

# PLEASANT HOURS

PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XIV.]

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 10, 1894.

[No. 6.]

## THE CRUSADERS.

A GREAT and permanent impetus was given to civilization by that vast movement of the middle ages, known as the crusades. These religious wars united the nations of the West in a grand political league long before any similar union could otherwise have taken place. They also greatly improved, or, indeed, almost created, the military organization of Europe, and inspired and fostered the spirit of chivalry in her populations. They led to the abolition of serfdom by the substitution of martial service instead of the abject vassalage to which the masses had been accustomed. By enforcing the so-called Truce of God they prevented the pernicious practice of private warfare, and turned the arms of Christendom against its common foe. Vast multitudes were led to visit Italy, Constantinople, and the East—the seats of ancient learning, and the scenes of splendid opulence.

Extended travel enlarged their knowledge of the geography, literature, natural history, and productions of foreign lands. In the East still lingered the remains of the science of the palmy days of the Caliphate. The rusty banners of the crusaders became polished by contact with the more refined oriental races. To the British or German knight, who had never stirred farther from his ancestral castle than a boar-hunt or a stag chase led him, what a wonderland must Italy and the East have been, with their great cities, their marble palaces, porphyry pillars, and jasper domes! The Crusaders, becoming acquainted with the luxuries of the Orient, discovered new wants, felt new desires, and brought home a knowledge of arts and elegances before unknown.

The result was seen in the greater splendor of the Western courts, in their more gorgeous pomp and ceremonial, and in the more refined taste in pleasure, dress and ornaments. The miracles and treasures of ancient art and architecture in Greece and Italy, far more numerous than now, did much to create and develop a taste for the beautiful, and to enlarge the sphere of human enjoyment. The refining influence of the East and South have left their mark in every corner of Europe, from Gibraltar to Norway, from Ireland to Hungary, from the crosses on the doors to the arabesque traceries in cathedrals and castles. It is not wonderful that these great and stirring events, with their combined religious enthusiasm and military splendor, awoke the imaginations of the poets. They gave a new impulse to thought, and a greater depth and strength to feeling.

The Crusaders, moreover, made several commercial settlements in the East, the trade of which survived their military occupation by the Latins. Thus a valuable commerce sprang up, which contributed greatly to enrich the resources, ameliorate the manners, and increase the comforts of

the West. But there were serious evils, resulting from the Crusades, which went far to counterbalance all these advantages. The lives and labours of millions were lost to Europe, and buried beneath the sands of Syria.

Many noble families became extinguished by the fortunes of war, or impoverished by the sale or mortgaging of their estates to furnish the means for military equipment. The influence of the Pope,

## LINCOLN'S FRIENDS FROM SANGAMON COUNTY.

The following incident, in which Mr. Lincoln is the most prominent figure, was related by the late Schuyler Colfax:

It was during the dark days of 1863, on the evening of a public reception given at the White House. The foreign legations were there gathered about the president. A young English nobleman was just being

"Why, John, I am glad to see you. I haven't seen you since you and I made rails for Mrs. — in Sangamon county in 1847. How are you?"

The old man turned to his wife with quivering lips, and without reply to the President's salutation, said:

"Mother, he's just the same Old Abe!" "Mr. Lincoln," he said finally, "you know we had three boys; they all enlisted in the same company;—John was killed in the 'Seven-days' fight'; Sam was taken prisoner and starved to death, and Henry is in the hospital. We had a little money, an' I said: 'Mother, we'll go to Washington, and see him.' An' while we were here I said, 'We'll go up and see the President.'"

Mr. Lincoln's eyes drew dim, and across the rugged, homely, tender face swept the wave of sadness, as he said:

"John, we all hope this miserable war will soon be over. I must see all these folks here for an hour or so, and I want to talk with you."

The old lady and her husband were hustled into a private room in spite of all their protests.

## WHERE MUSIC-BOXES ARE MADE.

The chief industry of Geneva, Switzerland, is the manufacture of music-boxes. Thousands of men, women and children are employed in the factories, one of which was visited by a young American, who thus writes about the visit:

An attendant invited him to take a seat. He did so, and strains of delightful music came from the chair. He hung his hat on a rack, and put his travelling staff in the stand. Music came from both rack and stand. He wrote his name in the visiting register, and, on dipping his pen into the ink, music burst forth from the inkstand.

The manager of the factory explained the process of making music-boxes, a business which requires patience and nicety. The different parts are made by men who are experts in those parts, and they do nothing else, year in and year out. The music is marked on the cylinder by a man who has served several years of apprenticeship. Another man inserts in the marked places pegs which have been filed to a uniform length. The comb or set of teeth which strikes the pegs and makes the sound, is arranged by a man who does nothing else.

The cylinder is then revolved, to see that every peg produces a proper tone.

The most delicate work of all is the revising of each peg. It is done by a workman who has a good ear for music. He sees that each peg is in its proper place, and bent at the correct angle. When the instrument is in its case, an expert examines it to see that the time is perfect.

The best workmen—those who mark the cylinder and adjust the pegs—earn a dollar and eighty cents a day, after serving an apprenticeship of ten or twelve years. An ordinary workman earns a dollar a day.



THE CRUSADERS.

as the organizer of the Crusades and common father of Christendom, was greatly augmented. The opulence and corruption of the religious orders were increased by the reversion to their possession of many estates whose heirs had perished in the field. Vast numbers of Oriental relics, many of them spurious and absurd, became objects of idolatrous worship. Many corruptions of the Greek Church were imitated, many Syrian and Greek saints introduced into the calendar, and many Eastern legends and superstitions acquired currency.

presented to the President. Inside the door, evidently overawed by the splendid assemblage, was an honest-faced old farmer, who shrank from the passing crowd until he and the plain-faced old lady clinging to his arm were pressed back to the wall. The President, tall and, in a measure, stately in his personal presence, looking over the heads of the assembly, said to the English nobleman:

"Excuse me, my lord, there's an old friend of mine." Passing backward to the door, Mr. Lincoln said, as he grasped the old farmer's hand: