

The Church attempted to stem the constant fighting. At the end of the tenth century the clergy of the south of France tried to enforce the Peace of God, a total prohibition of fighting among Christians.

THE
PEACE
OF GOD

Their efforts were unavailing, and in the second quarter of the eleventh century the Church fell back on a compromise and proposed the "Truce of God," which forbade all fighting on holy days and fast days, and from Wednesday evening to Monday morning in every week. Thus only about eighty days in the year remained in which private war was allowed. But the efforts of the Church in this direction were unavailing.

THE
TRUCE
OF GOD

In another direction the efforts of the Church were more successful, and that was in the development of the ideals of chivalry or knighthood, by which the brutal feudal warrior was to a certain extent civilised. The knight was a Christian warrior whose duty was to defend the Church, to fulfil faithfully his feudal obligations, to defend all who were weak and in distress, especially all ladies, to be courteous alike to friend and foe, and to keep his honour inviolate.

CHIVALRY

The son of a feudal noble first served as a page in the castle of some lord or prince: then he became a squire, and at last, when he became of age, if he had proved himself worthy, he was admitted to knighthood. His arms were blessed and placed upon the altar, and the young warrior knelt in the church and watched them during the hours of the night. In the morning he attended mass and took an oath to perform faithfully the duties of knighthood. He was arrayed in his armour, the sword was girt upon him, the golden spurs were fastened on, and he received the accolade, or blow which dubbed him knight. In time of war, however,