

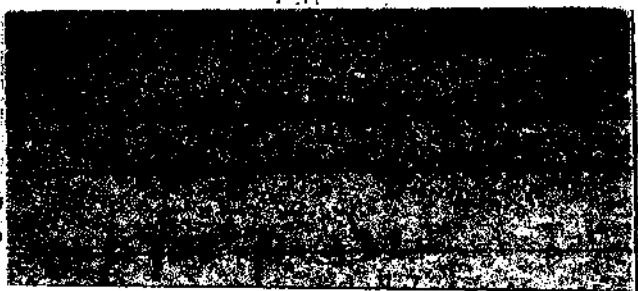
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HISTORY'S BACKGROUND

BOOK I.

EURASIA, INCLUDING THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

THE DAWN OF HISTORY TO THE CLOSE OF THE
FIFTEENTH CENTURY

BY

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PREFACE.

THE aim of the authors in drawing up this Series of Historical Geography Headers is to provide a companion reader to the geography and history text-books, with the object of showing the influence of geographical conditions upon the leading historical movements. History thus determines the order of the geographical* argument, and it is hoped that the books will prove useful adjuncts to the teaching of both subjects.

These books are intended primarily for the Senior Classes of Elementary Schools and the Lower Forms of Secondary Schools. Book I., through the avenue of Historical Geography, traces the growth of the earliest civilisations to the close of the fifteenth century. The scene of this great drama of history is the great continental land mass of Eurasia.

Book II. deals with the commercial and industrial periods, and traces the growth of the maritime enterprise of Britain and her chief rivals, and the causes which finally led to the supremacy of our Naval Power. It shows how far historical movements in America and other lands were determined by geographical causes, and how the industrial revolution facilitated the development of these newly-found lands. It is thus specially suitable

as a reader for those pupils who are learning the geography of the British Empire or the Americas.

Book III. deals in greater detail with the relations of History and Geography in the British Isles.

The authors beg to acknowledge their indebtedness to the following authorities in drawing up this course: Mackinder {*Britain and the British Seas*), Herbertson {*Man and His Work*), Myers {*The Dawn of History*), De Burgh {*The legacy of Greece and Rome*), Woodward {*The Expansion of the British Empire*), Giles {*China*), Holderness {*India*), George {*The Beginnings of History and Geography*), Gibbins {*History of Commerce in Europe*), Mort {*Commercial Geography*). The Maps, which have been specially drawn to illustrate the text, are the work of Mr P. C. Moorhouse, Art Master at the East Ham Higher Elementary School. Our thanks are also due to Mr K. J. Done, Principal of the East Ham Higher Elementary School, and to Mr J. Summers, Headmaster of the East Ham High Street School, for the assistance given in correction of proof and for valuable suggestions.

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HISTORY'S BACKGROUND.

PART I.

GREAT RESERVOIRS OF LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

THIS little book deals with Historical Geography, and there are three questions which we should always bear in mind when studying this interesting subject. Our attention should be directed to noting: first, how the nature of man's immediate surroundings influences his life; secondly, to what extent he makes use of his surroundings; and, lastly, how the life of the people of one region is powerfully affected by the inhabitants of other regions, and how far this is due to geographical facts.

These questions are very closely connected, and in some cases the answers are fairly simple. Consider, for a moment, the life of man within the tropics, under the equatorial sun. Here "there is an abundance of moisture, and animal and plant life reach their fullest development. It is in this belt that food is provided for man throughout the year without labour on his part; in which frost and drought need not be feared; where shelter and clothing are so easily provided and often so unnecessary that life becomes too easy, Nature does too much; there is little

left for man to do. Captain Cook put the case very emphatically when he said that a South Sea Islander who plants ten bread-fruit trees does as much towards providing food for his family as does a man in Northern Europe who works throughout the year."

These easy conditions of life, then, have a marked influence upon the character of the people; they have no need to exert themselves, and are generally indolent. All seasons are seasons of growth—there is no necessity for making hay while the sun shines; under these circumstances man takes no thought for the morrow, as the dwellers in lands which experience a regular succession of seasons are forced to do. A Swiss guide, on a certain occasion, said to a famous traveller, "It would be good for tropical peoples to have a winter," meaning that their whole character would be changed for the better thereby.

The evil effects of the too easy conditions of equatorial lands are not confined to individuals; but the life of the inhabitants as a whole suffers. Men have little need to combine with one another to carry out schemes for the common good; the ties that bind men together are very loose, and it is not surprising to find that such peoples are governed by the representatives of hardier nations of other lands.

• On the other hand, we shall see, in the course of our reading, that in some regions life would not be possible for a large population if man did not combine with his fellow-man to carry out great schemes like irrigation. Working together in this way makes men realise the value of co-operation, and the ties binding them become closer and firmer. They become stronger as a group by uniting in this manner for a common end, and progress in other directions becomes possible.

This single illustration is sufficient to show how impor-

tant climate is when we come to consider the influences that affect men's lives; indeed, in a very rough and general way, to the broad differences in climate there are corresponding differences in the general characteristics of peoples. As we have seen, the hot equatorial climates induce indolence. On the other hand, we do not find great nations in the very cold regions of the world, but here the reason is very different. The inhabitants of the tundra, for example, have a hard struggle to secure sufficient food for even a small, scattered population, while the Esquimaux are in a worse plight still. Peoples of this kind are hardy enough, but the climate sets definite limits to their growth and development. Under these adverse conditions man can do little more than win a bare existence, nothing more than keep body and soul together.

These two illustrations of the importance of climate in our study will be sufficient for the present, and we will now turn to another important point in connection with man's immediate surroundings, viz., the nature of the rock-formation or land upon which he lives. This, also, has an important effect upon the history of a people. One example will serve to illustrate this. The great industrial centres of England, like Manchester, Leeds, Newcastle, etc., are found in the north of the country, and their situation is to be accounted for by the presence, round the Pennine Uplands, of two important minerals—coal and iron—which are indispensable in the production of goods by machinery on a large scale. Similarly, in Scotland, we have great centres of population like Glasgow, with great industries based on the coalfields of the lowland plain between the Firths of Forth and Clyde. The presence of these stores of minerals, coupled with the fact that the British are an enterprising nation, and have

included in their ranks the great pioneer inventors like Arkwright, Hargreaves, Crompton, Watt, and Stephenson, has enabled our country to attain to the first rank among the industrial nations of the world.

Further, the fertility of the soil depends in a large measure (provided the climate is suitable for plant growth) on the nature of the rocks which form the crust. Certain rocks, on weathering (*i.e.*, the process by which the surface rocks are split up by the action of rain, wind, frost, the various *denuding* agents, as they are called) form but a poor soil, and one entirely unsuitable for cultivation. The importance of this in agriculture will be obvious.

Turning now for a moment to the second question—the extent of man's use of nature's gifts—we should observe that this depends upon his progress. As we have seen, nature is too prodigal of her gifts with equatorial man; he simply gathers her fruits; he reaps, but he does not sow. On the other hand, in the very cold regions man has to put forth every effort to secure a bare subsistence.

In the temperate regions, taking the British Isles as an illustration, conditions are somewhat different from the cases cited above. No stone is left unturned to wrest nature's wealth, and more is produced than is required to support even our dense population. The shallow seas are made to yield up rich stores of fish food; the fertile plains are either cultivated or support herds of cattle; on the hills and mountain slopes sheep are reared; while the coal and iron fields form the basis of a large number of manufacturing industries, the products of which are exchanged, in part, for the wealth of other countries.

We may say, then, quite generally, that the extent of man's use of nature's gifts depends upon his progress; uncivilised man is almost "completely a creature of his

surroundings, and is as much their outcome or product as the animals. Man, however, in process of time learns how to make a better use of the wealth around him, and by working with his fellow-men makes life more secure; whereas the savage lives from hand to mouth, civilised man so makes use of nature as to make universal famine impossible. One illustration of this will suffice. We do not grow sufficient wheat in the British Isles to support our large population. With the wealth produced by means of our manufacturing industries, however, we can obtain wheat from other lands. Crops, of course, may fail, but fortunately the risks of a bad harvest in all wheat-growing countries are quite remote, for not a month passes but that in some land or other wheat is being harvested. Thus in the Argentine, in Chili, and in Australia the harvest month is January ; in British India the crops are gathered during February and March; the wheat is harvested in July in Russia (in Europe) and in the Northern States of the United States of America; while June is the harvest month of the Southern States; September of Canada.

This brings us to our third point, viz., how the history of the people of one region is affected by the inhabitants of other regions. The greater part of history furnishes us with illustrations of this. Thus in the case of the British Isles, their history has been influenced most powerfully by successive invasions of peoples from the mainland of Europe—the Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Danes, and Normans. In succeeding chapters, too, we shall read that fierce, nomadic tribes have frequently burst in upon the peaceful dwellers of rich cultivated plains, and changed the whole current of their history.

It is interesting to note some of the causes which have led, in the past, to invasions of this kind. In some cases,

invaders themselves have been forced out of their homes by other tribes, and they in their turn have seized the land of less hardy peoples; in other cases the plain has been a Naboth's vineyard to the inhabitants of neighbouring hill regions where the conditions are much more unfavourable. Yet another cause is to be found in the too rapid increase in the population. The area cannot support more than a certain number of people, and some, under chosen leaders, enter upon careers of conquest, and find homes elsewhere.

Not infrequently we shall find that a plain has undergone successive invasions, and as a consequence the inhabitants will be very mixed in their origin. This mixture of races is a good thing, for, generally speaking, the pure races are not strong. The aboriginal Australians, for instance, are amongst the most backward of all peoples, and this is largely due to the fact that at a very early period in the history of man they were cut off from intercourse with the peoples of other lands.

Now, we shall read in the course of succeeding chapters that the avenues through which invasions are possible depend largely upon geographical facts. At a very early stage, when, no doubt, man's migrations were aimless, he would choose the line of least resistance, skirting the sides of mighty ranges of mountains, or proceeding up river valleys.

Facilities for intercourse and communications are thus very important in the history of a people, as if they are isolated little progress is made. The first great steps in man's progress were made in regions where communication was comparatively easy—in the river valleys of the Nile, the Euphrates, and Tigris, the Ganges, and the river worlds of China, and round the shores of the great inland Mediterranean, where dwelt the great peoples of antiquity]

—the Hebrews, the Greeks, the Phoenicians, the Carthaginians, and the Romans.

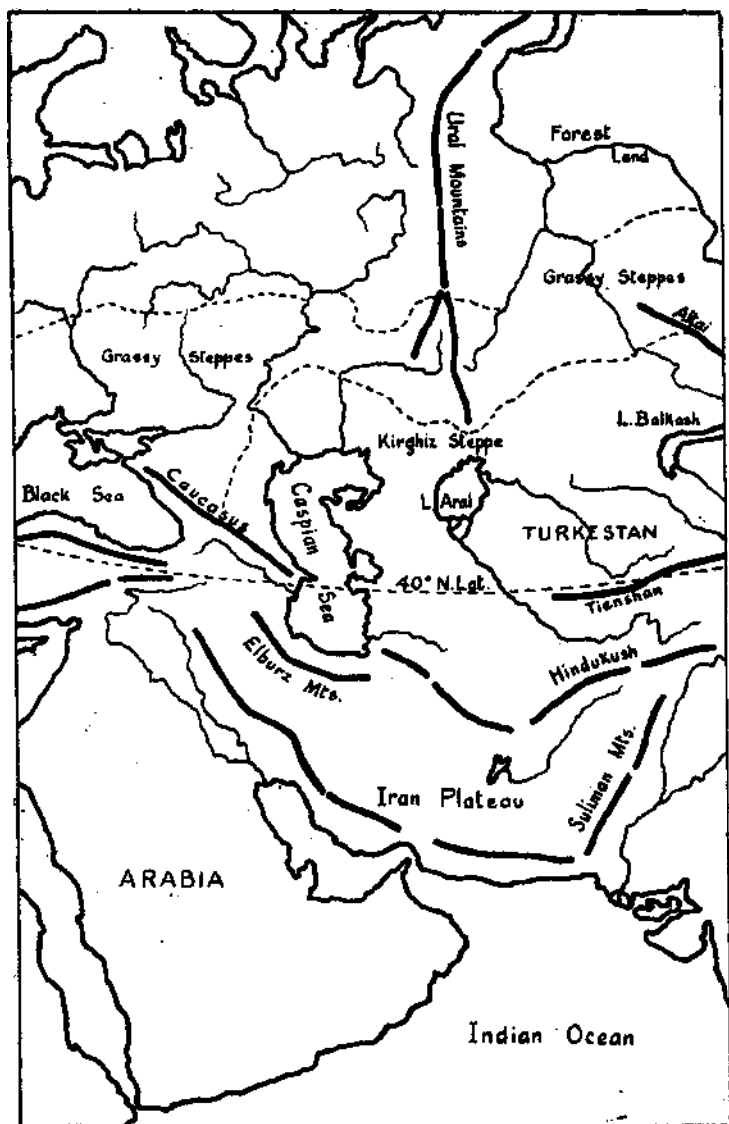
Let us now briefly summarise the chief points in this chapter:—

(1) Man's life is influenced or controlled very largely by climate. We may call this climatic control.

(2) The nature of the land or rock formation on which he lives also powerfully affects him. This may be described as the geological control of man's life. (Geology is the science which treats of the rocks forming the earth's crust.) Indeed, even the varied relief of the land, the general distribution of land and water, are parts of this science of geology, and both the relief of the land and the opposition of land and water are important factors affecting climate.

(3) The extent of man's use of his surroundings depends upon his progress. This may be described as social control, as it is only by combining with his fellows that man can make anything like a full use of nature's wealth.

(4) The history of a people inhabiting a region may be changed entirely by the intrusion of peoples from other areas. Intercourse and communication with other peoples are very important in the history of a people. The possibilities of invasion and of intercourse and communication with other peoples depend mainly on geography, and the study of this subject will, therefore, throw much light upon the thread of history.



MAP 1.—THE STEPPE LANDS OF EURASIA.

CHAPTER II

THE STEPPE LANDS OF EURASIA.

To the combined and continuous land masses of Asia and Europe the name Eurasia is given.

At a very remote period in the physical history of the world—long before man appeared to play his part—the two continents were separated by a stretch of water which linked the Indian and Arctic Oceans, and of this nothing now remains but the great inland Caspian Sea. In this connection it is interesting to note that seals, whose natural home is the cold water of Arctic regions, are found in the Caspian.

An examination of a map shows that the southern shores of this sea are flanked by the Elburz Mountains, which is a section only of one vast system of folded mountains passing under various names in its sinuous course across Europe and Asia—the Pyrenees, the Alps, the Carpathians, the Hindukush, the Karakoram, the Himalaya, and the tangled mountain ranges of Further India. East of the Caspian extends the Plain of Turkistan, which is itself an area of inland drainage, the Aral Lake drawing its waters from two rivers that rise in the Hindukush and the Tienshan Mountains respectively. Between the Ural Mountains and the Caspian the land is low. This is the Kirghiz Steppe, the gateway through which have passed successive migrations of various races into Europe. The steppes are continued westwards into Europe and north-eastwards into Asia, and form one of the distinctive regions of the world.

It is important to note a few points in connection with

the general conditions experienced in the European and Asiatic Steppes.

Observe, first, that they are far moved from the great oceans, and form, in fact, the interior of the great continental mass of Eurasia. This situation has an important effect on the climate. In the winter season, despite the fact that they lie in the so-called temperate regions of the world, it is bitterly cold, while in summer the heat is intense. Such a climate is described as extreme or continental.

Now, consider the wind systems found in corresponding latitudes in the North Atlantic or North Pacific Oceans. The steppes lie, roughly speaking, north of the fortieth parallel of latitude. North of this the prevailing winds on the Atlantic are the south-westerlies, the winds which bring our country so much rain, and which, in the days before the steamship, helped the sailing vessels on their course from North America to Europe. They blow from warmer regions to colder regions, and set up a drift of waters from the parts where the waters of the ocean are warmer. It follows, therefore, from these facts that the climate of Western Europe is rendered much more equable. The presence of the sea, the warm ocean drifts, the warm winds, give this part of Europe the oceanic type of climate. What really happens is that the conditions found over the adjacent ocean are carried to a certain extent inland, or oceanic conditions invade the coastal lands.

The farther removed the land is from the ocean, the less will the beneficial effects of the latter be felt, and in some areas far removed from the sea, or fringed with mountainous land, the sea has no effect at all.

Let us now consider the climate of steppe lands. In the winter season the cold is intense, and as a result,

over the land as a whole, the air is denser than the air over the surrounding oceans. The air over the land is said to be at a *higherr pressure* than that over the sea. As air flows freely, there will be a movement of air from the high-pressure areas towards the low-pressure areas. The general movement will thus be from the land towards the oceans. From that part of the land mass, where the pressure is highest, there will be an outflow in all directions. To feed this outflow, air is drawn from higher elevations above the centre of the high - pressure area. As the air descends it becomes warmer, and thus better able to retain any moisture it may contain. These outflowing surface winds are therefore dry winds; they prevent ocean winds penetrating for any great distance inland. During the winter the steppes are therefore a cold, rainless region.

Let us now consider summer conditions. The great land masses become heated much more rapidly than the ocean. The air over the interior of Eurasia is at low pressure, and that over the surrounding oceans is at a relatively high pressure. Sea-winds, under these conditions, penetrate a considerable distance inland, and the steppes receive rain during this season. An examination of a physical map will enable you to understand that the Eurasian Steppes are cut off from sea influences to a large extent from the east and south by high land.

During the change of the seasons from winter to spring, too, there are considerable disturbances of the atmosphere. Local low pressure areas develop; air within these areas ascends, is therefore cooled, and the moisture in it is condensed and falls as rain. Note also that thunderstorm rains are prevalent at the same period.

An area experiencing a climate such as has been described above — wind-swept, receiving a comparatively

small amount of moisture in spring or early summer, intensely cold in winter—cannot support a rich type of vegetation. There is not sufficient moisture for the growth of trees. It is only along the river banks that trees are found, or on the slopes of highlands, which receive more moisture than the treeless plains. Grass is the natural vegetation of the steppe regions of the world, and it is the need for fresh pastures for his Hocks and herds that has determined man's movements in this region in the past, and still determines them, to a very great extent, to-day. The following are interesting references to steppe scenery:—

"The earliest description of steppe scenery is found in scattered phrases of Holy Scripture, which acquire a new meaning when this is realised. The desire of the Shepherd King for 'green pastures and still waters' represents the ideal of well-being in a steppe land, where water is often so scarce that man and beast are parched with thirst, and the grass withers in the scorching sun. The thought of *the shadow of a great rock in a weary land' is nowhere so comforting as where the dry steppe is passing into the rainless desert. The familiar phrase, 'the desert shall blossom as the rose' is a literal description of a spring landscape on the steppe; 'the grass withereth and the flower fadeth' describes the same scene in autumn. Many modern travellers have remarked the accuracy of such descriptions of steppe scenery, many of which will readily suggest themselves to the memory." *

And again:

"The spring is the season of beauty in the steppe. Boundless tracts are resplendent with tulips—yellow, dark-red, white, white and red. Immediately after the tulips come the lilies. They appear in much more impressive multitudes, and completely dominate wide stretches of country. Usually each species, or variety, is by itself, but here and there blue lilies and yellow are gaily intermingled—a vision for rapture.

¹ *Man and His Work*, by A. J. Herbertson and F. D. Herbertson.

THE STEPPE LANDS OF EURASIA.

After a few weeks the steppe land lies like a gay carpet. . . . The dwarf almond, alone or in association with the pea tree and the honeysuckle, covers broad stretches of land in all its glory. . . . The whole effect is a shimmer of peach-red, in lively contrast to the green of the grass and herbage, to the bloom of the pea trees, and even to the delicate rose-red or reddish-white of the woodbine."

Proceeding northwards the steppe merges into forest land. Southwards it is replaced by arid deserts, while to the west and to the east the heavier rainfall ensures the growth of trees.

We are to think of the central Steppe of Eurasia as a well-defined area. It is a vast stretch of almost treeless lands surrounded on almost every side by forest land (much of which, particularly in the west, has now been cleared of trees), and in the region of the Aral by desert. Within the steppes area itself, too, there are stretches of desert. Note how the great earth block, which includes the Plateau of Tibet and the Desert of (lobi, Hanked on one side by the Hindukush, the Tienshan, the Altai and the Sayan Mountains, on the other by the Xhingan Mountains, and buttressed in the south by the Himalayas, separates the region from the Plain of China, while the Plateau of Iran separates it from Arabia and the Arabian Sea.

The life of the Asiatic steppe-dwellers of to-day is little altered from that of their ancestors of most remote times. They are a pastoral people, and their existence depends entirely upon their possession of ilocks and herds. They have no settled dwellings, as they have to move from place to place in order to obtain pasture for their cattle. In the colder months the steppe is a dangerous region both for man and beast, so the people settle down in carefully selected, sheltered spots, where grass and

water are available. The steppe-dwellers owe everything to their flocks and herds—their food and clothing, the coverings for their tents, and their utensils. Cloth and carpets are made from the wool or hair, their tent coverings are made of felt, their household goods are usually made of leather. Their constant wandering life makes it necessary that all their goods should be durable and easily carried. Their most precious possession is the horse. "Without their swift steeds it would be impossible for the herdsmen either to ride ahead and choose suitable halting places, or to keep the vast flocks from straying."

The form of government which we find existing amongst steppe-dwellers is closely connected with their mode of life. The keeping of great flocks and herds requires skilful management and a considerable number of shepherds. Women and children also are valuable helpers and workers. The primitive steppe-dweller, therefore, has many wives and a numerous family. In fact, when he takes stock of his wealth he includes his wives and children in the same list with his cattle and horses. A group of steppe-dwellers is like a very great family, and the oldest and most experienced amongst them, to whom they are more or less closely related, is regarded as a father. His word is law, and his government is despotic. Even to this day the nomads of Asia speak of their despotic ruler, the Czar, as the "little father."

Some of the, great migrations from these areas which history records were, no doubt, due to the necessity of finding food for their cattle. A prolonged drought compelled the nomads to seek fresh pastures farther afield, **and** this brought them into conflict with other peoples. **Knowledge** of the rich lands lying outside their region came to them probably through traders, or it may have come to **them** through their enforced wanderings.

With the progress of civilisation the more favoured portions of the steppes are brought under cultivation, and immense crops of wheat are now raised on these natural grass-lands. Over large tracts, however, the rainfall is not sufficient for wheat growing, and pastoral farming only can be carried on.

The incursions of the steppe-dwellers from Asia into China and Europe were made easier by the possession of the horse. Their horsemanship is of the best, and their descent upon the settled populations of these areas has been likened to a whirlwind.

The steppe lands of Europe and Asia may be well described as pivots of history. The steppe north of the Caucasus, it is supposed, was the original home of the Aryan races, successive waves of which passed westwards. Various subdivisions of them were the ancestors of the Greeks, the Eomans, the Celts, the Teutons, and the Slavs. Some passed eastwards, and piercing the Hindukush reached and settled in the Indo-Gangetic Plain. From one branch were descended the Persians, who established a mighty empire in ancient historical times.

The Asiatic Steppe was, probably, the original home of another great branch of the human family, viz., the Mongolian. From very early times the Mongol nomads were a terror to the cultivators of the plains of China. They pierced the mountain barrier, and carried death and destruction to the peaceful dwellers of the plain, and it was with the object of preventing further inroads that the famous Chinese Wall was built.

The activities of the Mongol nomads were not, however, confined to the East, but they powerfully affected the history of Europe. Making their way by the lowlands between the Urals and the great inland Caspian Sea, under their leader Attila, the Huns, as they were called,

crossed the Carpathians, and were a terrible scourge to Europe. To this very day the name Hun stands for something terrible and cruel. On another occasion the Huns crossed the Alps and carried fire and sword into the Plain of Lombardy. Some of the inhabitants took refuge amongst the fens and marshes of the mouth of the river Po, and in this way Venice was established.

Later still they made raiding expeditions as far as Gaul, the country which is now called France. But here they suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Gauls and the Franks at the famous battle of Chalons. There is a tradition, too, that Germany was invaded by these Huns, and so terrible were their attacks that many of the Teutonic tribes were forced to seek homes elsewhere. The ousted tribes invaded Britain, and these forced migrations of the Angles, Saxons, and the Jutes laid the foundation, of England.

4 At a much later date (the eleventh century), by way of Asia Minor and south of the Caspian, another branch of the Mongolian race—the Turks—invaded the Saracen empire, the establishment of which will be referred to in Chapter XI. Owing to the persecution by the Turks of the Christian pilgrims of Jerusalem, the great outstanding historical event of the Middle Ages was precipitated, viz., the Crusades. In course of time the invaders embraced the Mohammedan faith.

The capture of Constantinople in 1453 by yet another Mongolian tribe—the Ottoman Turks—is a landmark in the history of the world, and is generally regarded as a convenient dividing line between the Middle Ages and Modern Times.

Grèatest of all Mongolian empires was that established luring the thirteenth century by Jinghis Khan and his successors, the vastness of whose empire can be realised

from the inset diagram of Map 7. These were days of peace in the East. Then was it that Marco Polo, the famous Venetian, made his celebrated travels in the East by sea and land. He recounted his experiences in a book which is world-famous, and which has lost none of its interest to-day.

