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# **MEDITERRANEAN   CIVILISATION**

*By the Same Author*

THE SCALY-WINGED

A SCHOOL LITURGY

A MODERN HANDBOOK TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

# MEDITERRANEAN CIVILISATION

BY

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LONDON

WILLIAM HEINEMANN LIMITED

1931

SET IN THE MONOTYPE VERSION OF THE  
TYPE OF JOHN BASKERVILLE ( 1706-1775)  
AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY  
MESSRS J. AND J. GRAY OF EDINBURGH

## PREFACE

THIS book is not intended to be used only as a text-book in schools. Although it is certainly hoped that it may be found suitable for use in a class-room, its aim" is directed at a somewhat larger target. During the composition of the book, that intelligent but somewhat elusive person—the general reader—has been in the forefront of the writer's mind.

Many are the writings of history by experts for the scholar; standards have been raised in every direction and with each such elevation, the general reader has fallen further behind. There is a danger lest he altogether lose touch. The amateur has felt himself to be more and more an intruder on the well-kept estates of the expert. Naturally and rightly afraid to express his own opinion of the beauties of the landscape presented to him, his humility has not merely reduced him to a decorous silence but has driven him right out of the grounds. To illustrate—there was a time, within the memory of some yet living, when people were not ashamed to own to a positive delight in the reading of such books as Macaulay's *History of England*. In those days, it was considered to be quite as great a defect in ordinary culture not to be acquainted with such books as it is nowadays to display a liking for them!

Now there can be no doubt that, to the serious student of history, the highest possible degree of accuracy will be the first consideration, and for him there will be no danger of any loss of interest; but to those without special knowledge or the possibility of attaining it, most modern history books will, of necessity, seem to be somewhat arid. The ordinary reader is inclined to think that too great a price

can be paid for accuracy and he finds that he has not the wherewithal to pay it. This book is for amateurs and has been written by one. The author has found great pleasure in the study of many different periods of history, but it is obvious that no one can possess any claims to expert knowledge of all the periods (from 1200 B.C. to 1500 A.D.) dealt with in the course of this short story. It is probable that mistakes will be found; it is certain that the mistakes would have been many but for the kind work of a host of friends who have looked over and criticised the various chapters.

There is a vicious circle in history reading. An intensive study of a short period is the only really exciting pursuit; outlines are both dull and misleading; yet without an outline of the whole, an intensive study of any part is almost unintelligible. How can the circle be broken? Perhaps by the selection of a few very important incidents or movements set forth with rather more detail than is possible in an outline which might cover the same long period; this will involve the omission of a great many noteworthy historical events to leave room for a few details which are themselves of less import, but which serve to give life and colour to those pivotal events chosen for special study. If these events can, further, be shewn to be connected by a logical thread, however thin, the gain will be considerable both for the understanding and for the memorising of the scheme. Such is the method of this book.

When mountaineers wish to make a path across a rough and difficult piece of country, they often mark out the route by making a series of heaps of stones called cairns. All travellers who wish to follow such a path can do so by keeping these cairns always in view. There will be some positions marked out quite unmistakably for the cairns by the nature of the ground. A conspicuous rock or a corner, a gap in a ridge, will here and there render the selection of appropriate places quite easy, but the ground between any

two such places will leave much room for variety of choice. Nor does the exact position of such cairns matter very much; the essential thing is that anyone standing near one of them should be able to see the next one. It will also be realised that the cairns need not be actually on the path itself, but may stand some feet away in some prominent position.

It will be obvious that a very different series of events might be chosen for precisely the same purpose and that the writer's own preferences and the accidents of his own reading have been the decisive factors in his choice. Others might have devoted more space to Rome and less to Greece, or in dealing with Greece have paid more attention to the fourth century and less to the fifth; some would prefer Augustus to Julius Caesar, Otto to Charlemagne or a study of Luther instead of Francis of Assisi. Others again would wish to make an entirely different scheme; such differences, however, do not invalidate the method but rather lend it strength. If the method be sound, then other schemes ought most certainly to be devised. The writer's hope is that, with the knowledge of these historical events, and with the help of the table of dates at the end of the book, any reader will find it possible to follow with interest such books of history as he may care to study. This book is intended, therefore, to supply both a background and a framework; a background before which the great historical characters may be seen to move and a framework into which historical events may be fitted.

