achieving a stricter observance of the Benedictine Rule. He had been one of the leading Church politicians ever since his tireless struggle to end the schism of 1130 between Innocent II and Anacletus II. On the question of the crusade his advice was sought as though he were a 'divine oracle' as one of the chroniclers put it. Bernard was probably well aware that the clash between the king's plan and the pope's wishes created a delicate political problem—a problem which was to play a considerable role in the later history of the crusades. Even if Louis VII had only planned an armed pilgrimage this inevitably came to be looked upon as a crusade in the light of the pope's crusading bull which had, after all, been issued earlier. Should the French authorities have argued that the bull had not been discussed at Bourges and that the king acted on his own initiative, this might have given rise to the opinion that a king could summon and carry through a crusade independently of the Church. For this reason the question of how much influence the pope's bull had on the assembly at Bourges was bitterly debated in the last century—and all too often debated in the polemical and anachronistic terms common to nineteenth-century nationalism or religious feeling. The sources simply do not permit a definite answer, though it is perhaps more probable than not that the bull was already known to the king, or at least to Bernard of Clairvaux. The only certain thing is that it was indeed issued on 1 December 1145. This was proved by the researches of Erich Caspar after it had long been obstinately denied by those who wished to give Louis VII the credit for initiating the crusade.[36]

Understandably enough the abbot of Clairvaux was not at all inclined to support an expedition which looked as though it might have been instigated by the king. This would have meant that control over the crusade had been taken out of the hands of the Church. The papacy would have to face a considerable blow to its prestige if it could not maintain its position as overlord of the crusading movement. Bernard therefore tried to give the initiative back to the pope. He declared that he could not consider so important a question without first consulting the pope. The result, early in 1146, was a round of negotiations between the papal and French courts culminating in the reissue of *Quantum praedecessores* (with a slightly amended text) on 1 March 1146. This version was, both in form and content, to be the pattern for all later papal crusading bulls. It was divided into three parts: the narrative, the exhortation, and the privileges (*narratio, exhortatio, privilegia*). Right in the opening phrases the pope—and here

doubtless the influence of his teacher, Bernard of Clairvaux, can be discerned—asserted his claim to direct the crusade. He vigorously emphasized the tradition of the Church, appealing to the precedents set by his predecessors and describing the part played by Urban II in setting the First Crusade in motion. There followed a short account of the First Crusade and a description of the fall of Edessa which the pope explained as a punishment for sin (*nostris peccatis exigentibus*). Here Eugenius had hit upon a formula which was to appear time and time again in the writings of preachers and chroniclers. In the *exhortatio* he called upon nobles and magnates to defend, like good sons, the land which their brave fathers had won. As Christians they were summoned to fight for the Church in the East so that they would obtain remission of sins, help to enhance the dignity of Christendom and preserve unblemished their own knightly reputations. Then came a list of privileges headed by the crusading indulgence which, in conformity with the interpretation current as early as 1096, went beyond what had been authorized by the decree at Clermont. At this point Eugenius explicitly referred to the indulgence granted by Urban II but since, as Eugenius himself wrote, he was relying upon chronicle reports and not upon his predecessor's letters, this does not in fact tell us much about Urban's own point of view. The chroniclers had very early gone further than the Clermont decree warranted. The Church's protection for the wives, children, and possessions of the crusaders was then renewed. The extravagant dress which had been all too common on the First Crusade was forbidden. Crusaders who had to borrow money were exempted from paying interest on it. This, together with the provision which regulated the pawning of land to the Church, meant that the most urgent aspects of the problem of financing the crusade had been dealt with.

Eugenius entrusted Bernard alone with the job of preaching the crusade north of the Alps; in France the bull *Quantum praedecessores* was promulgated only in connection with his preaching. Eugenius III himself did no more than issue a crusading bull in Italy in October 1146. He was unable to leave Italy because of the situation in Rome. He had been driven out of the city and a republic had been set up by Arnold of Brescia. In the German king, Conrad III (1138–52), Eugenius hoped to find an ally who would both enable him to re-enter Rome and support him against the ambitions of Roger II of Sicily who had had himself crowned king (1130–54) after bringing all the Norman lands in Italy under one rule. Thus Eugenius naturally wished to see the preaching of

the crusade limited to France and Italy, the countries which had taken part in the First Crusade. The original impulse for the Second Crusade had come from the pope, but it was entirely owing to the eloquence of the abbot of Clairvaux that anything came of that impulse.