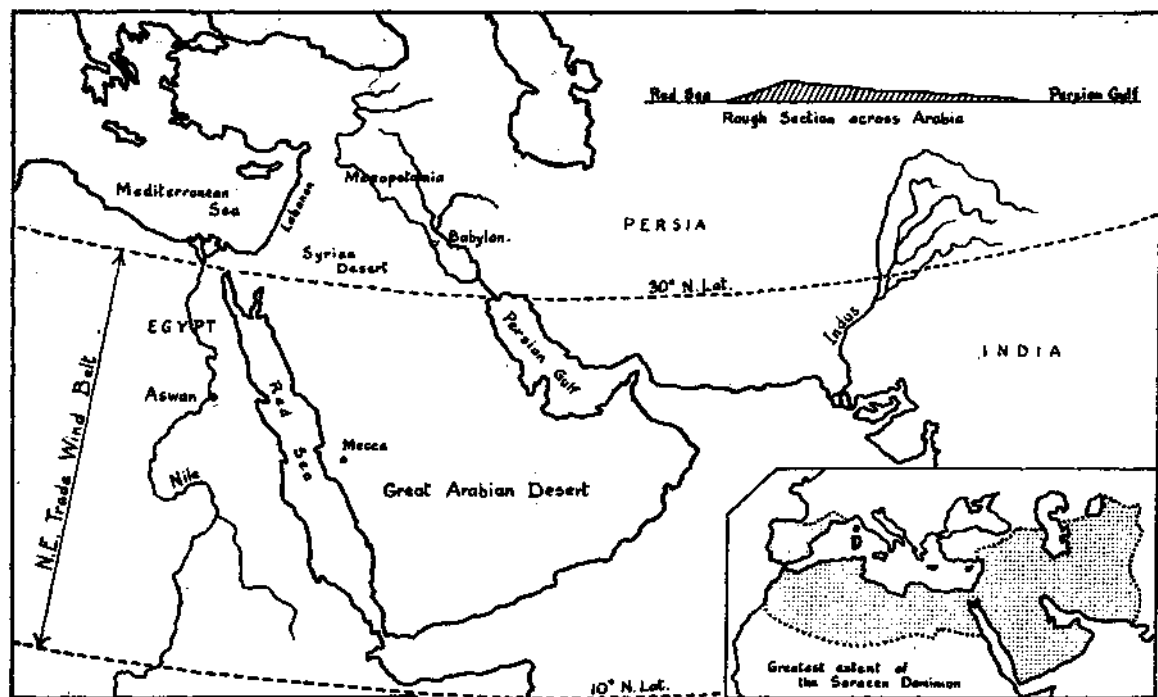
CHAPTER III.

ARABIA.

IN Chapter II. we showed the importance of the steppe lands north of the Caucasus and of the Asiatic Steppes in the study of historical geography. No less interesting in this connection is Arabia, the original home of another great branch of the human race, known as the Semitic, to which, amongst others, the Hebrews and the Phoenicians of ancient times belonged.

Arabia is a vast plateau, with its steep edge facing the Red Sea. From the Red Sea it slopes north-eastwards, and finally merges into the Plain of Mesopotamia, or disappears beneath the waters of the Persian Gulf. Arabia lies roughly within the same lines of latitude as the Sahara, and much of this country, too, is desert; in the north there is the Syrian Desert, while the Arabian Desert occupies a vast area in the south. Much of the interior also is desert land.

The surface of the peninsula, fortunately for man, is very much diversified, and there are numerous hollows which are moist enough to support the growth of grass. The inhabitants, therefore, follow pastoral pursuits, and



MAP 2.—ARABIA.

are keepers of flocks and herds. They are a nomad people like the steppe dwellers of whom we have read in Chapter II., and their wanderings are and were determined by the necessity of securing pasture for their sheep and goats.

In a country like Arabia very much depends on the amount of rainfall; if, for a succession of years, it receives an amount somewhat above the average, larger flocks can be kept and more people can be supported. A series of good years has been followed, not infrequently, by a succession of dry summers. There will now be less pasture land; fewer animals can be supported; the question of food for the population, which has greatly increased during the years of plenty, will become a serious one. As starvation stares large numbers in the face, they determine to migrate as a body to more favoured regions.

Arabia lies in the trade-wind belt, *i.e.*, roughly speaking between latitudes 10° and 30° in the northern hemisphere. The trade-wind belt, both on land and on sea, is of enormous importance in the history of the world. By sea, as we shall read later, the Trades were the means by which Columbus steered his westward course in his search for a passage to India, thus accidentally lighting upon the New World; on land the regions which experience these winds are deserts, great gaps in the civilised world which can never be reclaimed to any great extent for cultivation.

It is important to understand why these areas are dry. The north-east winds blow from colder to warmer regions, and thus the air becomes warmer, retains its moisture, and hence we get desert conditions. Of course, if the air is driven up into colder regions by reason of intervening uplands, rain will fall, and a richer vegetation becomes possible. Portions of the desert are reclaimed from

barrenness by the presence of underground springs, and fertile oases result.

The great deserts may be likened to great inland seas. The fertile oases are the islands which dot its surface, and make the journey across it possible. The grasslands on its boundary, inhabited by a settled population, may be compared to the coastal shores, and the towns which spring up on the desert edge, as centres of trade, to the ports. Nor is the desert without its ship. The camel has fittingly been called the "ship of the desert."

The desert regions are amongst the healthiest in the world, the air being dry and stimulating. Man has to exert himself if he is to exist, and this constant exertion, together with the bracing climate, has produced hardy and enterprising peoples. When rich lands border the desert a regular system of communication across the desert is maintained, and frequently the nomads are able to seize upon these lands and make them tributary. The exactions of the nomads are, in some cases, so great, that the dwellers on the margins of the deserts revert to a nomadic life, and become robbers themselves. North-east of Arabia lies the rich land watered by the Euphrates and the Tigris; there is also a way into Egypt, a land where there is always corn. To the north-east, too, forming the eastern shore of the great Mediterranean, lies a land flowing with milk and honey, full of attraction to the nomads.

Knowledge of the lands surrounding their desert homes comes to them through traders, who cross the desert in bands from oasis to oasis along routes which only long experience can determine with certainty. Danger lies not only in shifting sands obscuring the beaten track and in blinding sand storms, but in the Bedouin of the desert who frequently adopts robbery as his profession, and to

whom the contents of the traders' caravans offer fine booty. Not unnaturally, under the circumstances, we find that traders will travel in as large numbers as possible in order the better to resist attack. We should observe that during seasons of drought, the temptation to resort to robbery is further increased. It is important to bear in mind that the traders who link the margin of the desert in this way are drawn from the nomad population itself, because only those conversant with the desert—its landmarks, its oases, its dangers—can possibly conduct these perilous journeys.

Only a brief reference can be made to the early incursions of the Arabs into the surrounding regions. On more than one occasion they caused anxiety to the kingdom of Babylonia, which occupied the lower basin of the Euphrates and Tigris. Trade naturally sprang up between the Arabs and the famous city of Babylon, and this penetration of Arabian influence was of [a peaceful kind; but there are records, too, of a great invasion of Babylonia by the Arabs from the upper valleys of the twin rivers. Indeed attack was feared from this quarter, and provision was made against these nomads by the construction of a wall right across from the Euphrates to the Tigris. The Chinese employed a similar device to keep out the Mongol nomads; the great Chinese Wall is one of the wonders of the world.

Another interesting off-shoot of these wanderings is the settlement of a section along the coast of the Mediterranean. These were the ancestors of the Phoenicians, who early established a great maritime empire.

In Genesis we read of Semitic settlers in Canaan, and how they went down into Egypt and returned to Canaan again. In the pages of the Bible we read of the captivity of the children of Israel in Egypt, how they escaped into

the desert and found their way to the Promised Land. Later books of the Bible tell us how in the days of Saul, of David, and of Solomon, there was established for a time a great Hebrew Empire.

It is probable also that Arabs found their way to the Nile Valley by crossing the Eed Sea, and reaching the Nile at a point at which it nearly approaches the African coast within Egypt Proper, *i.e.*, the portion of the Nile Valley between the last cataract at Aswan and the Mediterranean.

Of all the migrations of the Arabs the most noteworthy is that which occurred in the seventh century. It was a tremendous outflow which seemed likely to swallow everything in its course. Syria and Egypt came under the sway of the Arabians, or Saracens, as they were called. They penetrated North Africa, crossed the Straits of Gibraltar into Spain, and their victorious march across the Pyrenees was only checked at Poitiers by their crushing defeat at the hands of a great Frankish leader, Charles Martel, who was the grandfather of the famous Charlemagne. Italy was threatened, and Sicily fell into their hands.

At the same time vast hordes swept eastwards, and they established their rule over Persia, and penetrated into the Indo-Gangetic Plain. These are events to which it will be necessary for us to return later; but it is interesting to observe that during the period which intervened between the earlier migrations and this later one, important events had taken place in the internal history of Arabia. A great prophet, Mohamet, had arisen, and his birth-place, Mecca, was now a Holy City. His teachings were embodied in the Koran, which is the Bible of the Mohammedans. The gospel which he preached spread in a most rapid and wonderful way; his followers were filled with a fierce missionary

zeal, and their belief, that from death in battle in the Prophet's cause they passed at once into Heaven, made them incomparable warriors who shrank from no danger. There can be no doubt, too, that their rulers, ambitious to extend their territories, used this religious enthusiasm to stir the people to enter upon these remarkable careers of conquest.

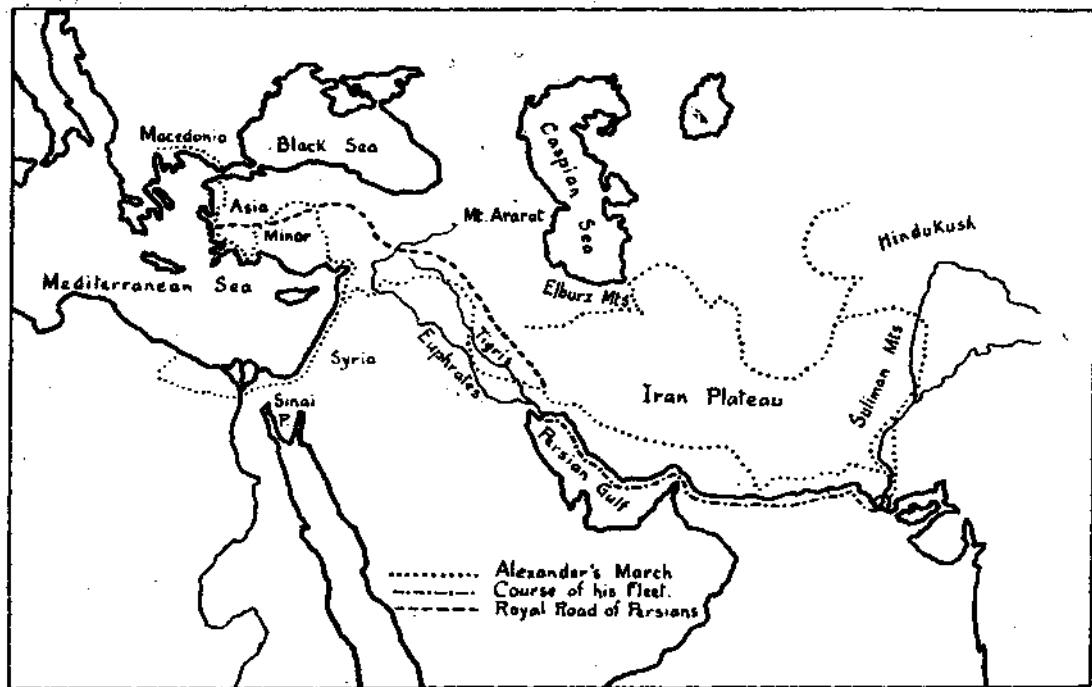
There is yet another point of difference between this later spread of the Arab people and their earlier migrations. The nomads had now acquired the horse, an animal which in the earlier period was unknown to them. This meant that they were far better able to cover great distances rapidly, and this made them far more formidable as a fighting force.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LAND BETWEEN ARABIA AND THE EURASIAN STEPPES.

BETWEEN Arabia and the Eurasian Steppes there lies an extensive stretch of country which formed the homes of various peoples who played a great part in the history of ancient times. Notice that it is a land of many seas—to the north lie the Black and Caspian Seas, to the south the Eastern Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf. This region also contains two very notable river valleys—those of the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers, which unite before entering the Persian Gulf.

With the exception of the lowland plain in which these two rivers flow, the whole of the country, stretching from



MAP 3.—THE LAND BETWEEN ARABIA AND THE EURASIAN STEPPES.

the Mediterranean to the frontiers of India, consists of a broad belt of plateaux. It is an area in which vast bucklings and foldings of the earth's crust have taken place.

The general nature of the country differs in some important respects from Arabia. The latter consists of a vast block of the earth's crust, raised, generally speaking, high above sea-level, and sloping gently towards the Persian Gulf and Mesopotamia. The rocks forming it are laid down in layers, evenly like the pages of a book. The cliff-like nature of its coasts on its western and eastern shores are monotonous, and Arabia turns its back, as it were, both on the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.

In marked contrast to this, the region with which we are dealing now consists of a number of ranges radiating from a central point, with plateaux between them. This central point is Mount Ararat. Thus between the Elburz and its continuation, the Hindukush, on one side, and the Kurdistan Highlands and their continuation, which includes the Sulaiman Mountains, on the other, there is the vast Plateau of Iran. West of Ararat lies the Plateau of Asia Minor. The Taurus Mountains form a link between the central system of Ararat and the Plateau of Asia Minor, and also with the Mountains of Syria, Palestine, and the Peninsula of Sinai.

The ring of mountain ranges has an important effect on the climate, as the lofty plateaux are shielded on every side, and are thus rendered very dry. The great height above sea-level makes it very cold in winter. In summer great heat is experienced, but even in the summer it is very cold during the night time. Owing to these conditions the greater part of this area is a desert, and the general conditions of man's life resemble those described in the preceding chapter. Fertile parts are found in the valleys leading up to the mountains, where irrigation can

be practised by means of the mountain streams. The windward side of the encircling mountains will of course be forested, but the interior is treeless.

Note that the mountain ranges run roughly east and west, and that therefore there are no insurmountable difficulties to passage from Asia into Europe by this route.

In ancient, historical times a people known as the Hittites established a powerful empire in the western portion of this plateau region, *i.e.*, in Asia Minor. The eastern portion, the Iran Plateau, was the home of the Medes and the Persians, the latter of whom conquered the whole of South-Western Asia, and also included Egypt in their empire. On the accompanying diagram note the Royal Road of the Persian kings, which bound, as it were, the vast empire together. The Persians pushed their conquests from Asia into Europe, and their invasion of Macedonia had important results. King Philip of Macedon determined to avenge the outrage to his country, and though prevented by death from leading his armies against Persia, his son, Alexander the Great, carried out the project successfully, and in the course of his great march pierced the Hindukush and raided India. On the map the course of Alexander's march is indicated by a dotted line; the course taken by his fleet is also marked.

Asia Minor was also the bridge by which the Turks found their way into Europe, with momentous results, as we shall see, to the history of the continent. Across the Iran Plateau, too, it is probable that the earliest settlers in the lower valley of the Euphrates-Tigris River found their way from Central Asia, and established one of the very earliest centres of civilisation, to a brief consideration of which we propose devoting a succeeding chapter.

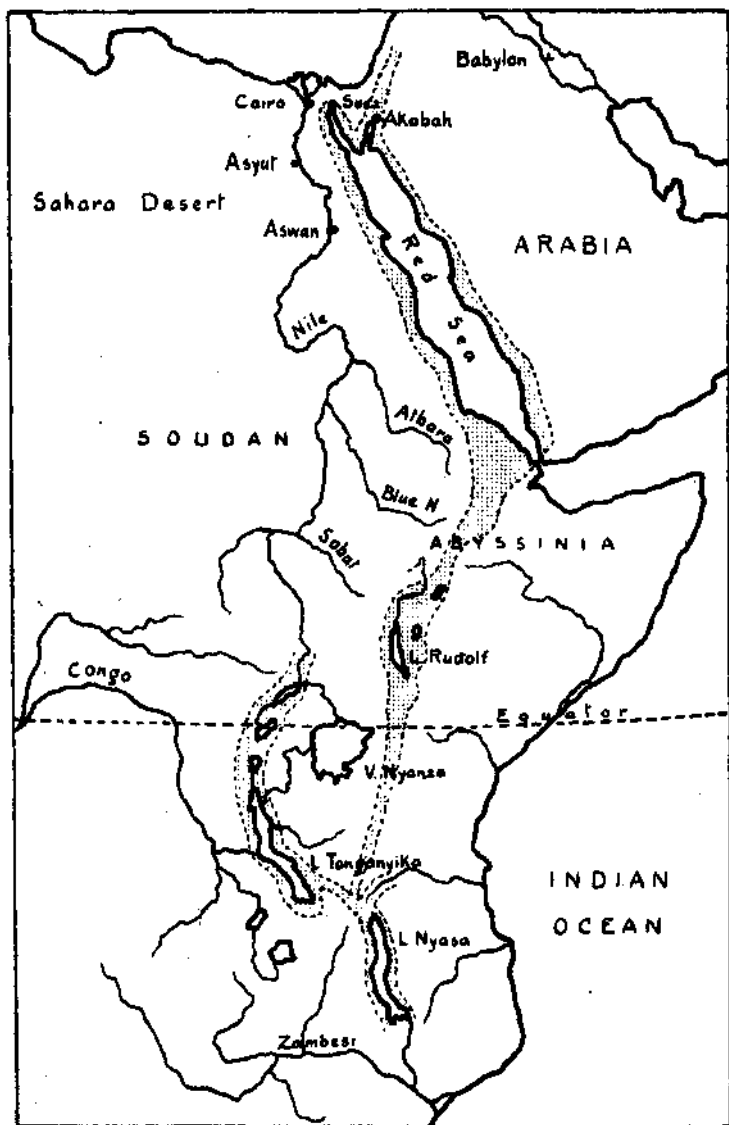
PART IL
ANCIENT RIVER CIVILISATIONS.

CHAPTER V.

THE NILE VALLEY.

THE basin of the Lower Nile is one of the most interesting regions in the world. It was the cradle of one of the earliest civilisations, one of the areas in which men first settled down and learned to turn to a fuller use the gifts of Mother Earth. A glance at the map shows you that the region which we propose dealing with in this chapter is but a comparatively small portion of the immense area which the basin of the Nile occupies, and in order to understand the advantages which Egypt enjoys it is necessary to glance briefly at the nature of its surroundings.

The first general point to note is that there is much evidence to show that at some remote time the earth's crust in this particular area was weak. Thus Abyssinia is made up of highlands which have been formed by vast outpourings of lava through the weakened surface. Again, by the sinking of the crust, a great rift or valley was formed, the enormous extent of which can be realised from the accompanying diagram. It will be observed that the formation of the Ked Sea was due to this sinking, and also of the Gulfs of Suez and Akaba and the Valley of the Jordan. To the same cause is to be traced the



MAP 4.—THE NILE VALLEY.

formation of some of the numerous lakes of Central Africa.

Both the plateau of the Great Lakes and the Abyssinian Highlands are exceedingly important in the study of the Nile. The lakes of Central Africa lie in the region of the Equator, where the rainfall is very heavy, and where it falls at all seasons. Thus they act as great reservoirs to the Nile; but great as the volume of water received is, it is probable that with this supply alone the river would never reach the Mediterranean Sea, but would disappear in the intervening desert. For you should bear in mind that the amount of water lost by evaporation in this region is enormous.

Fortunately, Abyssinia, north of the plateau of the Great Lakes, provides another source of supply, so great in volume as to flood the banks of the Lower Nile Valley. In the summer the air over the Sahara is greatly heated, and forms a low-pressure area; as a result winds are set up which blow from the Indian Ocean landwards. Forced into higher and colder regions by the Abyssinian Highlands the air is cooled, the moisture contained therein is condensed and falls, giving heavy rains. Summer is thus the flood season of the Lower Nile. The river commences to rise in June, reaches its height in October, and then begins to recede until it is at its lowest again in the following May.

"The most important characteristic of the Nile is its annual flooding or *Inundation*. By the end of May, in Egypt, the river is at its lowest level. During the month of June the Nile, between Cairo and Aswan, begins to rise, and a quantity of 'green water' appears at this time. The cause of the colour is said to be myriads of minute algee, which subsequently putrefy and disappear. During August the river rises rapidly, and its waters assume a red, muddy colour, which is due to the presence of the rich red earth

which is brought into the Nile by the Blue Nile and the Atbara. The rising of the waters continues until the middle of September, when they remain stationary for about a fortnight or three weeks. In October a further slight rise occurs, and then they begin to fall; the fall continues gradually until, in the May following, they are at their lowest level once more. The cause of the Inundation is, as Aristotle (who lived in the fourth century B.C.) first showed, the spring and early summer rains in the mountains of Ethiopia and the Southern Soudan; these are brought down in torrents by the great tributaries of the Nile. The united waters of these tributaries, with the water of the Upper Nile, reach Egypt about the end of August, and cause the Inundation to reach its highest level. The Nile rises from 21 feet to 28 feet, and deposits a thin layer of fertilising mud over every part of the country reached by its waters. Formerly, when the rise was about 26 feet, there was sufficient water to cover the whole country; when it was less, scarcity prevailed; and when it was more, ruin and misery appeared through overflowing. In recent years the British irrigation engineers in Egypt have regulated, by means of the Aswan Dam, the Barrage at Asyut, and the Barrage near Al Manashi, a little to the north of Cairo, the supply of water during the winter, or dry season, with such success, that, in spite of 'low' Niles, the principal crops have been saved, and the people protected from want."¹

To the east and west of the lower river valley there is desert land, and the fertile Nile strip can be looked upon as an oasis on a great scale. It supports an enormous population, and its recorded history dates back to 4000 years before the birth of Christ.

As was pointed out previously, the Nile lies in the same latitude as the Sahara and Arabia, and were it not for the flood waters of the river, Egypt, too, 'would be a desert. Egypt is, indeed, the gift of the Nile. "Soil, products* vegetation, animals, are all determined by the great river, which long before man's advent widened a limestone fracture into a gorge, filled the gorge with

¹ *British Museum Guide to Egyptian Antiquities,*

debris from the southern uplands, and encroaching upon the Mediterranean formed the Delta." -

The apex of the Delta is about 150 miles in length, and by reason of the lagoons and fen-land entrance into Egypt this way is difficult. The recorded invasions of Egypt have generally been made at points east or west of the Delta.

One other point of a general nature should be noted in connection with the Nile Valley. At various points it is crossed by bands of hard rock, and this has led to the formation of cataracts. The last of these occurs at Aswan, which may be regarded as the southern limit of Egypt Proper. These cataracts obstruct navigation at low water, but offer no impediment when the Nile is in flood.

The true Egyptians are of African origin, and belong to that section of the human race known as Hamites. They are tall, slender of body, with long, thin legs, small hands and long feet. Their hair is black and curly, their eyes black, their cheek-bones high, their mouths are wide, with somewhat full lips, their teeth small and regular.

Some of the great inventions to which the Egyptians gave birth can be traced directly to the nature of their surroundings. A "low" Nile meant famine, and this led them to devise methods of irrigating the soil. By means of a system of dykes, reservoirs, and lock-canal they learned, at a very early period, to store the precious water to meet the wants of a dry year. Despite these precautions the country was visited by terrible famines. Thus we read in Genesis of one that lasted for seven years. There is also an account of one inscribed upon a rock, which happened 6000 years ago. The story runs "that grain was very scarce, vegetables and garden produce of every description could not be obtained, and

people had nothing to eat, and men were everywhere robbing their neighbours. Children wailed for food, young men had no strength to move, strong men collapsed for want of sustenance, and the aged lay in despair on the ground waiting for death."

Another of their inventions was a system of surveying. The flood of the Nile frequently washed away all landmarks and boundaries. Disputes naturally arose, and to settle these a system of measurement according to a settled standard was devised.

Ancient Egypt was probably the first instance of a very large number of people united to form a Kingdom or State. "Between five and ten thousand years before Christ this narrow land was more densely populated than any other stretch of country of the same size in the world's history." The river helped to make them one people. Communication by boat by means of the river current from Aswan to the Delta was easy, while up stream the prevailing winds, which are the north-east trades somewhat modified, enabled the sailors to make use of sails. These facilities for communication made the government of the whole area from a single centre a comparatively easy matter.

The system of dykes, reservoirs, and lock-canals required constant attention, and the peasants were practically tied to their plots. A section of the people had thus to be set apart for the purposes of defence against the attacks of the nomadic tribes from the desert or the steppe. Gradually, therefore, the people came under the control of despotic rulers who controlled the army. "Under the Pharaohs the mass of the people were in complete subjection, and slavery became an established institution.

Some plan also was necessary to convey the royal

commands, and it was to meet this need that the Egyptian early invented a system of writing. "Even under the First Dynasty the royal property was habitually marked with the King's name and titles; and annual records were kept of important events, conspicuous among which, as we should expect, are measurements of the Nile Flood."

The potter's art was also developed early in Egypt. It is a treeless country, and many common objects were made in clay. Pottery is easily broken, and has to be frequently renewed. This meant that plenty of practice in the art was ensured; this encouraged men to become inventive in devising new shapes, and was thus a valuable means of training.

The ancient Egyptians also made great progress in religious matters. They believed there was a life hereafter, and they paid great respect to their dead, whose bodies were preserved in vast tombs. The wonderful Pyramids are simply the tombs of some of the greatest kings. Some idea of the high standard which they reached can be gathered from the following words of one of their old feudal lords: "I am one who spoke good and repeated what was liked. Never did I say an evil word of any kind to a chief against anyone, for I wished it to be well with me before the great God. I gave bread to the hungry man, and clothes to the naked man. I never gave judgment in a case between two brothers whereby a son was deprived of his father's goods. I was loved by my father, favoured by my mother, and beloved by my brothers and sisters."

Let us now turn for a moment to consider the ways in which the history of Egypt has been affected by neighbouring peoples. It had to make provision against the **attacks** of nomadic tribes on all but its northern side;

where it was screened by the Delta. At a very early period Arabs crossed the Red Sea and settled in the valley, but this settlement was probably of a peaceful nature. From the savanna land to its south Egypt was threatened by barbaric and warlike tribes; for a time, indeed, an able leader of these fierce nomads became the ruler of the whole valley. When these invaders were finally expelled Egypt entered upon a period of expansion; she conquered Syria and Phoenicia, and fought the Hittites on the Upper Euphrates. The nomads of the Libyan Desert and of the grass lands south of Egypt were also made subject to her. It was during this period that the children of Israel were sojourning in Goshen, and the story of their exodus to the Desert of Sinai is recounted in the early books of the Bible. The desert dwellers of Libya on the west were also a danger, and during the reign of Eameses III. (1200 B.C.) Egypt repelled a combined attack at the hands of Libya and the seafaring people inhabiting the Eastern Mediterranean.

On several occasions Egypt was invaded by peoples from Asia, to which it is connected by a narrow isthmus. This was the route employed by the conquering Hyksos (a nomad people from Arabia), by Assyrian armies, and by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Later, Egypt was included in the Persian Empire, and when Persia fell before the armies of Alexander the Great it was added to the Macedonian Empire. The foundation of Alexandria dates from this period.

