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Tutorial and Essay Topics

1. No tutorial
2. Civilization and Barbarians
3. Celtic Christianity
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5. Vikings
6. Al-Andalus: Moorish Spain and the “Reconquista”
7. Crusades: Baldwin IV, Leper King of Jerusalem
8. Robin Hood
9. Abelard and Eloise
10. Black Death
11. Joan of Arc
12. Columbus
13. Essay Writing Guide

Note on citations

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Rule of St Columba, 6thc. From A. W. Haddan and W. Stubbs, Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents Relating to Great Britain and Ireland II, i (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1873), pp. 119-121. Internet Medieval Sourcebook
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/columba-rule.html
2. Civilization and Barbarians

Medieval Sourcebook: Letters of Theodoric [r.493-526]

*These letters were written for Theodoric, the most Romanized of Germanic kings, by his secretary Cassiodorus. Theodoric strove to preserve the civilization he knew well, for he had grown up as a young hostage in Constantinople.*

**King Theodoric to Maximian, Vir Illustris; and Andreas, Vir Spectabilis**

If the people of Rome will beautify their city we will help them. Institute a strict audit (of which no one need be ashamed) of the money given by us to the different workmen for the beautification of the City. See that we are receiving money's worth for the money spent. If there is embezzlement anywhere, cause the funds so embezzled to be disgorged. We expect the Romans to help from their own resources in this patriotic work, and certainly not to intercept our contributions for the purpose.

The wandering birds love their own nests; the beasts haste to their own lodgings in the brake; the voluptuous fish, roaming the fields of ocean, returns to its own well-known cavern. How much more should Rome be loved by her children!

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**King Theodoric to Faustus, Praeceptor**

It should be only the surplus of the crops of any Province, beyond what is needed for the supply of its own wants, that should be exported. Station persons in the harbours to see that foreign ships do not take away produce to foreign shores until the Public Providers have got all that they require.

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**King Theodoric to Suna, Vir Illustris and Comes**

Let nothing lie useless which may rebound to the beauty of the City. Let your illustrious Magnificence therefore cause the blocks of marble which are everywhere lying about in ruins to be wrought up into the walls by the hands of the workmen whom I send herewith. Only take care to use only those stones which have really fallen from public buildings, as we do not wish to appropriate private property, even for the glorification of the City.

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King Theodoric to the Senate of the City of Rome

We hear with sorrow, by the report of the Provincial judges, that you the Fathers of the State, who ought to set an example to your sons (the ordinary citizens), have been so remiss in the payment of taxes that on this first collection nothing, or next to nothing, has been brought in from any Senatorial house. Thus a crushing weight has fallen on the lower orders, who have had to make good your deficiencies and have been distraught by the violence of the tax gatherers.

Now then, oh Conscript Fathers, who owe as much duty to the Republic as we do, pay the taxes for which each of you is liable, to the Procurators appointed in each Province, by three installments. Or, if you prefer to do so-and it used to be accounted a privilege pay all at once into the chest of the Vicarius. And let this following edict be published, that all the Provincials may know that they are not to be imposed upon and that they are invited to state their grievances.

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King Theodoric to Colossaeus, Vir Illustris and Comes

We delight to entrust our mandates to persons of approved character.

We are sending you with the dignity of the illustrious belt to Pannonia Sirmiensis, an old habitation of the Goths. Let that Province be induced to welcome her old defenders, even as she used gladly to obey our ancestors. Show forth the justice of the Goths, a nation happily situated for praise, since it is theirs to unite the forethought of the Romans and the virtue of the Barbarians. Remove all ill planted customs, and impress upon all your subordinates that we would rather that our Treasury lost a suit than that it gained one wrongfully, rather that we lost money than the taxpayer was driven to suicide.

*** King Theodoric to Unigis, the Sword-Bearer

We delight to live after the law of the Romans, whom we seek to defend with our arms; and we are as much interested in the maintenance of morality as we can possibly be in war. For what profit is there in having removed the turmoil of the Barbarians, unless we live according to law? ... Let other kings desire the glory of battles won, of cities taken, of ruins made; our purpose is, God helping us, so to rule that our subjects should grieve that they did not earlier acquire the blessings of our domain

*** King Theodoric to All the Jews of Genoa ...We cannot command the religion of our subjects, since no-one can be forced to believe against his will.

3. Celtic Christianity

Medieval Sourcebook: Rule of St. Columba 6th Century

Even if it did not quite "save civilization", Ireland was one of the monastic centers of Europe in the early middle ages. In fact the Church in Ireland was dominated by monasteries and by monastic leaders. Other Irish monks became missionaries and converted much of Northern Europe. St. Columba (521 -597) and his followers converted Scotland and much of northern England. Columba did not leave a written rule. But the following rule, attributed to him, was set down much later. It does reflect the spirit of early Irish Monasticism.

- Be alone in a separate place near a chief city, if thy conscience is not prepared to be in common with the crowd.
- Be always naked in imitation of Christ and the Evangelists.
- Whatsoever little or much thou possessest of anything, whether clothing, or food, or drink, let it be at the command of the senior and at his disposal, for it is not befitting a religious to have any distinction of property with his own free brother.
- Let a fast place, with one door, enclose thee.
- A few religious men to converse with thee of God and his Testament; to visit thee on days of solemnity; to strengthen thee in the Testaments of God, and the narratives of the Scriptures.
- A person too who would talk with thee in idle words, or of the world; or who murmurs at what he cannot remedy or prevent, but who would distress thee more should he be a tattler between friends and foes, thou shalt not admit him to thee, but at once give him thy benediction should he deserve it.
- Let thy servant be a discreet, religious, not tale-telling man, who is to attend continually on thee, with moderate labour of course, but always ready.
- Yield submission to every rule that is of devotion.
- A mind prepared for red martyrdom [that is death for the faith].
- A mind fortified and steadfast for white martyrdom. [that is ascetic practices] Forgiveness from the heart of every one.
- Constant prayers for those who trouble thee.
- Fervour in singing the office for the dead, as if every faithful dead was a particular friend of thine.
- Hymns for souls to be sung standing.
- Let thy vigils be constant from eve to eve, under the direction of another person.
- Three labours in the day, viz., prayers, work, and reading.
- The work to be divided into three parts, viz., thine own work, and the work of thy place, as regards its real wants; secondly, thy share of the brethren's [work]; lastly, to help the neighbours, viz., by instruction or writing, or sewing garments, or
whatever labour they may be in want of, ut Dominus ait, "Non apparebis ante Me vacuus [as the Lord says, "You shall not appear before me empty."].

- Everything in its proper order; Nemo enim coronabitur nisi qui legitime certaverit. [For no one is crowned except he who has striven lawfully.]
- Follow alms-giving before all things.
- Take not of food till thou art hungry.
- Sleep not till thou feellest desire.
- Speak not except on business.
- Every increase which comes to thee in lawful meals, or in wearing apparel, give it for pity to the brethren that want it, or to the poor in like manner.
- The love of God with all thy heart and all thy strength;
- The love of thy neighbour as thyself
- Abide in the Testament of God throughout all times.
- Thy measure of prayer shall be until thy tears come;
- Or thy measure of work of labour till thy tears come;
- Or thy measure of thy work of labour, or of thy genuflexions, until thy perspiration often comes, if thy tears are not free.

St. Columba was born on December 7, ca. 521 A.D. to Fedhlimidh and Eithne of the Ui Neill clan in Gartan (Donegal). As a young man, Columba soon took an interest in the church, joined the monastery at Moville, and was ordained a deacon by St. Finnian. After studying with a bard called Gemman, Columba was ordained a priest by Etchen, the bishop of Clonfad. Columba entered the monastery of Mobhi Clarainech, and when disease forced the disbanding of that monastery, Columba went north and founded the church of Derry. Tradition has it that after founding several other monasteries, Columba copied St. Finnian's psalter without the permission of Finnian, and thus devalued the book. When Finnian took the matter to High King Dermott for judgement, Dermott judged in favor of Finnian, stating "to every cow its calf; to every book its copy" (I am borrowing this quote from Cathach Books in Dublin). Columba refused to hand over the copy, and Dermott forced the issue militarily. Columba's family and clan defeated Dermott at the battle of Cooldrevny in 561. Tradition further holds that St. Molaisi of Devenish, Columba's spiritual father, ordered Columba to bring the same number of souls to Christ that he had caused to die as penance. In 563, Columba landed on Iona with 12 disciples, and founded a new monastery. After founding several more monasteries, confounding the local druids, and participating in another battle (this time against St. Comgall over who owned the church of Colethem), Columba died on June 9, 597.


CHAPTER XL
The Saint's prophecy regarding Libran, of the Rush-ground.

AT another time, while the saint was living in the Iouan island (Hy, now Iona), a certain man of humble birth, who had lately assumed the clerical habit, sailed over from Scotia (Ireland), and came to the blessed man's monastery on the island. The saint found him one day sitting alone in the lodging provided for strangers, and inquired first about his country, family, and the object of his journey. He replied that he was born in the region of the Connacht men (Connaught), and that he had undertaken that long and weary journey to atone for his sins by the pilgrimage. In order to test the depth of his repentance, the saint then laid down minutely before his eyes the hardship and labour attending the monastic exercises. "I am prepared," he replied at once to the saint, "to do everything whatever thou cost bid me, however hard and however humiliating." Why add more? That same hour he confessed all his sins, and promised, kneeling on the ground, to fulfil
the laws of penance. The saint said to him, "Arise and take a seat." Then he thus addressed him as he sat, "Thou must do penance for seven years in the Ethican land (Tiree); thou and I, with God's blessing, shall survive that period of seven years." Being comforted by the saint's words, he first gave thanks to God, and turning afterwards to the saint, asked, "What am I to do with regard to an oath which I have violated? for while living in my own country I murdered a certain man, and afterwards, as guilty of murdering him, I was confined in prison. But a certain very wealthy blood-relation came to my aid, and promptly loosing me from my prison-chains, rescued me from the death to which I was condemned. When I was released, I bound myself by oath to serve that friend all the days of my life; but I had remained only a short time in his service, when I felt ashamed of serving man, and very much preferred to devote myself to God. I therefore left that earthly master, broke the oath, and departing, reached thee safely, God prospering my journey thus far." The saint, on seeing him very much grieved over such things, and first prophesying with respect to him, thus made answer, saying, "At the end of seven years, as I said to thee, thou shalt come to me here during the forty days of Lent, and thou shalt approach the altar and partake of the Lucharist at the great Paschal festival." Why hang longer over words? The penitent stranger in every respect obeyed the saint's commands; and being sent at that time to the monastery of the Plain of Lunge (Magh Lunge, in Tiree), and having fully completed his seven years' penance there, returned to him during Lent, according to the previous command and prophecy. After celebrating the Paschal solemnity, and coming at that time to the altar as directed, he came again to the saint to consult him on the above-mentioned oath. Then the saint gave this prophetic answer to his inquiry, "That earthly master of thine of whom thou hast formerly spoken is still living; so are thy father, thy mother, and thy brethren. Thou must now, therefore, prepare thyself for the voyage." And while speaking, he drew forth a sword ornamented with carved ivory, and said, "Take this gift to carry with thee, and offer it to thy master as the price of thy ransom; but when thou dost, he will on no account accept it, for he has a virtuous, kindly-disposed wife, and by the influence of her wholesome counsel he shall that very day, without recompense or ransom, set thee free, unbinding the girdle round thy captive loins. But though thus relieved from this anxiety, thou shalt not escape a source of disquietude arising on another hand, for thy brethren will come round and press thee to make good the support due to thy father for so long a time which thou hast neglected. Comply thou at once with their wish, and take in hand dutifully to cherish thine aged father. Though the duty may, indeed, seem weighty, thou must not be grieved thereat, because thou shalt soon be relieved of it; for from the day on which thou shalt take charge of thy father, the end of that same week shall see his death and burial. But after thy father's burial thy brethren will a second time come and sharply demand of thee that thou pay the expenses due for thy mother. However, thy younger brother will assuredly set thee free from this necessity by engaging to perform in thy stead every duty or obligation which thou owest to thy mother."

Having heard these words, the above-mentioned brother, whose name was Libran, received the gift, and set out enriched with the saint's blessing. When he reached his native country, he found everything exactly as prophesied by the saint. For when he showed and made offer of the price of his freedom to his master, his wife opposed his wish to accept it, saying, "What need have we to accept this ransom sent by St. Columba?
We are not even worthy of such a favour. Release this dutiful servant without payment. The prayers of the holy man will profit us more than this price which is offered us." The husband, therefore, listening to his wife's wholesome counsel, set the slave free at once without ransom. He was afterwards, according to the saint's prophecy, compelled by his brethren to undertake the providing for his father, and he buried him at his death on the seventh day. After his burial they required him to discharge the same duty to his mother; but a younger brother, as the saint foretold, engaged to supply his place, and thus released him from the obligation. "We ought not on any account," said he to his brethren, "detain this our brother at home, who, for the salvation of his soul, has spent seven years in penitential exercises with St. Columba in Britain."

After being thus released from the matters which gave him annoyance, he bade farewell to his mother and brothers, and returned a free man to a place called in the Scotic tongue Daire Calgaich (Derry). There he found a ship under sail just leaving the harbour, and he called to the sailors to take him on board and convey him to Britain. But they, not being the monks of St. Columba, refused to receive him. He then prayed to the venerable man, who, though far distant, indeed, in body, yet was present in spirit, as the event soon proved, saying, "Is it thy will, holy Columba, that these sailors, who do not receive me, thy companion, proceed upon their voyage with full sails and favourable winds?"

At this saying the wind, which till then was favourable for them, veered round on the instant to the opposite point. While this was taking place, the sailors saw again the same man running in a line with them along the bank of the river, and, hastily taking counsel together, they cried out to him from the ship, saying, "Perhaps the wind hath suddenly turned against us, for this reason, that we refused to give thee a passage; but if even now we were to invite thee to be with us on board, couldst thou change these contrary winds to be in our favour?" When the pilgrim heard this, he said to them, "St. Columba, to whom I am going, and whom I have served for the last seven years, is able by prayer, if you take me on board, to obtain a favourable wind for you from his Lord." They then on hearing this, approached the land with their ship, and asked him to join them in it. As soon as he came on board, he said, "In the name of the Almighty God, whom St. Columba blamelessly serveth, spread your sails on the extended yards." And when they had done so, the gale of contrary winds immediately became favourable, and the vessel made a prosperous voyage under full sail to Britain. After reaching the shores of Britain, Libran left the ship, blessed the sailors, and went directly to St. Columba, who was staying in the Iouan island (Hy, now Iona). The blessed man welcomed him with joy, and, without receiving the information from any one, told him fully of everything that happened on his way--of his master and the wife's kindly suggestion and of his being set free by her advice; of his brethren also, and the death and burial of his father within the week; of his mother, and the timely assistance of the younger brother; of what occurred as he was returning, the adverse and favourable winds; of the words of the sailors when first they refused to take him in; of the promise of fair wind, and of the favourable change when they took him on board their vessel. Why need I add more? Every particular the saint foretold he now described after it was exactly fulfilled.
After these words, the traveller gave back to the saint the price of his ransom which he had received from him; and at the same time the saint addressed him in these words: "Inasmuch as thou art free, thou shalt be called Libran." Libran took at the same period the monastic vows with much fervour.

And when he was being sent back again by the holy man to the monastery where he had formerly served the Lord during the seven years of penance, he received in farewell the following prophetic announcement regarding himself: "Thou shalt live yet a long time, and end this present life in a good old age; yet thou shalt not arise from the dead in Britain, but in Scotia (Ireland)." Hearing these words, he knelt down and wept bitterly. When the saint saw his great grief he tried to comfort him, saying, "Arise, and be not sad. Thou shalt die in one of my monasteries, and thy lot shall be among my chosen monks in the kingdom; and with them thou shalt awake from the sleep of death unto the resurrection of life." When he heard this unusual consolation from the saint he rejoiced exceedingly, and, being enriched by the saint's blessing, went away in peace. This truthful prophecy of the saint regarding the same man was afterwards fulfilled; for when he had faithfully served the Lord for many revolving years of holy obedience in the monastery of the Plain of Lunge (Magh Lunge, in Tiree), after the departure of St. Columba from the world, he was sent, in extreme old age, on a mission to Scotia regarding the interests of the monastery, and proceeded as soon as he landed through the Plain of Breg (Maghbreg, in Meath), till he reached the monastery of the Oakwood Plain (Derry). Being there received as a stranger in the guest-chamber, and suffering from a certain disease, he passed to the Lord in peace on the seventh day of his illness, and was buried with the chosen monks of St. Columba, according to his prophecy, to await the resurrection unto eternal life.