It may interest schoolmasters to know that one three-quarter-hour period a week is enough to get through the book in a year and yet allow plenty of time to deal more fully with many of the events related.

History is hardly intelligible if the reader lacks the necessary geographical knowledge to enable him to follow all the movements described; every reader will therefore find it convenient to be in possession of some good

historical atlas. The maps in the text illustrate the main points dealt with, and many, though not all, of the places mentioned in the book will be found on one or other of these maps.

R. B. H.

DULWICH, *April* 1931.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

EVERY event of history is the result of a multitude of antecedent events and to understand fully, not only what does happen, but why it has happened, it would be necessary to know everything that every man, woman and child all over the world was thinking, saying, doing and even being, in the times which preceded the event under review. As this is clearly impossible, the historian selects what seem to him the most important factors from among those known and thus tries to make a consistent and intelligible story. He must omit many factors of which he is himself cognisant and he must always bear in mind that there are very many more which are unknown. Having made his selection, the historian must then group his facts, giving greater emphasis to some and less to others, according to his own theory of the meaning of life. From these considerations it will be clear that to write an unbiassed history is impossible, yet, although impossible of attainment, it will be the ideal which every writer has constantly before him, and a good historian will use special pains so to present his facts that the reader will have some opportunity of forming conclusions different from, and even opposed to, those of the writer.

Among the groups of factors which seem to determine the sequence of events in history, attention may be drawn to a few of the main ones by a mere mention of the names by which they are known. There are geographical facts, economic facts, political, social, naval and military facts, and these have all given rise to different forms of historical study,

so that we may speak of "the political history" or "the naval history" of a particular time and people, and although it is true, there has never appeared "a geographical history,"<sup>1</sup> the influence of geography upon history is so powerful that writers have sometimes been led into the error of supposing that geography is the sole and sufficient cause of history. This is the over-emphasis of one out of a very great many causes, nor has the above list by any means exhausted them. It might, for example, conceivably be possible to write the history of a people from an acute and critical study of their literature, or of their art, their music, drama and folk-songs, and a host of other media through which people tell us of their best and highest thoughts and which not only express their thoughts, but have a formative influence on their actions. Some historians—Count Leo Tolstoy is a notable and extreme example—are so much impressed by the influence of the past on the present that they seem to think that if only all the contributing factors, at any one time, could be known, it would be seen that history was the unfolding of an absolutely inevitable sequence of events, and men whom the world calls great and important owed their prominence solely to the circumstances and the times—accordingly men are not only the product of their age, they are its mere creatures. Other historians, of whom Thomas Carlyle may be quoted as an outstanding example, maintain that man is somehow master of his fate and that history, therefore, so far from being an orderly progress, is a series of catastrophes caused by the impact of great minds on a world of mediocrities.

Fortunately, it is not necessary to decide between such opposing views; the truth does not lie with either extreme but embraces both. All men are, without doubt, products of their age, but it is also true that times out of joint have cried and sometimes cried in vain for a man born to set them right, and if *the* age, in a limited sense, produces the

<sup>1</sup> There are, however, "historical geographies."

man, the man also has it in his power to react upon the age.

When it comes to the discovery of the origins of civilisation, we have not enough evidence to enable us to decide between these two schools of thought, but here too a corresponding difference of outlook is clearly marked. There are those who would have us believe that groups of human beings will, under favourable conditions, of themselves develop civilisation and go through all its known phases without interference or suggestion from outside. This is sometimes, though perhaps inaccurately, called evolution. To others, these processes seem by no means inevitable and to them it appears that civilisation has originated in one or more centres and spread thence by actual contact to other parts of the world. Egypt is one such centre and there are even writers who maintain that all other civilisations owe their growth to direct or indirect contact with the Valley of the Nile. If it be asked how civilisation began in Egypt, the answer can only be that it was the work of one or more pioneers.