" In the early part of the Christian era Egypt, like other nations of the civilised world, succumbed to Soman invasion, and following this invasion came the introduction of Christianity. The Roman occupation was followed by a great Mohammedan-Arab conquest which lasted for 900 years, which in its turn fell before the invasion

of the Turks. We should associate the foundation of Cairo with the Arab invasion. Cairo stands near the site of a very old Egyptian city, Memphis, to which we shall refer later when dealing with ancient commerce. Note that Cairo is built on the Arabian side of the river bank.

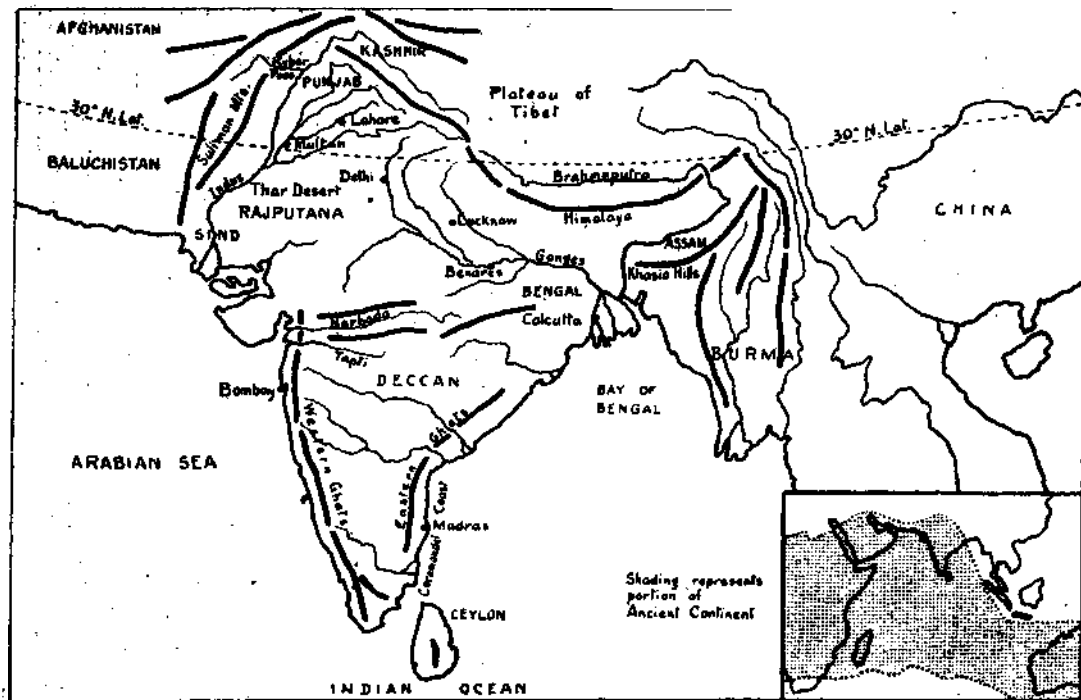
In a subsequent chapter it will be necessary to return to the consideration of Egypt again, and to note how a chain of circumstances led Britain in the nineteenth century to take over the control of the country.

CHAPTER VI.

THE INDO-GANGETIC PLAIN.

IN this chapter we propose touching very briefly on the great river world of Northern India, which includes the Valley of the Ganges, and portions of the Valleys of the Indus and the Brahmaputra.

Two of these rise north of the Himalaya, while the Ganges lies almost entirely south of the mountain barrier. Let us note, first of all, the boundaries of this vast Indo-Gangetic plain. To the north stretch the vast folded ranges of the Himalaya, 1500 miles in length, and averaging about 150 miles in width. The Himalaya are really the edge of the great Plateau of Tibet. It must be carefully borne in mind that these mountains are a great alpine region, very much larger and containing a much greater population than Switzerland. To the south of the Indo-Gangetic Plain lies the Deccan (a word which means the country to the south). An examination of a



MAP 5.—INDIA.

physical map shows that the general slope of the Deccan is south-eastwards. Nearly all the Deccan rivers rise in the Western Ghats and flow into the Bay of Bengal. Two only—the Nabarda and the Tapti—flow westwards, forming important gaps in the Western Ghats.

The Deccan is a vast plateau which has been dissected by great rivers running eastwards or westwards. This makes it a region difficult of access from the Plain of the Ganges, and it has thus invariably been a place of refuge for the weaker tribes which have been driven from the plain.

Extensive in area as the Deccan is, yet it represents but a fragment of what was once a vast southern continent stretching from South America to Australia. It was the sinking of vast stretches of this ancient continent that led to the formation of the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans. The Indo-Gangetic Plain was then occupied by the sea. Later, but still at a very remote time, within this sea, crumpling of the earth's crust led to the formation of the Himalaya and the system of fold mountains which runs roughly east and west through Eurasia. The physical history of the Indo-Gangetic Plain is therefore the filling in of the sea between the old lands of the Deccan and the very much more recent folded mountains to the north. The soil is thus composed of the "dust of mountains," and is exceedingly rich and fertile, provided the necessary moisture is available. To the east the boundary of the Indo-Gangetic Plain is the enormous Delta of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra and the intricate and numerous ranges of Burma, while to the west lie the Plateau of Baluchistan, the Sulaiman Mountain, and the Hindukush.

The position of the Indo-Gangetic Plain in relation to other areas is important. The steppe lands of Asia are

separated from it either by a broad belt of plateau land, or by ranges of mountains. It is cut off from the Chinese Plain in a similar way. Access to it from the Plain of the Euphrates and Tigris is difficult by land, but the sea-way is comparatively easy. The Ked Sea is the natural link between Mediterranean countries and India. Note that the whole area is much nearer the Equator than the Mediterranean region. The line 30° N. latitude forms roughly the southern boundary of the Mediterranean region, whereas only a small section of the Indo-Gangetic Plain—the Punjab—lies north of it.

It lies roughly in the same latitude as Egypt and Arabia, *i.e.*, in the trade-wind desert belt. It will be interesting, therefore, to note what has saved this vast plain from being a desert. On either side of the Deccan lie two great stretches of water, the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal, while to the south stretches the Indian Ocean. The Sahara has *land* to the south of it, and a great sea-expanse to the west only, while Arabia is shut off to a great extent from sea-influences by the cliff-like nature of its coasts.

The winter conditions are not difficult to understand. The prevailing winds are north-east, just as they are in Arabia and in the Sahara, and they bring no rain to continental India. A glance at the map will enable you to understand that these north-east winds will bring rain to Ceylon and the Coromandel coast.

Now consider the summer conditions. The plains of the north-west, being farther removed from the sea, become the hottest* part of India. A great low-pressure area is thus formed, and powerful winds are set up blowing from the sea towards the land. These winds, **called** Monsoons, are cyclones on a tremendous scale. As they blow over a vast expanse of water, in a hot region,

they are heavily laden with moisture, and when forced into the colder, upper layers of air by the Western Ghats and the Himalaya, copious rains result. Again, the Monsoon blowing over the Bay of Bengal brings a heavy rainfall to the Burmese Mountains and the Khasia Hills. This south-west wind is unable to surmount the uplands of Further and Northern India, and is diverted up the Ganges Valley in a north-westerly direction. This wind thus provides another source of rainfall for the rivers of Northern India.

Note that between the Indus and the Ganges there is a stretch of desert land called the Thar Desert. Neither the south-west Monsoon from over the Arabian Sea, nor the north-east wind blowing up the Ganges Valley, brings rain to this area, and here we get desert conditions. Observe that the Thar Desert lies roughly in the same latitude as the Libyan Desert, the desert of Central Arabia, and the Sahara.

The mountains of Northern India act not only as huge condensers of the moisture contained in the Monsoon winds, but their glaciers help to provide the enormous volume of water for the giant rivers which have their sources in them. It will be obvious that highlands that lie in the track of the Monsoons will receive the greatest amount of rainfall. Thus the slopes of the Western Ghats and the Khasia Hills are amongst the rainiest regions in the world. We thus see that the reasons why India is not another Sahara are to be found in the following facts:—

(1) The great land mass is opposed by a great water mass.

(2) As the land absorbs heat much more rapidly than the sea, a vast low-pressure area is formed in North-West India, and Monsoon winds are formed.

(3) The relief of the land causes these winds to be raised to the colder levels of the air, and ensures a wide distribution of rain.

It would be well at this point to compare and contrast some of the features of the Indo-Gangetic Plain with other natural regions which we have passed, or propose passing, under review. It lies nearer the Equator, and is therefore warmer than the lands bordering the Mediterranean. Rain falls in the summer season, whereas winter is the rain season of the latter. South of the Mediterranean extends the vast compact land mass of Africa, south of the Ganges Plain there is the tapering land mass of the Deccan, with great seas on either side, and a vast ocean on the south. The steppe lands resemble it in that they, too, have summer rains, but the rainfall is very much less in amount, and the climate of the steppe lands is extreme.

As in the case of Egypt, the rivers of India are much used for irrigation, and this system has been greatly developed since the British occupation. Sufficient has been said to show the importance of the Monsoon winds to India. The life of the whole country depends upon them. Should the bursting of the Monsoon be delayed for some reason or other, this means that drought is prolonged, and it spells disaster to the cultivators. Sometimes, too, the Monsoonal winds are weaker than usual, and do not reach so far inland as they normally do. This means that no crops can be grown in certain districts, and terrible famines ensue. Failure of this kind sometimes affects small tracts of country, at others vast areas suffer.

The large majority of the people of India are agriculturists, and even at the present day only one-tenth of its 315,000,000 live in towns. The largest towns of to-day

are either ports which have been opened up by Britain (Bombay, Calcutta, Madras), or the capitals of former rulers (Delhi, Lahore, Lucknow), or holy cities like Benares. In the whole of India there are not ten cities with populations of over 200,000. What a contrast does this present to England, where more than ninety per cent, live in towns.

India is made up of a large number of villages, each complete in itself, and depending little on other villages or on the outside world for its means of support. The villages are less isolated, now since the introduction of railways and the construction of canals, but these changes date from quite recent times. Previous to these modern innovations there was practically no communication between the various villages. This was a serious matter when we consider what was said about drought affecting certain areas, as the inhabitants of many villages died from starvation. "If we had a complete record of an Indian village during the last three hundred years, we should probably find that its population had ever and anon been blotted out by some terrible drought." The conditions of the village life in India were similar in some respects to those under which our Anglo-Saxon forefathers lived. Each little community was almost completely independent of other similar communities.

In India the clock, as it were, stayed its hand for centuries, and changes have only just begun. Referring to the strength and power of village communities, a distinguished writer said :—

•"They seem to last where nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down: revolution succeeds revolution. Hindu, Pathan, Mughal, Maratha, Sikh, English, are all masters in turn: but the village communities remain the same. In times of trouble they arm and fortify themselves :

a hostile army passes through the country: the village communities collect their cattle within their walls, and let the enemy pass unprovoked. If plunder and devastation be directed against themselves, and the force employed be irresistible, they flee to friendly villages at a distance: but when the storm is over they return and resume their occupation. . . . A generation may pass away, but the succeeding generation will return. . . . This union of the village communities, each one forming a separate little state itself, has, I conceive, contributed more than any other cause to the preservation of the people of India through all the revolutions and changes which they have suffered, and is in a high degree conducive to their happiness, and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence."

The most important cultivated plant of Monsoon lands is rice. Rice culture requires skilful and careful management. It is a plant that can only be grown in hot lands, and the temperature must average at least about 70° F. during the six months of growth. There must further be an abundant supply of water. It is important also that the supply of water should be controlled.

The climate of Monsoon lands, with its great heat and abundant moisture in the summer season, is therefore suited to rice growing. Rice is one of the most prolific of crops, and a small area produces sufficient to maintain a single family. Monsoon lands are thus amongst the most densely populated regions in the world. They are vast gardens, so to speak, and as the gardeners are tied to their plots, which require constant attention, it is not surprising to find that the dwellers of Monsoon lands have always been a prey to nomadic conquerors, to whom they are forced to pay tribute. In the succeeding sections we shall see that this is very true of India, and in a succeeding chapter we shall read that this applies, too, to the other great rice country, viz., China.

In the light of foregoing considerations it is not difficult

to understand that India has ever been a prey to the invader. There were great difficulties in the way of making a great united country, as communication between the isolated groups did not exist. Nor should we forget that India is not a country in the sense that France or Spain is. It is really a continent, and equal in area to Europe if we take Kussia out of it, and contains a population equal to one-fifth of the human race.

It will not be necessary to give any details of the history of India in these pages, but a brief consideration of the types of people found in the India of to-day serves to show how important the passes in the north-west—the Khaibar and the Bolan—are in this connection.

The earliest inhabitants of India were a short, dark race, and many of their nearly pure descendants are to be found in the Southern Deccan to-day. Just as the Saxon invaders drove the Celts to the mountainous parts of our islands, so did the Dravidians, as they are called, withdraw to the inaccessible Deccan.

Men of the Aryan race found their way to India by the passes in the north-west, and these early invaders gave the country its name. The word "India" means "river." To these Aryans Northern India was a great river world. It was the Aryans, too, who named the great mountain wall the "Himalaya" or the "abode of snow"—the homes of their gods and the source of their rivers.

* Naturally enough the Aryan types are found in their pure form in the north-west in the Punjab, Rajputana, and Kashmir. By way of the Bramaputra Valley men of the Mongolian race entered India. These are found in the border land between India and Tibet and in the areas adjoining Burma, and are akin to the Chinese. The passage to India from Tibet or by way of the Brahma-

putra, however, is difficult, and no great invasions have been possible from either of these directions. The pivot of India's history, until the discovery of the Cape route in the fifteenth century by Vasco de Gama, has always been the passes in the north-west, particularly the Khaibar. By this route the Persians under Darius invaded India in 500 B.C., and the Greeks under Alexander the Great in 323 B.C., but both invasions were mere raids, and did not affect the history of the country. The invasions of Darius and Alexander, however, have a certain importance, as they taught the tribes the necessity of union to face a common foe.

It is from this period that the foundation of vast empires in India is to be dated. During the years (320-180 B.C.) there are records of a great empire of India, equal in extent to the area under British rule to-day; but by about 200 B.C. this decayed, and a period of confusion followed. This period is noteworthy in the history of India, as the teaching of Buddha was now recognised as the official religion. The teaching of Buddha, called Buddhism, spread to Ceylon and China, and is one of the four great religions of the world—Christianity, Moham-medanism, Hinduism, Buddhism.

At various times by way of the north-west passes, tribes of Scythians, Turks, Afghans, and Mongols found their way into the plain, and these inroads help us to understand why there are so many types of people living there now. Not unnaturally, the people are of very mixed origin. Thus the famous Mahrattas, who established a powerful kingdom for a time, are the result of the admixture of Scythians and Dravidians. In the Punjab the people are descended from Aryan and Dravidian races. On the border lands of the north-west live Turco-Iranians, who are a mixture of Afghans and Turks, while in Bengal

and Assam the result is seen of the admixture of Mongol and Dravidian races.

When we bear in mind the numerous invasions to which India has been subjected, and how the population is distributed in numerous villages, it is not difficult to understand another interesting feature of Indian life, viz., the caste system, "by which they divide themselves into distinct races or castes of greater or less dignity, and keep these so superstitiously that no one of a higher caste can eat or drink with those of a lower."

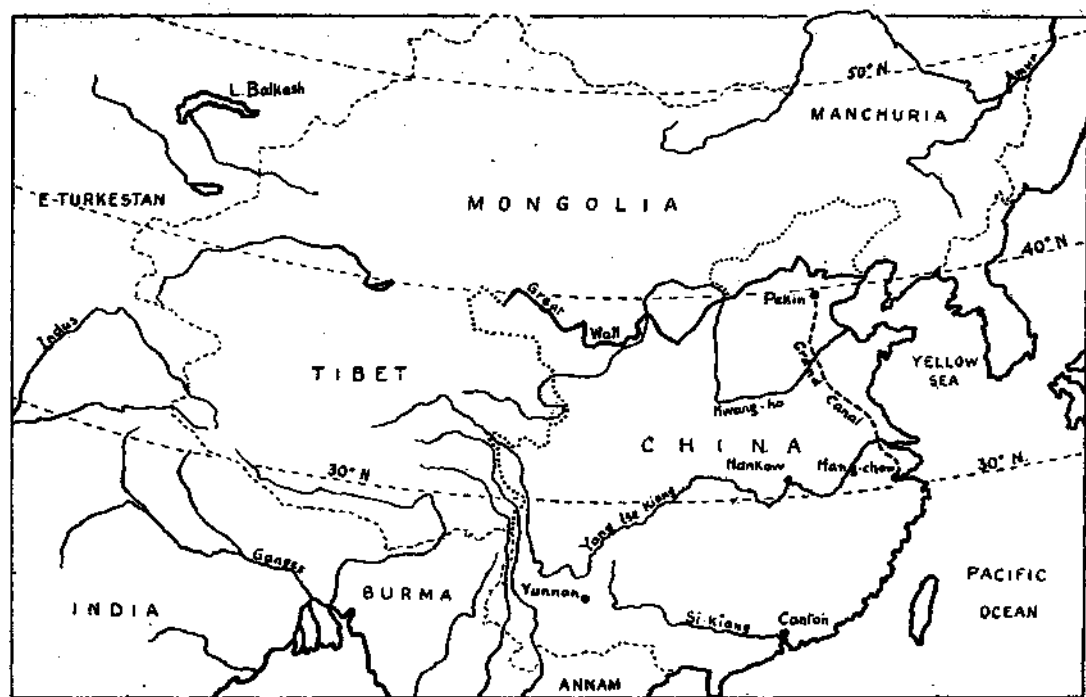
CHAPTER VII.

THE CHINESE RIVER WORLDS.

THE enormous extent of China from north to south can be realised when we note that the river valleys of the Yang-tse-kiang and the Si-kiang lie within the same lines of latitude as Egypt, while the line of latitude 50° N. cuts the basin of the River Amur in Northern China and passes near Lizard Point in Cornwall.

There is a belt of land in China, therefore, which lies in the Trade Wind Desert latitudes, another in the latitude of the Mediterranean, and a third in the south-westerly wind belt. As in the case of India, however, this arrangement of wind belts is interfered with by the opposition of land and water, particularly during the summer.

The climate of China is generally more extreme than that of lands in corresponding latitudes on the western side of Eurasia. Thus the climatic conditions experi-



MAP 6.—CHINA.

THE CHINESE RIVER

enced in the lands north of Peking are severe, whereas, in corresponding latitudes on the Atlantic European coast the climate is mild and equable. The climate of the Chinese Plain, too, is severe compared with that experienced in the Mediterranean area which lies in corresponding latitudes, *e.g.*, the rivers in the north of China, in the latitude of Italy, are frozen in winter. Southern China has a tropical climate, with a long, dry summer and a short, bleak winter. The climate of China illustrates very well the important principle that the east of a continent is generally more extreme, and on the whole much colder than the west. On the western coasts the conditions found over the adjacent ocean are carried to a certain extent inland, or oceanic conditions invade the coastal lands. On the eastern coasts, on the other hand, the severe conditions of the interior of the continent invade, as it were, the coastal lands in the winter season. In the summer, however, the air over Central Asia is at low pressure, and the prevailing winds are on shore and rain-bearing. China is thus, like India, a Monsoon country, and the combination of wet and warm summers makes many parts of China highly productive.

Much of China is mountainous, but there are two extensive areas of low ground, one in the north-east, the other, in the south, consisting chiefly of the Basin of the Si-kiang. The northern plain and the valleys of the northern plains are covered with a very fertile soil known as loess. Climate, soil, and a highly industrious people have made China a great agricultural country, and, indeed, in no country is agriculture so honoured.

"The Emperor himself visits the rice fields every year to show that agriculture is the foundation on which the pros-

perity of the State depends. The Chinese spare no pains to secure good crops, of which they obtain two annually. The embankments of their rice fields are planted with mulberries, which bind the banks together, afford such shade as is required, and also feed thousands of silk-worms. The irrigation ditches are stocked with fish after the rice has ripened, and thus the rice fields furnish another source of food between crops. It is by such wise economy that China feeds an immense population."

As China extends through so many degrees of latitude, and has such a varied surface, it experiences a variety of climates, and this leads to a great variety of productions. Apples, pears, grapes, melons, and walnuts grow in the north, while in the south tropical fruits like the banana, the pine-apple, and the mango flourish. In Northern China cereals and pulses are grown as an early crop. The summer crops of China include sugar, indigo, rice, and cotton. Note that on the well-watered and well-drained slopes of the south large quantities of tea are grown. The staple food of the Chinese is rice, though, as in the case of India, this is replaced by millet in areas where rice cultivation is not possible.

The important part which rivers play in the prosperity of China is well brought out in the following extract from Hugh Murray's *China*:—

"Rivers in China form a conspicuous feature, and minister in the most remarkable degree to its prosperity. They are fed not only from its own mountains, but also from snowy heights of those vast chains which traverse Eastern Tartary. Thence descend the two parallel streams of the Hoang-ho and Yang-tse-kiang, which cross the entire breadth of the Empire.

"One of the most remarkable circumstances attending the Hoang-ho is the extraordinary quantity of mud which it conveys to the ocean*. In this respect it is equalled only by the Nile: and the waters thereby so completely dis-

coloured as to cause it to receive the name of the Yellow River. So deep is the tint, that early travellers hesitated not to pronounce that the suspended earth composed one-third of the whole mass of its current.

"The twin-stream of the Yang-tse-kiang rises apparently at a source considerably farther south and west; perhaps from the boundary chain of Thibet. For a long space it flows south-south-east, in a direction almost opposite to that of its rival, till it enters the frontier-province of Yun-nan, when the rivers are separated by nearly the whole breadth of the Empire. The Yang-tse-kiang, however, now performs a circuit from south to north, after which it waters and fertilises the noble provinces of Se-tchuen, Hou-quang, and Kiang-nan. In this course it becomes parallel to the Hoang-ho, and the two continually approach till their mouths are only distant from each other about 100 miles. The Yang-tse-kiang, in this part of its progress, is bordered by the most splendid cities, the great seats of interior commerce. The navigation along its broad channel resembles that of the sea; and on occasion of a high wind and swell the waves are hardly inferior in height to those of the ocean. When China was divided into two kingdoms, this stream constituted the boundary between them, and the districts immediately adjoining are considered the finest and most populous in the whole country.

"Along the lower course of both these magnificent waters, the crowds of vessels passing up and down, deeply laden with valuable cargoes or gaily adorned for pleasure—the numerous towns, of which the more striking edifices are seen stretching several miles along the banks—the hills covered with villas and rich cultivation—present a more gorgeous scene, perhaps, than any other in the world.

"Numerous other rivers, such as might rank with the Rhine, the Elbe, or the Po, water the different provinces; but none of them can be compared to those just described. Most of the smaller ones which flow north and south across the great valleys are received by either of the two great trunks. Others which irrigate the maritime provinces, taking their rise in the neighbouring mountains, have only the breadth of the intervening plain to traverse before reaching the ocean; yet, as each of these districts may rank in extent with a European kingdom, the river which fertilises it, and

forms the channel of its commerce, becomes a very important geographical feature. The value of these waters, moreover, has been wonderfully enhanced by the canals which unite them.

"Lakes cannot be considered as prominent objects in the geographical system of China; yet there are two—the Tong-ting in Hon-quang, and the Po-yang in Kiangsee—the former about 250 miles in circuit, the latter nearly half that size. There are also chains of small lakes along the great canal and in other quarters. These sheets of water, and the numerous enclosed bays, are chiefly remarkable for the crowded population which they support, being almost covered with barks and vessels, the inmates of which have no other habitation, and subsist entirely by fishing.

"Notwithstanding the singular qualities which distinguish the physical geography of China, the object of interest is the remarkable people by whom that country is possessed. They have, indeed, laboured to overcome Nature—to bring its boldest scene under the control of industry and art.

"Not only has the native vegetation been everywhere superseded by culture, but the highest mountains have been levelled and terraced almost to their tops; cities have been built upon them, and extensive ranges of wall erected along their summits. They practise upon a vast scale all the industrial arts, whether rural or manufacturing, and maintain a population the most numerous that is anywhere united under one system of rule. Five hundred years ago they were undoubtedly the most civilised nation on earth, with the doubtful exception of the Hindoos.

"Since that time, indeed, the Europeans, by their rapid advances in science, and in the arts both useful and ornamental, have far surpassed all the inhabitants of the East. Still, the Chinese seem fully entitled to stand next in order, while they have the additional right to boast of a much more ancient improvement. Their civilisation, too, has been developed under peculiar forms altogether differing from those which are presented by the nations of the west. This dissimilarity is perhaps as wide as can possibly exist between two races of beings having the same common natures and wants.

"A few people, among whom inventions which are esteemed

the pride of modern Europe—the compass, gunpowder, printing—were known and practised many centuries earlier—who probably amount to more than two hundred millions united in one system of manners, letters and polity—who in every province have towns that rival the greatest capitals in our part of the world—who have not only covered every spot of earth with inhabitants but have streets and cities on the waters—such a nation must indeed occupy a conspicuous place in the history of mankind."

An examination of a physical map shows clearly that China Proper is cut off in a very marked way both from the Steppes of Eurasia and from India. The distance between Southern China to the Ganges is not considerable, but the country is of a very difficult nature. The mountain ranges of Further India run roughly north and south, with great rivers in the dividing valleys. Further, the mountains lying in the track of the Monsoons receive a very heavy rainfall, and their slopes are amongst the most densely forested regions in the world. Access from China to India by sea was also difficult in ancient times as the journey from Canton to the mouth of the Ganges is over 3000 miles. Nor is the way by Tibet and Himalayas practicable, as the climate of this plateau land is one of the most severe in the world, and there are no convenient passes in the mountains. The Chinese pilgrims of ancient days who wished to visit the Holy Cities of India—the religion of China is chiefly Buddhism—had to take a circuitous journey from Central China. They journeyed through Mongolia, skirting the north of the Plateau of Tibet, and so into Eastern Turkestan, then by way of the passes in the Hindukush they reached the Ganges Valley. There are records of a journey made in A.D. 399 by a Buddhist priest who reached Patna Benares, and other hallowed places by way of the

Hindukush. The use of an indirect route of this kind shows how completely China is cut off from India. The access to China is not nearly so difficult from the north, and, as in the case of India, her history has been powerfully affected by the inroads of nomadic tribes from this quarter.