Let it suffice that we have written these truthful prophecies of St. Columba regarding Libran of the Rush-ground. He was called "of the Rush-ground " from his having been engaged many years in the labour of collecting rushes.

CHAPTER XLI.

Concerning a certain little Woman who, as a daughter of Eve, was enduring the great and extremely dangerous pains of Childbirth.

ON a certain day during the saint's stay in the Iouan island (Hy, now Iona), the saint arose from reading, and said with a smile, "I must now hasten to the oratory to pray to the Lord on behalf of a poor woman in Hibernia, who at this moment is suffering the pangs of a most difficult childbirth, and is calling upon the name of Columba. She trusteth that God will grant her relief from her sufferings through my prayers, because she is a relation of mine, being lineally descended from the house of my mother's parentage."

Having said this, the saint, being touched with pity for the poor woman, hastened to the church, and, on his bended knees, earnestly prayed for her to Christ, who was Himself by birth a partaker of humanity. Returning from the church after his prayer, he said to the brethren who met him, "The Lord Jesus, born of a woman, hath given seasonable help to this poor woman, and hath mercifully relieved her from her distress. She hath been safely
delivered of a child, nor shall she die upon this occasion." That same hour, as the saint had predicted, the poor woman, by invoking his name, was safely delivered, and restored to perfect health, as we afterwards learned from travellers who came to us from that part of Scotia (Ireland) where the woman resided.

CHAPTER XLII.

Of one Lugne, surnamed Tudida, a Pilot, who lived on the Rechrean island (either Rathlin or Lambay), and whom, as being deformed, his wife hated.

ANOTHER time, when the saint was living on the Rechrean island, a certain man of humble birth came to him and complained of his wife, who, as he said, so hated him, that she would on no account allow him to come near her for marriage rights. The saint on hearing this, sent for the wife, and, so far as he could, began to reprove her on that account, saying: "Why, O woman, dost thou endeavour to withdraw thy flesh from thyself, while the Lord says, 'They shall be two in one flesh'? Wherefore the flesh of thy husband is thy flesh." She answered and said, "Whatever thou shalt require of me I am ready to do, however hard it may be, with this single exception, that thou dost not urge me in any way to sleep in one bed with Lugne. I do not refuse to perform every duty at home, or, if thou dost command me, even to pass over the seas, or to live in some monastery for women." The saint then said, "What thou dost propose cannot be lawfully done, for thou art bound by the law of the husband as long as thy husband liveth, for it would be impious to separate those whom God has lawfully joined together."

Immediately after these words he added: "This day let us three, namely, the husband and his wife and myself, join in prayer to the Lord and in fasting." But the woman replied: "I know it is not impossible for thee to obtain from God, when thou askest them, those things that seem to us either difficult, or even impossible." It is unnecessary to say more. The husband and wife agreed to fast with the saint that day, and the following night the saint spent sleepless in prayer for them. Next day he thus addressed the wife in presence of her husband, and said to her: "O woman, art thou still ready to-day, as thou saidst yesterday, to go away to a convent of women?" "I know now," she answered, "that thy prayer to God for me hath been heard; for that man whom I hated yesterday, I love today; for my heart hath been changed last night in some unknown way--from hatred to love." Why need we linger over it? From that day to the hour of death, the soul of the wife was firmly cemented in affection to her husband, so that she no longer refused those mutual matrimonial rights which she was formerly unwilling to allow.
Charlemagne [i.e. Charles the Great] is the most discussed political leader of the 8th and 9th centuries. He became ruler of a vast empire in Western Europe, and from 800 on held the title of Roman Emperor. The most extensive account of his life is by his friend and courtier, Einhard. Although Einhard modeled his life on the genre of biography exemplified by the Roman writer Suetonius, there is no reason to believe that much of the detail is inaccurate. Later on Charlemagne acquired an almost divine status, both as a Catholic saint, and as the hero of French epics and Romances.

The Full Text of Einhard's Life of Charlemagne is also available here.

[All extracts from Book III. Section numbers used in various translations]

#22. [Charles' Appearance.] Charles was large and strong, and of lofty stature, though not disproportionately tall (his height is well known to have been seven times the length of his foot); the upper part of his head was round, his eyes very large and animated, nose a little long, hair fair, and face laughing and merry. Thus his appearance was always stately and dignified, whether he was standing or sitting; although his neck was thick and somewhat short, and his belly rather prominent; but the symmetry of the rest of his body concealed these defects. His gait was firm, his whole carriage manly, and his voice clear, but not so strong as his size led one to expect. His health was excellent, except during the four years preceding his death, when he was subject to frequent fevers; at the last he even limped a little with one foot. Even in those years he consulted rather his own inclinations than the advice of physicians, who were almost hateful to him, because they wanted him to give up roasts, to which he was accustomed, and to eat boiled meat instead. In accordance with the national custom, he took frequent exercise on horseback and in the chase, accomplishments in which scarcely any people in the world can equal the Franks. He enjoyed the exhalations from natural warm springs, and often practised swimming, in which he was such an adept that none could surpass him; and hence it was that he built his palace at Aixla-Chapelle, and lived there constantly during his latter years until his death. He used not only to invite his sons to his bath, but his nobles and friends, and now and then a troop of his retinue or body guard, so that a hundred or more persons sometimes bathed with him.

#23. [Charles' Clothing] He used to wear the national, that is to say, the Frank, dress-next his skin a linen shirt and linen breeches, and above these a tunic fringed with silk; while
hose fastened by bands covered his lower limbs, and shoes his feet, and he protected his shoulders and chest in winter by a close-fitting coat of otter or marten skins. Over all he flung a blue cloak, and he always had a sword girt about him, usually one with a gold or silver hilt and belt; he sometimes carried a jewelled sword, but only on great feast-days or at the reception of ambassadors from foreign nations. He despised foreign costumes, however handsome, and never allowed himself to be robed in them, except twice in Rome, when he donned the Roman tunic, chlamys, and shoes; the first time at the request of Pope Hadrian, the second to gratify Leo, Hadrian's successor. On great feast-days he made use of embroidered clothes, and shoes bedecked with precious stones; his cloak was fastened by a golden buckle, and he appeared crowned with a diadem of gold and gems: but on other days his dress varied little from the common dress of the people.

#24 [Charle's Manner] Charles was temperate in eating, and particularly so in drinking, for he abominated drunkenness in anybody, much more in himself and those of his household; but he could not easily abstain from food, and often complained that fasts injured his health. He very rarely gave entertainments, only on great feast-days, and then to large numbers of people. His meals ordinarily consisted of four courses, not counting the roast, which his huntsmen used to bring in on the spit; he was more fond of this than of any other dish. While at table, he listened to reading or music. The subjects of the readings were the stories and deeds of olden time: he was fond, too, of St. Augustine's books, and especially of the one entitled "The City of God."

He was so moderate in the use of wine and all sorts of drink that he rarely allowed himself more than three cups in the course of a meal. In summer after the midday meal, he would eat some fruit, drain a single cup, put off his clothes and shoes, just as he did for the night, and rest for two or three hours. He was in the habit of awaking and rising from bed four or five times during the night. While he was dressing and putting on his shoes, he not only gave audience to his friends, but if the Count of the Palace told him of any suit in which his judgment was necessary, he had the parties brought before him forthwith, took cognizance of the case, and gave his decision, just as if he were sitting on the Judgment-seat. This was not the only business that he transacted at this time, but he performed any duty of the day whatever, whether he had to attend to the matter himself, or to give commands concerning it to his officers.

#25 [Charles' Education] Charles had the gift of ready and fluent speech, and could express whatever he had to say with the utmost clearness. He was not satisfied with command of his native language merely, but gave attention to the study of foreign ones, and in particular was such a master of Latin that he could speak it as well as his native tongue; but he could understand Greek better than he could speak it. He was so eloquent, indeed, that he might have passed for a teacher of eloquence. He most zealously cultivated the liberal arts, held those who taught them in great esteem, and conferred great honours upon them. He took lessons in grammar of the deacon Peter of Pisa, at that time an aged man. Another deacon, Albin of Britain, surnamed Alcuin, a man of Saxon extraction, who was the greatest scholar of the day, was his teacher in other branches of learning. The King spent much time and labour with him studying rhetoric, dialectics, and especially astronomy; he learned to reckon, and used to investigate the motions of the
heavenly bodies most curiously, with an intelligent scrutiny. He also tried to write, and used to keep tablets and blanks in bed under his pillow, that at leisure hours he might accustom his hand to form the letters; however, as he did not begin his efforts in due season, but late in life, they met with ill success.

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#19 [Charles and the Education of His Children] The plan that he adopted for his children's education was, first of all, to have both boys and girls instructed in the liberal arts, to which he also turned his own attention. As soon as their years admitted, in accordance with the custom of the Franks, the boys had to learn horsemanship, and to practise war and the chase, and the girls to familiarize themselves with cloth-making, and to handle distaff and spindle, that they might not grow indolent through idleness, and he fostered in them every virtuous sentiment. He only lost three of all his children before his death, two sons and one daughter, Charles, who was the eldest, Pepin, whom he had made King of Italy, and Hruodrud, his oldest daughter....

He was so careful of the training of his sons and daughters that he never took his meals without them when he was at home, and never made a journey without them; his sons would ride at his side, and his daughters follow him, while a number of his body-guard, detailed for their protection, brought up the rear. Strange to say, although they were very handsome women, and he loved them very dearly, he was never willing to marry any of them to a man of their own nation or to a foreigner, but kept them all at home until his death, saying that he could not dispense with their society. Hence, though otherwise happy, he experienced the malignity of fortune as far as they were concerned; yet he concealed his knowledge of the rumours current in regard to them, and of the suspicions entertained of their honour.

#27[Charles and the Roman Church] ... He cherished the Church of St. Peter the Apostle at Rome above all other holy and sacred places, and heaped its treasury with a vast wealth of gold, silver, and precious stones. He sent great and countless gifts to the popes; and throughout his whole reign the wish that he had nearest at heart was to re-establish the ancient authority of the city of Rome under his care and by his influence, and to defend and protect the Church of St. Peter, and to beautify and enrich it out of his own store above all other churches. Although he held it in such veneration, he only repaired to Rome to pay his vows and make his supplications four times during the whole forty-seven years that he reigned.

#28 [Charles' Coronation] The Romans had inflicted many injuries upon the Pontiff Leo, tearing out his eyes and cutting out his tongue, so that he had been compelled to call upon the King for help. Charles accordingly went to Rome, to set in order the affairs of the Church, which were in great confusion, and passed the whole winter there. It was then that he received the titles of Emperor and Augustus, to which he at first had such an aversion that he declared that he would not have set foot in the Church the day that they were conferred, although it was a great feast-day, if he could have foreseen the design of the Pope. He bore very patiently with the jealousy which the Roman emperors showed
upon his assuming these titles, for they took this step very ill; and by dint of frequent embassies and letters, in which he addressed them as brothers, he made their haughtiness yield to his magnanimity, a quality in which he was unquestionably much their superior.

http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/einhard1.html
5. Vikings

Medieval Sourcebook: 
Three Sources on the Ravages of the Northmen in Frankland, c. 843 - 912

[Ogg Introduction]: Below are a few passages taken from the Annals of St. Bertin, the poem of Abbo on the siege of Paris, and the Chronicle of St. Denis, which show something of the character of the Northmen's part in early French history, first as mere invaders and afterwards as permanent settlers.

- [The Annals of St. Bertin]
- [Abbo's Wars of Count Odo with the Northmen in the Reign of Charles the Fat]
- [The Chronicle of St. Denis Based on Dudo and William of Jumièges]

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From The Annals of St. Bertin,


843 A.D. Pirates of the Northmen's race came to Nantes, killed the bishop and many of the clergy and laymen, both men and women, and pillaged the city. Thence they set out to plunder the lands of lower Aquitaine. At length they arrived at a certain island [the isle of Rhé, near La Rochelle, north of the mouth of the Garonne], and carried materials thither from the mainland to build themselves houses; and they settled there for the winter, as if that were to be their permanent dwelling-place.

844. The Northmen ascended the Garonne as far as Toulouse and pillaged the lands along both banks with impunity. Some, after leaving this region went into Galicia [in Northern Spain] and perished, part of them by the attacks of the crossbowmen who had come to resist them, part by being overwhelmed by a storm at sea. But others of them went farther into Spain and engaged in long and desperate combats with the Saracens; defeated in the end, they withdrew.

845. The Northmen with a hundred ships entered the Seine on the twentieth of March and, after ravaging first one bank and then the other, came without meeting any resistance to Paris. Charles [the Bald] resolved to hold out against them; but seeing the impossibility of gaining a victory, he made with them a certain agreement and by a gift of 7,000 livres he bought them off from advancing farther and persuaded them to return. Euric, king of
the Northmen, advanced, with six hundred vessels, along the course of the River Elbe to
attack Louis of Germany. The Saxons prepared to meet him, gave battle, and with the aid
of our Lord Jesus Christ won the victory. The Northmen returned down the Seine and
coming to the ocean pillaged, destroyed, and burned all the regions along the coast.

846. The Danish pirates landed in Frisia. They were able to force from the people
whatever contributions they wished and, being victors in battle, they remained masters of
almost the entire province.

847. The Northmen made their appearance in the part of Gaul inhabited by the Britons
and won three victories. Noménoé [a chief of the Britons], although defeated, at length
succeeded in buying them off with presents and getting them out of his country.

853-854. The Danish pirates, making their way into the country eastward from the city of
Nantes, arrived without opposition, November Eighth, before Tours. This they burned,
together with the church of St. Martin and the neighboring places. But that incursion had
been foreseen with certainty and the body of St. Martin had been removed to Cormery, a
monastery of that church, and from there to the city of Orleans. The pirates went on to the
château of Blois and burned it, proposing then to proceed to Orleans and destroy that city
in the same fashion. But Agius, bishop of Orleans, and Burchard, bishop of Chartres, had
gathered soldiers and ships to meet them; so they abandoned their design and returned to
the lower Loire, though the following year [855] they ascended it anew to the city of
Angers.

855. They left their ships behind and undertook to go overland to the city of Poitiers; but
the Aquitanians came to meet them and defeated them, so that not more than 300 escaped.

856. On the eighteenth of April, the Danish pirates came to the city of Orleans, pillaged it,
and went away without meeting opposition. Other Danish pirates came into the Seine
about the middle of August and, after plundering and ruining the towns on the two banks
of the river, and even the monasteries and villages farther back, came to a well located
place near the Seine called Jeufosse, and, there quietly passed the winter.

859. The Danish pirates having made a long sea-voyage (for they had sailed between
Spain and Africa) entered the Rhone, where they pillaged many cities and monasteries
and established themselves on the island called Camargue. . . . They devastated
everything before them as far as the city of Valence. Then, after ravaging all these
regions, they returned to the island where they had fixed their habitation. Thence they
went on toward Italy, capturing and plundering Pisa and other cities.

