

to post, divided the spoils among their coreligionists and left the christians to bewail the loss of their possessions and their freedom, the desecration of their shrines and the profanation of their churches. Surely the people of Europe might prefer utter vagrancy and dire impoverishment, rather than suffer the domineering and degrading rule of ignorance, immorality, cruelty and laziness, so perfectly personified in the Mussulmans

Thus, the very fact of having been the means of keeping the Mohamedans from occupying the fair provinces of Europe, must strike the unbiassed reader as a benefit which far outbalances the sacrifices and losses suffered in the undertaking. Nor does it affect this conclusion, to say that the Arabs were never able to take Europe, and that it had been a sparing of Christian blood, to let them into the country and then overwhelm them as was done before at Soissons. A charming plan, indeed! Besides, the dispute is not about the means most proper to keep the Saracens from despoiling Europe but to know if the means taken did or did not accomplish that end. A gift bestowed, is none the less a gift, if bestowed by a foe.

Another equally specious objection sometimes alleged, is that the Saracens in spite of the Crusades, did finally get a foothold on the soil of Europe, which they hold even at the present day. Yes, undoubtedly, they got into Europe at last, but when? In 1453, just one hundred and eighty years after the last Crusade. One would think that the Saracens could in that space of time have recovered from the disasters of the Crusades, and recruited anew their armies.

Another happy effect due to the Crusades was the abolition of the Feudal System. This mode of land tenure, really excellent in itself, had become by abuse of power on the part of the seigniors, wretched and oppressive. During the war, a strong feeling of sympathy grew up between the serfs and their lords, who learned on the field of battle and in adversity to forget their old animosities, and the inequality of their social rank. Besides, many feudal lords, before setting out to Jerusalem, allowed their serfs to buy back their liberty.

By means of these wars, Europe rid herself of many petty lords and princes, whose presence at home served mainly to foment