There are authentic records of Chinese history which go back to 1000 B.C., and tradition speaks of events which occurred even 3000 B.C. Up to about 200 B.C. China was divided into a number of Feudal States, between which there was much warfare. The people had, however, attained a high stage of civilisation. They possessed a written language. Their books were made of thin slips of wood, and their pens consisted of pencils of wood frayed at the end, by which the ink or coloured liquid was transferred to the tablet. To the feudal age belonged Confucius (551-579 B.C.), whose teaching the Chinese pay the greatest respect and reverence.

A great wall, extending from Peking to Tibet, was built by one of the early Emperors to keep out invaders from the north. This particular Emperor, known as the First Emperor, was the first ruler of a united China, and he organised a great army to fight the Huns. He died about 200 B.C., but his good work was continued by his successor, and during the next 400 years China made great progress. The Huns were kept in check, and the limits of China were extended. The Chinese came into touch even with an outlying Greek Province, one result of which was the introduction into their country of the grape vine. During the Middle Ages, China suffered at the hands of the Mongols, who came by way of the northern passes. The most famous of the Mongol Emperors was Kublai Khan, during whose reign the famous Grand Canal, connecting Peking and Canton, was

designed and constructed. By about the middle of the fourteenth century the power of the Mongols had decayed, and for about three centuries the Chinese were freed from a foreign yoke and had native Emperors. Then followed another conquest of the country by a people from the north—the Manchus—who then became the ruling class.

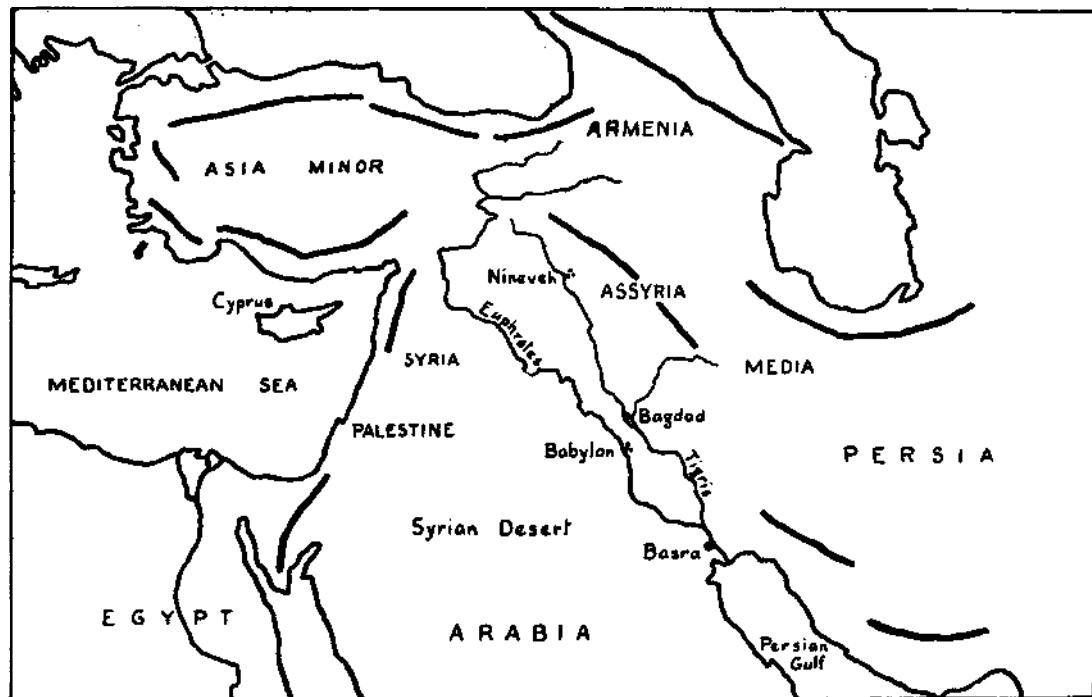
CHAPTER VIII.

BETWEEN THE IRAN PLATEAU AND ARABIA.

THE Basin of the Euphrates and Tigris lies to the west of the Persian Uplands, and to the east of the Syrian and Arabian Deserts. The two rivers unite before entering the Persian Gulf, and the combined stream is then named the Shat-el-Arab.

As in the case of the Nile, the lower basin was the seat of a civilisation dating from very remote times. Much of the course of both rivers lies in the mountainous region north of Arabia. The middle portion consists of steppe land supporting a scattered nomad population, while the lower basin, made up of the alluvial soil brought down by the rivers, is exceedingly fertile under skilful management. The flooding of the rivers occurs in spring, when the snows of the Armenian Mountains melt, and under a system of irrigation enormous crops can be grown on the plain.

The difficulties of irrigation in this region are, however, much greater than in the case of the Nile. The upper reaches of the latter are converted into a huge swamp, through the choking of the river channels by enormous



MAP 7.—THE EUPHRATES-TIGRIS BASIN.

quantities of vegetation. Between Lado and Fashoda, too, the general surface is so level that the current becomes very slow. These checks to the current are important as all the heavier silt is thrown down before Egypt Proper is reached, and the river then flows as a placid stream, depositing only fine fertilising mud on the flooded banks.

The Euphrates and Tigris, on the contrary, for rivers of their length are very rapid, thus bringing down enormous quantities of silt, which has, from time to time, choked up the channels and caused disastrous floods.

Observe that the very ancient Kingdom of Babylonia occupied the lower valley of the Euphrates and Tigris. Enormous quantities of corn were raised in this fertile, irrigated area. The climate and soil are suitable for the growth of the date palm, so important as a source of food for man. It was also a great sheep-rearing district, and Babylon was famous for the manufacture of woollen goods.

As the capital of this kingdom, Babylon was a centre which carried on a great trade with the surrounding districts. By way of the Upper Euphrates and Tigris it could obtain wine, olive oil, timber, and stone. East of the Tigris, the hill region was rich in timber and minerals. Still farther to the east lay India, while to the west the district merged into the Arabian Desert.

The founders of Babylonia were probably men from Central Asia, who crossed the Persian Plateau at some very remote time, and settled down to an agricultural life in the fertile land of the Delta. They were joined later by Arabs, and by about 2000 B.C. there was a powerful Babylonian Empire.

Babylonia was surrounded by peoples who played a

great part in ancient history, and there are frequent references to them in the Bible. Thus the Assyrians, who established a great Empire, lived higher up the river valley than the people of Babylonia. Their great city was Nineveh on the Tigris. The Bible tells us how Assyrian kings invaded the land of Canaan and took many of the Israelites into captivity. We are told, too, of the great power of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, who also conquered Canaan, and took many of its people into his own country as slaves. One of the captives was the Prophet Daniel, who interpreted the writing on the wall for King Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar. To the east of Babylon was the land of the Medes and Persians, who are also referred to in the Scriptures. The Medes and Persians were fine horsemen and great fighters. It was Darius, a great Persian King, who conquered Belshazzar, and who afterwards took Daniel into his favour. The Persians were men of their word, and their great aims in life were "to ride, to shoot straight, and to tell the truth." When the Persians were conquered by the Greeks under Alexander the Great, the whole district formed part of Alexander's great Empire.

During the Middle Ages the region was included in the Saracen Empire. The Arabs neglected the irrigation works, and thus turned thousands of square miles of fertile land into barren desert. Bagdad and Basra now acquired importance, the former as a great centre of converging caravan routes, and of the traffic up and down the Tigris, the latter on account of its position on the Shat-el-Arab. This plain, however, once a garden of the Lord, is now, thanks to the blight of the Saracen and the later Turkish dominion, nothing but a fever-breeding swamp.

PART III.

INLAND SEA CIVILISATIONS.

CHAPTER IX.

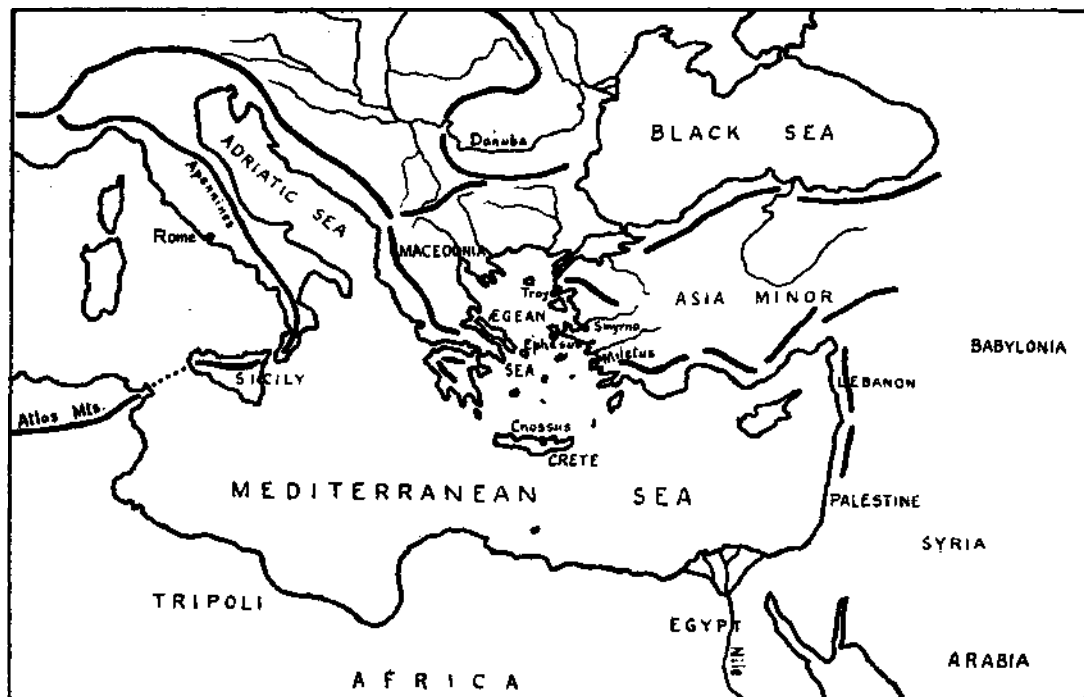
THE ^GEAN.

IN the preceding chapters we have read how important certain areas, like the Nile Valley, the valley of the Euphrates and Tigris, the river worlds of India and China, have been in the history of man's conquest over nature.

In this chapter we propose considering, not a river valley, but a portion of the great inland Mediterranean Sea, which is of surpassing interest in the history of civilisation. An examination of the map shows you that the eastern portion of the Mediterranean is almost landlocked. Access from it by water to the Western Mediterranean is only possible on either side of Sicily, which is also a link between Africa and Italy.

The physical feature which determines the western boundary is a system of folded mountains, similar to those which have been referred to in earlier chapters. These are the Apennines, the Sicilian Mountains, and the Atlas Mountains. Folded mountains also skirt the Adriatic Sea.

The Balkan Peninsula, the region south of the Eiver Danube, consists of mountainous land, the mountain masses separating a number of river valleys. The main slope of the land, as the course of the rivers shows, is



MAP 8.—THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN.

towards the Ægean Sea, which is studded with innumerable islands. These islands are really remnants of mountain systems, which, in the neighbourhood of the Ægean, have been submerged.

East of the Ægean lies Asia Minor, which is a vast plateau, 3000 to 5000 feet above sea-level, fringed with a low-lying coast land, much broken on the west into islets and promontories.

Asia Minor is separated from the Balkan Peninsula by the Sea of Marmora, which is connected with the Black Sea by the Bosphorus, and with the Ægean by the Dardanelles.

Glancing for a moment at the southern shore of the Eastern Mediterranean, note that the River Nile has built an enormous delta right into it, while to the west of the Delta, in Tripoli, the desert conditions of the Sahara come right down to the shore. Syria, separated from the desert-plateau of Arabia by the mountains of Lebanon, forms the eastern shores of this portion of the Mediterranean. South of the main heights of the Lebanons lies Palestine, while part of the coastal strip was occupied by the Phoenicians, who early established a great maritime empire.

In the Ægean area, as in the case of the Nile Valley and in Babylonia, great progress was made in very early times by man. Many interesting discoveries have been made by scholars who have made excavations in places which formed the sites of very ancient towns. Thus, at Cnossus, in Crete, recent excavations have unearthed "splendid royal palaces, with sculptured reliefs and paintings, metal work, engraved gems, and pottery. The drainage and sanitary arrangements of the palace at Cnossus are worthy of the twentieth century A.D." It is interesting to note that the Cretans were the first

people in Europe to use writing. Interesting discoveries of a similar nature have also been made on the mainland of Modern Greece. All this wonderful development dates from before 2000 B.C. This early people, who had made so much progress, came originally from Northern Africa, had dark hair, and were somewhat short of stature.

Let us now note some of the advantages which this region possesses as a home for early civilisation. Considering communications first, note that the islands which dot the Ægean must have been a great aid to men when beginning to learn the art of navigation. They were sign-posts telling these early sailors their position. The coasts of the Ægean are very much indented, and the capes and promontories were useful for the same reason. As we have pointed out, the mainland on both sides of the Ægean is very mountainous, and it is in the river valleys between the mountains that plains are found. Towns sprang up on these plains near the coast, and it is obvious that communication between these valleys was difficult by land and comparatively easy by sea. The Ægean requires careful navigation, as it contains some treacherous currents. It is not surprising to find, therefore, that these early peoples became skilful sailors and developed commerce. We should note in passing, that the Mediterranean, unlike the seas surrounding our shores, has no tides.

Crete was probably the chief centre of this early Ægean Empire, and an examination of a map will enable you to realise the advantages possessed by this island. It occupies the central position in the Eastern Mediterranean, and was thus splendidly situated to trade with, the surrounding regions.

Turning now to other advantages, this will be a convenient point at which to make a further reference to

the effect of winds upon the climate of a region. We have already observed that in the north of Africa a large tract of country is desert because the prevailing winds are north-east, blowing from a colder to a warmer region, and thus becoming better able to retain moisture. When studying the winter conditions in steppe lands, it was shown that when air is drawn from higher elevations earthwards there will be no rain, as in this case also the air becomes warmer as it approaches the earth.

Now, in the summer, the region with which we are now dealing lies partly in a belt within which the air is descending to feed the Trades, which blow south-westwards and partly within the belt in which the Trades blow. In either case these conditions will bring no rain. In the winter season, on the other hand, the area lies in the south-westerly wind belt, and these winds bring rain. Further, in the winter season, air over the surrounding land masses is at a relatively high pressure compared with that over the inland sea. Hence we get cyclones formed, i.e., moving areas of low pressure in the centre of which air is ascending to higher elevations. The air cooled in this way parts with its moisture and falls as rain. During the winter season, also, cyclonic, rain-bearing storms reach this region from the Atlantic.

The climate of this region can be thus described in general terms as follows: The summer is a season of drought; rain comes in winter. As temperature depends mainly on distance from the Equator and elevation, the summers are hot, and even the winters are mild. The presence of the sea has a moderating effect, particularly when the winds are on-shore. Further, these conditions will be greatly modified on the higher parts, as they will receive more rain and experience a lower temperature.

The surprising variety of climates and types of vegeta-

tion found in the Ægean area, and the effect of these on man's oocupation in primitive times, are referred to in the following interesting extracts:—

"From pine forests above, we pass through great woods of deciduous oak and Spanish chestnut, now sadly destroyed, down into olive, figs, and vine. Interspersed, oasis-like, in scrubland lie small alluvial plains, screened and secluded, well watered in winter by ample rain, in spring by melting snows above, and in summer by many deep-seated springs. These last are fringed with plane, tamarisk, and oleander, and are capable of maintaining irrigated crops of beans and cucumbers all through the great heat. In this soil and climate the year falls into three parts, not four as in Italy or the north; the *reaping season' begins on the coast in May, and ends in the uplands in July; then without delay comes the *fruit season' with vintage, figs, and olive crops in their turn, and time enough for autumn ploughing and sowing, before the winter rains. Then, in this *storm season,' from December to February, the flocks are recalled off the hills, and man and beast alike remain near home; but in March, days lengthen, buds burst, children and lambs break bounds uphill. For a brief six weeks, between the rains and the heat, the spring flowers—annuals, bulbs, dry-rooted anemones, and evergreen rock-rose, sage, and rosemary—make Nature unspeakably beautiful and fragrant.

" On the margin of this gardener's paradise lies the sea. On this we may go in simple canoes at first, long, lean, with high prow and stern; and later, with great ships of many oars, and a single mast and wide square-sail. We fish, we dredge shells of many kinds and uses, we dive for urchins and rich merchandise of sponges. Above all, we go over to other lands, and see other men, with our sponges, our dried fish, or oil and raisins, wine and olives, our pot stone gems and vessels, our gay pottery with the flowers and foliage patterns; it is much better than theirs. But there is stone in their hills that makes knife-edges keener than our flint. With the summer wind and the current that always sets so, we can go south too, to the palm country where they are sitting under the trees whenever we go, and doing no work at all;

and so on by the east, to the lagoons and the great river where the king's palaces and wall-paintings are bigger than anything of ours."

About 1400 B.C. the early inhabitants of these Ægean lands suffered invasion at the hands of a hardier race who crossed the Balkans. Some of the original inhabitants left their homes and settled elsewhere. One section, a people known to history as the Philistines, of whom we read in the Bible, settled near the Israelites. Another section, so it is supposed, sailed into the Western Mediterranean and settled in Italy, and founded Etruria. The greater number, however, remained, and by degrees conquerors and conquered became one people, known as Greeks.

Note that Phrygia occupied the north-west of Asia Minor, one of whose famous cities was Troy, which was besieged by these early Greeks for ten years. The story of the struggle is recounted in the *Iliad* of the great Greek poet, Homer.

Again, about 900 B.C., there was a further invasion of Greece from the north at the hands of the Dorians. Large numbers of the other Greek race—the Ionian and Æolians—then left the mainland, and migrated to the islands of the Ægean Sea. Some settled on the coast of Asia Minor, and soon this coast and the neighbouring islands were filled with flourishing commercial cities, one of which was Smyrna. The Ionian settled chiefly in Lydia, which was at this time the buffer state between the Greeks and the empires in the East. They founded the famous cities of Miletus and Ephesus. Meanwhile the Phoenicians, who occupied a strip of the Syrian coast, had established a great commerce, and we shall refer to their exploits in the chapter on Ancient Commerce.

* Myers : *The Dawn of History*.

The Greeks ousted the Phoenicians from the trade in the Eastern Mediterranean, and also established many colonies in the Western Mediterranean. They did not, however, become a united people, as their country was subdivided into a number of separate provinces. Greece was really a number of small independent city-states. There can be little doubt that the mountainous nature of Greece, which made communication by land difficult, helped to prevent the establishment of a united Greek State. When colonies were established, they were quite independent of the parent city, and governed themselves.

That which distinguished the Greeks from other peoples of those far-off days was their civilisation. In all kinds of learning they were the great pioneers, and, even to this day, their work in some of these departments remains unexcelled. They were filled with the spirit of inquiry and investigation, and were keenly alive to the beauty of the world in which they lived. The possession of this spirit of looking at the world around them in this way was something new, and was Greece's great gift to the world.

The most renowned city-state of the Greeks was Athens, which for a time became the leader amongst her sister states. Union became necessary, as the Persians were threatening their independence. Despite the great power of Persia, the Greeks were able to inflict upon her crushing defeats both on land and on sea. Land victories at Marathon and Platea and the defeat of the Persian fleet at Salamis relieved the Greeks from all fears of a Persian tyranny.

Subsequently, however, when the Persian danger was removed, the Greek States fell to fighting amongst themselves, and thus weakened by a long civil war were unable to withstand the power of Philip of Macedonia,

Philip's son, Alexander the Great, as we have read in Chapter IV., in accordance with his father's "projected plan, invaded the Persian Empire, and led his armies across the mountain barrier even to the plains of India.

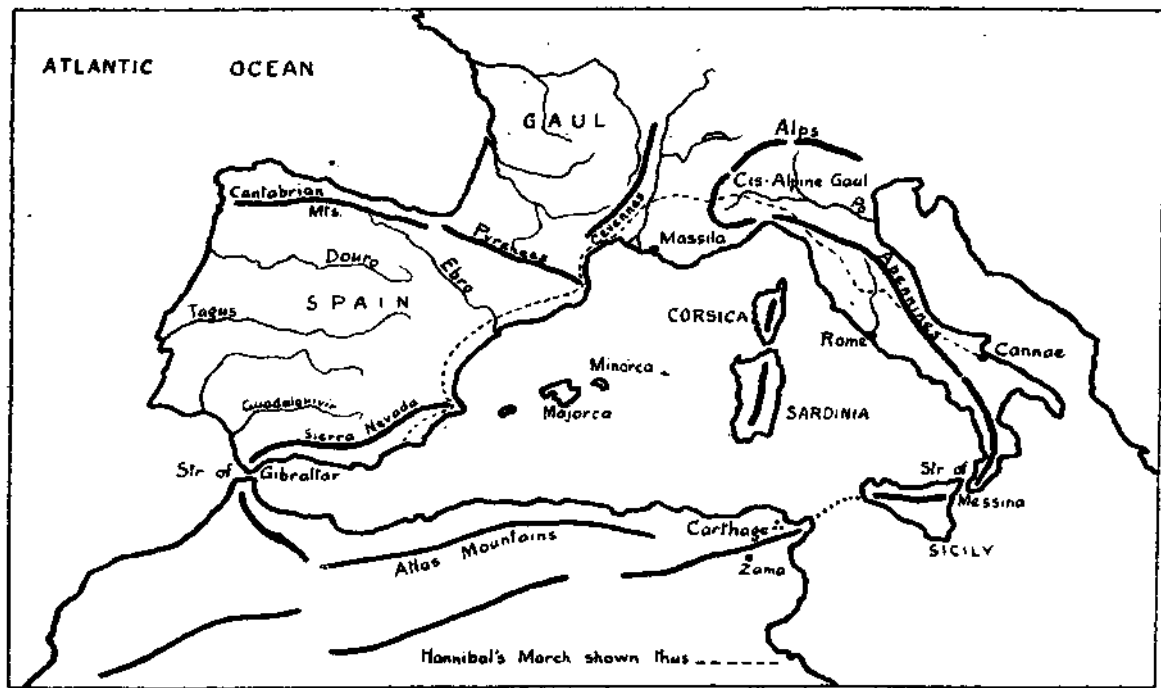
In our next chapter we propose touching briefly on the Western Mediterranean, and we shall read how the Macedonian power fell, in its turn, before the rising power of Rome.

CHAPTER X.

THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN.

WE will now turn to the other natural division of the Mediterranean area, its western half. Here, again, folded mountain systems form a natural boundary that almost completely encircles it, as the accompanying diagram shows. In the north the Pyrenees, the Southern Cevennes, and the Alps; in the east the Apennines and the Sicilian Mountains; in the south the Atlas Range, which is a continuation of the latter, form natural boundaries. Observe, too, that the folded system of the Atlas is broken through at the Straits of Gibraltar, and reappears in the Sierra Nevada of Southern Spain; Majorca and Minorca are further continuations of the same system.

The Iberian Peninsula, the land between the Cantabrian Mountains and the Pyrenees in the north and the Sierra Nevada in the south, consists of a vast plateau, the surface of which has been furrowed by the action of four rivers flowing westwards, the Douro, the Tagus, the Guadal-



MAP 9.—THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN.

quiver, and—to a less degree—by rivers flowing eastwards, the most important of which is the Ebro—

It will not be necessary to describe the climate of this region, as its main features have been already outlined in the preceding chapter. The conditions in the Western Mediterranean, however, differ somewhat from those experienced in the Eastern Mediterranean. Note that it lies nearer to the Atlantic Ocean, and also in more northerly latitudes. The climate is therefore less extreme than in the east. The rainfall is heavier, particularly in Portugal, in Western Italy, and on the windward side of the Atlas Mountains. We are still in a region of corn, wine, and oil; but in the wetter parts, as in Northern Italy, cattle-rearing becomes more important, and the conditions, generally, resemble those experienced in Northern Europe. In a general way, however, we may say, as in the case of the Eastern Mediterranean, that the summer is a season of drought, and that the winter is the rainy season. In the winter the area lies in the south-westerly wind belt, while in summer the prevailing winds are dry north-easterlies.

The avenues into the Western Mediterranean, both by land and sea, have played an important part in the history of this region. We have already pointed out that colonists from the Eastern Mediterranean had settled at various ports in this region at an early period. The civilisation which had its centre at Crete spread into the area. The Phoenicians established towns in Spain, and their descendants settling on the African coast made Carthage the centre of the great Carthaginian Empire. The Greeks also established numerous colonies in the Western Mediterranean, one — Massila — occupying the site of the modern Marseilles. The natural gateway of these immigrants was, of course, by way of the Straits of Messina or

the sea way between Sicily and the mainland of Africa, known as the Sicilian Gate.

Long before the arrival of the Greeks and the establishment of the Carthaginian Empire, however, men of Aryan race, the ancestors of the Romans, had found their way into the peninsula now known as Italy, just as the ancestors of the Greeks at about the same remote period crossed the Balkans into the Ægean region. Another branch of the Aryan race found its way across the Alps also, and made settlements in Italy. These were Celts. The main stream of this race, however, passed westwards, and settled in Gaul and Britain. The Valley of the River Po was called by the Romans Cis-Alpine Gaul, *i.e.*, the Gaul on their side of the Alps. The Gauls were a terrible menace to Rome in the days when it was only a small struggling city, beset by many enemies, and in 390 B.C. they burned Rome to the ground.

To the north of the Plain of Latium, on which Rome stood, lay the land of the Etruscans, who were skilful seamen, and made piratical raids on the lands bordering the Western Mediterranean. Who these Etruscans were it is not certainly known, but a study of their language proves that they were not of Aryan race. For a time the Etruscans acquired great power, and their princes became Kings of Rome. Not only were the plain dwellers threatened with danger from Etruscan pirates, but their flocks and herds were coveted by the surrounding hill tribes, who waged a perpetual war upon them.

You will now be in a position to understand the following interesting reference to the beginnings of the Roman City State :—

"On a ring of hills by the banks of the Tiber, 14 miles from its mouth, there stood in the early centuries of the first millennium, groups of rude huts surrounded by a stockade, where

shepherds took refuge with their flocks when raiders descended on them from the Sabine Hills. As time went on—several of these hamlets were united within a single ring-wall, and a town came into being. It occupied a favoured spot as the natural market of the Plain of Latium where the Tiber still was navigable, and there was little fear of the Etruscan pirates that harried the coast. The inhabitants of the plain had from early times been united for mutual defence from the Highlanders in a league sanctioned by religious ceremonial, under the presidency of Alba; the city by the Tiber formed one of the members of the confederacy. The league was called the Latin League; the city on the Tiber was Home.