From Abbo's Wars of Count Odo with the Northmen in the Reign of Charles
the Fat
885. The Northmen came to Paris with 700 sailing ships, not counting those of smaller size which are commonly called barques. At one stretch the Seine was lined with the vessels for more than two leagues, so that one might ask in astonishment in what cavern the river had been swallowed up, since it was not to be seen. The second day after the fleet of the Northmen arrived under the walls of the city, Siegfried, who was then king only in name but who was in command of the expedition, came to the dwelling of the illustrious bishop. He bowed his head and said: "Gauzelin, have compassion on yourself and on your flock. We beseech you to listen to us, in order that you may escape death. Allow us only the freedom of the city. We will do no harm and we will see to it that whatever belongs either to you or to Odo shall be strictly respected." Count Odo, who later became king, was then the defender of the city. The bishop replied to Siegfried, "Paris has been entrusted to us by the Emperor Charles, who, after God, king and lord of the powerful, rules over almost all the world. He has put it in our care, not at all that the kingdom may be ruined by our misconduct, but that he may keep it and be assured of its peace. If, like us, you had been given the duty of defending these walls, and if you should have done that which you ask us to do, what treatment do you think you would deserve?" Siegfried replied. "I should deserve that my head be cut off and thrown to the dogs. Nevertheless, if you do not listen to my demand, on the morrow our war machines will destroy you with poisoned arrows. You will be the prey of famine and of pestilence and these evils will renew themselves perpetually every year." So saying, he departed and gathered together his comrades.

In the morning the Northmen, boarding their ships, approached the tower and attacked it [the tower blocked access to the city by the so-called "Great Bridge," which connected the right bank of the Seine with the island on which the city was built. The tower stood on the present site of the Châtelet]. They shook it with their engines and stormed it with arrows. The city resounded with clamor, the people were aroused, the bridges trembled. All came together to defend the tower. There Odo, his brother Robert, and the Count Ragenar distinguished themselves for bravery; likewise the courageous Abbot Ebolus, the nephew of the bishop. A keen arrow wounded the prelate, while at his side the young warrior Frederick was struck by a sword. Frederick died, but the old man, thanks to God, survived. There perished many Franks; after receiving wounds they were lavish of life. At last the enemy withdrew, carrying off their dead. The evening came. The tower had been sorely tried, but its foundations were still solid, as were also the narrow bays which surmounted them. The people spent the night repairing it with boards. By the next day, on the old citadel had been erected a new tower of wood, a half higher than the former one. At sunrise the Danes caught their first glimpse of it. Once more the latter engaged with the Christians in violent combat. On every side arrows sped and blood flowed. With the arrows mingled the stones hurled by slings and war-machines; the air was filled with them. The tower which had been built during the night groaned under the strokes of the darts, the city shook with the struggle, the people ran hither and thither, the bells jangled. The warriors rushed together to defend the tottering tower and to repel the fierce assault. Among these warriors two, a count and an abbot [Ebolus], surpassed all the rest in
courage. The former was the redoubtable Odo who never experienced defeat and who continually revived the spirits of the worn-out defenders. He ran along the ramparts and hurled back the enemy. On those who were secreting themselves so as to undermine the tower he poured oil, wax, and pitch, which, being mixed and heated, burned the Danes and tore off their scalps. Some of them died; others threw themselves into the river to escape the awful substance.

Meanwhile Paris was suffering not only from the sword outside but also from a pestilence within which brought death to many noble men. Within the walls there was not ground in which to bury the dead. . . . Odo, the future king, was sent to Charles, emperor of the Franks, to implore help for the stricken city. One day Odo suddenly appeared in splendor in the midst of three bands of warriors. The sun made his armor glisten and greeted him before it illuminated the country around. The Parisians saw their beloved chief at a distance, but the enemy, hoping to prevent his gaining entrance to the tower, crossed the Seine and took up their position on the bank. Nevertheless Odo, his horse at a gallop, got past the Northmen and reached the tower, whose gates Ebolus opened to him. The enemy pursued fiercely the comrades of the count who were trying to keep up with him and get refuge in the tower. [The Danes were defeated in the attack.]

Now came the Emperor Charles, surrounded by soldiers of all nations, even as the sky is adorned with resplendent stars. A great throng, speaking many languages, accompanied him. He established his camp at the foot of the heights of Montmartre, near the tower. He allowed the Northmen to have the country of Sens to plunder; and in the spring he gave them 700 pounds of silver on condition that by the month of March they leave France for their own kingdom. Then Charles returned, destined to an early death.

From The Chronicle of St. Denis Based on Dudo and William of Jumièges [Vol. III, p. 105].

The king had at first wished to give to Rollo the province of Flanders, but the Norman rejected it as being too marshy. Rollo refused to kiss the foot of Charles when he received from him the duchy of Normandy. "He who receives such a gift," said the bishops to him, "ought to kiss the foot of the king." "Never," replied he, "will I bend the knee to anyone, or kiss anybody's foot." Nevertheless, impelled by the entreaties of the Franks, he ordered one of his warriors to perform the act in his stead. This man seized the foot of the king and lifted it to his lips, kissing it without bending and so causing the king to tumble over backwards. At that there was a loud burst of laughter and a great commotion in the crowd of onlookers. King Charles, Robert, Duke of the Franks, the counts and magnates, and the bishops and abbots, bound themselves by the oath of the Catholic faith to Rollo, swearing by their lives and their bodies and by the honor of all the kingdom, that he might hold the land and transmit it to his heirs from generation to generation throughout all time to come. When these things had been satisfactorily performed, the king returned in good spirits into his dominion, and Rollo with Duke Robert set out for Rouen.
In the year of our Lord 912 Rollo was baptized in holy water in the name of the sacred Trinity by Franco, archbishop of Rouen. Duke Robert, who was his godfather, gave to him his name. Rollo devotedly honored God and the Holy Church with his gifts. . . . The pagans, seeing that their chieftain had become a Christian, abandoned their idols, received the name of Christ, and with one accord desired to be baptized. Meanwhile, the Norman duke made ready for a splendid wedding and married the daughter of the king [Gisela] according to Christian rites.

Rollo gave assurance of security to all those who wished to dwell in his country. The land he divided among his followers, and, as it had been a long time unused, he improved it by the construction of new buildings. It was peopled by the Norman warriors and by immigrants from outside regions. The duke established for his subjects certain inviolable rights and laws, confirmed and published by the will of the leading men, and he compelled all his people to live peaceably together. He rebuilt the churches, which had been entirely ruined; he restored the temples, which had been destroyed by the ravages of the pagans; he repaired and added to the walls and fortifications of the cities; he subdued the Britons who rebelled against him; and with the provisions obtained from them he supplied all the country that had been granted to him.

Source.

6. Al-Andalus: Moorish Spain and the “Reconquista”

Medieval Sourcebook: Ibn Abd-el-Hakem: The Islamic Conquest of Spain

The Muslim expansion continued throughout the sixth and into the seventh century. In 711 the Berber Tarik invaded and rapidly conquered Visigothic Spain. Famously by 733 the Muslims reached Poitiers in France. There a battle, more significant to westerners than Muslims, halted the Muslim advance. In truth by that stage Islam was at its limits of military expansion. Tarik gave his name to "Jabal (mount of) Tarik" or, as we say, Gibraltar. In 712 Tarik’s lord, Musa ibn-Mosseyr, joined the attack. Within seven years the conquest of the peninsula was complete. It became one of the centers of Moslem civilization, and the Umayyad caliphate of Cordova reached a peak of glory in the tenth century. Spain, called "al-Andulus" by Muslims remained was at least partially under Muslim control until 1492 when Granada was conquered by Ferdinand and Isabella.

Musa Ibn Nosseyr sent his son Merwan to Tangiers, to wage a holy war upon her coast. Having, then, exerted himself together with his friends, he returned, leaving to Tarik Ibn Amru the command of his army which amounted to 1,700. Others say that 12,000 Berbers besides 16 Arabs were with Tarik: but that is false. It is also said that Musa Ibn Nosseyr marched out of Ifrikiya [Africa] upon an expedition into Tangiers, and that he was the first governor who entered Tangiers, where parts of the Berber tribes Botr and Beranes resided. These bad not yet submitted themselves. When he approached Tangiers, he scattered his light troops. On the arrival of his cavalry in the nearest province of Sus, he subdued its inhabitants, and made them prisoners, they yielding him obedience. And he gave them a governor whose conduct was agreeable to them. He sent Ibn Beshr Ibn Abi Artah to a citadel, three days' journey from the town of Cairwan. Having taken the former, he made prisoners of the children, and plundered the treasury. The citadel was called Beshr, by which name it is known to this day. Afterwards Musa deposed the viceroy whom be had placed over Tangiers, and appointed Tarik Ibn Zeiyad governor. He, then, returned to Cairwan, Tarik with his female slave of the name Umm-Hakim setting out for Tangiers. Tarik remained some time in this district, waging a holy war. This was in the year 92. The governor of the straits between this district and Andalus was a foreigner called Ilyan, Lord of Septa. He was also the governor of a town called Alchadra, situated on the same side of the straits of Andalus as Tangiers. Ilyan was a subject of Roderic, the Lord of Andalus [i.e. king of Spain], who used to reside in Toledo. Tarik put himself in communication with Ilyan, and treated him kindly, until they made peace with each other. Ilyan had sent one of his daughters to Roderic, the Lord of Andalus, for her improvement and education; but she became pregnant by him. Ilyan having heard of this, said, I see for him no other punishment or recom pense, than that I should bring the Arabs against him. He sent to Tarik, saying, I will bring thee to Andalus; Tarik being at that time in Tlemsen, and Musa Ibn Nossevr in Cairwan. But Tarik said I cannot trust thee
until thou send me a hostage. So be sent his two daughters, having no other children. Tarik allowed them to remain in Tlemens, guarding them closely. After that Tarik went to Ilyan who was in Septa on the straits. The latter rejoicing at his coming, said, I will bring thee to Andalus. But there was a mountain called the mountain of Tarik between the two landing places, that is, between Septa and Andalus. When the evening came, Ilyan brought him the vessels, in which he made him embark for that landing-place, where he concealed himself during the day, and in the evening sent back the vessels to bring over the rest of his companions. So they embarked for the landing-place, none of them being left behind; whereas the people of Andalus did not observe them, thinking that the vessels crossing and recrossing were similar to the trading vessels which for their benefit plied backwards and forwards. Tarik was in the last division which went across. He proceeded to his companions, Ilyan together with the merchants that were with him being left behind in Alchadra, in order that he might the better encourage his companions and countrymen. The news of Tarik and of those who were with him, as well as of the place where they were, reached the people of Andalus. Tarik, going along with his companions, marched over a bridge of mountains to a town called Cartagena. He went in the direction of Cordova. Having passed by an island in the sea, he left behind his female slave of the name of Umm-Hakim, and with her a division of his troops. That island was then called Umm-Hakim. When the Moslems settled in the island, they found no other inhabitants there, than vinedressers. They made them prisoners. After that they took one of the vinedressers, slaughtered him, cut him in pieces, and boiled him, while the rest of his companions looked on. They had also boiled meat in other cauldrons. When the meat was cooked, they threw away the flesh of that man which they had boiled; no one knowing that it was thrown away: and they ate the meat which then had boiled, while the rest of the vinedressers were spectators. These did not doubt but that the Moslems ate the flesh of their companion; the rest being afterwards sent away informed the people of Andalus that the Moslems feed on human flesh, acquainting them with what had been done to the vinedresser.

As Abd-Errahman has related to us on the authority of his father Abd-Allah Ibn Abd-El-Hakem, and of Hisham Ibn Ishaak: There was a house in Andalus, the door of which was secured with padlocks, and on which every new king of the country placed a padlock of his own, until the accession to power of the king against whom the Moslems marched. They therefore begged him to place a padlock on it, as the kings before him were wont to do. But he refused saying, I will place nothing on it, until I shall have known what is inside; he then ordered it to be opened; but behold inside were portraits of the Arabs, and a letter in which it was written: "When this door shall be opened, these people will invade this country."

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When Tarik landed, soldiers from Cordova came to meet him; and seeing the small number of his companions they despised him on that account. They then fought. The battle with Tarik was severe. They were routed, and he did not cease from the slaughter of them till they reached the town of Cordova. When Roderic heard of this, he came to their rescue from Toledo. They then fought in a place of the name of Shedunia, in a
valley which is called this day the valley of Umm-Hakim [on July 11, 711, at the mouth of the Barbate river]. They fought a severe battle; but God, mighty and great, killed Roderic and his companions. Mugheyth Errumi, a slave of Welid, was then the commander of Tarik’s cavalry. Mugheyth Errumi went in the direction of Cordova, Tarik passing over to Toledo. He, then, entered it, and asked for the table, having nothing else to occupy himself. This, as the men of the Bible relate, was the table of Suleyman Ibn Dawid, may the blessing of God be upon him.

As Abd Errahman has related to us on the authority of Yahva Ibn Bukeir, and the latter on the authority of Leyth Ibn Sad: Andalus having been conquered for Musa Ibn Nosseyr, he took from it the table of Suleyman Ibn Dawid, and the crown. Tarik was told that the table was in a citadel called Faras, two days' journey from Toledo, and the governor of this citadel was a nephew of Roderic. Tarik, then, wrote to him, promising safety both for himself and family. The nephew descended from the citadel, and Tarik fulfilled his promise with reference to his safety. Tarik said to him, deliver the table, and he delivered it to him. On this table were gold and silver, the like of which one had not seen. Tarik, then, took off one of its legs together with the pearls and the gold it contained, and fixed to it a similar leg. The table was valued at two hundred thousand dinars, on account of the pearls that were on it. He took up the pearls, the armour, the gold, the silver, and the vases which he had with him, and found that quantity of spoils, the like of which one had not seen. He collected all that. Afterwards he returned to Cordova, and having stopped there, he wrote to Musa Ibn Nosseyr informing him of the conquest of Andalus, and of the spoils which he had found. Musa then wrote to Welid Abd Ed-Malik informing him of that, and throwing himself upon his mercy. Musa wrote to Tarik ordering him not to leave Cordova until he should come to him. And he reprimanded him very severely. Afterwards Musa Ibn Nosseyr set out for Andalus, in Rajab of the year 93, taking with him the chiefs of the Arabs, the commanders, and the leaders of the Berbers to Andalus. He set out being angry with Tarik, and took with him Habib Ibn Abi Ubeida Elfihi, and left the government of Cairwan to his son Abd Allah who was his eldest son. He then passed through Alchadra, and afterwards went over to Cordova. Tarik then met him, and tried to satisfy him, saying: "I am merely thy slave, this conquest is thine." Musa collected of the money a sum, which exceeded all description. Tarik delivered to him all that he had plundered.

**note:** The selection above is from the *History of the Conquest of Spain* by the Egyptian Ibn Abd-el-Hakem (d. 870 or 871), who also wrote a history of Egypt. He mixes myths and fact in his account, which was written a century and a half after the events it describes.


[http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/conqspain.html](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/conqspain.html)
THE LAY OF THE CID: The Christian Conquest of Al-Andalusia

Online Medieval and Classical Library Release #30

The following text was scanned from The Lay of the Cid, translated by R. Selden Rose and Leonard Bacon, and published in Berkeley, California, by the University of California Press in the year 1919 as part of the series entitled Semicentennial Publications of the University of California: 1868-1918.

This work was prepared for OMACL, and made available 4 May 1997

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- Cantar I [The extract comes from the first Cantar]
- Cantar II
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BACKGROUND:

The Lay of the Cid is a translation of the Cantar del mio Cid, a poem written in the mid-twelfth century about the Castilian Hero, Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar, and relating events from his exile from Castile in 1081 until shortly before his death in 1099. Although the Cid accomplished the remarkable feats of capturing the rich Muslim kingdom of Valencia and holding it as his own, and being the first of the Christian leaders to defeat the Almoravides, a warlike band of zealots from North Africa, the poem concentrates upon his relationship with King Alfonso VI of Leon-Castile. Like many feudal epics, The Lay of the Cid portrays the breakdown of the vassal-lord relationship due to some shortcoming of the lord, the manner in which the vassal attempts to deal with this situation, and reaches a climax and resolution in a detailed account of a formal trial.