In this little book the author proposes to take his readers on a rapid journey—as it were in one of Mr. H. G. Wells' time machines—from the dawn of Mediterranean history up to the time of the Reformation, alighting, on our way, on mountain peaks, from each of which a view of the next stretch of country can be seen. It will be our object to point out the salient features of the picture thus presented to us on the top of each peak and then to pass over, in rapid flight, to the next.

The result should be a scheme into which more detailed knowledge will be found to fit easily and, in the making of it, we shall become acquainted with most of the great events of ancient, and some of those of mediaeval times.

Moreover, such a scheme, once mastered, must greatly assist that development of time sense without which the

## MEDITERRANEAN CIVILISATION

general reader is so badly handicapped in his pursuit of historical knowledge.

Events for special mention have, therefore, been chosen; first, because they are interesting in themselves, secondly, because they interlock with others, each leading on to the next; and thirdly because they have some bearing on the question—which must be interesting and important to us—as to how the civilisation of the Mediterranean came to have such a marked influence on the history of the British Isles. Most of the events chosen have some relation to modern political and social problems, and all of them are events of which the general reader may find it useful to have an account in an easily accessible form.

For a long stretch of the time we call "ancient," Great Britain and Ireland were hardly in touch with the civilisation centering round the Mediterranean, yet our life to-day is very closely connected with that civilisation; for though it is true that we have made our own contribution as Northerners, it is clear that we are debtors to the three main streams which have flowed round the Mediterranean basin—the Roman, the Greek, and the Hebrew.

### OUR DEBT TO ROME.

Through the Romans we became acquainted both with the Greeks and with the Hebrews, but the Romans have also bequeathed us a handsome legacy of their own.

*Language.*—Some three-fifths of the words in an English dictionary are of Latin origin. (Since most of the commonest words are Anglo-Saxon, the proportion of Latin words in spoken or written English, though still high, is not sixty per cent.) These Roman words have come to us at three separate times in our history—first, at the time of the Roman occupation (43-410 A.D.); second, when the Normans brought many Latin words, more or less modified by their passage through France; and third, at the time of the Renaissance, when a direct study of both Latin and **Greek**

was made by all people with any pretence to culture. Many place-names (*e.g.* Chester=*Castra*) bear witness still to the Roman occupation of Britain. It must also be remembered that French, Spanish, and Italian owe even more to Latin than does English, and are, indeed, largely developments of the ancient tongue.

*Law.*—A fact not always realised, yet of great importance, is that the legal systems of most of the countries of Western Europe are based on Roman Law. The code of Justinian (c. 550 A.D.) is the foundation on which the law of England is built, as also that of most other countries in Europe.

In addition to language and law, England owes some benefits of a more material kind to Rome. A glance at the map of London will reveal the fact that Edgware Road is remarkably straight for a long way: this is part of Watling Street which ran from Richborough to Chester and most of which is still in use to-day. England, like every other Roman province, was covered with a network of roads.

#### OUR DEBT TO GREECE

This is much more subtle, more difficult to define than the Roman, but it is also much more important. It has come to us through the Roman—entirely so until the Renaissance, when a direct and intensive study of Greek was made.

So far as European civilisation is concerned it may be said that the Greeks took the first steps in almost every branch of human enquiry and learning. They said the first words inmost things—philosophy, poetry, drama, literary criticism, geography, history, mathematics, science; almost everything in fact, with the possible exception of religion. In some forms of art their work has never been surpassed. This high praise is due to their sculpture, architecture and—many would add—poetry and drama.

The Greeks in fifth-century Athens were probably more

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genuinely and more highly civilised than any other people before or since, and much of their civilisation forms part of our own. Moreover, we have much yet to learn from them.

It should also be realised that many of our most important words, especially those dealing with all branches of human learning, have been borrowed from the Greek language.

### OUR DEBT TO PALESTINE

From Palestine we have received our religion, though it should always be remembered that it has reached us through the Greek and through the Roman. From contact with the Greek, it has been obliged to make terms with philosophy and the Roman influence has often forced it into a legalistic mould which threatens to destroy some of its original beauty and suppleness. With Christianity has come the Bible and the study of that great book has had a profound influence on the shaping of English character.