"We can trace in broad outline the beginnings of the growth of Rome. Before the first landmark in her history—the expulsion of the kings and establishment of the Republic at the close of the sixth century—she had risen already to the chief place among the Latin cities, had secured the Tiber bank to the port of Ostia at its mouth, and developed political institutions and an organised citizen army. In the sixth century it appears that Rome became the capital of Etruscan princes who bore sway over Southern Etruria and the whole Plain of Latium. The expulsion of the kings meant the overthrow of this foreign dominion; Rome became once more one of many Latin confederate towns. The Etruscan overlords had laid the foundations of the future splendour of Rome; fragments of architecture—such as the stone wall ascribed to Servius Tullius—remain as witness of their skill; in the words of Montesquieu, 'Already they had begun the building of the Eternal City!'"¹

A good idea of the kind of people the Romans were can be gathered from the kinds of legends that won belief among them.

"Take one legend only out of many—the tale how the three Horatii championed Rome in combat against three Curiatii of Alba. Two of the former were slain; the unbounded Horatius held the field alone against his three antagonists. Feigning flight, he vanquished them singly, crippled as they were by wounds. As he returned to Rome

¹ *The Legacy of Greece and Rome* (Do Burgh).

bearing the spoils, his sister, betrothed to one of the slain Curiatii, broke out in lamentation; her brother slew her on the spot. He was condemned for murder, but acquitted of guilt by the people, in that he had wrought justice on one who mourned the enemies of Rome. Let us mark the significance of the story. It is profoundly true that the fortune of Rome brought her enemies upon her one by one. Her wars again and again open with disaster, they all way close in victory. From earliest days the Romans lived and died for their country/¹

It is not part of our purpose to narrate the successive steps by which Koine's power was extended, so that within her empire were included not only the lands bordering the Mediterranean, but much of North-Western Europe. It will be well, however, to bear certain points in mind. First, the years 510-270 B.C. saw the rise of Rome to be mistress of Italy. During the years 264-212 B.C. she was engaged in a life and death struggle with Carthage. A great Carthaginian general, Hannibal, even led his forces across the Alps from Spain into Italy, and inflicted a terrible disaster upon the Romans at Cannae (216 B.C.). Rome, however, did not despair, but still persisted with the struggle, so that finally Hannibal was defeated at Zama in 202 B.C., and the city of Carthage was razed to the ground.

By the middle of the second century Rome was acknowledged the chief power throughout the Mediterranean. In the west she ruled over Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica, Cis-Alpine Gaul, Spain, and the southern shore lands of the Western Mediterranean. In the east her provinces included Macedonia, Greece, much of Asia Minor. Further she controlled the foreign relations of Egypt, Syria, and a large number of smaller states which adjoined her provinces in east and west.

¹ *The Legacy of Greece and Rome.*

All portions of the Empire were bound together by a magnificent system of roads. Roman farmer-soldiers settled in each district added, and were the governing class in the midst of conquered enemies.

After the expulsion of the Etruscan Kings, Rome adopted the republican form of government, and she remained a Republic until 27 A.D., when Augustus, the nephew of Julius Cæsar, took the title of Emperor, and it is from that date that the history of the Roman Empire, as distinct from that of the Roman Republic, commences.

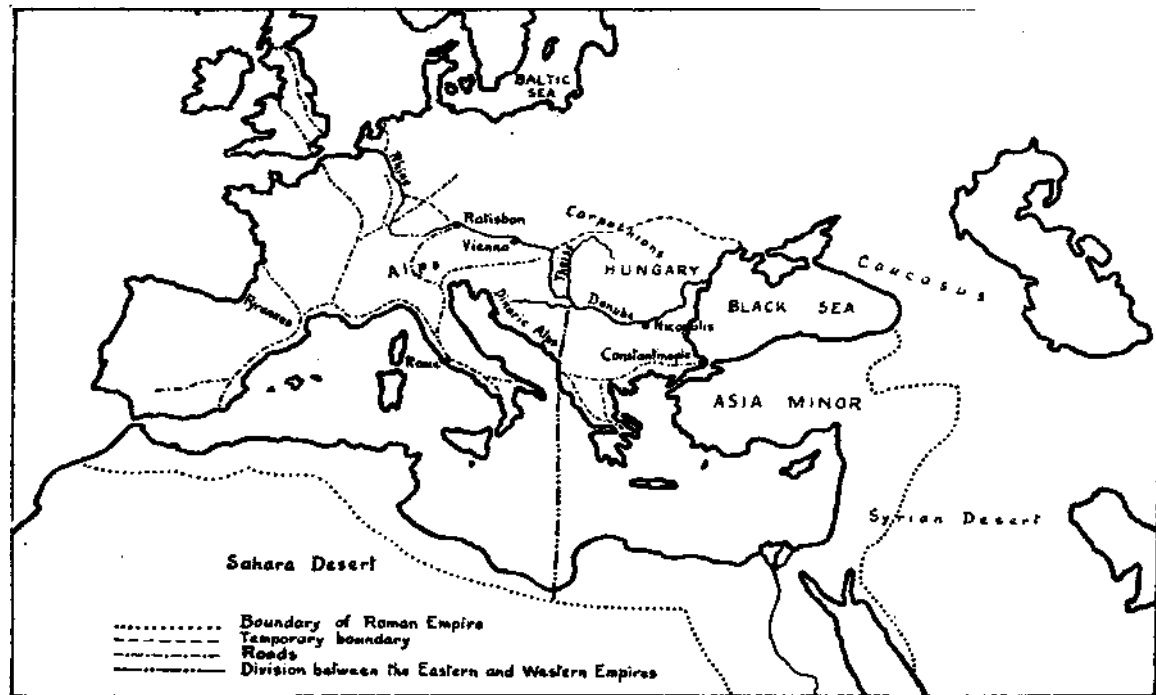
In our next chapter we propose touching very briefly on the extent of the Empire in relation to Geography.

CHAPTER XI.

THE EXTENT OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

REFERENCE has already been made to the beginnings of the extension of Rome's power in the Mediterranean area, and it will be our purpose, in this chapter, to consider the map of Europe as it stood when the Empire had reached its greatest limits.

Before doing this, let us first note the divisions into which Europe naturally falls. One division consists of the lands bordering the Mediterranean Sea. The system of folded mountains stretching from the Pyrenees to the Caucasus forms its northern boundary. Its true southern boundary is the Sahara, which is a far more formidable barrier than the mountain boundary. On the east there is mountainous land in Asia Minor, and desert in Syria.



MAP 10.—THE EXTENT OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

The climate is marked, as we have seen, by hot summers and mild winters. The summer is a season of drought, and rain falls in winter. The most important products of the area are corn, wine, and oil. Sheep, goats, and in the wetter parts cattle, are the important animals. Fowls are naturally reared in large numbers in this corn-growing region, and are a valuable source of food.

The second division consists of the land forming the western sea-board. Here the prevailing winds are the south-westerlies. Rain falls at all seasons, but the fall is greatest during the winter. The nearness to the sea, the warm ocean drifts, and the warm winds, ensure an equable climate for this region. The natural vegetation consists of forests of deciduous trees, replaced in the higher parts by hardier cone-bearing trees. For the most part these forests have been felled by man, and the land has been brought under cultivation.

The pastures are naturally rich, and cattle are reared in large numbers. The climate admits of the growth of corn, wheat, barley, and in the colder and wetter parts, oats and rye. Butter as a fat food takes the place of the oil of the Mediterranean man; beer, brewed from barley, replaces wine, and northern peoples, when compared with their Mediterranean brothers, are much greater eaters of flesh foods, as is natural in a great cattle-rearing region.

The interior of the continent forms a third natural division of Europe. This consists mainly of steppe land, the general nature of which has been described in an earlier chapter.

Northwards the steppe merges into forests of deciduous trees, which, in turn, merge into the hardier conifers. Proceeding northwards, the severe cold permits of only the scantiest kind of vegetation, as found in the Tundra region. Southwards and eastwards the steppe merges

into desert. In addition to the broad differences in climate and vegetation which have been noted above, these natural regions present other points of contrast.

The Mediterranean is a tideless sea, whereas the continental shelf on the west makes the tides exceptionally high. This renders the rivers of Western Europe much more valuable for commerce, as the tides penetrate, by means of the rivers, a considerable distance inland.

The western rivers rise well inland and are long, whereas those of the Mediterranean area partake more of the nature of mountain torrents, and the enormous amount of material which they carry into the tideless sea forms deltas and bars at their mouths. Again, the shallow western seas form excellent feeding grounds for enormous numbers of fish, while the deep Mediterranean is comparatively poor in fish, particularly those that are edible.

The rivers of the eastern province differ from both in that for some months they are ice-bound. Further, they flow into inland or ice-bound seas—the Baltic, the Black and Caspian Seas, and the cold Arctic Ocean. Note in particular the Rhine and the Danube, which flow, roughly speaking, at right angles to each other, and run very near the lines dividing the three main regions which we have described.

Now, in the light of the above, let us examine the extent of the Roman Empire. The accompanying diagram shows you its more permanent boundaries, while those additions which were of a more temporary nature are marked by a dotted line.

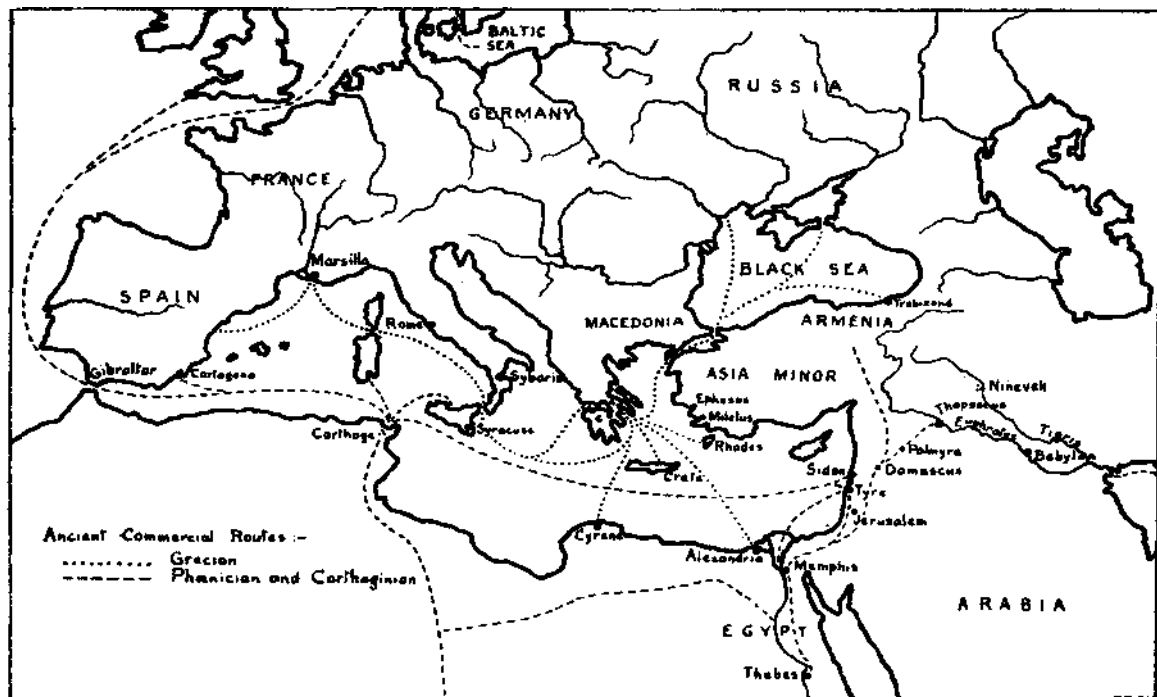
An examination of the map shows that the Roman Empire was mainly a Mediterranean Empire. Yet it extended its rule beyond the strict limits of this area. In the region of very cold winters, the third of the

natural divisions, Rome was unable to plant its power for a considerable period. The region surrounded by the Carpathians, watered by the Theiss, a tributary of the Danube, you will observe, was held only temporarily. Nor was Rome successful beyond the Rhine; but west of this river, into the western region, where the winters are milder, she extended her sway into Britain.

To the south and south-east the desert regions formed the natural boundaries, while to the east the Persians and their descendants, the Parthians, were able to prevent Rome establishing a sure foothold upon the Plateau of Iran.

Note that the rivers Rhine and Danube were chosen as the northern boundaries of the Empire, as it was found easier to prevent the passage of the barbarian tribes across them than to hold mountain frontiers. Some of the forts built by the Romans along these rivers developed into important towns, interesting examples of which are Ratisbon and Vienna.

A magnificent network of roads was built throughout the Empire, by means of which military forces were easily hurried up to any centre of disturbance or attack. Along these roads, particularly where two or more crossed, or where a road and a river crossed at a bridge, important towns sprang up. This interesting question of town and town sites we shall return to in a succeeding chapter, and we must turn from the consideration of the limits of the Roman Empire in relation to Geography to the reverse side of the picture, and note how this mighty Empire fell in the west before invaders from the north, and at a much later date in the east before the Turks.



MAP 11.—ANCIENT COMMERCIAL ROUTES.

CHAPTER XII.

THE COMMENCE OF ANCIENT TIMES.

IN an earlier chapter the progress of people* from one stage to another was noted. We saw that a nomadic life was succeeded by a settled, agricultural state. Then industries were developed, and the life of progressive peoples wore much the same complexion as it does in our own days.

In each stage the wants of people were increased, and they could not be satisfied by the products of the immediate neighbourhood. These increased wants, and a desire for a higher standard of living, led to the development of commerce, and it is to a brief outline of this in ancient times that we propose devoting this chapter. In many respects we shall find that this differs in no wise from that of to-day, as the productions of an area depend mainly upon its climate, and this is unalterable by the agency of man.

In studying commerce from the point of view of Geography, we have to seek information with regard to three topics:—

(1) The productions of the areas between which it is carried on.

(2) The routes employed and the means of transport.

(3) The development of towns and ports.

As we have seen Egypt and Babylonia were rich, productive areas, and commerce sprang up between them at a very early date. On the Plain of the Euphrates and Tigris stood the famous cities of Babylon and Nineveh; on the banks of the Nile were two cities equally renowned—Memphis, which occupied the site of the modern Cairo,

and higher up the river, Thebes. Between Egypt and Babylon and Nineveh regular trading relations were carried on by means of camels. The route from Babylon followed the Valley of the Euphrates for a considerable distance, then struck across to the oasis at Palmyra, thence to Damascus, which commands a route to the south of the Lebanon Mountains. The traders then made use of the Syrian Coast and the Isthmus of Suez to reach Memphis. Note that in one part of their journey they touched at Tyre, the famous Phoenician city, while along the Syrian coast they passed close to Jerusalem.

Memphis was admirably placed for collecting the products of Egypt. Goods could be brought there both from the Delta and from up-stream by means of boats. Below the cataract the transport of goods by boats was a simple matter, as the current carried them down-stream, while the prevailing winds, which, in this region are north-east, made possible the effective use of sails for up-stream traffic.

Then, as now, Egypt produced large quantities of corn, deer, cotton, and flax; further, the Egyptians made fine linen and cotton cloth, and were skilful potters. In return for these they took wool, ivory, gold-dust, spices, slaves, and the manufactured goods of Babylon.

The Egyptians themselves were not fond of commerce, and preferred this to be carried on for them by foreigners. At first this was done by the Phoenicians, and later by the Greeks. Particularly noteworthy were the exploits of the former. From their centres of Tyre and Sidon they traded in all directions, both by land and sea. Phoenicia itself was mainly an industrial country, manufacturing such things as purple-dyed robes, fine cloths and carpets, works in precious metals, in ivory and amber, and even in glass. From all quarters of the then known world the

Phoenicians imported raw material in exchange for their finished goods.

One of their early discoveries was Spain, whence they obtained silver, gold, tin, lead, iron, corn, wine, oil, and wool. The discovery of Spain, with its great mineral resources, brought immense wealth to the Phoenicians, and enabled them to still further develop their commerce. By way of Gibraltar they skirted the west of Europe, and entered into trading relations with Britain and the Baltic countries. From the former they obtained the tin of Cornwall, and from the latter copper and various other metals, timber, fish, corn, wool, hides, furs, and amber.

The Phoenicians were admirably placed for commerce with Egypt and the East. As Egypt is poor in metals and in timber, these formed an important part of their exports to this country. They also traded with Palestine, Syria, Armenia, Arabia, and Babylonia.

There were two regular routes by which they reached India. From Tyre and Sidon one ran to Damascus, and thence to Thapsaeus on the Euphrates. From the last town boats were used to reach the Persian Gulf, whence they made their way to India, taking care to keep near the coast, as the sailors feared to trust their ships far from land on the unknown Arabian Sea.

The Phoenicians also reached India by way of the Bed Sea and the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb. In course of time the wealth and power of Phoenicia decayed by reason of the continued warfare and anarchy in South-Western Asia during the eighth century. The great merchants, however, migrated, and established another famous city—Carthage—on the Gulf of Tunis. So powerful did Carthage become, that it dominated the whole of the Western Mediterranean. The position of Carthage is noteworthy. It was situated in the most central and narrowest part of

the Mediterranean, with easy communication inland up a river valley. Its harbour, however, was not good.

The Carthaginians traded all along the Mediterranean coast, and also along the coasts of Western and North-Western Europe. By caravan they traded with Egypt and the Red Sea lands. The African products consisted, as they do to-day, of gold-dust, ivory, dates, and ostrich feathers, in exchange for which the Carthaginians gave corn, wine, oil, and gaudy clothing.

As we read in Chapter X. the power of Carthage fell before that of Rome, and the Greeks, who had in the meantime been their keen rivals, particularly in the Eastern Mediterranean, now became the leading commercial nation. Greece has the best situation in the Eastern Mediterranean for trade; to the west lies Italy and Sicily; to the south Crete and Africa; to the east Asia Minor; while north of the Ægean, by way of the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmora, and the Bosporous, the Black Sea can be reached. Athens was the most renowned of the Greek cities, and was the market and centre for "the whole of Greece. Its metal-work and pottery were particularly famous, and its artistic works were exchanged for foodstuffs and raw materials.

Corinth was also a great commercial city, and its situation between the Ægean and Ionian Seas was a powerful factor in its prosperity. Light ships were drawn on rollers over the narrow isthmus, while the cargo of large ships was unloaded, transferred by land across the isthmus, and then re-shipped. This plan was adopted in order to avoid the dangerous voyage round the south coast. The manufactures of Corinth included work in metals, dyeing, and weaving. The Greeks were amongst the most successful of colonising nations, and some of the daughter city - states prospered exceedingly. Colonies

were established in Asia Minor, on the shores of the Red Sea, on the islands of the Ægean, on the shores of North Africa, in Southern Italy, in Sicily, and one even on the site of the modern Marseilles. It will only be possible in these pages to mention a few of the most famous in industry and commerce. Miletus made cloth and carpets, Rhodes was famous for shipbuilding, Ephesus for work in gold and silver. Many of the colonies were famous for the production of wine. Of the colonies in Sicily, Syracuse acquired great wealth by its commerce, its chief exports being corn, wine, oil, and fruits. Sybaris, in Italy, was perhaps the wealthiest of all; the word Sybaritic is now used in the sense of luxurious and extravagant.

The Greeks traded as far as India, the route employed being by way of the Red Sea and the Straits of Bab-el Mandeb. After leaving the Straits it had been customary to skirt the shores until India was reached. A Greek sailor, named Hippalus, however, had observed that during the summer months the prevailing winds were south-westerly, while in winter they were north-easterly. He accordingly determined to trust his ship to the summer Monsoon, and by this way reached India. For his return journey the off-shore north-easterlies were used. From the date of this historic voyage made by Hippalus, this became the regular sea route from the Red Sea to India.

With the decay of Greece before the power of Macedonia under Philip and Alexander the Great, the centres of industry and commerce shifted. The cities of Asia Minor became important seats of manufacture, and Alexandria the commercial centre of the civilised world. With the growth of the Roman power, Rome became the focus of all commerce and trade. "The city contained nearly two million inhabitants, and to supply the neces-

sities and luxuries of this great and wealthy community involved a considerable amount of trading, a fair proportion of which was in the hands of Roman merchants. . . . The Roman merchants traded with practically all parts of the known world. The products of Russia, Germany, France, Britain, Spain, Asia Minor, and even of India, were brought to the capital of the world. From Britain came tin and other metals, oysters, cattle, dogs, and slaves. The mines of Spain furnished all kinds of metals, including gold and silver. Spanish wool, too, was famous. Sicily sent corn, wool, and the well-known Maltese cloth. Southern France supplied corn, wine, and oil. Marble, perfume, wine, and highly-worked metal goods came from Greece and Asia Minor. Egypt was one of the granaries of Rome, and in addition collected the costly merchandise of Arabia and Africa, including incense, gold, spices, perfumes, gems, silks, pearls, ostrich feathers, and slaves."

Rome paid for all these things with the gold which she exacted as tribute from all the provinces which composed her great Empire, as she exported little herself, and her own manufactures were designed to meet her own needs. The magnificent system of roads which Rome constructed throughout the Empire for military purposes were useful for commerce too, and important towns grew up along them.

In conclusion, we should note that nearly all the industries were carried on amongst the Greeks and Romans by means of slaves, of whom rich men owned very large numbers.

FART IV.

THE BEGINNINGS OF MODERN EUROPE.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DIVISION OF THE EMPIRE.

LET US consider again the map on which the limits of the Roman Empire are marked. Notice its very great length from west to east. To govern this vast area was no easy task, and we read that during the reign of the great Emperor Diocletian (284 A.D.) the Empire was parted into four great divisions, and at a later date (395 A.D.) into an eastern and western portion, the boundary between which is marked on Map 11. You see that the eastern portion coincides roughly with the eastern Mediterranean area and the western with the other natural division of the great inland sea, viz., the western Mediterranean.

The division between these two areas is well marked. The mountains skirting the Adriatic on the Balkan side—the Dinaric Alps and the Pindus Range—are difficult to cross from the land side, and there are few points which offer means of entrance from the sea. The mountains turn their back, as it were, upon the Adriatic.

Proceeding northwards of this sea, the land also is inhospitable. Indeed, at no place in Europe are desert conditions so nearly approached as in this limestone region between the valley of the Po and the Plain of

Hungary, where the water percolates through the rocks rapidly, making vegetation of the sparsest kind only possible.

South of the Adriatic, observe that the Mediterranean reaches its greatest depths. Moreover there are no islands in this portion and even the shores of Africa directly opposite the Adriatic are a desert area, a part, in fact, of the Sahara, which comes right down to the sea.

We thus see that the partition of the Empire into an eastern and western portion followed a natural line of division. The division of the Empire had one very important result. The guarding of the northern frontier, a task now divided between the two governments, was not done with the same thoroughness as formerly. The opportunity was not missed by the tribes beyond the Danube, and Alaric and his Goths, crossing the river and making use of convenient passes in the Alps, invaded Italy and sacked Rome in 410 A.D. This was the signal for the complete break up of the Empire in the west and it will be our purpose in the next chapter to note the distribution of the various Teutonic tribes in Western Europe.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE EMPIRE IN THE WEST AND THE RISE OF THE FRANKS.

IN a preceding chapter we saw how the extent of the Roman Empire was related to the great climatic divisions into which Europe naturally falls. Now it



MAP 12.—NATURAL DIVISIONS OF EUROPE AS DETERMINING THE DISTRIBUTION OF PEOPLES.

will be necessary to examine the map of Europe more closely to understand the second great phase of history, the Medieval or the Middle Ages, which may be said to close towards the end of the fifteenth century.

There are some areas which have natural boundaries, and this has helped to make them the homes of nations, the members of which are united by certain common bonds, such as a common ancestry, language, customs, religion, etc. The British Isles and Spain are good examples; the former have a natural frontier in that they are surrounded by the sea, while the latter has sea on three sides and a formidable land boundary—the Pyrenees—on the north.

Again, the general relief of the land determines the direction in which rivers flow, and when we bear in mind how valuable great rivers are as a means of communication, binding as it were the whole area which they drain, it will be obvious that a natural way of subdividing larger areas will be by noting carefully great river basins which are marked off clearly from "similar areas by uplands.

Compare Map 12 with a surface map of Europe, and notice these divisions. South of the Alps and their continuation in the Balkans, Italy and the Balkan Peninsula form natural divisions; south of the Pyrenees Spain forms a natural division. These are the natural subdivisions of the Mediterranean Region on the European side. The Pyrenees, the Cevennes, the Côte d'Or, the Langres Plateau, the Argonne, and the edge of the Ardennes define the limits of Gaul, which may be described as consisting of the basins of the Garonne, the Loire, the Seine and the Somme, and is thus considerably less than modern France.

Note that roughly parallel to this line of division

another axis of uplands can be traced from the Alps to the North Sea. This middle belt is naturally divided into two parts, Rhone-land and Rhine-land. Note carefully the land between which corresponds roughly to the modern Switzerland. To the east of the Rhine we have North Germany, separated from Danube-land by clearly defined ranges. Note the plateau of Bohemia. The remaining natural divisions of Europe are Russia, which is a great plain, and Scandinavia. In addition there is the clearly-defined region of the British Isles. Gaul, Rhine-land, Rhone-land and Britain may be grouped and described as Western Europe; Scandinavia and the shorelands of the Baltic as North-Western Europe; the German plain and Danube-land as Central Europe; the greater part of Russia as Eastern Europe.

When we come to consider the settlement of various tribes within these divisions, it is important that we should have clear ideas of the avenues by which these invasions and migrations were made. Of course, once the power of Rome was unable to withstand the invaders, the magnificent Roman roads, which had been constructed for military purposes, made invasion a very much easier matter.

When Gaul was invaded by the Romans the country was occupied mainly by Iberians and Celts, the ancestors of the former having crossed the Pyrenees at some remote time from Spain, probably by the comparatively lower land found at either end of the dividing range.

Let us now note the links between Rhine-land and Gaul. There is first of all the way through modern Belgium, which we can describe as the Belgian Gate. This is the narrow, western extension of the great European Plain. It lies between the Ardennes and the North Sea, and is traversed by the Schelde, the Meuse

and the Lower Rhine. A glance at a physical map will show you that the passage from the German plain to Gaul by this route is comparatively easy. Observe, however, that many rivers have to be crossed. On the physical map of France in your atlas notice the upper reaches of the Marne, a tributary of the Seine; of the Moselle, a tributary of the Rhine; and the Meuse, and observe that at one point the river valleys lie close together. This area is thus a link between Rhine-land and Gaul, as the rivers rising there give access to both regions. This link is known as the Lorraine Gate.