The Cid became a universal hero to the Spanish, and his history was elaborated by numerous ballads, legends, and other tales until the historical figure was completely obscured by this fanciful literature. The Cid was rescued from fiction by the Spanish Scholar Ramon Menendez Pidal, who devoted the entirety of his long life to uncovering the historical Cid and in portraying the Spain in which he lived.
XXV They heaped the spoil together. Pondered the Cid my lord,  
He who in happy hour had girded on the sword,  
How tidings of his raiding to the King would come ere long,  
And Alfonso soon would seek him with his host to do him wrong.  
He bade his spoil-dividers make a division fair,  
And furthermore in writing give to each man his share.  
The fortune of each cavalier had sped exceeding well,  
One hundred marks of silver to each of them there fell,  
And each of the foot soldiers the half of that obtained.  
A round fifth of the treasure for my lord the Cid remained  
But here he could not sell it, nor in gifts give it away.  
No captives, men or women, he desired in his array.  
And with the men of Castejon he spoke to this intent  
To Hita and Guadalajara ambassadors he sent  
To find how high the ransom of the fifth part they would rate.  
Even as they assessed it, his profit would be great.  
Three thousand marks of silver the Moors agreed to pay.  
The Cid was pleased. And duly was it paid on the third day.  
My lord the Cid determined with all his men of war  
That there within the castle they would abide no more,  
And that they would have held it, but that water so rare it lacked:  
"Ye Moors are friendly to the King; even so runs the pact,  
With his host will he pursue us. And I desire to flee  
From Castejon; Minaya and my men, so hark to me;  

XXVI "Nor take it ill, mine utterance. For here we cannot stay.  
The king will come to seek us, for he is not far away;  

19 THE LAY OF THE CID  

But to destroy the castle seems in no way good to me.  
An hundred Moorish women in that place I will set free  
And of the Moors an hundred. Since there, as it befell,  
I captured them. Hereafter shall they all speak of me well.  
Ye all are paid; among you is no man yet to pay.  
Let us on the morrow morning prepare to ride away,  
For against my lord Alfonso the strife I would not stir."  
What the Cid said was pleasing to his every follower.  
Rich men they all departed from the hold that they had ta'en  
And the Moors both men and women blessed them o'er and o'er again.  
Up the Henares hastened they and hard they rode and strong.  
They passed through the Alcarrias, and swift they marched along,  
By the Caverns of Anquita they hastened on their way.  
They crossed the stream. Into Taranz the great plain entered they,  
And on down through that region as hard as they might fare.  
Twixt Fariza and Cetina would the Cid seek shelter there.
And a great spoil he captured in the country as he went,  
For the Moors had no inkling whatso' er of his intent.  
On the next day marched onward the great Cid of Bivar,  
And he went by Alhama, and down the vale afar.  
And he passed Bubierca and Ateca likewise passed,  
And it was nigh to Alcocer that he would camp at last  
Upon a rounded hillock that was both strong and high.  
They could not rob him of water; the Jalon it flowed hard by.  
My lord Cid don Rodrigo planned to storm Alcocer.

XXVII He pitched a strong encampment upon the hillock there,  
Some men were toward the mountains, some by the stream arrayed.  
The gallant Cid, who in good hour had girded on the blade,  
Bade his men near the water dig a trench about the height,

That no man might surprise them by day nor yet by night.  
So might men know that there the Cid had taken up his stand.

XXVIII And thereupon the tidings went out through all that land,  
How my lord Cid the Campeador had there got footing sure,  
He is gone forth from the Christians, he is come unto the Moor,  
In his presence no man dareth plough the farmlands as of yore.  
Very merry with his vassals was the great Campeador.  
And Alcocer the Castle wider tribute had he laid.
In 1094 or 1095, Alexios I Komnenos, the Byzantine emperor, sent to the pope, Urban II, and asked for aid from the west against the Seljuq Turks, who taken nearly all of Asia Minor from him. At the council of Clermont Urban addressed a great crowd and urged all to go to the aid of the Greeks and to recover Palestine from the rule of the Muslims. The acts of the council have not been preserved, but we have five accounts of the speech of Urban which were written by men who were present and heard him.

Versions by:

1. Fulcher of Chartres: *Gesta Francorum Jerusalem Expugnantium*
2. Robert the Monk: *Historia Hierosolymitana*
3. *Gesta Francorum* [The Deeds of the Franks]
4. Balderic of Dol
5. Guibert de Nogent: *Historia quae dicitur Gesta Dei per Francos*
6. Urban II: Letter of Instruction, December 1095

[Only the first two have been included]

1. Fulcher of Chartres

*adapted from Thatcher* Here is the one by the chronicler Fulcher of Chartres. Note how the traditions of the peace and truce of God - aimed at bringing about peace in Christendom - ties in directly with the call for a Crusade. Does this amount to the export of violence?

Most beloved brethren: Urged by necessity, I, Urban, by the permission of God chief bishop and prelate over the whole world, have come into these parts as an ambassador with a divine admonition to you, the servants of God. I hoped to find you as faithful and as zealous in the service of God as I had supposed you to be. But if there is in you any deformity or crookedness contrary to God's law, with divine help I will do my best to remove it. For God has put you as stewards over his family to minister to it. Happy indeed will you be if he finds you faithful in your stewardship. You are called shepherds;
see that you do not act as hirelings. But be true shepherds, with your crooks always in your hands. Do not go to sleep, but guard on all sides the flock committed to you. For if through your carelessness or negligence a wolf carries away one of your sheep, you will surely lose the reward laid up for you with God. And after you have been bitterly scourged with remorse for your faults--., you will be fiercely overwhelmed in hell, the abode of death. For according to the gospel you are the salt of the earth [Matt. 5:13]. But if you fall short in your duty, how, it may be asked, can it be salted? O how great the need of salting! It is indeed necessary for you to correct with the salt of wisdom this foolish people which is so devoted to the pleasures of this-world, lest the Lord, when He may wish to speak to them, find them putrefied by their sins unsalted and stinking. For if He, shall find worms, that is, sins, in them, because you have been negligent in your duty, He will command them as worthless to be thrown into the abyss of unclean things. And because you cannot restore to Him His great loss, He will surely condemn you and drive you from His loving presence. But the man who applies this salt should be prudent, provident, modest, learned, peaceable, watchful, pious, just, equitable, and pure. For how can the ignorant teach others? How can the licentious make others modest? And how can the impure make others pure? If anyone hates peace, how can he make others peaceable? Or if anyone has soiled his hands with baseness, how can he cleanse the impurities of another? We read also that if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch [Matt. 15:14]. But first correct yourselves, in order that, free from blame, you may be able to correct those who are subject to you. If you wish to be the friends of God, gladly do the things which you know will please Him. You must especially let all matters that pertain to the church be controlled by the law of the church. And be careful that simony does not take root among you, lest both those who buy and those who sell [church offices] be beaten with the scourges of the Lord through narrow streets and driven into the place of destruction and confusion. Keep the church and the clergy in all its grades entirely free from the secular power. See that the tithes that belong to God are faithfully paid from all the produce of the land; let them not be sold or withheld. If anyone seizes a bishop let him be treated as an outlaw. If anyone seizes or robs monks, or clergymen, or nuns, or their servants, or pilgrims, or merchants, let him be anathema [that is, cursed]. Let robbers and incendiaries and all their accomplices be expelled from the church and anathematized. If a man who does not give a part of his goods as alms is punished with the damnation of hell, how should he be punished who robs another of his goods? For thus it happened to the rich man in the gospel [Luke 16:19]; he was not punished because he had stolen the goods of another, but because he had not used well the things which were his.

"You have seen for a long time the great disorder in the world caused by these crimes. It is so bad in some of your provinces, I am told, and you are so weak in the administration of justice, that one can hardly go along the road by day or night without being attacked by robbers; and whether at home or abroad one is in danger of being despoiled either by force or fraud. Therefore it is necessary to reenact the truce, as it is commonly called, which was proclaimed a long time ago by our holy fathers. I exhort and demand that you, each, try hard to have the truce kept in your diocese. And if anyone shall be led by his cupidity or arrogance to break this truce, by the authority of God and with the sanction of this council he shall be anathematized."
After these and various other matters had been attended to, all who were present, clergy and people, gave thanks to God and agreed to the pope's proposition. They all faithfully promised to keep the decrees. Then the pope said that in another part of the world Christianity was suffering from a state of affairs that was worse than the one just mentioned. He continued:

"Although, O sons of God, you have promised more firmly than ever to keep the peace among yourselves and to preserve the rights of the church, there remains still an important work for you to do. Freshly quickened by the divine correction, you must apply the strength of your righteousness to another matter which concerns you as well as God. For your brethren who live in the east are in urgent need of your help, and you must hasten to give them the aid which has often been promised them. For, as the most of you have heard, the Turks and Arabs have attacked them and have conquered the territory of Romania [the Greek empire] as far west as the shore of the Mediterranean and the Hellespont, which is called the Arm of St. George. They have occupied more and more of the lands of those Christians, and have overcome them in seven battles. They have killed and captured many, and have destroyed the churches and devastated the empire. If you permit them to continue thus for awhile with impurity, the faithful of God will be much more widely attacked by them. On this account I, or rather the Lord, beseech you as Christ's heralds to publish this everywhere and to persuade all people of whatever rank, foot-soldiers and knights, poor and rich, to carry aid promptly to those Christians and to destroy that vile race from the lands of our friends. I say this to those who are present, it meant also for those who are absent. Moreover, Christ commands it.

"All who die by the way, whether by land or by sea, or in battle against the pagans, shall have immediate remission of sins. This I grant them through the power of God with which I am invested. O what a disgrace if such a despised and base race, which worships demons, should conquer a people which has the faith of omnipotent God and is made glorious with the name of Christ! With what reproaches will the Lord overwhelm us if you do not aid those who, with us, profess the Christian religion! Let those who have been accustomed unjustly to wage private warfare against the faithful now go against the infidels and end with victory this war which should have been begun long ago. Let those who for a long time, have been robbers, now become knights. Let those who have been fighting against their brothers and relatives now fight in a proper way against the barbarians. Let those who have been serving as mercenaries for small pay now obtain the eternal reward. Let those who have been wearing themselves out in both body and soul now work for a double honor. Behold! on this side will be the sorrowful and poor, on that, the rich; on this side, the enemies of the Lord, on that, his friends. Let those who go not put off the journey, but rent their lands and collect money for their expenses; and as soon as winter is over and spring comes, let hem eagerly set out on the way with God as their guide."

2. Robert the Monk

Robert perhaps 25 years after the speech, but he may have been present at the council. He used the Gesta version (see below, number 3).

Oh, race of Franks, race from across the mountains, race chosen and beloved by God as shines forth in very many of your works set apart from all nations by the situation of your country, as well as by your catholic faith and the honor of the holy church! To you our discourse is addressed and for you our exhortation is intended. We wish you to know what a grievous cause has led us to Your country, what peril threatening you and all the faithful has brought us.

From the confines of Jerusalem and the city of Constantinople a horrible tale has gone forth and very frequently has been brought to our ears, namely, that a race from the kingdom of the Persians, an accursed race, a race utterly alienated from God, a generation forsooth which has not directed its heart and has not entrusted its spirit to God, has invaded the lands of those Christians and has depopulated them by the sword, pillage and fire; it has led away a part of the captives into its own country, and a part it has destroyed by cruel tortures; it has either entirely destroyed the churches of God or appropriated them for the rites of its own religion. They destroy the altars, after having defiled them with their uncleanness. They circumcise the Christians, and the blood of the circumcision they either spread upon the altars or pour into the vases of the baptismal font. When they wish to torture people by a base death, they perforate their navels, and dragging forth the extremity of the intestines, bind it to a stake; then with flogging they lead the victim around until the viscera having gushed forth the victim falls prostrate upon the ground. Others they bind to a post and pierce with arrows. Others they compel to extend their necks and then, attacking them with naked swords, attempt to cut through the neck with a single blow. What shall I say of the abominable rape of the women? To speak of it is worse than to be silent. The kingdom of the Greeks is now dismembered by them and deprived of territory so vast in extent that it can not be traversed in a march of two months. On whom therefore is the labor of avenging these wrongs and of recovering this territory incumbent, if not upon you? You, upon whom above other nations God has conferred remarkable glory in arms, great courage, bodily activity, and strength to humble the hairy scalp of those who resist you.

Let the deeds of your ancestors move you and incite your minds to manly achievements; the glory and greatness of king Charles the Great, and of his son Louis, and of your other kings, who have destroyed the kingdoms of the pagans, and have extended in these lands the territory of the holy church. Let the holy sepulchre of the Lord our Saviour, which is possessed by unclean nations, especially incite you, and the holy places which are now treated with ignominy and irreverently polluted with their filthiness. Oh, most valiant soldiers and descendants of invincible ancestors, be not degenerate, but recall the valor of your progenitors.

But if you are hindered by love of children, parents and wives, remember what the Lord says in the Gospel, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me."
"Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake shall receive an hundredfold and shall inherit everlasting life." Let none of your possessions detain you, no solicitude for your family affairs, since this land which you inhabit, shut in on all sides by the seas and surrounded by the mountain peaks, is too narrow for your large population; nor does it abound in wealth; and it furnishes scarcely food enough for its cultivators. Hence it is that you murder one another, that you wage war, and that frequently you perish by mutual wounds. Let therefore hatred depart from among you, let your quarrels end, let wars cease, and let all dissensions and controversies slumber. Enter upon the road to the Holy Sepulchre; wrest that land from the wicked race, and subject it to yourselves. That land which as the Scripture says "floweth with milk and honey," was given by God into the possession of the children of Israel Jerusalem is the navel of the world; the land is fruitful above others, like another paradise of delights. This the Redeemer of the human race has made illustrious by His advent, has beautified by residence, has consecrated by suffering, has redeemed by death, has glorified by burial. This royal city, therefore, situated at the centre of the world, is now held captive by His enemies, and is in subjection to those who do not know God, to the worship of the heathens. She seeks therefore and desires to be liberated, and does not cease to implore you to come to her aid. From you especially she asks succor, because, as we have already said, God has conferred upon you above all nations great glory in arms. Accordingly undertake this journey for the remission of your sins, with the assurance of the imperishable glory of the kingdom of heaven.

When Pope Urban had said these and very many similar things in his urbane discourse, he so influenced to one purpose the desires of all who were present, that they cried out, "It is the will of God! It is the will of God!" When the venerable Roman pontiff heard that, with eyes uplifted to heaven he gave thanks to God and, with his hand commanding silence, said:

Most beloved brethren, today is manifest in you what the Lord says in the Gospel, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them." Unless the Lord God had been present in your spirits, all of you would not have uttered the same cry. For, although the cry issued from numerous mouths, yet the origin of the cry was one. Therefore I say to you that God, who implanted this in your breasts, has drawn it forth from you. Let this then be your war-cry in combats, because this word is given to you by God. When an armed attack is made upon the enemy, let this one cry be raised by all the soldiers of God: It is the will of God! It is the will of God!

And we do not command or advise that the old or feeble, or those unfit for bearing arms, undertake this journey; nor ought women to set out at all, without their husbands or brothers or legal guardians. For such are more of a hindrance than aid, more of a burden than advantage. Let the rich aid the needy; and according to their wealth, let them take with them experienced soldiers. The priests and clerks of any order are not to go without the consent of their bishop; for this journey would profit them nothing if they went without permission of these. Also, it is not fitting that laymen should enter upon the pilgrimage without the blessing of their priests.
Whoever, therefore, shall determine upon this holy pilgrimage and shall make his vow to God to that effect and shall offer himself to Him as a, living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, shall wear the sign of the cross of the Lord on his forehead or on his breast. When, 

truly,' having fulfilled his vow be wishes to return, let him place the cross on his back between his shoulders. Such, indeed, by the twofold action will fulfill the precept of the Lord, as He commands in the Gospel, "He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."