At first Bernard adhered to the papal plan of keeping Germany out of the crusade. He began his preaching at the court at Vézelay on 31 March 1146 after the pope's March bull had been read out. The eloquence of the 'honey-tongued teacher' (*doctor mellifluus*) which can still move the modern reader of his literary works and which was acclaimed by all his contemporaries, had its expected effect. The king and a crowd of great nobles took the cross. They decided to allow a year in which to make their preparations. Louis VII used this time to negotiate with the countries through which he intended to march, particularly Germany and Byzantium. He may also have taken a forced loan from some of the churches of France in order to cover his expenses, though the evidence for this is by no means compelling. In any event this would have been something quite different from a crusading tax.

In the following months Bernard preached unceasingly. If he could not appear in person he would send envoys to read letters of exhortation, the essential points of which he wrote himself but which his chancery would alter slightly to suit local circumstances before distributing them. About a dozen of these letters are still extant. Very characteristic of Bernard's preaching style is the one which was sent to the people of England. There are no cloudy eschatological notions here. For Bernard the crusade was a work of penance. The indulgence, once a means to an end, had become an end in itself. The East, of course, had to be freed from the heathen, but so too the souls of the crusaders had to be freed from sin. For this reason he welcomed the threat to the crusader states as a sign that 'the accepted time, the day of salvation' (cf. 2 Corinthians 6: 2) was at hand. From now on the *acceptabile tempus* motif was an inseparable part of the preaching of crusades. Bernard had a disquieting tendency to take it for granted that his contemporaries were evil-doers who needed to repent. Thus he, more than anyone, emphasized the idea of a spiritual reward.

But Bernard's own words speak more clearly than any analysis. Here therefore some typical passages from his letter to the English are quoted as being representative of all later crusading sermons.

> Now is the accepted time, the day of abundant salvation. The earth has been shaken; it trembles because the Lord of heaven has begun to

lose his land—the land in which, for more than thirty years, he lived as a man amongst men.... But now, on account of our sins, the sacrilegious enemies of the cross have begun to show their faces even there; their swords are wreaking havoc in the promised land.... What are you doing, you mighty men of valour? What are you doing, you servants of the cross? Will you throw to the dogs that which is most holy? Will you cast pearls before swine? ... What are we thinking of, my brethren? Is then the arm of the Lord grown so short that he himself has become powerless to bring salvation and must needs summon us, poor earthly worms that we are, to defend and restore to him his inheritance? Can he not send more than twelve legions of angels ... and so free his land? Of course there can be no doubt that, should he wish to, he can do this.... But I say unto you, the Lord God is testing you. He is looking down upon the sons of men to see if he can find anyone who understands and grieves over what is now happening on earth.... See then with what skill he plans your salvation and be amazed. Look, sinners, into the depths of his pity and trust in him ... He is not trying to bring you down but to raise you up. What is it but a unique and wonderful act of divine generosity when the Almighty God treats murderers, thieves, adulterers, perjurors, and criminals of all kinds as though they were men of righteousness and worthy to be called to his service. Do not hesitate. God is good. ... He pretends to be in debt so that he can repay those who take up arms on his behalf with the forgiveness of sins and with eternal glory ... I would call blessed that generation that has the chance to obtain so rich an indulgence, blessed to be alive in this year of jubilee, this year so pleasing to the Lord.... O mighty soldier, O man of war, you now have a cause for which you can fight without endangering your soul; a cause in which to win is glorious and for which to die is but gain....

Or are you a shrewd businessman, a man quick to see the profits of this world? If you are, I can offer you a splendid bargain. Do not miss this opportunity. Take the sign of the cross. At once you will have indulgence for all the sins which you confess with a contrite heart. It does not cost you much to buy and if you wear it with humility you will find that it is the kingdom of heaven.

The letter closes with some words of warning. The Jews are not to be persecuted. In other letters Bernard advised men not to leave too soon as Peter the Hermit had done—with terrible consequences for those who followed him. They should wait and then march east in good order. The abbot was an advocate of good order in the Church, of everything being in its proper place within the system. His preaching differed from the preaching of the First Crusade in that he addressed himself not to the whole population but to the knightly classes alone. He relied on their energy and he

tried to awake in them the feeling that they had been specially chosen.

