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The idea of a Teachers' Reading Course is meeting a hearty reception in different parts of the State. Letters of inquiry are frequently coming in. The Secretary invites correspondence. She particularly urges the prompt purchase of the books. Those who have shown their interest by subscribing to The Progressive Farmer, and paying their membership fee wish, no doubt, to get the full benefit of the course. To do this the books ought to be in hand as promptly as possible; the column in the paper will then be more helpful. Send two dollars for the books, paper, and membership fee.

Irving's Columbus—II.

The importance of Marco Polo's book in shaping the life of Columbus was mentioned in the column of last week's issue, and a short account of the book was given.

Among the other circumstances that directed the life of Columbus into the channel of exploration, notice his marriage in Lisbon to a lady whose father had been a navigator; his coming into possession of the papers, maps, charts and memorandums of the latter; the residence of Columbus and his bride in the recently discovered island of Porto Santo, and their association with voyagers to and from Guinea; his intimate acquaintance with all that was known at the time about geography, and his correspondence with Tascanelli.

On page 25, l. 45, the domination of the Moslems or Mohammedans in Spain is mentioned. Their presence in Spain reminds one of the wonderful rise and spread of Mohammedan rule. Their religion was founded in the seventh century in Arabia by Mohammed, the camel-driver of Mecca. "Before the close of his stormy life, the green-robed warrior-prophet had subdued the scattered tribes of Arabia, destroyed their idols, and united the people in one nation."

Under the Caliphs, or successors of Mohammed, the new faith triumphed rapidly. Through Syria, Palestine, Persia, Egypt, and, westward, through northern Africa swept the conquering armies of Mohammedans. The narrow strait of Gibraltar did not bar them; Spain was quickly subdued and a Mohammedan or Moorish kingdom was established throughout the peninsula. Not content with subduing the eastern and the southern borders of the Mediterranean, the Moors aspired to overrun France, "preach in the Vatican," the palace of the Pope, and to conquer great Constantinople. This vaulting ambition had been humbled, however, by Charles, the Frankish leader, who, in a series of seven battles on the plain of Tours, in northern France, so vigorously "pounded" the Moors as to coin the title "Martel," or "the hammer." This happen-

ed in 732. Never again did the Moors attempt conquest beyond the Pyrenees.

Gradually the Christians of Spain, who had retired to the northern mountains, began to drive out their heathen conquerors. The thirteenth century that saw the Venetian Polos traveling to Cathay, saw the Christians firmly established in all of Spain except the southern province of Granada. Besides Portugal, there were three kingdoms in the peninsula—Castile in the west, Aragon in the east, and Navarre, among the Pyrenees. When Ferdinand, King of Aragon, married Isabella, Queen of Castile, these monarchs determined to drive the hated Moor from the southern province, the fairest of all. This engrossing business it was which made the sovereigns so slow to embark in the enterprise proposed by Columbus. The sovereigns conquered, however; Boabdil, the last of the Moorish kings, rode forth from the Alhambra, his favorite palace, "bemoaning like a woman" the loss of that which he "could not defend like a man." In the crowd of spectators that saw that proud triumph of the Christian rulers, moved "a man obscure and but little known . . . confounded in the crowd of unfortunate applicants."

To-day, the names of Ferdinand and Isabella are known to many only through their connection with that of the "man obscure."

The reader will, doubtless, notice that the smoothly flowing style of Irving's language is partly due to the number of words of Latin derivation.

An examination of the words to be defined at the close of the chapters will show how the knowledge of even a little Latin will, in many cases, reveal at once the vital meaning of the word.

Run over the list at the end of chapter one:

Lineage.—L., linea, a line (of ancestors).

Maritime.—L., mare, the sea.

Contemporary.—L., con, together; tempus, time; living at the same time.

Nautical.—L., nauta, a sailor.

Opulent.—L., opes, riches, wealth.

Inspired.—L., in and spiro, I breathe; breathed into, animated.

Rudiments.—L., rudis, rough; the beginnings.

Casual.—L., casus, a chance; accidental.

Vicissitudes.—L., vicissitude, change.

Impediments.—L., im (in) and pes, pedis, a foot; literally, things that snare, that cause one to stumble. The slang expression, "to put one's foot into it," is really a translation of the verb impede.

Facility.—L., facilis, ease.

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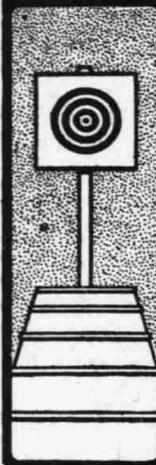
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