Source:

Dana C. Munro, "Urban and the Crusaders", Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History, Vol 1:2, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1895), 5-8. IMS <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/urban2-5vers.html>

9. Baldwin IV Becomes King of Jerusalem

[Adapted from Brundage] The union of Egypt under Saladin with Nur ad-Din's empire presented an obvious and immediate peril to the Latin states of the East. Attempts to convince the magnates of Western Europe of the urgency of the threat were unsuccessful and, although an attempt was also made to bind the Latin states closer to Byzantium, the final outcome of these negotiations is unknown. The power of Saladin as ruler of Egypt produced tensions, too, within Nur ad-Din's empire. Relations between Saladin and his nominal overlord worsened steadily during the first five years after Saladin's rise to power in Egypt. It seemed, almost, as if Saladin and Nur-ad-Din would be at one another's throats, thus saving the Latin states from the peril of imminent attack. Before an open break between the two Moslem leaders occurred, however, Nur-ad-Din died in 1174. This event changed the whole situation. Furthermore it seemed as if the empire which Nur ad-Din had created would soon disintegrate into a number of warring, bickering, rival states, Before King Amalric could intervene to take advantage of this situation, however, he died, leaving his son, Baldwin IV, to inherit the Latin Kingdom.

The sixth of the Latin kings of Jerusalem was the lord Baldwin IV, son of the lord King Amalric of illustrious memory and of the Countess Agnes, daughter of the younger Count Jocelin of Edessa. . . . While Baldwin was still a boy, about nine years old, and while I was still Archdeacon of Tyre, King Amalric put him in my care, after asking me many times and with a promise of his favor, to teach him and to instruct him in the liberal arts. [William probably became Baldwin's tutor in 1170] While he was in my hands, I took constant care of him, as is fitting with a king's son, and I both carefully instructed him in literary studies and also watched over the formation of his character.

It so happened that once when he was playing with some other noble boys who were with him, they began pinching one another with their fingernails on the hands and arms, as playful boys will do. The others evinced their pain with yells, but, although his playmates did not spare him, Baldwin bore the pain altogether too patiently, as if he did not feel it. When this had happened several times, it was reported to me. At first I thought that this
happened because of his endurance, not because of insensitivity. Then I called him and began to ask what was happening. At last I discovered that about half of his right hand and arm were numb, so that he did not feel pinches or even bites there. I began to have doubts, as I recalled the words of the wise man: "It is certain that an insensate member is far from healthy and that he who does not feel sick is in danger." [Hippocrates]

I reported all this to his father. Physicians were consulted and prescribed repeated fermentations, anointings, and even poisonous drugs to improve his condition, but in vain. For, as we later understood more fully as time passed, and as we made more comprehensive observations, this was the beginning of an incurable disease. I cannot keep my eyes dry while speaking of it. For as he began to reach the age of puberty it became apparent that he was suffering from that most terrible disease, leprosy. Each day he grew more ill. The extremities and the face were most affected, so that the hearts of his faithful men were touched by compassion when they looked at him.

Baldwin was adept at literary studies. Daily he grew more promising and developed a more loving disposition. He was handsome for his age and he was quick to learn to ride and handle horses-more so than his ancestors. He had a tenacious memory and loved to talk. He was economical, but he well remembered both favors and injuries. He resembled his father, not only in his face, but in his whole appearance. He was also like his father in his walk and in the timbre of his voice. He bad a quick mind, but his speech was slow. He was, like his father, an avid listener to history and he was very willing to follow good advice.

Baldwin was scarcely thirteen years old when his father died. He had an elder sister named Sibylla, born of the same mother. She was raised in the convent of St. Lazarus at Bethany by Lady Ivetta, the abbess of the convent, who was her father's maternal aunt.

When Baldwin's father died, all the princes of the Kingdom, both ecclesiastical and secular, assembled. All were in agreement as to what they wanted and Baldwin was anointed and crowned solemnly and in the usual fashion in the Church of the Lord's Sepulcher on the fifteenth of July, four days after his father's death, by the Lord Amalric of good memory, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, in the presence of the archbishops, bishops, and other prelates of the church.

Source:


[http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/tyre-cde.html#baldwin1](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/tyre-cde.html#baldwin1)
8. Robin Hood

Source: Robin Hood Project [http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/chronint.htm](http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/chronint.htm)

Robin Hood in Piers Plowman (a late 14th English poem)

'I kan noght parfitly my Paternoster as þe preest it syngeþ,
But I kan rymes of Robyn Hood and Randolf Earl of Chestre,
Ac neiþer of Oure Lord ne of Oure Lady þe leeste þa t euere was maked.'

['I don't know perfectly my Our Father as the priest sings it;
I know rhymes of Robin Hood and Randolf Earl of Chester,
But neither of Our Lord nor of Our Lady the least that ever was written.]

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**THE CHRONICLER’S ROBIN HOOD: INTRODUCTION**

*The Chronicler's Robin Hood*

Edited by Stephen Knight and Thomas H. Ohlgren

Originally Published in *Robin Hood and Other Outlaw Tales*

Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 1997

**INTRODUCTION**

Best known for his stirring adventures, Robin Hood is also an object of study by archivists and historians, seeking traces of a real Robin Hood who might, like the equally elusive King Arthur, be the real figure behind the myths -- or legends, as such historians would want to call them. In 1852 Joseph Hunter found a man called Robin Hood who was actually a valet to King Edward II in the north of England and assumed that he lay behind some of the story of the *Gest*. But there was no sign that the king's valet was ever thought of as an outlaw. More recently archivists have found other traces of criminals known to the medieval legal authorities as Hood, R.

The earliest contender is one Robert Hod, described as a fugitive, who is mentioned in the York assizes record of 1226: his goods were being confiscated because he owed money to St. Peter's of York (Owen, 1936). The debt is not unlike that of Sir Richard in the *Gest* and certainly consistent with the fierce hostility toward abbeys and rich churchmen through the whole myth. A slightly later reference speaks of William Le Fevre, son of a smith, who was indicted at Reading for larceny in 1261 (Crook, 1984). Nothing very surprising about that, except that in the following year there is another reference to him, and now he is called William Robehod, as if that surname has become appropriate to his condition as a fugitive from justice.
The fact that Robin Hood's name was interpreted in that way in legal circles is clear from a record from Tutbury, Staffordshire for 1439, which says that a certain Piers Venables, of nearby Aston,

gadered and assembled unto hym many misdoers beynge of his clothinge and, in manere of insurrection, wente into the wodes in that contre, like as it hadde be Robyn Hode and his meyne. (Child, 1965, III, 41)

Historians have liked to trace through these references a personalized and historicized process; they feel there must have been a certain Robin Hood who started the legend and others were identified with him: their arguments have been recently summarized by Bellamy (1985, chs. 1 and 2). The question is which was in fact the first reference: which was this notionally real Robin Hood? Only a few years before the miscreant of York comes a legal record of a man called Robert Hood, servant to the Abbot of Cirencester, who killed a man called Ralph between 1213 and 1216 (Holt, 1982, p. 54). And in 1354 in the forest of Rockingham, Northamptonshire, a man gave his name as Robin Hood when he was arrested for a forest offence.

The obvious interpretation, unpleasing as it may be to literal-minded historians, is that "Robin Hood" means fugitive from (probably unfair) justice, that like "Santa Claus" it is a name for a role, a mask to be worn in appropriate circumstances (Knight, 1994, pp. 14-15). What the legal references tell us most is not who was the real Robin Hood but how many versions there were and what the circumstances might have been to cause the intriguing changes that the tradition underwent in its quasihistorical forms as well as in its frankly fictional ballads and plays.

This is message that comes through the fuller quasi-historical references found in a series of chronicles in the late Middle Ages which have something to say about the outlaw. The relevant excerpts will each be printed here with a note about the author and his context, and what he might have understood as the meaning of the outlaw and his activities.

**Commentary and Criticism**


Go To Selection From Andrew of Wyntoun's *Orygynale Chroincle* (c. 1420)
FROM ANDREW OF WYNTOUN'S ORYGYNALE CHRONICLE (C. 1420)

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[The Orygynale Chronicle was compiled for Andrew of Wyntoun's patron Sir John of Wemyss in the 1420s in Scotland. Andrew was an Augustinian canon of St. Sers Inch, a religious house set on an island in Loch Leven, and a daughter house of the great St. Andrew's priory. The chronicle is strongly pro-Scottish in tone, especially severe on the malpractices of Edward I in his war against the Scots and his treatment of the national hero William Wallace. In the period of these wars, under the year 1283, Andrew mentions two forest outlaws (waythmen, i.e., men who lie in wait) from the long turbulent area of the borders. They operated, it seems, both just south of the border near Carlisle in Inglewood (meaning English Wood), and much further south in England in Barnsdale. Andrew's apparent approval of their efforts and his report of the common praise of them is no doubt related to the fact that they were enemies of the English crown and its officers. After the battles of Dunbar (1296) and Falkirk (1298) William Wallace and the Scots took to the forests themselves, and many later people saw resemblances between Robin Hood and the Scottish nationalist outlaw (Spence, 1928).

The reference to Barnsdale is surprising, as it is far to the south, but it has been argued that this may refer to the forest of Barnsdale in Rutland, not that in Yorkshire where the Gest of Robyn Hode is set. In the Middle Ages the royal forest of Barnsdale in Rutland was owned by the Earl of Huntingdon, and this title was closely connected to the royal house of Scotland (Knight, 1994, p. 31). Internal evidence suggests this fact came to Wyntoun's notice: the language of the reference is rather oddly amplified, and it may be that there was an earlier popular jingle which ran:

Litil Iohun and Robert Hude Waythmen war in Ingilwode.
It may be that Andrew's discovery, through royal contacts, of the Barnsdale Robin Hood might have led him to recast the couplet into the slightly awkward four lines he offers.]

Litil Iohun and Robert Hude
Waythmen war commendit gud;
In Ingilwode and Bernynysdaile
Thai oyssit al this tyme thar trawale.
To her master, nay father, to her husband, nay brother; his handmaid, nay daughter, his spouse, nay sister: to ABELARD, HELOISE. Your letter written to a friend for his comfort, beloved, was lately brought to me by chance. Seeing at once from the title that it was yours, I began the more ardently to read it in that the writer was so dear to me, that I might at least be refreshed by his words as by a picture of him whose presence I have lost. Almost every line of that letter, I remember, was filled with gall and wormwood, to wit those that related the miserable story of our conversion, and thy unceasing crosses, my all.

Thou didst indeed fulfil in that letter what at the beginning of it thou hadst promised thy friend, namely that in comparison with thy troubles he should deem his own to be nothing or but a small matter. After setting forth thy former persecution by thy masters, then the outrage of supreme treachery upon thy body, thou hast turned thy pen to the execrable jealousy and inordinate assaults of thy fellow-pupils also, namely Alberic of Rheims and Lotulph the Lombard; and what by their instigation was done to that famous work of thy theology, and what to thyself, as it were condemned to prison, thou hast not omitted.

From these thou comest to the machinations of thine Abbot and false brethren, and the grave detraction of thee by those two pseudo-apostles, stirred up against thee by the aforesaid rivals, and to the scandal raised by many of the name of Paraclete given to the oratory in departure from custom: and then, coming to those intolerable and still continuing persecutions of thy life, thou hast carried to the end the miserable story of that cruelest of extortioners and those wickedest of monks, whom thou callest thy sons. Which things I deem that no one can read or hear with dry eyes, for they renewed in fuller measure my griefs, so diligently did they express each several part, and increased them the more, in that thou relatedst that thy perils are still growing, so that we are all alike driven to despair of thy life, and every day our trembling hearts and throbbing bosoms await the latest rumour of thy death.

And so in His Name Who still protects thee in a certain measure for Himself, in the Name of Christ, as His handmaids and thine, we beseech thee to deign to inform us by frequent letters of those shipwrecks in which thou still art tossed, that thou mayest have us at least, who alone have remained to thee, as partners in thy grief or joy. For they are wont to bring some comfort to a grieving man who grieve with him, and any burden that is laid on several is borne more easily, or transferred. And if this tempest should have been stilled for a space, then all the more hasten thou to write, the more pleasant thy letter will be. But whatsoever it be of which thou mayest write to us, thou wilt confer no small remedy on us; if only in this that thou wilt shew thyself to be keeping us in mind.

For how pleasant are the letters of absent friends Seneca himself by own example teaches us, writing thus in a certain passage to his friend Lucilius: "Because thou writest me often, I thank thee. For in the one way possible thou shewest thyself to me. Never do I receive a letter from thee, but immediately we are together." If the portraits of our absent friends
are pleasant to us, which renew our memory of them and relieve our regret for their absence by a false and empty consolation, how much more pleasant are letters which bring us the written characters of the absent friend. But thanks be to God, that in this way at least no jealousy prevents thee from restoring to us thy presence, no difficulty impedes thee, no neglect (I beseech thee) need delay thee.

Thou has written to thy friend the comfort of a long letter, considering his difficulties, no doubt, but treating of thine own. Which diligently recording, whereas thou didst intend them for his comfort, thou hast added greatly to our desolation, and while thou wert anxious to heal his wounds has inflicted fresh wounds of grief on us and made our former wounds to ache again. Heal, I beseech thee, the wounds that thou thyself hast given, who art so busily engaged in healing the wounds given by others. Thou has indeed humoured thy friend and comrade, and paid the debt as well of friendship as of comradeship; but by a greater debt thou hast bound thyself to us, whom it behoves thee to call not friends but dearest friends, not comrades but daughters, or by a sweeter and a holier name, if any can be conceived.

As to the greatness of the debt which binds thee to us neither argument nor evidence is lacking, that any doubt be removed; and if all men be silent the fact itself cries aloud. For of this place thou, after God, art the sole founder, the sole architect of this oratory, the sole builder of this congregation. Nothing didst thou build here on the foundations of others. All that is here is thy creation. This wilderness, ranged only by wild beasts or by robbers, had known no habitation of men, had contained no dwelling. In the very lairs of the beasts, in the very lurking places of the robbers, where the name of God is not heard, thou didst erect a divine tabernacle, and didst dedicate the Holy Ghost's own temple. Nothing didst thou borrow from the wealth of kings or princes, when thou couldst have obtained so much and from so many, that whatsoever was wrought here might be ascribed to thee alone. Clerks or scholars flocking in haste to thy teaching ministered to thee all things needful, and they who lived upon ecclesiastical benefices, who knew not how to make but only how to receive oblations, and had hands for receiving, not for giving, became lavish and importunate here in the offering of oblations.

Thine, therefore, truly thine is this new plantation in the divine plan, for the plants of which, still most tender, frequent irrigation is necessary that they may grow. Frail enough, from the weakness of the feminine nature, is this plantation; it is infirm, even were it not new. Wherefore it demands more diligent cultivation and more frequent, after the words of the Apostle: "I have planted, Apollos watched; but God gave the increase." The Apostle had planted, by the doctrines of his preaching, and had established in the Faith the Corinthians, to whom he wrote. Thereafter Apollos, the Apostle's own disciple, had watered them with sacred exhortations, and so by divine grace the increment of virtues was bestowed on them. Thou are tending the vineyard of another's vine which thou didst not plant, which is turned to thine own bitterness, with admonitions often wasted and holy sermons preached in vain. Think of what thou owest to thine own, who thus spendest thy care on another's. Thou teachest and reprovest rebels, nor gainest than aught. In vain before the swine dost thou scatter the pearls of divine eloquence. Who givest so much thought to the obstinate, consider what thou owest to the obedient. Who bestowest
so much on thine enemies, meditate what thou owest to thy daughters. And to say nothing of the rest, think by what a debt thou are bound to me, that what thou owest to the community of devoted women thou mayest pay more devotedly to her who is thine alone.

How many grave treatises in the teaching, or in the exhortation, or for the comfort of holy women the holy Fathers composed, and with what diligence they composed them, thine excellence knows better than our humility. Wherefore to no little amazement thine oblivion moves the tender beginnings of our conversion, that neither by reverence for God, nor by love of us, nor by the examples of the holy Fathers hast thou been admonished to attempt to comfort me, as I waver and am already crushed by prolonged grief, either by speech in thy presence or by a letter in thine absence. And yet thou knowest thyself to be bound to me by a debt so much greater in that thou are tied to me more closely by the pact of the nuptial sacrament; and that thou art the more beholden to me in that I ever, as is known to all, embraced thee with an unbounded love. Thou knowest, dearest, all men know what I have lost in thee, and in how wretched a case that supreme and notorious betrayal took me myself also from me with thee, and that my grief is immeasurably greater from the manner in which I lost thee than from the loss of thee.

