



IN FEUDAL TIMES



AN ENGLISH KNIGHT IN THE TIME OF EDWARD III

PREFACE

THIS book is in no degree an attempt to relate the involved and intricate history of the Middle Ages. Its plan is, rather, to present pictures of the manner of life and habits of thought of the people who lived between the eighth and fifteenth centuries. Our writings and our everyday conversation are full of their phrases and of allusions to their ideas. Many of our thoughts and feelings and instincts, of our very follies and superstitions, have descended to us from them. To become better acquainted with them is to explain ourselves. In selecting from the enormous amount of material, I have sought to choose those customs which were most characteristic of the times and which have made the strongest impression upon the life of to-day, describing each custom when at its height, rather than tracing its development and history. The illustrations are largely reproduced from contemporary sources, and old manuscripts. I hope that the volume will be found sufficiently full to serve as a work of reference, and sufficiently interesting to win its way as a book for general reading.

E. M. TAPPAN

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CHAPTER I

Page, Squire, and Knight

IT must have been a gallant sight when a knight mounted his horse and galloped away from a castle. Of course his armour was polished and shining, and, as Lowell says of Sir Launfal, he "made morn through the darksome gate." The children of the castle especially must have watched him with the greatest interest. The girls looked wistfully at the scarf or glove on his helmet, each one hoping that he who would some day wear her colours would be the bravest man that ever drew sword. As for the boys, they could hardly wait for the day to come when they, too, would don glittering armour and sally forth into the world in quest of adventures.

Even the youngest of these children knew that a boy must pass through long years of training before he could become a knight. This began when he was a small child, perhaps not more than seven years old. It was not the custom for the son of a noble to be brought up in the home of his father. He was sent for his education and training to the castle of some