

## Preparation for the Conflict

Alanus de Insulis (1114-1200) was one of the first to write a book on Islam in Latin, and the title shows his ignorance: "*Contra paganos seu Mahometanos.*" He classes Moslems with Jews and Waldenses! Western Europe, according to Keller, was ignorant even of the century in which Mohammed was born; and Hildebert, the archbishop of Tours, wrote a poem on Mohammed in which he is represented as an apostate from the Christian Church! Petrus Venerabilis, whose pregnant words stand at the head of this chapter, was the first to translate the Koran and to study Islam with sympathy and scholarship. He made a plea for translating portions of the Scripture into the language of the Saracens, and affirmed that the Koran itself had weapons with which to attack the citadel of Islam. But, alas! he added the plea of the scholar at his books: "I myself have no time to enter into the conflict." He