And the greater the cause of grief, the greater the remedies of comfort to be applied. Not, however, by another, but by thee thyself, that thou who art alone in the cause of my grief may be alone in the grace of my comfort. For it is thou alone that canst make me sad, canst make me joyful or canst comfort me. And it is thou alone that owest me this great debt, and for this reason above all that I have at once performed all things that you didst order, till that when I could not offend thee in anything I had the strength to lose myself at thy behest. And what is more, and strange it is to relate, to such madness did my love turn that what alone it sought it cast from itself without hope of recovery when, straightway obeying thy command, I changed both my habit and my heart, that I might shew thee to be the one possessor both of my body and of my mind. Nothing have I ever (God wot) required of thee save myself, desiring thee purely, not what was thine. Nor for the pledge of matrimony, nor for any dowry did I look, not my own passions or wishes but thine (as thou thyself knowest) was I zealous to gratify.

And if the name of wife appears more sacred and more valid, sweeter to me is ever the word friend, or, if thou be not ashamed, concubine or whore. To wit that the more I humbled myself before thee the fuller grace I might obtain from thee, and so also damage less the fame of thine excellence. And thou thyself wert not wholly unmindful of that kindness in the letter of which I have spoken, written to thy friend for his comfort. Wherein thou hast not disdained to set forth sundry reasons by which I tried to dissuade thee from our marriage, from an ill-starred bed; but wert silent as to many, in which I preferred to love to wedlock, freedom to a bond. I call God to witness, if Augustus, ruling over the whole world, were to deem me worthy of the honour of marriage, and to confirm the whole world to me, to be ruled by me forever, dearer to me and of greater dignity would it seem to be called thy strumpet than his empress.

For it is not by being richer or more powerful that a man becomes better; one is a matter of fortune, the other of virtue. Nor should she deem herself other than venal who weds a
rich man rather than a poor, and desires more things in her husband than himself. Assuredly, whomsoever this concupiscence leads into marriage deserves payment rather than affection; for it is evident that she goes after his wealth and not the man, and is willing to prostitute herself, if she can, to a richer. As the argument advanced (in Aeschines) by the wise Aspasia to Xenophon and his wife plainly convinces us. When the wise woman aforesaid had propounded this argument for their reconciliation, she concluded as follows: "For when ye have understood this, that there is not a better man nor a happier woman on the face of the earth; then ye will ever and above all things seek that which ye think the best; thou to be a husband of so excellent a wife, and she to be married to so excellent a husband." A blessed sentiment, assuredly, and more than philosophic, expressing wisdom itself rather than philosophy. A holy error and a blessed fallacy among the married, that a perfect love should preserve their bond of matrimony unbroken, not so much by the continence of their bodies as by the purity of their hearts. But what error shews to the rest of women the truth has made manifest to me. Since what they thought of their husbands, that I, that the entire world not so much believed as knew of thee. So that the more genuine my love was for thee, the further it was removed from error.

For who among kings or philosophers could equal thee in fame? What kingdom or city or village did not burn to see thee? Who I ask, did not hasten to gaze upon thee when thou appearest in public, nor on thy departure with straining neck and fixed eye follow thee? What wife, what maiden did not yearn for thee in thine absence, nor burn in thy presence? What queen or powerful lady did not envy me my joys and my bed? There were two things, I confess, in thee especially, wherewith thou couldst at once captivate the heart of any woman; namely the arts of making songs and of singing them. Which we know that other philosophers have seldom followed. Wherewith as with a game, refreshing the labour of philosophic exercise, thou has left many songs composed in amatory measure or rhythm, which for the suavity both of words and of tune being oft repeated, have kept thy name without ceasing on the lips of all; since even illiterates the sweetness of thy melodies did not allow to forget thee. It was on this account chiefly that women sighed for love of thee. And as the greater part of thy songs descanted of our love, they spread my fame in a short time through many lands, and inflamed the jealousy of many against me. For what excellence of mind or body did not adorn thy youth? What woman who envied me then does not my calamity now compel to pity one deprived of such delights? What man or women, albeit an enemy at first, is not now softened by the compassion due to me?

And, though exceedingly guilty, I am, as thou knowest, exceeding innocent. For it is not the deed but the intention that makes the crime. It is not what is done but the spirit in which it is done that equity considers. And in what state of mind I have ever been towards thee, only thou, who hast knowledge of it, canst judge. To thy consideration I commit all, I yield in all things to thy testimony. Tell me one thing only, if thou canst, why, after our conversion, which thou alone didst decree, I am fallen into such neglect and oblivion with thee that I am neither refreshed by thy speech and presence nor comforted by a letter in thine absence. Tell me, one thing only, if thou canst, or let me tell thee what I feel, nay what all suspect. Concupiscence joined thee to me rather than
affection, the ardour of desire rather than love. When therefore what thou desiredst ceased, all that thou hadst exhibited at the same time failed. This, most beloved, is not mine only but the conjecture of all, not peculiar but common, not private but public. Would that it seemed thus to me only, and thy love found others to excuse it, by whom my grief might be a little quieted. Would that I could invent reasons by which in excusing thee I might cover in some measure my own vileness.

Give thy attention, I beseech thee, to what I demand; and thou wilt see this to be a small matter and most easy for thee. While I am cheated of thy presence, at least by written words, whereof thou hast an abundance, present to me the sweetness of thine image. In vain may I expect thee to be liberal in things if I must endure thee niggardly in words. Until now I believed that I deserved more from thee when I had done all things for thee, persevering still in obedience to thee. Who indeed as a girl was allured to the asperity of monastic conversation not by religious devotion but by thy command alone. Wherein if I deserve nought from thee, thou mayest judge my labour to have been vain. No reward for this may I expect from God, for the love of Whom it is well known that I did not anything. When thou hastenedst to God, I followed thee in the habit, nay preceded thee. For as though mindful of the wife of Lot, who looked back from behind him, thou deliverestd me first to the sacred garments and monastic profession before thou gavest thyself to God. And for that in this one thing thou shouldst have had little trust in me I vehemently grieved and was ashamed. For I (God wot) would without hesitation precede or follow thee to the Vulcanian fires according to thy word. For not with me was my heart, but with thee. But now, more than ever, if it be not with thee, it is nowhere. For without thee it cannot anywhere exist. But so act that it may be well with thee, I beseech thee. And well with thee will it be if it find thee propitious, if thou give love for love, little for much, words for deeds. Would that thy love, beloved, had less trust in me, that it might be more anxious! But the more confident I have made thee in the past, the more neglectful now I find thee. Remember, I beseech thee, what I have done, and pay heed to what thou owest me. While with thee I enjoyed carnal pleasures, many were uncertain whether I did so from love or from desire. I have forbidden myself all pleasures that I might obey thy will. I have reserved nothing for myself, save this, to be now entirely thine. Consider therefore how great is thine injustice, if to me who deserve more thou payest less, nay nothing at all, especially when it is a small thing that is demanded of thee, and right easy for thee to perform. And so in His Name to whom thou has offered thyself, before God I beseech thee that in whatsoever way thou canst thou restore to me thy presence, to wit by writing me some word of comfort. To this end alone that, thus refreshed, I may give myself with more alicrity to the service of God. When in time past thou soughtest me out for temporal pleasures, thou visitedst me with endless letters, and by frequent songs didst set they Heloise on the lips of all men. With me every public place, each house resounded. How more rightly shouldst thou excite me now towards God, whom thou excitedst then to desire. Consider, I beseech thee, what thou owest me, pay heed to what I demand; and my long letter with a brief ending I conclude. Farewell, my all.

http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/heloise1.html
The onset of the Black Death, was described by Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375).

I say, then, that the years of the beatific incarnation of the Son of God had reached the tale of one thousand three hundred and forty eight, when in the illustrious city of Florence, the fairest of all the cities of Italy, there made its appearance that deadly pestilence, which, whether disseminated by the influence of the celestial bodies, or sent upon us mortals by God in His just wrath by way of retribution for our iniquities, had had its origin some years before in the East, whence, after destroying an innumerable multitude of living beings, it had propagated itself without respite from place to place, and so calamitously, had spread into the West.

In Florence, despite all that human wisdom and forethought could devise to avert it, as the cleansing of the city from many impurities by officials appointed for the purpose, the refusal of entrance to all sick folk, and the adoption of many precautions for the preservation of health; despite also humble supplications addressed to God, and often repeated both in public procession and otherwise by the devout; towards the beginning of the spring of the said year the doleful effects of the pestilence began to be horribly apparent by symptoms that shewed as if miraculous.

Not such were they as in the East, where an issue of blood from the nose was a manifest sign of inevitable death; but in men a women alike it first betrayed itself by the emergence of certain tumors in the groin or the armpits, some of which grew as large as a common apple, others as an egg, some more, some less, which the common folk called gavoccioli. From the two said parts of the body this deadly gavocciolo soon began to propagate and spread itself in all directions indifferently; after which the form of the malady began to change, black spots or livid making their appearance in many cases on the arm or the thigh or elsewhere, now few and large, then minute and numerous. And as the gavocciolo had been and still were an infallible token of approaching death, such also were these spots on whomsoever they shewed themselves. Which maladies seemed set entirely at naught both the art of the physician and the virtue of physic; indeed, whether it was that the disorder was of a nature to defy such treatment, or that the physicians were at fault - besides the qualified there was now a multitude both of men and of women who practiced without having received the slightest tincture of medical science - and, being in ignorance of its source, failed to apply the proper remedies; in either case, not merely were those that covered few, but almost all within three days from the appearance of the said symptoms, sooner or later, died, and in most cases without any fever or other attendant malady.
Moreover, the virulence of the pest was the greater by reason the intercourse was apt to convey it from the sick to the whole, just as fire devours things dry or greasy when they are brought close to it, the evil went yet further, for not merely by speech or association with the sick was the malady communicated to the healthy with consequent peril of common death; but any that touched the clothes the sick or aught else that had been touched, or used by these seemed thereby to contract the disease.

So marvelous sounds that which I have now to relate, that, had not many, and I among them, observed it with their own eyes, I had hardly dared to credit it, much less to set it down in writing, though I had had it from the lips of a credible witness.

I say, then, that such was the energy of the contagion of the said pestilence, that it was not merely propagated from man to mail, but, what is much more startling, it was frequently observed, that things which had belonged to one sick or dead of the disease, if touched by some other living creature, not of the human species, were the occasion, not merely of sickening, but of an almost instantaneous death. Whereof my own eyes (as I said a little before) had cognisance, one day among others, by the following experience. The rags of a poor man who had died of the disease being strewn about the open street, two hogs came thither, and after, as is their wont, no little trifling with their snouts, took the rags between their teeth and tossed them to and fro about their chaps; whereupon, almost immediately, they gave a few turns, and fell down dead, as if by poison, upon the rags which in an evil hour they had disturbed.

In which circumstances, not to speak of many others of a similar or even graver complexion, divers apprehensions and imaginations were engendered in the minds of such as were left alive, inclining almost all of them to the same harsh resolution, to wit, to shun and abhor all contact with the sick and all that belonged to them, thinking thereby to make each his own health secure. Among whom there were those who thought that to live temperately and avoid all excess would count for much as a preservative against seizures of this kind. Wherefore they banded together, and dissociating themselves from all others, formed communities in houses where there were no sick, and lived a separate and secluded life, which they regulated with the utmost care, avoiding every kind of luxury, but eating and drinking moderately of the most delicate viands and the finest wines, holding converse with none but one another, lest tidings of sickness or death should reach them, and diverting their minds with music and such other delights as they could devise. Others, the bias of whose minds was in the opposite direction, maintained, that to drink freely, frequent places of public resort, and take their pleasure with song and revel, sparing to satisfy no appetite, and to laugh and mock at no event, was the sovereign remedy for so great an evil: and that which they affirmed they also put in practice, so far as they were able, resorting day and night, now to this tavern, now to that, drinking with an entire disregard of rule or measure, and by preference making the houses of others, as it were, their inns, if they but saw in them aught that was particularly to their taste or liking; which they, were readily able to do, because the owners, seeing death imminent, had become as reckless of their property as of their lives; so that most of the houses were open to all comers, and no distinction was observed between the stranger who presented himself and the rightful lord. Thus, adhering ever to their inhuman determination to shun
the sick, as far as possible, they ordered their life. In this extremity of our city's suffering
and tribulation the venerable authority of laws, human and divine, was abased and all but
totally dissolved for lack of those who should have administered and enforced them, most
of whom, like the rest of the citizens, were either dead or sick or so hard bested for
servants that they were unable to execute any office; whereby every man was free to do
what was right in his own eyes.

Not a few there were who belonged to neither of the two said parties, but kept a middle
course between them, neither laying the same restraint upon their diet as the former, nor
allowing themselves the same license in drinking and other dissipations as the latter, but
living with a degree of freedom sufficient to satisfy their appetite and not as recluses.
They therefore walked abroad, carrying in the hands flowers or fragrant herbs or divers
sorts of spices, which they frequently raised to their noses, deeming it an excellent thing
thus to comfort the brain with such perfumes, because the air seemed be everywhere
laden and reeking with the stench emitted by the dead and the dying, and the odours of
drugs.

Some again, the most sound, perhaps, in judgment, as they were also the most harsh in
temper, of all, affirmed that there was no medicine for the disease superior or equal in
efficacy to flight; following which prescription a multitude of men and women, negligent
of all but themselves, deserted their city, their houses, their estates, their kinsfolk, their
goods, and went into voluntary exile, or migrated to the country parts, as if God in
visiting men with this pestilence in requital of their iniquities would not pursue them with
His wrath wherever they might be, but intended the destruction of such alone as remained
within the circuit of the walls of the city; or deeming perchance, that it was now time for
all to flee from it, and that its last hour was come.

Of the adherents of these divers opinions not all died, neither did all escape; but rather
there were, of each sort and in every place many that sickened, and by those who retained
their health were treated after the example which they themselves, while whole, had set,
being everywhere left to languish in almost total neglect. Tedious were it to recount, how
citizen avoided citizen, how among neighbors was scarce found any that shewed fellow-
feeling for another, how kinsfolk held aloof, and never met, or but rarely; enough that this
sore affliction entered so deep into the minds of men a women, that in the horror thereof
brother was forsaken by brother nephew by uncle, brother by sister, and oftentimes
husband by wife: nay, what is more, and scarcely to be believed, fathers and mothers
were found to abandon their own children, untended, unvisited, to their fate, as if they
had been strangers. Wherefore the sick of both sexes, whose number could not be
estimated, were left without resource but in the charity of friends (and few such there
were), or the interest of servants, who were hardly to be had at high rates and on
unseemly terms, and being, moreover, one and all, men and women of gross
understanding, and for the most part unused to such offices, concerned themselves no
further than to supply the immediate and expressed wants of the sick, and to watch them
die; in which service they themselves not seldom perished with their gains. In
consequence of which dearth of servants and dereliction of the sick by neighbors,
kinsfolk and friends, it came to pass—a thing, perhaps, never before heard of—that no
woman, however dainty, fair or well-born she might be, shrank, when stricken with the
disease, from the ministrations of a man, no matter whether he were young or no, or
scrupled to expose to him every part of her body, with no more shame than if he had been
a woman, submitting of necessity to that which her malady required; wherefrom,
perchance, there resulted in after time some loss of modesty in such as recovered. Besides
which many succumbed, who with proper attendance, would, perhaps, have escaped
death; so that, what with the virulence of the plague and the lack of due attendance of the
sick, the multitude of the deaths, that daily and nightly took place in the city, was such
that those who heard the tale—not to say witnessed the fact—were struck dumb with
amazement. Whereby, practices contrary to the former habits of the citizens could hardly
fail to grow up among the survivors.