The real contribution of Palestine will, however, never be understood unless the purity of worship developed in the synagogue is contrasted with the horrible and disgusting rites centering round animal and human sacrifices. Monotheism is important; so also is the moral content of God's law; both were a long time in coming to the Greeks and Romans and then came only to a few, but it was the purity of the synagogue worship with its songs, prayers and studies that made possible the other glories of the religious life of the Hebrews and ultimately produced a form of religion and a form of worship acceptable to the pagan world.

### A NOTE ON CHRISTIANITY

While it is obviously impossible, in a paragraph, to explain what has taxed the ingenuity and resourcefulness of all the saints and sages of Europe for well-nigh two thousand years, it may yet not be out of place to set forth one great asset of Christianity as compared with any other religious system. Christianity faces up to the awful facts of human sin and

human suffering. The Old Testament shews us generations of thinkers grappling with this problem and putting forth all manner of solutions, each one of which contains part of the truth but becomes untruth when claiming to be more than partial. The Old Testament culminates in the book of Job, wherein it is shewn that it is quite possible for the wicked to prosper in this imperfect world and that the good are by no means always as successful as they deserve to be. The author commands our gratitude and admiration for the bold manner in which he sweeps away the accumulated rubbish of ages and sets the problem in its true light; but he has no solution to offer and concludes by a bare statement—couched in some of the grandest words in the whole realm of literature (Job xxxviii-xli)—that we are all in the hands of an inscrutable Power who does with us as seems best to His Godly Wisdom. Now the centre of Christianity is the Cross. Job says that the good man *may* be called on to suffer, but Job offers us no sort of explanation for the call. The Gospels reiterate the call and add to it a Reason of tremendous import—God Himself suffers and He issues an invitation to man to share His pain and by so doing to share also His Divinity. Just as the artist by the touch of his magic is able to transform that which is intrinsically ugly into something beautiful, so also can God cause good to come out of evil by the use of vicarious and willing suffering.

Throughout the centuries, this has proved to be the strength of Christianity. It has often been misunderstood and sometimes it has been obscured by the words of creeds intended by their authors to make its meaning clear; devised to justify the ways of God to man, it has often been thrown into forms that can only disgust man with the caprice of an unjust God—yet properly understood and reasonably stated it remains the one beacon light to shew a path along which the pilgrim finds himself approaching nearer and nearer to an understanding of the deepest mystery of life.

**ROME, GREECE AND PALESTINE**

It will be our business in this book to trace, in outline, the development of these three strands in the rope of Mediterranean civilisation; to shew how the Palestinian thread became intertwined with the Greek and both with the Roman; and how the three-stranded rope was at length interwoven with our own thread of life in the North.

It is necessary, however, to guard against the mistake of supposing that, because we owe a great debt to the ancient world for much that is good in our own civilisation and culture, there is any direct historical connection between our political institutions and social customs and those of the Greeks and the Romans. Indirect association in some respects there may be, but a thousand years of Middle Ages—some of them very dark—come between Modern and Ancient times and the modern world is a development of Mediaeval Europe even when that development, as so often happens, has taken the form of reaction against what has gone before. Consider, for example, the growth of modern democracy; it would be easy to argue that, since, in ancient times, there were republics in Italy and in Greece, and since modern democracies began to take shape after the rediscovery of Latin and Greek culture had made us aware of what had happened in those times, therefore modern democracy owed its rise to a study of republican Rome or democratic Athens. Such reasoning is wide of the mark; there is no direct relation between the two things thus compared; democracy did not begin to flourish in Europe until long after the Renaissance and the influence of the Church of the Middle Ages was possibly more potent than the glory of Greece or the power of Rome in the determination of the forms of many of our modern institutions.

It will perhaps be of assistance to the reader to summarise the events chosen as pegs on which to hang this brief

historical survey, and thereby to reveal the chain of logic by which they are connected.