The unauthorized activity of a Cistercian monk, Rudolf, caused Bernard a good deal of anxiety. This monk wandered through north France and the Rhineland in the style of one of the popular millenarian preachers of the First Crusade. He had received no dispensation from the decree forbidding monks to preach so he was infringing the preaching monopoly of the secular clergy. Moreover he was damaging Bernard's prestige since the abbot's sermons contained no statements of an eschatological nature. Worst of all was the fact that the inhabitants of the Rhineland towns were once again being inspired to massacre the Jews. In order to bring Rudolf's activities under control, Bernard himself had to go to the Rhineland at the request of the archbishop of Mainz. He dealt severely with the monk and then stayed on in Germany. It was no longer possible to keep the Germans out of the crusade since Rudolf had already filled them with enthusiasm for it. Bernard also had gone further than Eugenius had originally envisaged as his letters to the English and the Spanish prove. But if a German crusade was to have any success the support of King Conrad III was needed. Bernard and the king met at an assembly at Frankfurt in November 1146. Conrad withstood Bernard's appeal but did agree to another meeting at Speyer at Christmas. Bernard felt that the king's resistance was weakening and inexorably increased the pressure on him. In a tremendous sermon which retained its power even through the words of an interpreter, Bernard brought Conrad to the point of imagining himself at the Last Judgement standing before Christ. Then Bernard, as Christ, asked the king, 'Man, what ought I have done for you that I have not done?' This assault on his feelings was too much for Conrad. He took the cross and his example was followed by countless nobles headed by his nephew, Duke Frederick of Swabia. Germany had been won over to the crusade. The king's decision had been made easier by the settlement of the long and destructive feud between the count of Namur and the archbishop of Trier. One of Bernard's aims in coming to Germany had been to end this feud. On Christmas Eve Conrad's old enemy, Duke Welf VI, had taken the cross though it is unlikely that there had been time for the king to hear of this before he made his own decision. Following the assembly at Speyer a crusading letter was sent to the Bavarians. At an assembly held at Regensburg in February 1147 many of them, including Bishop Otto of Freising, who was to be one of the chroniclers of the crusade, responded to this appeal.

Next month at another meeting of the imperial court at Frankfurt Conrad decided to take the land route through Byzantium and Asia Minor. This was the route hallowed by tradition because it had been taken by Godfrey de Bouillon. To Conrad it seemed particularly suitable because he had a firm alliance with Byzantium sealed by the marriage of his sister-in-law, Bertha of Sulzbach, to the emperor, Manuel I Comnenus (1143–80). Moreover Manuel had enjoyed considerable military success against the Seldjuks of Asia Minor and this suggested that there would be no repetition of the disasters of 1101. In the previous month (February 1147) the French too had decided in favour of the land-route despite the efforts made by their ally, Roger II of Sicily, to persuade them to travel by the sea route from Italy. Roger had suggested that he might then join them on crusade, but Louis realized that in fact the king of Sicily was hoping to secure French support for the anti-Byzantine policy which, in the best Norman tradition, he was pursuing. Even so Manuel had little enthusiasm for the course events had taken. From his point of view the alliance with Conrad had been intended mainly to keep Roger II at bay. This was now out of the question. Since the French were Roger's allies it seemed to the Greeks that the fact that the Germans and French were now taking the same line of march through the Balkans might mean that Conrad had changed sides. Nor, of course, was the pope overjoyed to learn of Conrad's decision. He had been counting on his help in Italy. But once the crusade had become a general European enterprise there was little that he could or would do to hinder it. None the less the inclusion of Germany meant that right from the start the crusade was saddled with problems which say little for the political insight of Bernard of Clairvaux.

At the Frankfurt assembly of March 1147 the German contingent was weakened when the Saxon princes announced their preference for a crusade of their own against the Wends—Slavs who lived beyond the north-eastern borders of the empire. Bernard and Eugenius gave their approval and the pope granted these crusaders the same spiritual and material privileges as were enjoyed by those who went to the Holy Land. It would have been difficult to reject the Saxon plan when, at roughly the same time, Eugenius was granting the status and privileges of a crusade to a campaign against the Saracens in Spain organized by Alfonso VII of Castile. Even so the Wendish Crusade was a dangerous precedent. In Spain there was at least a long tradition of war against the heathen going back to the days before the crusades. To this extent Spain was a special case. In Spain moreover the enemy was also Islam. But if the

example of the Wendish crusade were to be followed then the Holy Land might lose much of the support it so desperately needed, for heathens could be fought in many parts of the world, not just in the Holy Land. And in fact the system of crusades against the Slavs did become increasingly well developed, particularly after the Teutonic Order settled in Prussia in the thirteenth century.