It had been, as to-day it still is, the custom for the women that were neighbors and of kin
to the deceased to gather in his house with the women that were most closely connected
with him, to wail with them in common, while on the other hand his male kinsfolk and
neighbors, with not a few of the other citizens, and a due proportion of the clergy
according to his quality, assembled without, in front of the house, to receive the corpse;
and so the dead man was borne on the shoulders of his peers, with funeral pomp of taper
and dirge, to the church selected by him before his death. Which rites, as the pestilence
waxed in fury, were either in whole or in great part disused, and gave way to others of a
novel order. For not only did no crowd of women surround the bed of the dying, but
many passed from this life unregarded, and few indeed were they to whom were accorded
the lamentations and bitter tears of sorrowing relations; nay, for the most part, their place
was taken by the laugh, the jest, the festal gathering; observances which the women,
domestic piety in large measure set aside, had adopted with very great advantage to their
health. Few also there were whose bodies were attended to the church by more than ten
or twelve of their neighbors, and those not the honorable and respected citizens; but a sort
of corpse-carriers drawn from the baser ranks, who called themselves becchini and
performed such offices for hire, would shoulder the bier, and with hurried steps carry it,
not to the church of the dead man's choice, but to that which was nearest at hand, with
four or six priests in front and a candle or two, or, perhaps, none; nor did the priests
distress themselves with too long and solemn an office, but with the aid of the becchini
hastily consigned the corpse to the first tomb which they found untenanted. The condition
of the lower, and, perhaps, in great measure of the middle ranks, of the people shewed
even worse and more deplorable; for, deluded by hope or constrained by poverty, they
stayed in their quarters, in their houses where they sickened by thousands a day, and, and,
being without service or help of any kind, were, so to speak, irredeemably devoted to the
death which overtook them. Many died daily or nightly in the public streets; of many
others, who died at home, the departure was hardly observed by their neighbors, until the
stench of their putrefying bodies carried the tidings; and what with their corpses and the
corpses of others who died on every hand the whole place was a sepulchre.

It was the common practice of most of the neighbors, moved no less by fear of
contamination by the putrefying bodies than by charity towards the deceased, to drag the
corpses out of the houses with their own hands, aided, perhaps, by a porter, if a porter
was to be had, and to lay them in front of the doors, where any one who made the round
might have seen, especially in the morning, more of them than he could count; afterwards they would have biers brought up or in default, planks, whereon they laid them. Nor was it once twice only that one and the same bier carried two or three corpses at once; but quite a considerable number of such cases occurred, one bier sufficing for husband and wife, two or three brothers, father and son, and so forth. And times without number it happened, that as two priests, bearing the cross, were on their way to perform the last office for some one, three or four biers were brought up by the porters in rear of them, so that, whereas the priests supposed that they had but one corpse to bury, they discovered that there were six or eight, or sometimes more. Nor, for all their number, were their obsequies honored by either tears or lights or crowds of mourners rather, it was come to this, that a dead man was then of no more account than a dead goat would be to-day.

[Colby Introduction]: Joan of Arc is the most phenomenal and attractive personage of the Hundred Years' War on either side. Those whom she led to victory believed that she was inspired of God, and the English, not denying her inspiration, believed that it was of the devil. A full and authentic report of her trial remains, and from it is extracted the passage in which she answers questions relative to her Voices. She maintained that she raised the siege of Orleans in obedience to the divine call, and that all her important acts were prompted by a voice from heaven. Her trial for witchcraft at Rouen was conducted by Peter Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais, to whom she had been handed over by the English for that purpose. She was little more than nineteen years old at the date of her execution.

We next required and admonished Joan, appearing before us in the said place, to take, under penalty of law, the oath which she had taken the day before; and that she should swear simply and absolutely to tell the truth in answer to what was asked her in the matter concerning which the charge had been brought and which was generally known. To this she answered that she had sworn yesterday and that was enough. Again we required that she should swear; for every one, though he be a prince, when required to take the oath on a point of faith cannot refuse. And she answered again: "I took the oath for you yesterday; that should suffice you quite well. You burden me too much." Finally she swore to tell the truth in whatever related to faith.

Then a distinguished professor of sacred theology, Master John Beaupère, acting by our order and behest, questioned Joan on the points which follow. And first he urged her to answer his questions truly, just as she had sworn to do. Whereupon she replied "You might very well ask me one sort of question which I would answer truly, and another sort which I would not answer." And she added: "If you were well informed about me, you should wish that I were out of your hands. I have done nothing save by revelation."

Next asked about her age when she left home: she said that she did not know. Asked whether in her girlhood she had learned any art: she said yes, that she had learned to sew linen cloth and to knit; and that she did not fear any woman in Rouen when it came to knitting and sewing. She further confessed that, through fear of the Burgundians, she left home and went to the town of Neufchâteau in Lorraine [Colby: seven miles south of Joan's birthplace, Domremy] to live with a woman named La Rousse, where she stayed a fortnight; adding furthermore that when she was at home she was exempt from household work nor went with the sheep and other animals to pasture.
Again asked whether she confessed her sins each year: she answered yes, to her own curé; and when the curé was hindered she with his permission confessed to another priest. Sometimes also, twice or thrice as she believed, she confessed to the friars. And this was in the said town of Neufchâteau. And she had been in the habit of receiving the Eucharist at Easter. Asked whether she had been in the habit of receiving the Sacrament of the Eucharist at any other feasts save Easter: she told her questioner to pass on. She further confessed that when she was thirteen years old she had a voice from God to aid her in self-discipline. And the first time she was greatly afraid. And this voice came about noon in summer in her father's garden, and she had fasted the day before. And she heard the voice on her right hand toward the church, and she seldom heard it without a light. Which light comes from the same side as the voice, but is usually great. And when she came to France she often heard this voice. Asked how she saw the light which she said was there present when it was on one side; to this she answered nothing, but passed to other things. She moreover said that if she were in a grove she distinctly heard voices coming to her. She also said that the voice seemed to her worthy, and she believes that it was sent by God; and after she had heard it three times she knew that it was the voice of an angel. She also said that it always guarded her well, and that she knew it well.

Asked about the teaching which her voice gave her respecting the salvation of her soul, she said that it taught her to govern herself well, to go often to church, and that it said she also must go to France. And Joan added that the questioner would not this time learn from her in what guise the voice had appeared to her. She furthermore confessed that the voice told her twice or thrice a week that she must leave home and go to France; and that her father knew nothing of her departure. She also said that the voice told her to go to France, and that she could no longer remain where she was, and that the voice told her that she should raise the siege of Orleans. She further said that her voice had told her that she should go to Robert de Baudricourt, Captain of the fortress of Vaucouleurs, and he would give her attendants; and she then answered that she was a poor girl who knew not how to ride a horse nor head a campaign. She also said that she went to her uncle and told him that she wished to stay with him for a little while; and she stayed there about eight days; and she then told her uncle that she must go to the fortress of Vaucouleurs; and he conducted her.

She also said that when she came to Vaucouleurs she recognized Robert de Baudricourt, although she had never seen him before; and she recognized him by the aid of her voice, for the voice told her that it was he; and she told Robert that she must go into France. Twice he denied and withstood her, and the third time he took her and gave her attendants; and so it happened even as her voice had said. . . . Moreover she confessed that in leaving Vaucouleurs she put on men's dress, wearing a sword which Robert de Baudricourt had given her and no other arms. Accompanied by a knight, a shield-bearer and four servants, she reached the town of St. Urbain, and there passed a night in the abbey.

She also said that in this journey she passed through the town of Auxerre and there heard mass in the cathedral, and at this time she was often wont to hear her voices. Asked to say by whose advice she put on men's dress, she refused several times to answer. At last she
said that she would not laden any man with this; and she several times changed her answer. She also stated that Robert de Baudricourt made those who took her swear that they would convey her well and safely, and Robert on parting with her said: "Go, go, and let whatever good can, come of it."

She also said that she well knew that God loved the Duke of Orleans [Colby: Charles, Duke of Orleans, son of Duke Louis who was murdered in Paris, 23rd Nov., 1407]; and that she had had more revelations about him than about any living man, save him whom she called her king. She said, too, that she was obliged to change her own dress for a man's. She also said that she believed that she had been well advised.

She said that she sent letters to the English before Orleans telling them to raise the siege, just as is set down in many letters which have been read to her in this town of Rouen, save for two or three words in them; for instance, "yield to the Maid" should be "yield to the King." These words also occur there which were not in the original letters, "body for body," and "head of the war."

Joan further said that she went to him whom she called her king [Colby: the Dauphin, the future Charles VII] without hindrance, and when she reached to town of Ste. Catharine de Fierbois she was sent to Chinon, where he whom she called her king was. She reached this place about noon and lodged in an inn; and after dinner she went to him whom she called her king who was in the castle. She also said that when she entered his chamber she knew him from the rest by the revelation of her voice. And she told her king that she wished to go making war against the English.

Asked if when the voice disclosed the king, there was any light in the place: she answered: "Pass on." Asked whether she had seen an angel above her king: she answered: "Spare me, pass on." Still she said that before her king gave her a charge she had many beautiful visions and revelations. Asked how the king regarded the revelations and visions: she answered: "I shall not tell you this. This is not to be answered you; but send to the king himself and he will tell you." Joan also said that the voice promised her that as soon as she came to her king he would receive her. She said that they on their part well knew that the voice came to her from God, and that they had seen and known her voice, stating that she was confident of it. She further said that her king and several others had heard and seen voices coming to her; and Charles de Bourbon with two or three others were present.

She moreover said that there was no day when she did not hear this voice, and that she stood in great need of it. She said that she had never asked from her voice any other final reward except the salvation of her soul. She further confessed that the voice told her to remain at the town of St. Denis in France; and she had wished to remain there; but they had led her out against the will of this master. Nevertheless if she had not been wounded she would not have retired; and she was wounded in the trenches before Paris after she had gone there from St. Denis; but in five days she was healed. She confessed that she had directed an attack, called in French a skirmish, before Paris. And when she was
questioned whether that were a feast day: she answered to that to the best of her belief it was. Asked if she approved of this: she answered: "Pass on."

After these things had been thus transacted, because it seemed quite enough for one day, we, the said bishop, postponed the trial until Saturday next following, at eight o'clock in the morning.

Source:

http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1431joantrial.html
Medieval Sourcebook: 
Christopher Columbus: Extracts from Journal

This document is the from the journal of Columbus in his voyage of 1492. The meaning of this voyage is highly contested. On the one hand, it is witness to the tremendous vitality and verve of late medieval and early modern Europe - which was on the verge of acquiring a world hegemony. On the other hand, the direct result of this and later voyages was the virtual extermination, by ill-treatment and disease, of the vast majority of the Native inhabitants, and the enormous growth of the transatlantic slave trade. It might not be fair to lay the blame at Columbus' feet, but since all sides treat him as a symbol, such questions cannot be avoided.

IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Whereas, Most Christian, High, Excellent, and Powerful Princes, King and Queen of Spain and of the Islands of the Sea, our Sovereigns, this present year 1492, after your Highnesses had terminated the war with the Moors reigning in Europe, the same having been brought to an end in the great city of Granada, where on the second day of January, this present year, I saw the royal banners of your Highnesses planted by force of arms upon the towers of the Alhambra, which is the fortress of that city, and saw the Moorish king come out at the gate of the city and kiss the hands of your Highnesses, and of the Prince my Sovereign; and in the present month, in consequence of the information which I had given your Highnesses respecting the countries of India and of a Prince, called Great Can, which in our language signifies King of Kings, how, at many times he, and his predecessors had sent to Rome soliciting instructors who might teach him our holy faith, and the holy Father had never granted his request, whereby great numbers of people were lost, believing in idolatry and doctrines of perdition. Your Highnesses, as Catholic Christians, and princes who love and promote the holy Christian faith, and are enemies of the doctrine of Mahomet, and of all idolatry and heresy, determined to send me, Christopher Columbus, to the above-mentioned countries of India, to see the said princes, people, and territories, and to learn their disposition and the proper method of converting them to our holy faith; and furthermore directed that I should not proceed by land to the East, as is customary, but by a Westerly route, in which direction we have hitherto no certain evidence that any one has gone. So after having expelled the Jews from your dominions, your Highnesses, in the same month of January, ordered me to proceed with a sufficient armament to the said regions of India, and for that purpose granted me great favors, and ennobled me that thenceforth I might call myself Don, and be High Admiral of the Sea, and perpetual Viceroy and Governor in all the islands and continents which I might discover and acquire, or which may hereafter he discovered and acquired in the
ocean; and that this dignity should be inherited by my eldest son, and thus descend from degree to degree forever. Hereupon I left the city of Granada, on Saturday, the twelfth day of May, 1492, and proceeded to Palos, a seaport, where I armed three vessels, very fit for such an enterprise, and having provided myself with abundance of stores and seamen, I set sail from the port, on Friday, the third of August, half an hour before sunrise, and steered for the Canary Islands of your Highnesses which are in the said ocean, thence to take my departure and proceed till I arrived at the Indies, and perform the embassy of your Highnesses to the Princes there, and discharge the orders given me. For this purpose I determined to keep an account of the voyage, and to write down punctually every thing we performed or saw from day to day, as will hereafter appear. Moreover, Sovereign Princes, besides describing every night the occurrences of the day, and every day those of the preceding night, I intend to draw up a nautical chart, which shall contain the several parts of the ocean and land in their proper situations; and also to compose a book to represent the whole by picture with latitudes and longitudes, on all which accounts it behooves me to abstain from my sleep, and make many trials in navigation, which things will demand much labor.

Friday, 3 August 1492. Set sail from the bar of Saltes at 8 o'clock, and proceeded with a strong breeze till sunset, sixty miles or fifteen leagues south, afterwards southwest and south by west, which is the direction of the Canaries.

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Monday, 6 August. The rudder of the caravel Pinta became loose, being broken or unshipped. It was believed that this happened by the contrivance of Gomez Rascon and Christopher Quintero, who were on board the caravel, because they disliked the voyage. The Admiral says he had found them in an unfavorable disposition before setting out. He was in much anxiety at not being able to afford any assistance in this case, but says that it somewhat quieted his apprehensions to know that Martin Alonzo Pinzon, Captain of the Pinta, was a man of courage and capacity. Made a progress, day and night, of twenty-nine leagues.

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Thursday, 9 August. The Admiral did not succeed in reaching the island of Gomera till Sunday night. Martin Alonzo remained at Grand Canary by command of the Admiral, he being unable to keep the other vessels company. The Admiral afterwards returned to Grand Canary, and there with much labor repaired the Pinta, being assisted by Martin Alonzo and the others; finally they sailed to Gomera. They saw a great eruption of names from the Peak of Teneriffe, a lofty mountain. The Pinta, which before had carried latine sails, they altered and made her square-rigged. Returned to Gomera, Sunday, 2 September, with the Pinta repaired.

The Admiral says that he was assured by many respectable Spaniards, inhabitants of the island of Ferro, who were at Gomera with Dona Inez Peraza, mother of Guillen Peraza, afterwards first Count of Gomera, that every year they saw land to the west of the
Canaries; and others of Gomera affirmed the same with the like assurances. The Admiral here says that he remembers, while he was in Portugal, in 1484, there came a person to the King from the island of Madeira, soliciting for a vessel to go in quest of land, which he affirmed he saw every year, and always of the same appearance. He also says that he remembers the same was said by the inhabitants of the Azores and described as in a similar direction, and of the same shape and size. Having taken in food, water, meat and other provisions, which had been provided by the men which he left ashore on departing for Grand Canary to repair the Pinta, the Admiral took his final departure from Gomera with the three vessels on Thursday, 6 September.

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Sunday, 9 September. Sailed this day nineteen leagues, and determined to count less than the true number, that the crew might not be dismayed if the voyage should prove long. In the night sailed one hundred and twenty miles, at the rate of ten miles an hour, which make thirty leagues. The sailors steered badly, causing the vessels to fall to leeward toward the northeast, for which the Admiral reprimanded them repeatedly.

Monday, 10 September. This day and night sailed sixty leagues, at the rate of ten miles an hour, which are two leagues and a half. Reckoned only forty-eight leagues, that the men might not be terrified if they should be long upon the voyage.