Links between Gaul and Rhone-land are few, but there is a good route near Dijon by means of river valleys. In the south, between the Cevennes and the Pyrenees, there is lowland, which makes communication easy between the two regions. This gap is known as the Gate of Carcassone. Observe also on the surface map that in Northern Rhone-land the sources of the Marne and the Saone are within easy reach of each other.

- From Rhine-land to Rhone-land there is a comparatively easy passage by way of the Upper Rhine and the River Doubs, a tributary of the Saone, and so to the Rhone and south. This is known as the Burgundy Gate and can be seen on the surface map of France in your atlas.

The Rhone Valley is linked with the Plain of Lombardy by several passes, the most important of which are the Mont Cenis, Little St. Bernard, Great St. Bernard and the Simplon. It would be well to note at this point the importance of river-valleys in linking up regions separated by highlands.

. Between Italy and Rhine-land the most important pass is the St. Gotthard, which links the Ticino ou

the one side with the Reuss, a tributary of the Aar which flows into the Rhine, on the other. Less important passes are the Splugen, St. Bernardino, and the Septimer.

Between Italy and Danube-land there are numerous passes but the easiest and lowest is the Brenner, connecting the valleys of the Adige and the Inn. The Semmering Pass is also noteworthy.

An examination of a physical map shows that the passage from the North German Plain into Rhine-land is similar in its nature to the Belgian Gate, previously described.

The Saale, a tributary of the Elbe, and the Main rise near the junction of the Ore Mountains and the Bohemian Forest, and these river valleys thus provide convenient routes from the German Plain to the Middle Rhine. Again the Upper Danube, the Neekar, and the Main provide natural avenues from the Danube-land to the Rhine. The Elbe and its tributary the Moldau link Germany with Bohemia and Danube-land, while the important gap between the Sudetic Mountains, near the eastern corner of Bohemia, and the western portion of the Carpathians is known as the Moravian Gate. Note that from this point the Oder flows north-westwards and the March southwards to join the Danube at the modern Pressburg.

Before noting the distribution of the invaders in the Empire in the West, let us first consider a few points of interest in connection with their mode of life in their original homes. Those of them that had lived near the Rhine-Danube boundary had come into touch with Rome's great empire; many indeed, long before the period of the great Teutonic invasions, had provided the Roman legions with their very best soldiers. Even some of

the greater officers and officials were often men of Teutonic stock.

The Teutons, unlike the Romans, were not fond of town life. The region of their original homelands beyond the Rhine and Danube was, in ancient times, almost completely covered with forests, and interspersed in this forest land were clearings in which their villages were situated. Kinsmen, fellow-tribesmen, were grouped in villages, and each village governed itself. The land in the neighbourhood of the village belonged to the community as a whole and it was allotted in separate parcels to the freemen to be cultivated for their own profit. This important business was done in the village moot or meeting, the privilege of attending which belonged to all freemen.

For certain purposes, notably for deciding matters relating to war, these villages were grouped into leagues, and it was the grand folk-moot of the league which summoned the army and elected the leaders. "The leaders selected to head the host were generally men of tried powers, who could inspire confidence and kindle emulation in their followers; and such leaders, though in all cases chosen to official leadership for a single campaign, never even in times of peace ceased to be the heads of military enterprise and daring adventure. Not uncommonly they would break the monotony of peace and dull inactivity by gathering about them a band of volunteers and setting forth, spite of the peace enjoyed by their tribe, to make fighting or find plunder somewhere for their own sake."

The causes which led to the Teutonic invasions of the Empire were various; the wealth of Koine must have been an attraction and they were quick in detecting a

weakening of her power; it is exceedingly probable, too, that they were feeling the pressure of other tribes moving westwards, viz., the Slavonic races, who were themselves forced to move by reason of invaders from the Asiatic Steppe.

The western portion was the first to fall at the hands of the barbarians from the north. The Suevi occupied much of the country that corresponds to the modern Portugal; the Visigoths, Spain; the Vandals, Corsica, Sardinia and a large strip in Africa. The Ostrogoths occupied considerably more than the Italy which we know to-day. The valley of the Rhone was occupied by the Buigundians, while the Franks held most of the country corresponding to modern France and much of what is now included in Germany, Holland and Belgium. You will note, too, that by this time the Angles and Saxons had settled in Britain.

By far the most interesting of these tribes is that of the Franks, who occupied (Saul. Their power grew and they established in the course of time a mighty Empire in the West. You should observe that the Franks had a considerable advantage over the other tribes as their territory adjoined their old home beyond the Rhine and they could thus be strengthened by fresh immigrants. Contrast, for example, the condition of the Vandals, who had burnt their boats, so to speak, and were quite cut off from their original homes.

There were other circumstances, too, which helped to strengthen the Franks. The danger from the common enemy, the Huns, helped to unite into one people the Franks and the Gauls they had conquered. The battle of Chalons, in which the Franks and the Gauls stood side by side and broke the power of the invading Huns is a

land mark in history. It pointed to the time when the land of the Frankish tribe should be inhabited by a united French people.

The Franks were also called upon to resist another formidable invasion from the south. The Saracens had been gradually extending their power until, by the end of the eighth century, they held Egypt, in fact the whole of Africa north of the Sahara, Sicily, and nearly the whole of Spain. Not content with this they pushed beyond the Pyrenees, but here their progress was stayed by the crushing defeat which they received at the hands of the Franks, under the leadership of Charles Martel, at the famous battle of Poitiers. Charles Martel was the grandfather of the illustrious Emperor Charlemagne who restored the Empire in the West. He was a great soldier and a great statesman, and it was through his labours that a brighter day dawned for Western Europe. Charlemagne established order beyond the Rhine and reduced the Saxons to subjection. He also defeated the Avars, a savage tribe who have been described as the Huns of the Middle Ages.

Further, he came to the help of the Pope and destroyed the power of the Lombards, a Teutonic tribe who had seized Italy. On Christmas day in the year 801, Charles was crowned Emperor by the Pope. This meant that the Empires in the West and East were now definitely separated both in matters relating to government and religion. Charlemagne's idea of the establishment of a great empire that should rival even that of Rome in extent, and that the Emperor and the head of the Christian Church should be the leaders, so to speak, within it, inspired his successors in the Middle Ages to form what was afterwards called the Holy Roman Empire, with Germany as the centre. With regard to this empire

a great French writer said with truth "it was neither holy, nor Roman, nor was it an empire."

During the Middle Ages there were many quarrels between Popes and Emperors as to who was the superior authority. The Empire and the Papačy were frequently at loggerheads. It was the same kind of quarrel that estranged the English King Henry II. and Becket.

The division of Charlemagne's territory amongst his grandchildren is noteworthy, as it is from the date of the Treaty of Verdun that we are to trace the separate histories of France, Germany and Italy. Gaul fell to Charles; nearly the whole of Italy, Rhone-land and the Eastern Rhine-land was assigned to Lothair; while the kingdom of Lewis included upper Danube-land and the region between the Rhine and the Oder. The middle kingdom and the kingdom of Lewis were united later to form the Holy Roman Empire.

CHAPTER XV.

FEUDALISM AND THE BEGINNINGS OF SOME GREAT STATES.

IT is not without interest to note some of the difficulties and problems with which the people of Europe were confronted during the Middle Ages.

There was, first of all, the problem of restoring order after the break up of the Roman Empire. The Feudal System helped to tide over these troublous times by introducing a settled form of government. Under this system the land was divided into a number of large

estates or fiefs in which the chief man was the feudal lord, who was practically king within his own domain. He made grants of land out of his own estate to other men on condition that they rendered him certain services. The overlord himself held his land from a superior-lord in return for certain services. The king was simply the greatest and most powerful of the feudal lords. The chief condition on which land was held was that of rendering military service.

The Feudal System had its good and bad points. It helped to make society better and healthier at a time when it stood sadly in need of improvement, as at no time were the vices of falsehood, treachery, and ingratitude so prevalent as in the Dark Ages which followed the fall of Rome. It taught men to keep faith with one another, and it appealed to their sense of justice by instituting a system of trial by peers. Again, the ties which bound lord and vassal brought out the best feelings; it was the lord's duty to protect his faithful vassal, as it was the vassal's duty to defend his lord against the powerful aggressor. Further, under the Feudal System it was possible to organise armies to cope with the various foes which threatened civilised Europe from time to time—the Huns, the Northmen, the Slavs, the Mongols, the Magyars, the Saracens, and the Turks.

The Feudal System had, however, some great drawbacks; the feudal lords were so many petty kings, who by quarrels amongst themselves often brought a country to a state of great disorder. England, for example, during the reign of King Stephen was reduced to this condition. It took many years before strong states were established, with a king or emperor at the head, who had no need to fear the rivalry of too powerful vassals.

Then again as the fiefs could be inherited, it was possible, for example, for an English king to acquire large domains in France, and this proved to be a fruitful source of trouble.

A knowledge of the nature of this feudal struggle is essential for the understanding of the histories of England, France, and Germany. Observe that there were three parties concerned—the king, the nobles, and the people. In England, the Norman conquest made the kings so powerful, that the nobles united with the people to secure the Great Charter (Magna Carta), the foundation of English liberties. In France, on the other hand, it was the feudal lords who were too strong and menaced liberty. The king and the people in that country united to achieve liberty. The Feudal System lasted longer in Germany than in other countries. Again and again the royal line died out and the feudal chiefs had to elect a new king, each time taking something away from his power. "As a result, there were finally a thousand princes in Germany and many states and principalities."

During the Middle Ages there were also difficulties with regard to religion. The Christian Church was first divided into an Eastern with its centre at Constantinople, and a Western with Rome as its centre. Then in the west a keen rivalry sprang up between the Popes and the Emperors of the Holy Roman Empire.

Inverting again to the Feudal System, let us now trace briefly some of the circumstances which helped to bring it to an end during the Middle Ages. It was shown in Chapter XIV. that the partition of Charlemagne's empire between his grandsons forms a convenient starting point for the separate histories of France, Germany and Italy. In course of time the

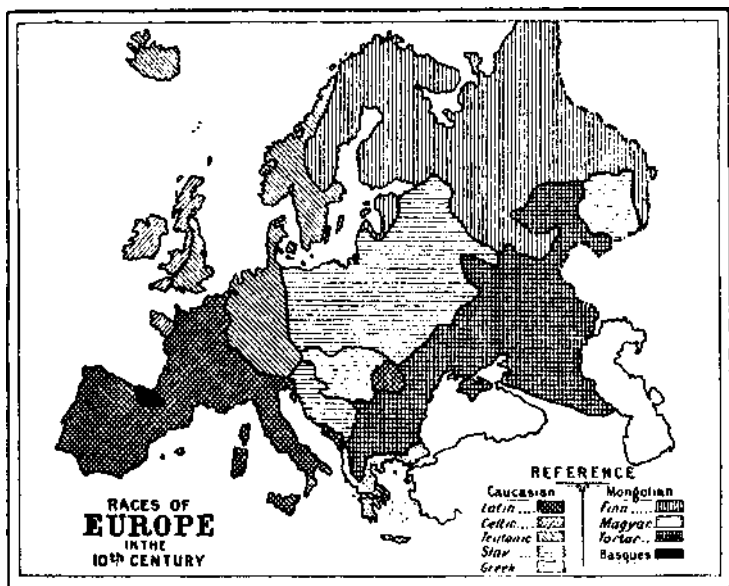
descendants of Charlemagne became weak and incapable of ruling with a strong hand, and thus a keen rivalry sprang up between the great feudal lords for the kingship.

In France, the Counts of Paris acquired the chief power and gave that country a line of kings that reigned without a break for 800 years. Thus one great noble took possession of the crown and made it hereditary and by this means it became possible to build up a powerful united kingdom. By various means—rights of inheritance, marriage, conquest—all the great fiefs were acquired by the French King and the power of the nobles was destroyed. It was shown in a preceding paragraph of this chapter that our English Kings had numerous possessions in France, and were serious rivals of the French Kings. This keen rivalry between France and England dated from the time of the Norman Conquest and resulted in frequent wars, one of which was the disastrous Hundred Years' War commenced in the reign of Edward III., at the conclusion of which the English were driven out of the country. One reason why the English were unsuccessful is to be found in the fact that by the time we come to the later Middle Ages, a national feeling was springing up in France, and the English kings, though descended from Norman Dukes, were looked upon as foreigners.

Further, a powerful Duke of Burgundy attempted to build up a great Middle Kingdom, consisting mainly of Rhine-land and Rhone-land, which would divide France from Italy and Germany. The French Kings, however, proved to be too powerful to permit this, and when they were freed from the rivalry of England, France devoted her attention to extending her boundaries east and west, *i.e.*, into Rhine-land and Rhone-land. One

of her kings, towards the end of the Middle Ages, even interfered in the affairs of Italy, which at this time was divided into five small states.

In Germany, on the other hand, the Crown did not become the possession of one family for several centuries. Time after time the royal line died out and a new king



MAP 13.—RACES OF EUROPE IN THE TENTH CENTURY.

had to be elected. The descendants of Charlemagne were succeeded by the Dukes of Franconia, Saxony and Swabia.

From an examination of the accompanying map showing the distribution of races during the tenth century, it is seen that to the east of Germany lay land occupied by

people of Slavonic race, while to the north dwelt the Danes, against whose encroachments provision had also to be made. Under the circumstances, the history of Germany during the Middle Ages is largely concerned with a series of wars, by which the frontiers were pushed eastwards. A German King, known as Henry the Fowler, did much work in strengthening the frontiers.

"He has been called the Founder of Cities. His plan was to choose one out of every nine soldiers and compel him to live in a town and build houses and store provisions while the other eight attended to the sowing and reaping of the harvests. In this way he accustomed his subjects to living in walled towns and provided fortifications and stores against attack. On one of his expeditions Henry captured from the Slavs the district known as Brandenburg and afterwards famous in history under the name of Prussia."

His son, Otto the Great, checked the advance of the Slavs and Mongols on the east and the encroachments of the Danes on the north. Particularly important is the battle of Lechfeld (955) at which Otto hurled back the Magyars or Ungrians who were making their way into Western Europe. The Magyars were forced back into Hungary, where, after adopting Christianity, they helped to resist later inroads of Mongol tribes. The battle of Lechfeld ranks with Chalons as one of the great decisive battles in world history. Unfortunately one of the German Kings wished to revive the glories of the reign of Charlemagne, and to found a Holy Roman Empire which should include Germany and Italy. Italy, however, could not be subdued and the German Kings or Emperors "dissipated in inglorious and ever-to-be-repeated strife the forces that might have achieved conquest elsewhere or made him feared and obeyed at home."

Naturally enough the feudal lords who distinguished themselves on the frontiers and who had to maintain armies in constant readiness, acquired great power, and there are two families which call for particular mention in this connection—the Hapsburgs and the Hohenzollerns. Both these families are famous in history. The successive heads of the House of Hapsburg became Emperors of the Holy Roman Empire and subsequently Emperors of Austria, while the heads of the House of Hohenzollern were destined to be elected Emperors of Modern Germany.

Note that in the Middle Ages there were two important Slav kingdoms between Russia and Germany. These were Bohemia, which now forms part of the dominion of the Austrian Emperor, and Poland, which was also destined to be absorbed by the surrounding powers. Poland was eventually partitioned between Prussia, Austria and Russia. Brief references will be made to the foundation of Holland and Switzerland in Chapter XX. and to the establishment of Spain and Portugal in Chapter XVIII., and we will now retrace our steps to consider briefly the fortunes of the Empire in the East.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE EMPIRE IN THE EAST.

BEFORE considering the fortunes of the Empire in the East, let us consult again Map 12, which shows the natural divisions of Europe. From the Russian plain there are a few obvious routes into Danube-land. There is an easy way to the Lower Danube by the lowland plain

between the Carpathians and the Black Sea. The land routes, however, from the Lower to the Middle Danube leave the river owing to the narrow gorge of the Iron Gate, situated at the point where the river breaks through the Carpathians and their continuation, the Balkans.

The Carpathians are not formidable barriers and can be crossed at many points. One such point is at the head waters of the Theiss, a tributary of the Danube, and the Pruth. This is known as the Gate of the Magyars. The Magyars are men of Mongolian race, whose ancestors settled in the Plain of Hungary and were later converted to Christianity. They are really Christianised Turks. Another convenient pass is the Yablunka, near the headwaters of the Waag, a tributary of the Danube, and the Vistula. The Moravian Gate which has already been mentioned offers another convenient route from the eastern plain into the valley of the Danube.

Between Balkan-land and Danube-land there is the well-defined mountain range of the Balkans. Here, again, it can be realised, from an examination of a map, how rivers flowing into the Danube on the one side and into the *Ægesm* on the other make communication and passage between the two areas much easier. Thus the Ottoman Turks passed first from Asia Minor into the Balkans, and thence extended their power into the Danube region.

Bearing those general facts in mind, it is not difficult to understand that South-Eastern Europe has been a battle ground of many races. Balkan-land, particularly the shorelands of the *Ægean*, was the principal home of the Greeks, whose lands passed into the possession first of Macedonia and then of Rome. The Roman frontier was the Danube, although for a time it was pushed to the Carpathians.

As on the western frontier, the Romans had to contend with invading tribes from beyond the Danube and the Carpathians. These were of Slavonic race and just as the Roman legions were recruited from the Teuton tribes, so too, did many Slavs who found their way into the Empire share in its defence. Indeed, one of the great emperors of the East, Justinian, was of Slavonic origin.

The Empire in the West fell rapidly before the invaders from beyond the Rhine and Danube. The Empire in the East had its various foes too, but it was able to withstand them for over a thousand years and it was not until 1453 when the Ottoman Turks took its capital, Constantinople, that it came to an end.

The Capital of the Empire in the East was deliberately chosen by the Emperor Constantine. Byzantium, on the Straits of Bosphorus, was selected, its name being changed to Constantinople. It occupies one of the most commanding positions in Europe. It is a link between Europe and Asia and stands on the sea route between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. The reign of the Emperor Constantine is noteworthy, as he not only sanctioned the practice of the Christian religion, but promised it imperial protection. (312 A.D.)

You should note that although Constantine had his capital at Constantinople he was Emperor of the whole Roman Empire, as the Empire in the West had not yet fallen. The Roman Empire thus became a Christian Empire, and Rome acquired fresh importance as the seat of the Pope who claimed to be chief bishop in the Church. With the break up of the Roman Empire in the West the importance of Rome naturally declined for a time, but the barbarians were eventually converted to Christianity, and Rome thus became the Mecca of the West. Just as the Empire was divided into an eastern and western

portion, so, later, was the Christian Church. The Christians in the east looked to Constantinople for leadership, those in the west to Rome. The Roman Church and the Greek Church have thus separate histories.

The history of Constantinople is exceedingly important, for it was in this city that the learning of Rome and Greece was preserved during the Dark Ages that followed the fall of Rome. Fortunately it was able to preserve its treasures until brighter days dawned in the west and the European nations were able to appreciate them.

As we have previously stated the starting point of history of the Eastern Empire may be dated from the opening of the fifth century, when the west was over-run by the Teutonic tribes. One of the most renowned of the Eastern Emperors was Justinian (527-565), famous for the code of laws which he ordered to be collected and arranged. During his reign, part even of the Empire in the West was recovered from the barbarians. The Vandals and the Ostrogoths were defeated and Southern Spain was brought under his rule. Italy, however, fell again before the Lombards, a Teutonic tribe from beyond the Alps.

The foes which the Eastern Empire had to contend with from time to time were the Slavs, the Persians and the Saracens, the Mongols and the Turks. The Saracens had encroached upon Rome's Empire in the East to a considerable extent (see Map 2), but they failed to take Constantinople, despite many attacks. Note in particular that Syria, including Palestine, formed part of the Saracen domains. The Saracen Empire in its turn suffered from the inroads of the Turks, who invaded it by way of the Plateau of Iran. Further, they steadily made progress towards Europe by way of Asia Minor. One exceedingly important result followed the Turkish occupation of

Palestine. The Turks interfered with the Christian pilgrims to the Holy Sepulchre and this led to the series of wars between East and West known as the Crusades.

The Eastern Emperor called in the aid of the people of Western Europe to stay the progress of the followers of Mohamet. The Pope of Rome, clearly recognising that the Eastern Empire was the bulwark between the West and East, used his powerful influence to promote the Crusades, and in this he was aided by the eloquence of Peter the Hermit, who preached a crusade throughout Europe. Many of the Crusaders were inspired by the highest and best motives, but many, on the contrary, looked upon the expeditions as opportunities for acquiring territory. Thus, during the Fourth Crusade, the Greek Emperor was driven out of Constantinople and a Latin kingdom was set up which lasted for about fifty years* Venice, too, during the course of this particular Crusade acquired much territory and many privileges in the East.

The reference to the Crusades bring us naturally to the rise of the great Italian cities of the Middle Ages. Indeed, the early prosperity of Venice and Genoa was secured in a great measure by transporting the Crusaders in their ships to the scene of battle in the East.

It was about the time of the opening of the Crusades when the Mongols set up a new dominion among the various tribes of Mongolia. The territories of their first great chieftain, Jehghis Khan (thirteenth century), covered an enormous area, as the inset diagram on Map 6 shows. His son Oktai still further increased the Mongolian Empire, and it was only the death of Oktai in 1241 which saved Europe from being overwhelmed and devastated. Kublai Khan reigned from 1259 to 1294 and it was at this period that Marco Polo, the celebrated

Venetian, journeyed in the East. He recounted his experiences in a famous book which still further stimulated interest in other lands. One other Mongolian Emperor deserves mention, viz, Tamarlane, who ruled from 1369 to 1405 and who also led his hordes against Europe.

The Christian nations now seemed in a hopeless position, for they were also beset by the Turks, who, although as yet unable to take Constantinople, had pushed their way into the Balkan Peninsula. The warriors in Hungary, Poland, and France gathered to arrest the menacing progress of the barbarians; but the allied army, numbering a hundred thousand men, was cut to pieces by the sabres of the Turks at Meopolis, in Bulgaria (1396).

The Turks now turned their attention to Constantinople, but they were diverted from this by Tamarlane's invasion of Asia Minor. The Turkish and Mongolian armies met upon the Plains of Angora where the former suffered a crushing defeat. Constantinople was thus still able to stand out until 1453; its fall, however, in that year signalled the end of the Roman Empire. The Turks had now secured a footing on the mainland of Europe, and by 1464 the whole of the Balkan Peninsula and a big proportion of Danube-land were included in the Turkish Empire.

The fall of Constantinople had many important results. The learning of Greece which had been preserved in the city was now carried to Italy by the exiled scholars, whence it spread to other parts of Europe. The trade of the Italian cities, Venice and Genoa, with the East was ruined as the Turks controlled all the routes. Thus it came about that from 1453 onwards other ways to the East were sought, the results of which will be described in Book II.

This rapid survey will enable you to understand one

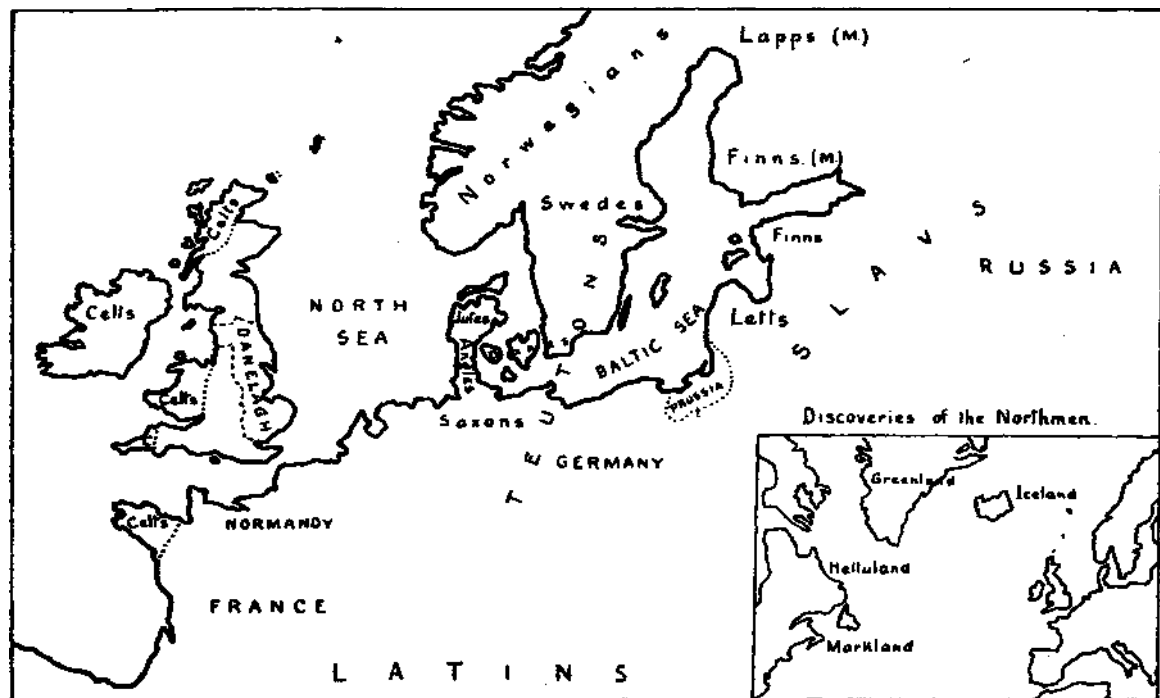
or two features of the map of Europe of to-day. Observe the kingdom of Rumania which is bounded by the Danube, the Pruth, the Transylvanian Alps and the Carpathians. The Rumanians are of Slavonic race, whose ancestors lived within the Empire and- on the other side of the Danube, but who were turned out from their homeland by other Slavonic tribes. They speak a Romance tongue and their country is named after the great city of Rome. Note also the other small states of the Balkan Peninsula—Servia, whose people, from their mountain fastnesses, were able to set at defiance the encroaching Turks; Bulgaria, whose people also succeeded in throwing off the Turkish yoke; and Greece, which includes the Morea and a stretch of country north of Corinth and numerous islands in the Ægean.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE NORTHMEN.

AN examination of a map showing the races that dwell on the lands surrounding the Baltic at the present day is not without interest. The Lapps and Finns are of Mongolian race, like the Chinese and Japanese; the Norwegians, the Swedes, the Danes, the Germans are Teutons; while on the eastern shores the inhabitants are mainly Slavs.