The prince of the Wendish Obotrites, Niklot, anticipating the crusade, launched an attack first. A large German army led by Henry the Lion, duke of Saxony, Conrad duke of Zähringen, Albert the Bear, margrave of Brandenburg, and the archbishops of Bremen and Magdeburg marched out to meet his invasion. But the fighting ended without any clear victory. Indeed only the fact that the Wends went through a mock baptismal service prevented the real failure of the campaign becoming obvious.[37]

The crusade itself started at Regensburg in May 1147. The French set out from Metz a few weeks later. The German march through Hungary went off without incident. But once in the Byzantine Empire the excesses of the German troops so badly damaged relations with Manuel Comnenus, that when Conrad III reached Constantinople in September the two rulers did not even meet each other. Manuel was furious because the arrival of the crusading armies deprived him of all mobility. He had to remain in the capital while Roger II of Sicily seized the opportunity to ravage Corfu and to destroy the centres of the Byzantine silk industry at Thebes and Corinth. Two years passed before Manuel, with Venetian help, was able to drive Roger off imperial territory. For his part Conrad felt somewhat put out because Manuel, like his grandfather, had required an oath from him promising to respect Byzantine claims over Syria and Palestine. It was the approach of the French army more than the pressure applied by Manuel which persuaded Conrad to take his troops across the Bosporus into Asia Minor. Then, instead of keeping to the original plan and waiting for the French to join them, they decided to push on immediately in the direction of Edessa.

At Nicaea Conrad divided his army into two sections. One contingent, under the command of Bishop Otto of Freising, was instructed to take the longer coast road. Conrad had intended that this contingent should include all the non-combatants, but in fact some hangers-on remained behind to hamper the main army. This made its first contact with the enemy near Dorylaeum at the end of October. The Seldjuks won a convincing victory. The German retreat to the coast began in good order but control was soon completely lost and, in consequence, casualties were heavy. Most

of the survivors who struggled back to Nicaea early in November left the army in order to return home. Otto of Freising's contingent meanwhile had marched south along the Aegean coast. It then struck inland only to suffer a severe reverse at the hands of the Turks at Laodicea. What was left of the army just about managed to reach the coast of Pamphylia but was then cut to pieces in February 1148. The bishop and a few other survivors finished the journey to Syria by ship.

Meanwhile the French army had reached Constantinople on 4 October 1147. On the surface relations with Manuel were good and the emperor himself went to some lengths to win over Louis VII. Within the French army, however, there was a strong anti-Byzantine party led by Bishop Godfrey of Langres. He was an unpleasant trouble-maker who claimed to enjoy the rights of a legate. In fact it seems that the pope had conferred them upon him but had later replaced him by Guido of Florence, cardinal priest of San Crisogono. His party derived encouragement from the news of Roger II's success at Corfu and gained more support when it was learned that Manuel had made a truce with the Seldjuk sultan of Iconium. This shocked the Latins although it was precisely their approach which had helped persuade Manuel to come to terms. Thus even before they reached Constantinople the anti-Byzantine party was pressing for an attack on the city and for an alliance with King Roger in order to achieve this. They continued their agitation while the army was encamped outside the city but failed to convince the majority who, with the support of Guido of Florence and Louis VII himself, pointed out that the pope had not authorized an expedition against Constantinople. Nevertheless here was the first sign that men were prepared to misuse the crusading ideal to the extent of turning it against fellow Christians. The capture of Constantinople by the crusaders of 1204 was foreshadowed.[38]

The French constantly postponed crossing the Bosporus until finally Manuel spread rumours about a German victory in Asia Minor. Fearing that they might come too late to quench their (typically medieval) thirst for booty—which made up an important part of a knight's income—the French hurried over into Asia Minor where they were reinforced by a contingent from Savoy. Manuel, however, refused to supply them with guides or provisions while the question of their relations with the Byzantine Empire was still unclear. Finally the French barons had to resign themselves to paying homage and Louis himself promised that he would not deprive the emperor of any town that rightfully belonged to him. Manuel now provided guides but in view of his

treaty with the sultan he could give the crusade no more than half-hearted help. This gave further stimulus to the anti-Greek mood in the French army. At Nicaea they joined up with Conrad III and the remnants of the German army. From here they marched to Smyrna and then on to Ephesus where Conrad became so ill (Christmas 1147) that he had to return to Constantinople. Manuel took care of him personally in order to breathe new life into their old alliance. Meanwhile the French army had met the same fate as the German. Early in the new year they suffered a heavy defeat at Laodicea. The surviving contingents fought their way to the coast at Attalia but this Byzantine town was neither able nor particularly willing to accommodate so many crusaders. The Byzantines were asked to provide ships but so few arrived that only the king, the clergy, and the barons were able to sail. Those who were left behind tried to make their way overland to Syria, but soon after leaving Attalia they were routed by the Seldjuks; Louis and his followers reached Antioch in safety.