Tuesday, 11 September. Steered their course west and sailed above twenty leagues; saw a large fragment of the mast of a vessel, apparently of a hundred and twenty tons, but could not pick it up. In the night sailed about twenty leagues, and reckoned only sixteen, for the cause above stated.

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Friday, 14 September. Steered this day and night west twenty leagues; reckoned somewhat less. The crew of the Nina stated that they had seen a grajao, and a tropic bird, or water-wagtail, which birds never go farther than twenty-five leagues from the land.

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Sunday, 16 September. Sailed day and night, west thirty-nine leagues, and reckoned only thirty-six. Some clouds arose and it drizzled. The Admiral here says that from this time they experienced very pleasant weather, and that the mornings were most delightful, wanting nothing but the melody of the nightingales. He compares the weather to that of Andalusia in April. Here they began to meet with large patches of weeds very green, and which appeared to have been recently washed away from the land; on which account they all judged themselves to be near some island, though not a continent, according to the opinion of the Admiral, who says, "the continent we shall find further ahead."

Monday, 17 September. Steered west and sailed, day and night, above fifty leagues; wrote down only forty-seven; the current favored them. They saw a great deal of weed
which proved to be rockweed, it came from the west and they met with it very frequently. They were of opinion that land was near. The pilots took the sun's amplitude, and found that the needles varied to the northwest a whole point of the compass; the seamen were terrified, and dismayed without saying why. The Admiral discovered the cause, and ordered them to take the amplitude again the next morning, when they found that the needles were true; the cause was that the star moved from its place, while the needles remained stationary. At dawn they saw many more weeds, apparently river weeds, and among them a live crab, which the Admiral kept, and says that these are sure signs of land, being never found eighty leagues out at sea. They found the sea-water less salt since they left the Canaries, and the air more mild. They were all very cheerful, and strove which vessel should outsail the others, and be the first to discover land; they saw many tunnies, and the crew of the Nina killed one. The Admiral here says that these signs were from the west, "where I hope that high God in whose hand is all victory will speedily direct us to land." This morning he says he saw a white bird called a water-wagtail, or tropic bird, which does not sleep at sea.

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Tuesday, 25 September. Very calm this day; afterwards the wind rose. Continued their course west till night. The Admiral held a conversation with Martin Alonzo Pinzon, captain of the Pinta, respecting a chart which the Admiral had sent him three days before, in which it appears he had marked down certain islands in that sea; Martin Alonzo was of opinion that they were in their neighborhood, and the Admiral replied that he thought the same, but as they had not met with them, it must have been owing to the currents which had carried them to the northeast and that they had not made such progress as the pilots stated. The Admiral directed him to return the chart, when he traced their course upon it in presence of the pilot and sailors.

At sunset Martin Alonzo called out with great joy from his vessel that he saw land, and demanded of the Admiral a reward for his intelligence. The Admiral says, when he heard him declare this, he fell on his knees and returned thanks to God, and Martin Alonzo with his crew repeated Gloria in excelsis Deo, as did the crew of the Admiral. Those on board the Nina ascended the rigging, and all declared they saw land. The Admiral also thought it was land, and about twenty-five leagues distant. They remained all night repeating these affirmations, and the Admiral ordered their course to be shifted from west to southwest where the land appeared to lie. They sailed that day four leagues and a half west and in the night seventeen leagues southwest, in all twenty-one and a half: told the crew thirteen leagues, making it a point to keep them from knowing how far they had sailed; in this manner two reckonings were kept, the shorter one falsified, and the other being the true account. The sea was very smooth and many of the sailors went in it to bathe, saw many dories and other fish.

Wednesday, 26 September. Continued their course west till the afternoon, then southwest and discovered that what they had taken for land was nothing but clouds. Sailed, day and
night, thirty-one leagues; reckoned to the crew twenty-four. The sea was like a river, the air soft and mild.

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Sunday, 30 September. Continued their course west and sailed day and night in calms, fourteen leagues; reckoned eleven.--Four tropic birds came to the ship, which is a very clear sign of land, for so many birds of one sort together show that they are not straying about, having lost themselves. Twice, saw two pelicans; many weeds. The constellation called Las Gallardias, which at evening appeared in a westerly direction, was seen in the northeast the next morning, making no more progress in a night of nine hours, this was the case every night, as says the Admiral. At night the needles varied a point towards the northwest, in the morning they were true, by which it appears that the polar star moves, like the others, and the needles are always right.

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Saturday, 6 October. Continued their course west and sailed forty leagues day and night; reckoned to the crew thirty-three. This night Martin Alonzo gave it as his opinion that they had better steer from west to southwest. The Admiral thought from this that Martin Alonzo did not wish to proceed onward to Cipango; but he considered it best to keep on his course, as he should probably reach the land sooner in that direction, preferring to visit the continent first, and then the islands.

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Thursday, 11 October. Steered west-southwest; and encountered a heavier sea than they had met with before in the whole voyage. Saw pardelas and a green rush near the vessel. The crew of the Pinta saw a cane and a log; they also picked up a stick which appeared to have been carved with an iron tool, a piece of cane, a plant which grows on land, and a board. The crew of the Nina saw other signs of land, and a stalk loaded with rose berries. These signs encouraged them, and they all grew cheerful. Sailed this day till sunset, twenty-seven leagues.

After sunset steered their original course west and sailed twelve miles an hour till two hours after midnight, going ninety miles, which are twenty-two leagues and a half; and as the Pinta was the swiftest sailer, and kept ahead of the Admiral, she discovered land and made the signals which had been ordered. The land was first seen by a sailor called Rodrigo de Triana, although the Admiral at ten o'clock that evening standing on the quarter-deck saw a light, but so small a body that he could not affirm it to be land; calling to Pero Gutierrez, groom of the King's wardrobe, he told him he saw a light, and bid him look that way, which he did and saw it; he did the same to Rodrigo Sanchez of Segovia, whom the King and Queen had sent with the squadron as comptroller, but he was unable to see it from his situation. The Admiral again perceived it once or twice, appearing like the light of a wax candle moving up and down, which some thought an indication of land. But the Admiral held it for certain that land was near; for which reason, after they had
said the Salve which the seamen are accustomed to repeat and chant after their fashion, the Admiral directed them to keep a strict watch upon the forecastle and look out diligently for land, and to him who should first discover it he promised a silken jacket, besides the reward which the King and Queen had offered, which was an annuity of ten thousand maravedis. At two o'clock in the morning the land was discovered, at two leagues' distance; they took in sail and remained under the square-sail lying to till day, which was Friday, when they found themselves near a small island, one of the Lucayos, called in the Indian language Guanahani. Presently they descried people, naked, and the Admiral landed in the boat, which was armed, along with Martin Alonzo Pinzon, and Vincent Yanez his brother, captain of the Nina. The Admiral bore the royal standard, and the two captains each a banner of the Green Cross, which all the ships had carried; this contained the initials of the names of the King and Queen each side of the cross, and a crown over each letter. Arrived on shore, they saw trees very green many streams of water, and diverse sorts of fruits. The Admiral called upon the two Captains, and the rest of the crew who landed, as also to Rodrigo de Escovedo notary of the fleet, and Rodrigo Sanchez, of Segovia, to bear witness that he before all others took possession (as in fact he did) of that island for the King and Queen his sovereigns, making the requisite declarations, which are more at large set down here in writing. Numbers of the people of the island straightway collected together. Here follow the precise words of the Admiral: "As I saw that they were very friendly to us, and perceived that they could be much more easily converted to our holy faith by gentle means than by force, I presented them with some red caps, and strings of beads to wear upon the neck, and many other trifles of small value, wherewith they were much delighted, and became wonderfully attached to us. Afterwards they came swimming to the boats, bringing parrots, balls of cotton thread, javelins, and many other things which they exchanged for articles we gave them, such as glass beads, and hawk's bells; which trade was carried on with the utmost good will. But they seemed on the whole to me, to be a very poor people. They all go completely naked, even the women, though I saw but one girl. All whom I saw were young, not above thirty years of age, well made, with fine shapes and faces; their hair short, and coarse like that of a horse's tail, combed toward the forehead, except a small portion which they suffer to hang down behind, and never cut. Some paint themselves with black, which makes them appear like those of the Canaries, neither black nor white; others with white, others with red, and others with such colors as they can find. Some paint the face, and some the whole body; others only the eyes, and others the nose. Weapons they have none, nor are acquainted with them, for I showed them swords which they grasped by the blades, and cut themselves through ignorance. They have no iron, their javelins being without it, and nothing more than sticks, though some have fish-bones or other things at the ends. They are all of a good size and stature, and handsomely formed. I saw some with scars of wounds upon their bodies, and demanded by signs the of them; they answered me in the same way, that there came people from the other islands in the neighborhood who endeavored to make prisoners of them, and they defended themselves. I thought then, and still believe, that these were from the continent. It appears to me, that the people are ingenious, and would be good servants and I am of opinion that they would very readily become Christians, as they appear to have no religion. They very quickly learn such words as are spoken to them. If it please our Lord, I intend at my return to carry home six
of them to your Highnesses, that they may learn our language. I saw no beasts in the island, nor any sort of animals except parrots." These are the words of the Admiral.

Saturday, 13 October. "At daybreak great multitudes of men came to the shore, all young and of fine shapes, very handsome; their hair not curled but straight and coarse like horse-hair, and all with foreheads and heads much broader than any people I had hitherto seen; their eyes were large and very beautiful; they were not black, but the color of the inhabitants of the Canaries, which is a very natural circumstance, they being in the same latitude with the island of Ferro in the Canaries. They were straight-limbed without exception, and not with prominent bellies but handsomely shaped. They came to the ship in canoes, made of a single trunk of a tree, wrought in a wonderful manner considering the country; some of them large enough to contain forty or forty-five men, others of different sizes down to those fitted to hold but a single person. They rowed with an oar like a baker's peel, and wonderfully swift. If they happen to upset, they all jump into the sea, and swim till they have righted their canoe and emptied it with the calabashes they carry with them. They came loaded with balls of cotton, parrots, javelins, and other things too numerous to mention; these they exchanged for whatever we chose to give them. I was very attentive to them, and strove to learn if they had any gold. Seeing some of them with little bits of this metal hanging at their noses, I gathered from them by signs that by going southward or steering round the island in that direction, there would be found a king who possessed large vessels of gold, and in great quantities. I endeavored to procure them to lead the way thither, but found they were unacquainted with the route. I determined to stay here till the evening of the next day, and then sail for the southwest; for according to what I could learn from them, there was land at the south as well as at the southwest and northwest and those from the northwest came many times and fought with them and proceeded on to the southwest in search of gold and precious stones. This is a large and level island, with trees extremely flourishing, and streams of water; there is a large lake in the middle of the island, but no mountains: the whole is completely covered with verdure and delightful to behold. The natives are an inoffensive people, and so desirous to possess any thing they saw with us, that they kept swimming off to the ships with whatever they could find, and readily bartered for any article we saw fit to give them in return, even such as broken platters and fragments of glass. I saw in this manner sixteen balls of cotton thread which weighed above twenty-five pounds, given for three Portuguese ceutis. This traffic I forbade, and suffered no one to take their cotton from them, unless I should order it to be procured for your Highnesses, if proper quantities could be met with. It grows in this island, but from my short stay here I could not satisfy myself fully concerning it; the gold, also, which they wear in their noses, is found here, but not to lose time, I am determined to proceed onward and ascertain whether I can reach Cipango. At night they all went on shore with their canoes.

Sunday, 14 October. In the morning, I ordered the boats to be got ready, and coasted along the island toward the north- northeast to examine that part of it, we having landed first at the eastern part. Presently we discovered two or three villages, and the people all came down to the shore, calling out to us, and giving thanks to God. Some brought us water, and others victuals: others seeing that I was not disposed to land, plunged into the sea and swam out to us, and we perceived that they interrogated us if we had come from
heaven. An old man came on board my boat; the others, both men and women cried with loud voices--"Come and see the men who have come from heavens. Bring them victuals and drink." There came many of both sexes, every one bringing something, giving thanks to God, prostrating themselves on the earth, and lifting up their hands to heaven. They called out to us loudly to come to land, but I was apprehensive on account of a reef of rocks, which surrounds the whole island, although within there is depth of water and room sufficient for all the ships of Christendom, with a very narrow entrance. There are some shoals withinside, but the water is as smooth as a pond. It was to view these parts that I set out in the morning, for I wished to give a complete relation to your Highnesses, as also to find where a fort might be built. I discovered a tongue of land which appeared like an island though it was not, but might be cut through and made so in two days; it contained six houses. I do not, however, see the necessity of fortifying the place, as the people here are simple in war-like matters, as your Highnesses will see by those seven which I have ordered to be taken and carried to Spain in order to learn our language and return, unless your Highnesses should choose to have them all transported to Castile, or held captive in the island. I could conquer the whole of them with fifty men, and govern them as I pleased. Near the islet I have mentioned were groves of trees, the most beautiful I have ever seen, with their foliage as verdant as we see in Castile in April and May. There were also many streams. After having taken a survey of these parts, I returned to the ship, and setting sail, discovered such a number of islands that I knew not which first to visit; the natives whom I had taken on board informed me by signs that there were so many of them that they could not be numbered; they repeated the names of more than a hundred. I determined to steer for the largest, which is about five leagues from San Salvador; the others were some at a greater, and some at a less distance from that island. They are all very level, without mountains, exceedingly fertile and populous, the inhabitants living at war with one another, although a simple race, and with delicate bodies.

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Sunday, 21 October. At 10 o'clock, we arrived at a cape of the island, and anchored, the other vessels in company. After having dispatched a meal, I went ashore, and found no habitation save a single house, and that without an occupant; we had no doubt that the people had fled in terror at our approach, as the house was completely furnished. I suffered nothing to be touched, and went with my captains and some of the crew to view the country. This island even exceeds the others in beauty and fertility. Groves of lofty and flourishing trees are abundant, as also large lakes, surrounded and overhung by the foliage, in a most enchanting manner. Everything looked as green as in April in Andalusia. The melody of the birds was so exquisite that one was never willing to part from the spot, and the flocks of parrots obscured the heavens. The diversity in the appearance of the feathered tribe from those of our country is extremely curious. A thousand different sorts of trees, with their fruit were to be met with, and of a wonderfully delicious odor. It was a great affliction to me to be ignorant of their natures, for I am very certain they are all valuable; specimens of them and of the plants I have preserved. Going round one of these lakes, I saw a snake, which we killed, and I have kept the skin for your Highnesses; upon being discovered he took to the water, whither
we followed him, as it was not deep, and dispatched him with our lances; he was seven spans in length; I think there are many more such about here. I discovered also the aloe tree, and am determined to take on board the ship tomorrow, ten quintals of it, as I am told it is valuable. While we were in search of some good water, we came upon a village of the natives about half a league from the place where the ships lay; the inhabitants on discovering us abandoned their houses, and took to flight, carrying of their goods to the mountain. I ordered that nothing which they had left should be taken, not even the value of a pin. Presently we saw several of the natives advancing towards our party, and one of them came up to us, to whom we gave some hawk's bells and glass beads, with which he was delighted. We asked him in return, for water, and after I had gone on board the ship, the natives came down to the shore with their calabashes full, and showed great pleasure in presenting us with it. I ordered more glass beads to be given them, and they promised to return the next day. It is my wish to fill all the water casks of the ships at this place, which being executed, I shall depart immediately, if the weather serve, and sail round the island, till I succeed in meeting with the king, in order to see if I can acquire any of the gold, which I hear he possesses. Afterwards I shall set sail for another very large island which I believe to be Cipango, according to the indications I receive from the Indians on board. They call the Island Colba, and say there are many large ships, and sailors there. This other island they name Bosio, and inform me that it is very large; the others which lie in our course, I shall examine on the passage, and according as I find gold or spices in abundance, I shall determine what to do; at all events I am determined to proceed on to the continent, and visit the city of Guiasay, where I shall deliver the letters of your Highnesses to the Great Can, and demand an answer, with which I shall return.

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