The Baltic has been described as the Northern Mediterranean, but it offers many points of contrast to that great southern, almost land-locked, sea. In the first place, it is much smaller in extent. It is shallow, whereas the Mediterranean is deep. It lies in colder



MAR 14.—THE NORTHMEN.

latitudes, and for much of the year is ice-bound. It receives enormous quantities of fresh water by means of the numerous rivers which flow into it, and the flow of water is therefore from the Baltic outwards to the Atlantic. The climate of the Baltic countries is rendered more severe by the Scandinavian Mountains acting as a barrier, preventing the prevailing south-westerly winds carrying their warmth beyond them. Note also that the amount of evaporation is small in the Baltic, whereas in the Mediterranean the higher temperature and the summer north-easterlies result in an enormous loss of water by evaporation. The flow of water is thus from the Atlantic into the tideless Mediterranean.

We have seen that the Mediterranean was the arena of many a conflict for empire in ancient times. Rome finally established a great Mediterranean Empire, which fell before various invaders. The Baltic lands, too, have played no small share in the history of the European world. In medieval times a league of Baltic cities, known as the Hansa League, established a great maritime empire, details of which will be given in the chapter on Medieval Commerce. The nucleus of the kingdom of Prussia was a small stretch of land on the Baltic shores. Prussia was destined to become the governing power of the whole of the German plain, the greater part of Rhine-land, and a considerable area in Danube-land.

Sweden, at one time, seemed likely to establish a great empire, and we shall read that immigrants from this country powerfully affected the history of the Slavonic races which dwelt on the opposite side of the Baltic. Most remarkable, perhaps, is the history of the Northmen who dwelt on the western shores of Scandinavia, to whose exploits we propose devoting the remaining section of this chapter.

In the preceding chapters we have read that at various times during the Middle Ages Europe was beset by many enemies. From the East the Mongols pressed their conquests and succeeded in enslaving for three centuries the Slavonic races occupying the region now known as Russia; from Africa the Saracens forced their way into the Iberian Peninsula; and by the close of the Middle Ages the Turks had entered Europe by way of Asia Minor. Christian Europe was, indeed, becoming perilously small, and seemed in danger of being swept away before the march of the infidel. It was, as it were, a beleaguered city.

During the Middle Ages, when Europe was recovering from the break-up of the Roman Empire, when Charlemagne was laying the foundations of a new Europe, and about the time of the Saracen inroads in the south of Spain, the Northmen commenced their remarkable series of invasions. Their homes were in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. Like the Goths, Vandals, and Franks, they were of Teutonic stock. They were Teutons in language, religion, habits, and spirit. The nature of their homeland encouraged them to seafaring. An examination of a map shows you that the Norwegian coast is very much indented, and consists of a remarkable number of openings known as fiords. The same kind of coast is seen in Western Scotland and Ireland.

In the Norwegian fiords there are strips of land bordering the water which can be used for cultivation. These little oases were called Viks and the inhabitants Vikings. Communication between the Viks is difficult by land, but the sea gives access from one to another. Naturally the Norsemen became good sailors, and the stormy nature of the surrounding seas developed the very highest skill. You will remember that communication

between the Greek towns, situated in little river valleys, separated by highlands from similar valleys, was easier by sea, and this helped to make the Greeks skilful sailors. Navigation in the Ægean, however, is child's play compared to the difficulties and dangers which the Norsemen had to face in the North Sea, in the days when boats were mere cockle-shells compared with the ships and steamers of our own day.

It is not difficult to understand why many of the fiord-dwellers took to piracy and the sea. Generally speaking, their homelands were barren, and the amount of food that could be raised was very limited. The rapid increase in their population made it necessary for many of them to seek homes elsewhere.

The Norsemen at first made their piratical raids during the summer season and returned to their homes for the winter, but in course of time they made permanent settlements. Of these early settlements, those made in Eastern England and Northern France are noteworthy. The English were forced to pay the hated Danegeld, a tax imposed by the Northmen, and a large part of England, the Danelagh, was occupied by the invaders. You will remember that from your reading, Canute was king not merely of England, but of a northern empire, which included Denmark and portions of Norway and Sweden.

In France the Northmen occupied, under their famous leader Kollo, the district known afterwards as Normandy. Some of the Northmen crossed the Baltic and troubled the Finns and Slavs on the eastern shore of that sea. One of the Scandinavian chiefs, Ruric, founded a kingdom, which in course of time developed into the mighty empire of Russia.

Some of these hardy Norsemen even found their way

to the New World. This is a striking testimony to their skill as sailors, as the passage by way of Iceland and Greenland is full of danger by reasons of the great icebergs which float southwards east of Greenland. It is doubtful whether the Norsemen made any settlement in the New World; if they did the difficulties of the journey from their old homeland made fresh immigration difficult, so that it soon died out.

Reverting to their settlement in France under Rollo, we should note that they made Normandy one of the most powerful French fiefs, and from this centre they set out again to conquer other countries. Their characters had become changed by this time; they were no longer heathen Vikings, delighting in the wild life of sea-rover and pirate, but Christian knights eager for pilgrimages and crusades. In Italy their love of fighting found free play, as the country was divided up into a number of petty states, between which wars were frequent. They fought against the Saracens, who had secured Sicily and were ambitious of establishing their power on the mainland of Italy as they had done in Spain. They founded a kingdom of their own in Italy, known as the kingdom of Naples and Italy, which continued as a separate state until comparatively recent times. Not only was this Norman kingdom powerful on land, but it possessed a powerful fleet, which played an important part in ridding the Mediterranean of Arab pirates. Amalfi, which rivalled at one time even Venice and Genoa, was its great port.

More important still was the Norman Conquest of England. For one hundred and fifty years they ruled the country despotically, but the results of their despotism were good, for by the end of the thirteenth century Angles, Saxons, Danes, Jutes, Normans had become

fused so as to make one nation. Their work formed an important chapter in the making of the greatness of Britain.

The Normans played a great part in the Crusades, and it is to their restless spirit that one of the chief causes of these important wars is to be traced. They were already Crusaders against the Saracens, before the great movement against the Turks was started.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CRUSADING SPIRIT AND THE WAY IT HELPED THE FOUNDATION OF STATES.

THE word Crusades is used generally with reference to the great movement against the Turks in the East, but during the Middle Ages there were crusades in other directions on a smaller scale.

Thus Christian knights waged a perpetual war against the Moors in Spain, and by the middle of the thirteenth century had forced them into a narrow strip in the south. When, finally, the Spanish kingdoms of Castile and Arragon were united, even the small strip in the south was wrested from the Moor, and Spain entered upon the most glorious period in her history.

Again, just before the beginning of the Crusades in the East, a band of northern knights broke their journey at the west of the Iberian Peninsula, and helped the Christians to drive out the Moors. Their success led to the foundation of Portugal.

During the Second Crusade Lisbon was captured from the Mahommedans with the help of the Crusaders, and a capital was thus provided for the rising state.

Further, a crusade was made during the thirteenth century by Teutonic knights against the heathen Slavs who occupied the Baltic shorelands east of the Vistula. "For the greater part of the century the knights carried on a desperate and almost continuous war against the Pagans, and upon the lands wrested from them were founded the important fortress-cities of Konigsberg and Marienburg. The surrounding Slav population was either destroyed or subjected, and the whole land was gradually Germanised." Thus was formed the basis of a principality which later on came to form an important part of modern Prussia. Note also that the frontier wars by which the Germans extended their territories eastwards, to which reference was made in Chapter XV., partook somewhat of the nature of crusades against the heathen, and were regarded as such by the Popes.

We must bear in mind that, apart from religious motives, many of the crusaders took part in these campaigns in order to acquire territory. Thus in Spain, "all classes in the Christian kingdoms benefited by the wresting of a new province from the infidel. The nobles received new fiefs; the burghers flocked into the cities evacuated by the Moors, or were encouraged by large grants or privileges to build new cities; round the cities clustered communities of peasants, who joyfully exchanged the barren security of the northern uplands for the risks and prizes of the river valleys. No kings were so popular as those who planned and carried to a successful conclusion these ventures for a common good."

The great Crusades against the Turks were really a continuation of the German, Spanish, and Norman wars

of conquest. The Empire in the East was, as it were, a buffer state between the countries in Western Europe and the Saracens and Turks of the East. The Saracens had occupied much of the empire, but they did not interfere with the Christians who made pilgrimages to Jerusalem. When, however, the Turks subdued the Saracens they ill-treated the Christians, and thus two good reasons could be urged for a great campaign against the Mohammedans. These were the threatened invasions of Europe by the Turks and the ill-treatment of the Christian pilgrims at Jerusalem.

It is not part of our purpose to go into details about each of the Crusades, but one or two general points may be noted. As a result of the First Crusade the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem was founded, to the kingship of which Godfrey of Vouillon was elected. The Fourth Crusade was changed from an attack on the Moslems into an attack on the Greek Empire. The Latin Empire which was then established lasted fifty years, and Greek restoration followed. It would be well to note here that when Constantinople was captured by the Crusaders many of its priceless treasures were ruthlessly destroyed.

Men's minds were stirred a great deal by the Crusades, which roused interest in other lands, and led men to desire to travel and see the wonders of the East. Concerned as they were with religion, yet they had a commercial side as well. The interference with the routes to the East by the Turks was a serious matter to the trade of Mediterranean countries. This meant that the highly prized spices of the East were no longer available in Europe. In those days, it should be remembered, cattle could not be kept in great numbers over the winter, as is done nowadays, as the system of raising root crops and of using artificial foods did not

exist. The animals were therefore killed off in great numbers before the winter, and the flesh preserved. The diet was thus somewhat monotonous, and the spices were all the more welcome.

During the period 1095-1272 there were no less than nine crusades, and by the latter date the crusading spirit of Europe had become exhausted. As a result, South-Eastern Asia fell to the Turks, and, as we have read, the Turks pushed their way into Balkan-land and Danubeland.

The Crusades, however, did good work in checking their advance, and in postponing the fall of the Greek Empire. The Crusades, too, helped to bring feudalism to an end, and thus powerfully affected the history of the countries of Western Europe. Many of the turbulent barons became Crusaders, and thus the kings were enabled to increase their power. Again, many of the towns were enabled to secure freedom from being governed by the overlords in whose domains they were situated. Frequently the overlord, desiring to be a Crusader, relinquished his rights over the town on the burghers paying a sum of money.

The Crusades are also important for the intercourse which they promoted between the East and West. Men's minds were stirred by what they saw, and they helped to bring about the great revival of learning which marked the close of the fifteenth century. They stimulated interest in other lands, and this induced men to undertake great voyages of discovery, to which we shall refer in Book II.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE RISE OF RUSSIA.

THE enormous extent of the Russian Empire of to-day can be realised from the following considerations. It has an area of nearly 9,000,000 square miles, and in this respect comes second to the British Empire. It comes second also in point of population, and its inhabitants number over 107,000,000. Its shores are washed by widely separated seas, and it is interesting to note the various drainage areas of its rivers. Thus there are Russian rivers flowing into the Black and Caspian Seas. There is a Baltic group, and yet another group flowing into the cold Arctic Ocean. Within this vast empire there are no considerable uplands, and most of it consists of lowlands.

The general conditions experienced in its steppe land have been described in Chapter II. There is a vast stretch of tundra bordering the Arctic Ocean, which is replaced southwards by great forests of coniferous trees, which, in their turn, give way to deciduous forests in warmer latitudes. A comparison of a physical and political map shows that the boundary of the empire in Asia consists in the main of plateau lands—Asia Minor, the Plateau of Iran, and the edge of the great earth block of Central Asia. In Europe the boundary is not so clearly defined by great natural features of this kind.

The fact that so much of the country consists of lowland, thus rendering communication comparatively easy, has had important results. It made the task of expansion eastwards easier for the Russians when they became a united people under strong kings. On the

other hand, the plain facilitated the attacks of the Mongolian hordes from Asia, which Russia had to suffer when the country was in a weak and divided state.

The Greek or Eastern Empire acted for a considerable period as a bulwark against the inroads of the Saracens and the Turks, and with its fall the Moslems definitely established themselves in Europe. Russia, too, played a great part as a buffer state between East and West, and this fact has affected the history of her Slavonic people powerfully.

We read in Chapter XVII. how Ruric, a Swedish chief, and his tribesmen called Ros, settled in the neighbourhood of Novgorod and laid the foundation of what was eventually to grow into the mighty Russian Empire. Unfortunately the state which he founded gradually split up into a number of smaller feudal states, possessing very little unity. They were thus unable to withstand the Mongol invaders which swept westwards during the thirteenth century. The Tartars also won a great victory over Poland at Liegnitz, and the kingdom of Hungary was almost destroyed.

For a period of about two and half centuries Russia was in a state of bondage, and her people were unable to make any progress. Towards the close of the fifteenth century a brighter day dawned. The Russian State, which had its centre at Moscow, grew in strength, and under Ivan the Great, who reigned from 1462-1505, a determined and successful stand was made against the Mongol oppression. By the end of the Middle Ages Russia was a really great Power, before which the Mongols were destined, in course of time, to fall back.

CHAPTER XX.

SWITZERLAND AND THE UNITED
NETHERLANDS.

** Two voices are there; one is of the Sea,
 One of the Mountains ; each a mighty voice :
 In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
 There came a tyrant, and with holy glee
 Thou fought against him,—but hast vainly striven ;
 Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,
 Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
 Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft;
 Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left—
 For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it be
 That Mountain floods should thunder as before,
 And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
 And neither awful voice be heard by thee ! "

THUS wrote the poet Wordsworth in 1802, when Switzerland underwent subjugation at the hands of Napoleon. The history of Switzerland and of the Netherlands illustrates well the general truth that mountaineers and sea-faring peoples are lovers of liberty.

It is interesting to note that though the Swiss and Dutch live in widely separated districts, yet their homes are, roughly speaking, at the extreme ends of the same great river—the Rhine. Their surroundings present great contrasts. The latter are dwellers of the plain, the former of the mountains. The mountaineers are compelled to be energetic and industrious to win a livelihood from a moderate soil and a somewhat severe climate, and the development of manufactures and trade is a necessity in a country which must import nearly half its food supplies. The struggle of the Dutch with nature is no less severe. Their soil has been won from the sea, against the encroachments of which they have always to be on their

guard. The situation of their country on the coast naturally led them to take up a seafaring life, and at one time they were the leading commercial nation of Europe.

Switzerland and the Netherlands have this point in common also ; they are both buffer states. Thus Switzerland is a kind of buffer state between France, Germany, Austria and Italy. Holland and Belgium are buffer states between France and Germany.

Further, it is interesting to observe that the rise of these small districts is connected with the same family, viz., the House of Hapsburg, to which reference was made in Chapter XV. Towards the end of the thirteenth century the Duke of Austria tried to oppress the Forest Cantons of Schwyz, Uri, and Winterwalden which lay round about the Lake of Lucerne. He sent arrogant overseers to exact certain duties and taxes. The hardy mountaineers refused and in 1315 Leopold, Duke of Austria, resolved to crush the insubordinate peasantry. " He marched into the forest region at the head of a formidable army, and as the Swiss stood expectant on the mountain slopes they saw the autumn sun glinting upon the shields and armour of the advancing host. Steadily the force advanced; but the Swiss so far made no sign of resistance. And so the army advanced until the cavalry defiled into a narrow pass. A little farther, and that army would have triumphed over the Swiss. As the Swiss saw their enemy filling the whole pass they raised a sudden shout and rolled down heaps of rocks and stones among the crowded ranks, and the Confederates, rushing down in close array, fell upon the disordered column/' This glorious and successful stand against the tyrant led to other Cantons joining the Confederation, and further efforts of the Dukes of Austria to subdue the brave Swiss ended in complete failure. Geography certainly helps

us to understand the success of the Swiss against the Hapsburgs and other tyrants. The Forest Cantons held the St. Gothard region, the central core of the Alps. They therefore controlled the routes, and this fact, coupled with their magnificent bravery, made up for their lack of numbers.

Turning now to the Netherlands, the people here, too, came into conflict with members of the Hapsburg family who endeavoured to suppress their liberties. After the fall of the Roman Empire Holland was sub-divided into a number of feudal estates, which in course of time were re-united under the rule of the powerful Dukes of Burgundy. This was the family to which reference was made in Chapter XV. who endeavoured to build up a Middle Kingdom separating France and Germany. Eventually, the country was inherited by the Emperor Charles V., the head of the House of Hapsburg. Charles was the most powerful ruler of his day. He was Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and King of Spain. He inherited the estates of the Dukes of Burgundy. Much of Italy, also, was under his rule. He abdicated in 1556 and his vast domains were divided between his brother Ferdinand and his son Philip. (Philip was the Spanish King who sent his Invincible Armada against England.) Spain and the Netherlands were included in Philip's share. Now by this time the movement known as the Reformation had made great headway. Just as the Christian Church in the old days was divided into an Eastern with its centre at Constantinople, and a Western with its centre at Rome, so now a division spread in the Western Church. Those who seceded, the followers of Luther, were called Protestants. Western Europe was thus split up into two rival religious camps, and Philip constituted himself the champion of the Pope and the

Roman Catholic faith. His Dutch subjects, on the contrary, for the most part, were Protestants. The king accordingly determined to punish them. The Dutch, we should note, had by this time built up a great commerce, and the king accordingly aimed a blow at this. As the Dutch obtained Eastern goods from Lisbon (Portugal and Spain were a united country at this time), he forbade them the use of this port. War followed with the result that Holland acquired her complete freedom, and in addition many valuable colonies of her would-be oppressor. In this war for independence the Dutch turned their canals to use as a means of defence. They flooded large parts of their country and thus increased the difficulties of their enemy greatly.

A word may be conveniently added here with regard to Belgium. Note that its coastline is very flat and sandy and that the rivers run from south to north into Holland. Not unnaturally, therefore, the people were not attracted by the sea. In the Middle Ages, as we shall see in the chapter on Medieval Commerce, it was the leading manufacturing area of Europe, containing many famous towns such as Bruges, Ghent, Ypres, Courtrai, Antwerp and Liege. Belgium, too, became King Philip's domain, and during his reign the provinces were ruined by persecutions and religious wars. Poor Belgium has been referred to as the cock-pit of Europe, as it has been the scene of so many battles. This is due partly to the fact that it fell into the possession of the Hapsburgs and partly to its being a gateway between France and Germany.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE BRITISH ISLES.

THE history of the British Isles has been affected very greatly by geography. Space will not permit to illustrate this in any great detail but some general points may be noted. Their position in relation to Europe and their structure were important in this connection in ancient and medieval times, while their position on the globe and their mineral products have affected their history powerfully in modern times.

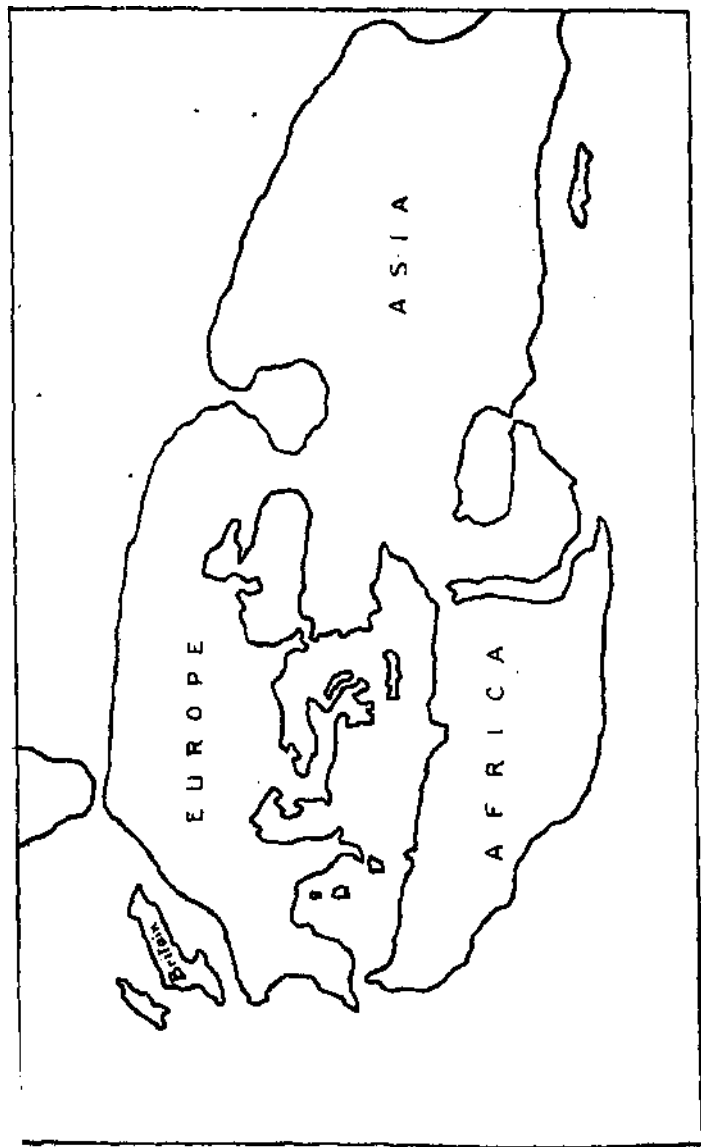
We will now illustrate the relations between history and geography with reference to the British Isles by considering

- (1) Their position as conceived in ancient and medieval times.
- (2) Some consequences of their position in relation to Europe.

(1) *The Position of the British Isles in Ancient and Medieval Times.*

It will not be without interest to note the position of the British Isles as it was conceived in ancient and medieval times, and to contrast the ideas then held with the facts as to their true position in relation to the land masses of the world.

Britain became known to the people of Mediterranean lands through the Phoenicians, who also discovered Spain. They reached Britain by sailing through the Straits of Gibraltar and then skirling the western coast of Europe.



MAP 15.—THE WORLD AS KNOWN TO THE ANCIENT GREEKS.

It should be borne in mind that these discoveries, dating from very remote times, are just as important in the history of the world as the later discoveries of men like Columbus, Vasco da Gama, Magellan, Tasman and Captain Cook. They stirred men's minds and fired their imaginations just as the later discoveries did the men, for example, of the Elizabethan Age. At a very much later period, 55 B.C., Britain was invaded by Julius Ciesar, who reached it from Gaul. Subsequently, as we have seen, the southern portion was included in the Empire.

The first diagram represents the world as it was known to the ancient Greeks. You will observe that Britain is placed at the edge of the land-world. The Greeks, however, knew a great deal about the world, amongst other things that it was globular, but their great discoveries in this and other departments of knowledge were lost to mankind during the Dark Ages which followed the fall of the Roman power and during the later Middle Ages, and they were only brought to light again about the middle of the fifteenth century.

In the Middle Ages, that is, roughly speaking, up to the close of the fifteenth century, people still thought that Britain was at the end of the world; it was held that dragons and demons haunted the undiscovered lands beyond the sea, and that these seas were full of treacherous currents and whirlpools; it was a popular superstition, too, that the mouth of hell was somewhere out in the Atlantic, while at the Equator there was believed to be an impassable belt of fire.

There is a very interesting old map, dating from the thirteenth century, preserved in Hereford Cathedral, which shows the plan of the then known world; here again you see the British Isles are placed right at the edge.

In Book II. we shall see how Columbus and a number

of other discoverers at the end of the fifteenth century and during the early part of the sixteenth century led men to see that this was a mistaken idea. The true position of our island can be readily understood by an



MAP 16.—THE WORLD AS KNOWN IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

examination of a globe. The first thing that strikes us is that most of the land is found in the Northern Hemisphere, while the Southern Hemisphere is, in the main, covered with water.

Now let us examine more closely the great land masses

of the Northern half; east of our islands stretch, in one continuous mass, the continents of Europe and Asia; southwards, beyond the Mediterranean Sea, extends Africa, a distance of about 5000 miles; looking westwards, beyond the Atlantic, we see the great land mass of North America, the western shores of which are washed by the waters of the Pacific Ocean.

The northern position of the Atlantic Ocean is another Mediterranean, so to speak, and in the great land masses that border it, our islands occupy a central position, a fact which has helped Great Britain to become the home of a great and powerful nation. The shores of this other Mediterranean, we shall see in the course of a succeeding chapter, became the home of great and powerful nations, between whom a keen rivalry in commerce sprang up.

There can be little doubt that Britain's central position was a great advantage to her in this race. Just as in ancient days, when the people who had made most progress lived in the lands bordering the Mediterranean Sea, and when the known land world, as far as Europeans were concerned, was mainly a Mediterranean world, it was natural that the occupation of favourable positions in this region was important for the development of commerce. Thus Tyre and Sidon, important centres linking up East and West, were the ports of the Phoenicians; the Greeks had numerous cities round the ^Egean; the descendants of the Phoenicians established themselves in Carthage and Sicily and captured the commerce of the Western Mediterranean. Subsequently the Komans destroyed the Carthaginian power, and from their central position in Italy extended their sway in all directions so that finally the Mediterranean world became a Roman world. Venice and Genoa, two great commercial cities during the Middle Ages, owed much of their prosperity to their position.

For a very long time, then, Britain was supposed to be at the end of the land world. It will be part of our purpose in Book II. to note the chain of circumstances which led men to see that this was not true.

(2) *Some Consequences of the Position of the British Isles in Relation to Europe.*

That Britain is an island separated from Europe by narrow seas is a simple geographical fact. Yet this fact has had many important consequences in history, of which only a few illustrations can be given in these pages. In the days before a strong power was established within it, its nearness to the Continent encouraged invasions from the mainland. The earliest inhabitants reached it probably when the country was joined to Europe by land. These people were a short, dark race, whose original home was in all probability the Mediterranean region. The name Iberian has been applied to these people.

When this western land was converted into a group of islands by the formation of the narrow seas, the Iberians suffered invasion at the hands of the Celts. The Celts came westwards in two waves. The descendants of the earliest invaders are found in parts of Ireland and Scotland. Their language survives in the Erse of Ireland and the Gaelic of the Scotch Highlands. The earlier Celtic invaders are now referred to as the Goidels. The descendants of the second Celtic wave—the Brythonic Celts—are found in Wales and Cornwall. Welsh, a Brythonic language, is still spoken by many people in Wales. Further, the position of Britain in relation to the Continent helps us to understand why it underwent successive invasions from the Teutonic Angles, Saxons, and Jutes. British people are therefore of very mixed

origin, and this, no doubt, has contributed to their strength; for it is a general rule that the pure races are weak while the mixed are strong.