The position in Syria was not at all good. Joscelin II of Edessa had taken advantage of the death of Zengi in 1146 to try to recapture his capital, but Nur ed-Din stepped in and, by massacring the Armenian and Jacobite population of Edessa, ensured that it was lost beyond recovery. After this there were no important clashes; both Muslims and Christians were waiting for the arrival of the crusaders. Raymond of Antioch wanted Louis to lead an expedition against Aleppo to relieve the pressure on his northern border where he had to face the Seldjuks of Asia Minor as well as Nur ed-Din. It was a sensible plan. Only in this way was there any hope at all of reconstructing the county of Edessa, some fragments of which still remained on the west bank of the Euphrates. Nur ed-Din moreover was to become a most dangerous enemy of the crusader states, though this was perhaps not entirely clear in 1148. Even so, it must have been obvious that a victory over him could hinder the union of Aleppo and Damascus. But on his own Louis was too weak to be able to help Raymond in the north and in addition the rumours of an affair between his wife, Eleanor, and Raymond made him feel that he had been badly treated. What was left of the crusading armies was little enough already and a division of forces seemed stupid. So Louis marched south to join Otto of Freising and Conrad III who, after his convalescence, had reached the Holy Land in April 1148. After visiting the Holy Places the kings of France and Germany met at Acre where Conrad meanwhile had been trying to raise a new army. Here Louis's forces were reinforced by some newly arrived Provençal crusaders.

At Acre on 24 June 1148 the High Court of Jerusalem met. The crusaders were admitted to the assembly as they were entitled to be according to a tradition of the court, though this is the first time that the historian can actually observe the tradition being followed. Besides Conrad III the Germans were represented by the bishops of Freising, Metz, and Toul, by the legate, the bishop of Porto, and by the duke of Swabia, Duke Welf VI and the margraves of Austria, Verona, and Montferrat. For the French there were Louis VII, the bishops of Langres and Lisieux, Cardinal Guido of Florence, the counts of Perche, Troyes, Flanders, and Soissons. The kingdom of Jerusalem was represented by Baldwin III, Queen Melisende, the patriarch of Jerusalem, the archbishops of Caesarea and Nazareth, the bishops of Sidon, Acre, Beirut, Banyas, and Bethlehem, the Masters of the Temple and the Hospital, and the lords of Nablus, Tiberias, Sidon, Caesarea, Oultrejourdain, Toron, and Beirut. North Syria was not represented. After some debate the assembly made the incredibly stupid decision to attack Damascus. After 1146 there could be no question of Edessa being a war objective and in view of the absence of the north Syrians the case for Aleppo rather went by default. But Damascus was the last place to attack. The existence of the kingdom depended on the continuation of the alliance made with Damascus against Aleppo in 1139. Its association with the apostle Paul made it a sacred city but the alliance with the atabeg of Damascus was a matter of life or death to Jerusalem and ought not to have been sacrificed for reasons of this kind, no matter how idealistic. It is commonly believed that it was the barons of Jerusalem who put forward and carried through this proposal. But there is no evidence in the sources to support this theory and later events suggest that it is very wide of the mark. A glance at the composition of the assembly will make it clear that the young king of Jerusalem and his mother had little chance of resisting the wishes of the kings of Germany and France. Only the crusaders, ignorant of local needs, could have put forward such an absurd scheme.

The plan was as ridiculous in execution as in conception. On 24 July they encamped among the orchards on the west side of the city. The approach of a relieving army under Nur ed-Din frightened the atabeg of Damascus just as much as it did the Palestinian barons. The latter, playing a dangerously devious game, persuaded the two kings that the orchards were adding to the difficulties of the siege and that it would be better to move the army to the south-east. But here the army was caught on a hot waterless plain; a prolonged stay was out of the question, so on

