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The Crusades



Synopsis

Belloc shows that the Crusades were a titanic struggle between Christian civilization and \"the Turk,\" savage Mongols who had embraced Islam. He explains the practical reasons why the Crusaders initially succeeded and why they ultimately failed then he predicts the re-emergence of Islam, since Christendom failed to destroy it in the 12th century. Makes history come alive and gives a rare, true appreciation of Christendom and of our Catholic forefathers!

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Customer Reviews

Hilaire Belloc was born at St. Cloud, France, in 1870. He and his family moved to England upon his father's death, where he took first-class honors in history at Balliol College in Oxford, graduating in 1895. It has been stated that his desire was to rewrite the Catholic history of both France and England. He wrote hundreds of books on the subjects of history, economics, and military science, as well as novels and poetry. His works include The Great Heresies, Europe and the Faith, Survivals and New Arrivals, The Path to Rome, Characters of the Reformation, and How the Reformation Happened.

A good historical prospective of the crusades. We all have heard something about the Crusades but probably from a bias and non historical source, Be it religious, political, or educational, the story teller usually has his own ax to grind. I was overwhelmingly amazed at the ability of these ancient people to mass such a large body of people for any cause. Leaving their home land and family's behind and march thousands of miles in a rag tag loosely organized, under supplied, and under

armed mob with the goal of taking possession of the Holy Land. The in-fighting among the various leaders from many countries and the lack of a commander in chief of the combined forces doomed the effort from the very beginning. Although they did achieve the main objective, more from luck than anything, the lack of any plan beyond that objective and total disorganization sealed the ultimate fate of the Crusades .I learned more than I had ever imagined about the Crusades . . .

Hilaire Belloc was one of the greatest Catholic writers ever. His books are clearly and simply written. This story tells about the Crusade-a precursor to the Clash of Civilizations in which we are currently engaged. Belloc argues that the crusaders had the opportunity to defeat Islam forever, but they wasted a great deal of energy capturing Jerusalem rather than Damascus. Should that ancient city have fallen to the Franks and other Christian Knights. All of history would have been vastly different. Belloc explains the various personalities involved in the conflict and explains the feudal society of Western Europe and its weaknesses. An outstanding book.

How the Reformation HappenedÂ was the first work of Hilaire Belloc's I had read, followed byÂ The Great Heresies, and they were both brilliant: no writer is better than Belloc at distilling enormous historical events into their essential components, and then arranging and presenting them to the reader in concise, entertaining and powerful works. I was excited to finally have a chance to open "The Crusades: The World's Debate", and my excitement was justified. Fast-paced, with characters and scenes that leap off the page, The Crusades explains feudal Christendom's great march across the world to retake the place of the Holy Sepulcher from the Moslem in 1096, and how a strategic blunder - the failure to take Damascus on that first thrust - led to its ultimate failure. To be properly understood, an event like the Crusades cannot focus on just one facet or view of history, be it a military, religious, strategic, cultural, geographical, or tactical one; all of them must be taken into account and combined with the correct weighting and detail to convey a true picture of what happened and why. Belloc achieves this with very straight-forward, "athletic" prose that grabs the reader from the start and hangs on throughout. Here's an excerpt, pulled at random, from the chapter "The Issue and the Occasion" describing the defeat of the Byzantine Emperor Romanus Diogenes in the battle of Manzikert in August, 1071: "The day was ending; but the reserve might yet have restored the action, permitting the Emperor to save his army and to fall back securely behind the entrenchments of his camp. He was destroyed through the jealousy of his rivals. The commander of that reserve abandoned the field, saying the Emperor had lost his battle and must suffer the consequence. As for the main command under Romanus, one portion of it fled and the

center was overwhelmed. With the approach of darkness and during the night there was a general massacre. The Emperor himself was wounded and taken prisoner. The bulk of the Byzantine army was no longer in being: Asia Minor lay open to the swirling tide of Mongol barbarians."In the epilogue Belloc tells how, for 1000 years after Alexander, Western civilization was the master of Asia Minor, Syria, and the Levant. Following the defeat of the Horns of Hattin in 1187, it appeared that those lands would remain under Moslem rule forever, until history took one of its many unforeseen twists. Back came the Westerners to rule in the nineteenth century, not in the name of Christendom or as Christians, but as Rationalists, their power depending on a fragile materialism that could blow away at any moment; the Moslem world, meanwhile has retained all the vigor and passion of religion. The World's Debate continues. Below are the chapters showing how this work is organized and main themes: Author's Preface 1. The World's Debate 2. The Issue and the Occasion 3. The Armies 4. The Advance 5. Antioch 6. Jerusalem 7. Monarchy 8. The Three Kings 9. The Tide and Slack Water 10. The Crash 11. Saladin 12. Hattin Epilogue I highly recommend this book for all lovers of history. This edition is from St. Benedict Press & TAN Books (January 1, 2009) and is a well-done paperback worth the ~ \$14.00 new price at the time of this review.

It is popular these days to condemn the Crusades as aggression against the Muslims. It is also false: The Crusades were a response to the aggression of the Muslims -- the Moors -- against western Europe. Belloc does a superb job of presenting the details of the campaigns, and why some things worked, and others did not. If you wish to actually understand the Crusades, this volume is for you.

Hilaire Belloc, the early 20th century Catholic polemical writer, was an English-French stylist of many talents. Some of his non-fiction books, including his histories, are marked by a delightfully bold writing style. Some are marked more by dated polemics and dryness. This book on the crusades, which really focuses only on the first crusade, falls into the latter category. It is really a pretty dry treatise of military history, not a spirited defense of the crusades as one might expect from Belloc. It's well-researched and pleasant enough to read, but it's not Belloc's best or most moving work.

Belloc is the Bomb!!!!

For those open to reading the actual history of the Crusades and the beauty of a read by an

incredible author, I highly recommend this book! Well written, great factual information in relation to the actual time of the Crusades, the history preceding and within.

There is a lot of misunderstanding about the Crusades. This book will answer just about any questions that you may have, and will defend the truth against all the many lies told today.

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