Even at the present day there are several types distinguishable, including:—

1. The Catholic Irishman, who is descended from the early Iberian people.
2. The Ulsterman, who is not quite Teutonic. He is a Protestant in religion.
3. The Scotsman of the far North, who is almost a Scandinavian.
4. The Scottish Highlander, descended from a pre-Celtic race.
5. The Lowland Scotchmen, who are Teutons.
6. The Welshman, a mixture of Celt and Iberian.
7. The Englishman of the North and East, an Anglo-Dane.
8. The Englishman of the South and West, a Saxon.
9. The Londoner, who is of very mixed origin.¹

Observe that Britain approaches the Continent most nearly at its south-east corner. From the narrow Straits of Dover the dividing seas widen and are roughly funnel-shaped. Note, too, that Britain approaches a region on the Continent where the Romance and Teutonic peoples meet. The history of Britain has been powerfully affected by this fact. Although separated, she has not been isolated. Her people have thus been influenced by the Romance and the Teutonic nations.

The insular position of Britain has saved its people from being embroiled in many Continental wars, from invasion, and has thus contributed largely to its prosperity.

¹ Based on *Britain and the British Seas* (Mackinder).

Further, the surrounding seas naturally encouraged its people to take up a seafaring life, and commerce was early developed with the Continent.

CHAPTER XXII.

A RAPID SURVEY.

PART of our purpose in this little book has been to put you into a position to understand the map of Europe as it is to-day. Now we have read something about the various races which found their way into Europe from time to time, and of their distribution. We have also pointed out how the Christian Church was divided into two great sections, the Greek of the East and the Roman of the West, and how the followers of Mohammed established themselves in Balkan-land and Danube-land.

Further, attention was drawn to the great services which feudalism rendered Europe, by making possible the raising of adequate armies to resist the various invading hordes.

It is particularly important to understand how feudalism helped to shape the Europe of modern times. Naturally the feudal lord who rendered the greatest service by raising the most efficient armies and by the most skilled leadership acquired the greatest power. Particularly was this the case in the Holy Roman Empire or the German Empire, which was made up of many petty states, the heads of which were styled Counts or Dukes, as they were in France. The heads of certain of these states, styled Electoral Princes, elected their

Emperor, and for this reason they were called Electors. Now, one of the emperors, forced to make provision for the defence of the empire by the encroachment of the Turks up the Danube, appointed a Count of Hapsburg to undertake the defence of this portion of the empire. A task of this kind meant that armies had to be continually in readiness, and it is not surprising to find that the Hapsburg family, who became the Dukes of Austria,, acquired great power. The great services which they rendered induced the Electors to choose the head of the House as their emperor, and finally it was decreed that the office should descend from father to son, *i.e.*, it became hereditary. It would be well to bear in mind, also, that feudal estates and even kingdoms could be acquired through marriages or by inheritance. Thus some of our Plantagenet kings acquired extensive estates in France, for which they owed allegiance to the French king. In those days there was little of what we now call national sentiment. Reverting to the House of Hapsburg, by various means they became the most powerful family in Europe, and at one time its head, in addition to being Emperor, was King of Spain, also of a large part of Italy. Moreover, the Netherlands formed part also of his dominions.

In the meantime the kings of France had been gradually bringing one great feudal lord after another completely under their control, until their country had become supreme. It so happened, too, that the French kings had completed their task of consolidating their kingdom before the House of Hapsburg had attained its greatest power. Naturally the French kings feared the overwhelming power of the Hapsburgs, and from this time we read of endeavours being made to maintain the "balance of power." Indeed, during the fifteenth century, France made a determined effort to add to her

territory by the invasion of Italy, which had not yet been united into a single kingdom. The French King based his claim to lands in Italy on a right of inheritance. The French invasion was successful for a brief time only, and one of the best results, as far as the French were concerned, was the bringing of France into touch with the learning of Italy, which easily stood first in this respect at this time amongst the countries of Europe. Fortunately for France, the Hapsburgs, when their dominions had reached their greatest limits, had to contend with troubles at home. During the sixteenth century a division sprang up within the Roman Catholic Church. The early teaching of Wiclif, and of his follower Huss, a Bohemian, and the later teaching of Luther, led to the Reformation, which split the Christians of Western Europe into two great camps. Some of the German states adhered to the Roman Catholic faith while others embraced the new Protestant faith, which the Emperor endeavoured to suppress. Thus terrible religious wars weakened the Empire for many years, and inspired many of the states with a hatred for their Austrian Emperor.

Further, when the Emperor Charles V. abdicated, the Hapsburg dominions were divided, Philip II. acquiring Spain and the Netherlands, while the Empire remained with the Austrian branch of the family. Philip II.'s persecution of the Protestant Netherlands led to the foundation of Holland as a separate kingdom. He was the king who married our English Queen Mary, and whose Armada was defeated in the days of Queen Elizabeth. The Austrian branch of the Hapsburg family was destined to lose its hold over most of Germany, too, after the lapse of many years. Gradually, by various means, Prussia extended her territory at the expense of her neighbours, so that during the nineteenth century **she** was in a position to challenge successfully **the**

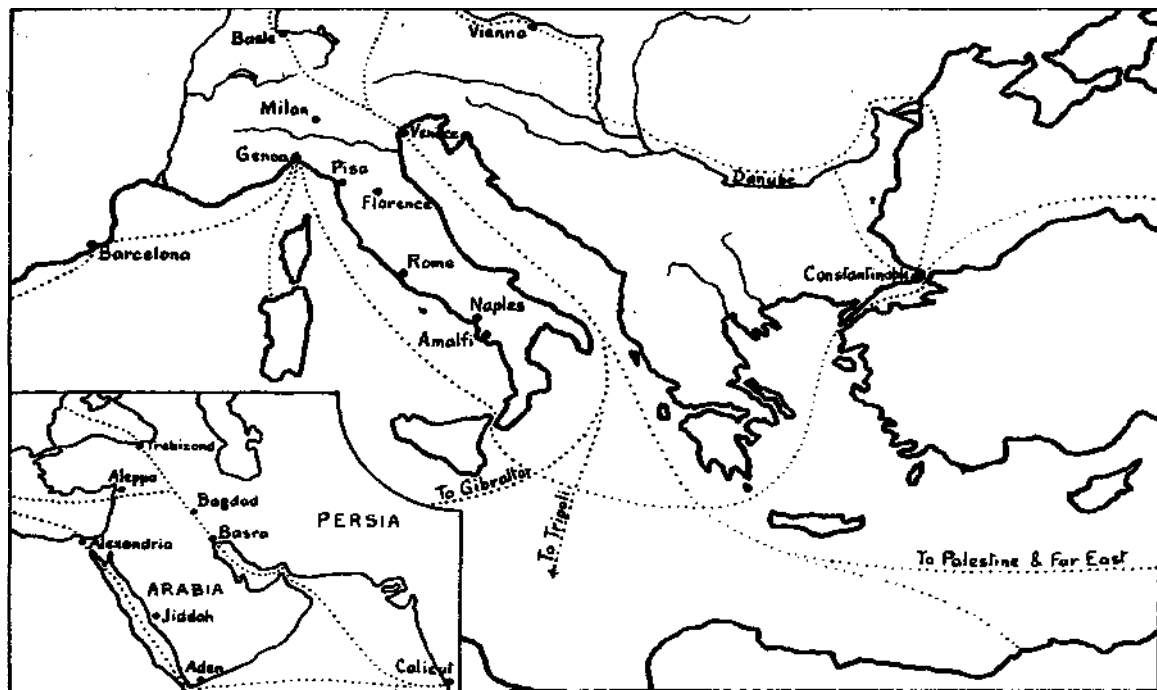
Austrian supremacy. The rise of Prussia is also associated with a famous European family, the House of Hohenzollern, the head of which is now Emperor of the greater part of the Rhine-land, of Upper Rhine-land, and the North German Plain. The-Emperor of Austria, you should note, is also King of Hungary.

In conclusion, the foundation of the little state of Switzerland should be noted. It sprang from the attempt of one of the Counts of Hapsburg to tyrannise over its people, whose sturdy and successful defence won them their independence. Of the Alpine dwellers the Schwyz distinguished themselves above the rest in their resistance, and hence the Alpine republic came to be called Switzerland.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MEDIEVAL COMMERCE.

During the Dark Ages that followed the break-up of the Roman Empire, commerce naturally decayed. The magnificent system of roads which the Romans had constructed, and along which important towns sprang up, shared in the general ruin, and it was not until the days of Charlemagne that a brighter day dawned for Europe. "He promoted throughout his realm education and the arts, as well as agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, establishing at the same time peace and security for these objects. He projected great national works, the most important being a great canal between the Rhine and the Danube. He improved agriculture by making his subjects plant various kinds of fruit trees, such as apples, pears, plums, and chestnuts, and by this means he greatly extended the cultivation of fruit farther



MAP 17.—THE ITALIAN CITIES AND THEIR COMMERCIAL ROUTES.

northward than it had hitherto been grown in Europe. . . . He took care to encourage foreign trade also, by cultivating relations with distant princes. It is interesting in this connection, too, to find that the earliest treaty of commerce in our English commercial history was made between Charlemagne and Offa, King of Mercia, by which document Charlemagne grants his protection to English traders coming from that district. The date of this important record is 796 A.D. 'We also will,' says Charlemagne in this treaty, 'that merchants shall have lawful protection in our kingdom according to our command; and if they be in any place unjustly aggrieved, let them apply to us or our judges, and we shall take care that ample justice be done them.'"

The Feudal System of government played an important part in the restoration of order; not only did it make provision to deal with evildoers within each fief, but under it was organised the defence of the countries as a whole against the devastating raids of Saracens, Huns, and Mongols.

Town life now began to develop anew. The feudal lords chose positions that could be easily defended and controlled important routes for their castles, and naturally enough towns tended to develop in course of time in their vicinity. Interesting examples of towns growing up near castles, or at places which could be easily defended, are Edinburgh and Carcassone. Many of the famous towns of Germany end in "burg/" *e.g.*, Augsburg, Hamburg. A burg was originally a fortified place round which the town developed later. Charlemagne founded several of these burgs, and so did the Saxon Emperor of Germany, Henry I. As life became more settled and more secure the need for selecting strong defensive positions for town-sites became less imperative, and towns tended to develop at places which were conveniently situated for trade.

During the Middle Ages monasteries were important centres of learning and industry, and frequently a monastery formed the nucleus of a town. Oxford is one example of a town developing near a monastery. Market towns grew where roads converged, or where rivers could be forded or bridged. There are numerous examples of "ford" towns in Britain—Chelmsford, Oxford, Stratford. Examples of bridge towns are Newcastle and Gloucester. Points up the river reached by the tide also formed convenient centres for trade, and many towns owe the beginnings of their importance to this fact. A good example of this type is London.

We may note at this point that during the Middle Ages all the great trading towns were on the coasts or on rivers, whereas in Roman times commercial centres were often inland places far from rivers, at the intersection of land routes. It is interesting to observe, too, that the rivers of Western Europe are tidal, whereas those of the Mediterranean are tideless. In Western Europe, therefore, there are far more river ports than in Southern Europe.

Generally speaking, towns tend to spring up at the meeting place of regions whose products differ, or at places where the products of various regions can be conveniently exchanged. Thus Milan lies between the plains and the mountains, and is conveniently placed for carrying on the exchange of goods between the dwellers of the Alpine region and the inhabitants of the plain.

Of all towns, ports are the most convenient for the exchange of goods, as the sea is a bridge which gives access to many lands. During the Middle Ages many towns were selected by reason of their convenient situation for the conduct of *Fairs*, to which goods from many parts were brought. Some of the most famous

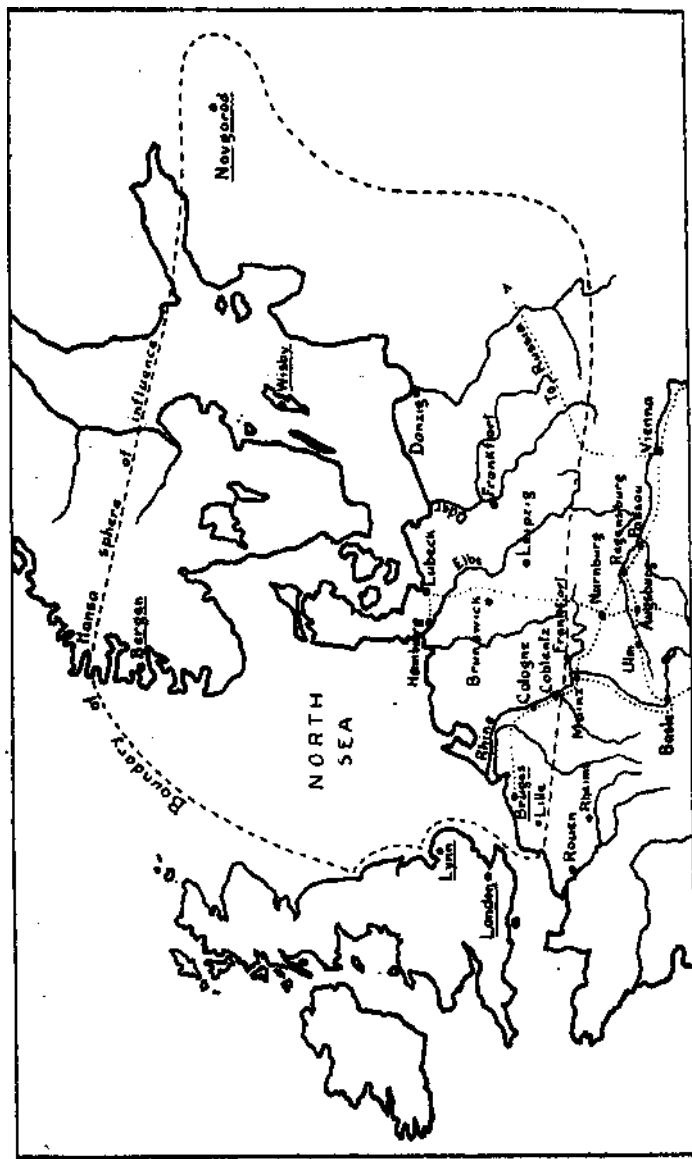
were those of Nigni-Novgorod, Frankfurt-on-the-Main, Frankfurt-on-the-Oder, Leipzig, Lyons, Rouen. English fairs were held at Stourbridge, Smithfield, Bristol, Exeter, Norwich, and many other places. The Novgorod fair is still important, but the others have" either become unimportant or disappeared altogether since the introduction of railways and the improvement of canals.

Reverting to the Feudal System, you will remember that one of its great drawbacks was that some of the powerful barons were rivals of the king himself, and were practically independent of him. In a similar way towns situated in the royal domain became very powerful, and were really independent of their king or emperor. This was the origin of the free imperial cities which played such an important part in the Middle Ages. Many towns secured freedom from being governed by their feudal lords through the payment of money, particularly during the period of the Crusades.

In Italy the course of events was somewhat different from that in Germany. Here the cities became the centres from which the surrounding districts were governed. In Western and North - Western Europe the towns gained their freedom from the feudal lords; in Italy the cities were stronger, and imposed their rule upon the feudal lords. The Italian cities, in fact, prevented the development of feudalism in that country.

There were two regions in which, during the Middle Ages, there was a wonderful growth of towns—one north of the Alps, in the area which we now call Germany, and one south of the Alps, in Italy.

The northern cities formed themselves into a union known as the Hansa League, which acquired great wealth and power. Its origin is to be traced to the determination of the rising towns to put down piracy in the North and Baltic Seas, but once this object was achieved the



MAP 18.—THE SPHERE OF INFLUENCE OF THE HANSEATIC LEAGUE.

advantages to be derived from combining for other objects were realised and the number of towns included was increased. South of the Alps the great commercial cities were united for a time, in what was known as the Lombard League. Generally speaking, however, the Italian cities were continually quarrelling amongst themselves. The commerce of medieval times was thus divided between two great dominions, and the connecting link between the two was the great river Rhine, on the banks of which grew up several important towns.

A few points concerning medieval trade routes and centres can be more easily followed with the aid of the accompanying map. Note, first, the great extent of the Hansa's sphere of influence, which included both land and sea. The Hansa towns were divided into four groups, each with a chief town. These were Lubeck (which had entered into an alliance with Hamburg as early as the twelfth century), Cologne, Brunswick, and Danzig. The Hansa established colonies in foreign countries. These centres—London, Lynn, Bruges, Bergen, Wisby, Novgorod—are underlined on the map.

Two other important confederacies of towns were the Rhine Confederacy, which included the important towns of Coblenz, Frankfurt, and Mainz, and the Swabien Confederacy, which contained Augsburg, Ulm, Regensburg, and Nurnburg. These two confederacies were the links between the Hansa towns and the Italian cities, and were very prosperous during the Middle Ages.

The most famous Italian cities were Amalfi, Pisa, Florence, Venice, Genoa, and Milan. Florence and Milan were manufacturing towns, the former being famous throughout Europe for work in gold and silk, and in the weaving of silk and woollen goods, the latter for its manufacture of armour, and later of silk and woollen goods. Venice was mainly a commercial city, being well

situated to carry on commerce with Eastern countries and with Central and Northern Europe. Her manufactures were also considerable, and her exports included silk, woollen, and cotton goods, glass, dyed stuffs, paper, soap, leather, and armour. Genoa rivalled for a time the wealth and power of Venice. Her manufactures, however, were limited to work in leather and wool, and her prosperity was based mainly in commerce. By the end of the fourteenth century Genoa was completely outstripped by Venice, and from that time she rapidly declined. North of the Alps, Flanders was the most important manufacturing district. Linen and woollen goods were the chief manufactures. England and Spain were the great wool-producing areas at this time, and both countries exported it in large quantities to Flanders.

Some of the most important Flemish towns were Bruges, Ghent, Lille, Ypres, Dendermonde, Oudenarde, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Leyden. Note that Bruges and Antwerp were very important ports. The Flemish towns were concerned mainly with the manufactures of linen and woollen goods, while the silk manufacture was carried on in Italy, Spain, and France. Genoa, Milan, Venice, Florence, and Naples in Italy, Lyons in France, Barcelona in Spain, were all very important silk manufacturing towns. From the examination of the Maps 17 and 18 the routes employed during the Middle Ages can be easily followed.

A word may be conveniently added as to the method by which trade and industry were organised during the Middle Ages. Below the lords and vassals, who were the warriors, there were various grades of workers. The villeins were allowed most freedom, and tilled their lands on the condition of rendering certain services and paying a yearly rent. "They tilled the fields, looked after the castle, worked in the vineyards, repaired the roads, made

furniture, utensils, etc. They could marry and transmit their property to their children. One class of tenants, known as mortmain tenants could not marry without their lord's consent, and their property, in the absence of heirs, reverted to the lord. The serfs were the lowest class, and at first were little better than slaves. They made clothing and armour for the nobles, built their castles, and performed all the most menial tasks."

The towns were the homes of liberty, and the workers formed guilds and corporations to protect their interests. They became more and more independent of the feudal lord, and were places of refuge for those of his dependants who wished to be rid of his authority. It was a frequent practice of the townspeople to call upon the king to aid them in their fight for freedom against the exactions of their feudal lord. The king was generally glad to do so, as by this means his own power was increased. Thus wealth and power of the towns helped in a great measure to break down feudalism.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE LEGACY OF OTHER DAYS.

You are familiar with the idea of division of labour in your own village or town or country. In the village we have, for example, the shoemaker, the smith, the teacher, the doctor, and so on. In the large town the subdivisions are greater; a doctor may make a special study of one part only of the body, like the eye, and confine his attention to cases in which that organ is affected.

Looking at our country as a whole, too, there is a rough

division of the nation's work. Northern England, with its rich deposits of coal, is mainly industrial; the south-eastern plain of England, with its rich soil, its drier and sunnier climate, mainly agricultural. Then some regions in the north of England are more suitable for one particular kind of industry; thus the manufacture of cotton goods is localised in Lancashire, that of woollen goods in the West Riding of Yorkshire. Then again, in the cotton industrial area, some towns are employed in one process of the manufacture, either the spinning or the weaving, or the making of machines for these processes.

The same thing is true of the world at large. We find a country like Australia producing and exporting large quantities of wool, and taking in exchange manufactured goods. The raw cotton of the Deccan, or of Egypt, will be exchanged for the finished manufactured articles of industrial countries.

So much for the distribution of work at the present day. There is yet another and equally interesting way of looking at the world's work; we can look at it from a historical point of view. All stages in the history of mankind have contributed something to the grand total of the inheritance, which we of to-day enjoy. " Even the savage life contributes something to the total of civilisation. The savage hunter, dependent for his very existence on success in the chase, learns to endure hardships without murmurings in the pursuit of his prey. Constantly on the look-out for danger, he develops powers of observation which are the admiration of his more civilised brother. He can trace the foot steps of an enemy in a thicket, where a modern detective would declare it impossible to read any sign. He can foretell the approach of a storm from warnings which would escape a scientific weather prophet. He can hear sounds

which to a civilised man are simply inaudible. He has infinite patience, provided only that the prospect of reward is palpable and immediate. These are no mean contributions to the store of civilisation."

Of work, however, in the sense that we understand it, the savage and the primitive peoples had no idea. It was only when men settled down in definite areas and learned to make a fuller use of the soil that any great progress became possible. How precarious the life of the savage is can be realised when we bear in mind that "the savages understand neither the cultivation of the land nor the rearing of sheep and cattle. Their only domestic animal (if 'domestic' it can be called) is the dog. They have no idea of dwellings more advanced than a rude bough hut ; for the most part they take shelter in caves, and behind pieces of bark propped up against trees or rocks. They have no food but the scanty game of the ^f 'bush' or forest, and the natural products of the earth. The art of fire-making in a very primitive form, is known to them; but their notions of cooking are of the crudest; still less have they the knowledge of working in metals, either by hammering or by melting."

Confining ourselves to material things, what a contrast to each of these particular items is presented by highly-civilised communities of the present day. Let us consider the item relating to animals. Quite a number have been domesticated and brought into the service of mankind—the dog, the horse, the sheep, to mention the most important. The domestication of animals is one of the great landmarks in the history of mankind. To what particular people this was due will never be known, but they must be regarded as amongst the great benefactors of the human race. From our point of view its importance lies in this—it made life more secure, a store of food was thus provided, and the life bordering on starvation

became a thing of the past. It gave men time to think of things other than those relating to mere subsistence, or in other words progress in civilisation became possible.

We are equally in the dark as to what person or what people discovered the art of cultivating the soil and raising crops of grain; but the discovery of the value of wheat, oats, barley, rye, rice, as foods for man, and of the methods by which they could be raised, had many important results. Men then settled down in definite areas; the tents of nomadic life were replaced by buildings of a more substantial nature; stores of food could be preserved; a much larger population could be maintained; and the danger of communities being exterminated through starvation was further lessened. A still higher civilisation thus became possible.

Other discoveries were made, the most important being the use of metals. Various industries, like that of the smith, were developed, and the foundations laid of present day industries.

A change in industrial methods amounting to a revolution has taken place, comparatively speaking, within quite recent times. It was towards the close of the eighteenth century, within the space of a few years, that a series of inventions and discoveries, amongst which may be mentioned the discovery of the power of steam and its application to industry and to the improvement of the means of communication, were made in England, that were destined to transform not only the industrial and social life of our own country, but of many other countries besides.

The change from savagery to pastoralism, and from the latter to the cultivation of the soil, the inauguration of manufacture by steam-driven machinery are all great revolutions in the social history of mankind.

It will not be necessary at this point to say more

about this, but it would be well to bear in mind that in the case of progressive peoples, society, *i.e.*, the people as a whole, passes through the stages to which we have made a brief reference in the preceding sections. Out of savagery it passes into the pastoral, "nomadic stage; then into the settled agricultural state in which the rearing of cattle will be continued; and finally, in some cases, a society may become mainly industrial.

You should note, however, that there are no hard and fast dividing lines between these various stages. We say that a society is in the agricultural stage only when the chief source of its wealth, *i.e.*, all the goods by which it satisfies its wants, are obtained by agriculture, or by the exchange of agricultural products for them.

We may say then, in a general way, that with the progress of civilisation man becomes less the creature of his surroundings; he makes the forces of nature minister to his needs in an ever-increasing degree, the more he discovers the secrets of the universe.

The nations of antiquity to whom we owe the greatest debt are the Hebrews, the Greeks, and the Romans. The Hebrews were the first people to arrive at the great truth that there was only one supreme, just God. Again, it was amongst the Jews that Jesus appeared to preach His mission to mankind. He came, too, at a time, when the history of Rome as an empire had commenced. When at a later date Christianity was adopted as the official religion, the wide extent of the empire ensured its spread to many lands and peoples. Rome was thus the avenue through which the Christian religion spread in Europe, and the city of Rome still remains the headquarters of the most powerful section of the Christian Church. We have already pointed out how Constantinople became the Mecca of the Christian Church in the East.

It is important also to bear in mind that Rome pre-

erved the civilisation of Greece. Although the Romans conquered the Greeks, yet they adopted the Greek civilisation, and, as in the case of Christianity, ensured its spread. It seems as if Rome's great mission was to gather up all that was best in ancient times and to hand it down to the succeeding ages. We have read in earlier chapters that the invading barbarians in the West were converted to Christianity in the form in which it was preserved at Rome. Just as the Greek civilisation conquered the Romans, so did the Roman conquer the Teutons from beyond the Rhine.

It was pointed out also, in an earlier chapter, that the great masterpieces of Greek literature were preserved during the Middle Ages in Constantinople and were lost for the time to the west. After the fall of the city at the hands of the Turks in 1453, they were restored to Europe again, and their study led to a great revival of learning, reference to which will be made in Book II.

We may thus look upon the close of the fifteenth century as the meeting place of many ages. The Middle Ages, with its feudal system of government was drawing to a close; the old Greek world with its priceless treasures of literature, permeated with the spirit of enquiry and investigation, was rediscovered; great modern states were rising on the ruins of feudalism, while beyond the Atlantic a New World, as the result of the discoveries of Columbus, swam into man's ken. Further, the time was fast approaching when even the Pope's supremacy was to be questioned and the Reformation was at hand. With the close of the fifteenth century we thus enter definitely upon the modern phase of history, and it is to some aspects of this in relation to geography that we propose devoting Book II.