the same day it was decided to raise the siege and withdraw. In his chronicle, William of Tyre, whose comments on the discussion at Acre had been very laconic, was later to try to put the blame on the count of Flanders or the influence of Raymond of Antioch. But contemporary public opinion in the West blamed, rightly, the barons of Palestine. They, of course, had been in a dilemma and had acted accordingly. On the one hand they had to keep in favour with the West for they needed men and money and there was no other source of supply. Thus, for good or ill, they had to march against Damascus. On the other hand they had to wreck the expedition for otherwise the vital alliance would be lost. It was a measure born of desperation and its consequences were bad. For one thing, public opinion in the West was shocked; for another, although the atabeg of Damacus still remained true to the alliance, the city population which had once accepted it also now distrusted the Franks and in 1154 opened the city gates to Nur ed-Din. The union of Aleppo and Damascus was helped rather than hindered by the campaign of 1148. On 8 September Conrad angrily left the Holy Land. Louis VII stayed on until Easter 1149 but achieved nothing of note. As William of Tyre observed: 'from this time on the position of the Latins in the East deteriorated visibly.'

Conrad III went to Thessalonika and there, probably in October 1148 before he returned to Germany, he made a treaty with Manuel Comnenus, renewing their old anti-Norman alliance from the days before the Second Crusade.[39] It was agreed that, with the support of Byzantine money and troops, Conrad would lead an expedition against Roger II next year. The European truce which Bernard of Clairvaux had brought about so that the crusade could go forward, was at an end. But Roger had made his preparations in good time. In 1148 he engineered a rebellion of the Welf family in Germany. This prevented Conrad III from entering Italy. In July 1149 when Louis VII visited the king of Sicily on his way back to France, Roger took the opportunity to strengthen their alliance. He advocated another crusade, again with the intention of turning it against the Greeks. He was helped by the fact that in France meanwhile Bernard of Clairvaux, Suger of St. Denis, and Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny, had also begun to preach a new crusade —a genuine one—which was intended to make amends for 1148. Bernard of Clairvaux might even have been chosen at Chartres to lead the expedition had not the plan collapsed because the French knights were unwilling to shoulder the burden of a new crusade so soon. The shock of the last failure was still too great; losses had been too heavy. But at least a great European war was narrowly

averted when the pope refused to join the coalition against Conrad and Manuel because he was afraid of being politically dominated by the Normans.

The one success of the whole crusade took place in the wings. In 1147 a group of English, Flemish, and Frisian crusaders who were taking the sea route to Palestine, sailed up the River Tagus and, after a siege lasting several months, captured the city of Lisbon from the Moors.[40] It was a pitifully small return for a crusade which had begun in such an atmosphere of hope and enthusiasm and which had been organized on so large a scale. The disappointment was, of course, correspondingly deep. This is clear from the many attempts which were made to explain the failure. Some, above all the French chronicler Odo of Deuil, preferred rational explanations—the hostility of the Greeks and Turks, the difficulties of the journey. Others, like the Cistercians Otto of Freising and Bernard of Clairvaux, used metaphysical arguments —the sins of men, the inscrutable judgement of God. Between these extremes we find all manner of natural and supernatural explanations. Gerhoh of Reichersberg and the Würzburg Annalist, the two severest critics of the crusade, subsequently went so far as to regard it as the work of the Devil and Antichrist. The most important target for critics was naturally the abbot of Clairvaux who had done more than anyone else to set the crusade in motion, and had so closely identified himself with it. By his treatment of the crusade as a means by which a soul could find salvation he had aroused hopes which were brutally dashed by its failure. It would be a long time before the crusading ideal would recover from this. Bernard replied to his critics in the second book of his *De Consideratione*. There is no doubt that he took the criticism seriously and was hurt by it; he compared the judgement of God—and it was in these terms that he saw the criticism—to a hell in which he was now standing. It could not shake his faith but his writings show clearly that he found the subject a painful one. He discussed the actions for which he had been—or might possibly be—reproached but he was not prepared to admit that he was in any way responsible for subsequent disappointments. It might, however, be argued that he had added to the difficulties of the crusade by widening its scope both internally and externally in a political situation which was not at all favourable to such a process of extension. Bernard's self-defence always ended with his taking cover behind the commission to preach the crusade which he had received from the pope. That he should try to evade responsibility for the crusade after it had failed reveals a side of his character

which is not very attractive. To answer those critics who, rightly, would not accept this excuse, he constructed a second line of defence. He described himself as the shield of God, drawing upon himself the fire of the blasphemers, the critics, so that God would not be touched by their poisoned darts. For the critics, he argued, were really attacking God, not him.[1] The zeal with which the Cistercians, the monks of Bernard's own order, emphasized a metaphysical explanation of the fiasco, rather suggests that they wanted to cover up other reasons for the failure. But public opinion was not deceived. In future it was not going to be so easy to preach a crusade.