The civilisation on which Western Mediaeval Europe was eventually built emanated from three centres all in close touch with the Mediterranean Sea—Italy, Greece, Palestine. The Persians after the coming of Gyrus the Great in 559 B.C. conquered Palestine and Egypt, and also turned their thoughts westward. This brought them into conflict with the Greeks. The Persian Wars (500-480 B.C.) left the Greeks supreme in the Ægean, but their quarrels among themselves led to the Peloponnesian War, from which they never recovered. Then came the expedition of Cyrus the Younger and the retreat of the ten thousand which proved to the Greeks that it was possible to beat the Persians in their own country. Further quarrels among the Greeks themselves eventually led to the conquest of Greece by Macedonia. Alexander applied the lessons of the retreat of the ten thousand and carried Greek arms through Persia to India. Palestine was one of the countries conquered by Alexander, and thus Hebrew and Greek were brought face to face. Pyrrhus, a relative of Alexander, attempted to spread Greek culture westward by force of arms just as Alexander had spread it eastward, but Rome barred the way. By defeating Pyrrhus, Rome became mistress of Italy. Sicily was clearly marked out as the next battlefield of Rome, and the Punic Wars (between Rome and Carthage) began there. By 200 B.C. Rome had conquered Carthage and was absolute ruler of the west. The flight of the Carthaginian Hannibal to Asia made certain (what was in any case probable) the advance of Rome in an eastward direction. Rome's success continued until all the Mediterranean was hers. Pompey entered Jerusalem in 63 B.C., so Palestine and Rome were brought into contact.

After 200 B.C. the Republic of Rome began to suffer from terrible internal diseases, and nothing but a change of constitution could have saved it from complete decay.

Julius Caesar, after conquering Gaul for the Republic, conquered also the Senatorial party in the Civil War, and gathered all the power of the State into his own capable hands. He was the real founder of the Roman Empire. When Augustus Caesar, the first crowned emperor, died in 14 A.D., the known world was unified—there was one political organisation to which all belonged. There was also one language (Greek) universally spoken and understood, but there were many gods. The world was then made ready for the work of St. Paul, who brought to Europe (c. 50 A.D.) a religion which, after nearly three hundred years of persecution, was accepted by Constantine as the official religion of the Roman Empire. Henceforth one Empire, one Church, was the ideal, but both the Empire and the Church soon split into two, and for eighty years there was the anomaly of two emperors. In 476 A.D., however, the emperor at Rome was compelled by the Barbarians, who had swept down from the north, to resign his power into the hands of the reigning emperor at Constantinople, and nominal unity was restored.

This event is usually considered as bringing ancient times to a close and as ushering in the Middle Ages. The fall of the Western Roman Empire produced a condition of chaos and weakness, and Asia was able to make another bid for the control of Europe.

Mohammedanism began its rise in the sixth century, and Islam was soon knocking at the doors of Christian Europe. Constantinople held firm, but the new religion spread along the north coast of Africa, until in 711 A.D. the Moors crossed the Straits of Gibraltar and effected a lodgment in Spain. Tours, in France, was the limit of their advance, and there, in 732, they were defeated by Charles Martel. The descendant of Charles Martel was Charles the Great, who was crowned in 800 A.D. by the Pope as Roman Emperor. In fact, though not in name, this was the foundation of the Holy Roman Empire. New blood was introduced into the nations by the coming of the Normans, but the ultimate

failure of the eight Crusades made it plain that Christian Europe was ringed round by Mohammedan foes. St. Francis and the Albigenses (from 1200 onwards) serve to show that the real awakening was coming, and Renaissance and Reformation followed. The ring was evaded, though not broken, by the discovery of the passage round the Cape of Good Hope, and in 1492 the discovery of America completely changed the geographical outlook of Europe and placed the British Isles and the Atlantic countries in a position of command.

The naval battle of Lepanto, 1571 A.D., in the Gulf of Corinth, where the Christian forces under Don John of Austria defeated the Moslems, proved to be the death-knell of Mohammedan power in Europe, though Constantinople, taken in 1453, still remains in the power of the Turk.

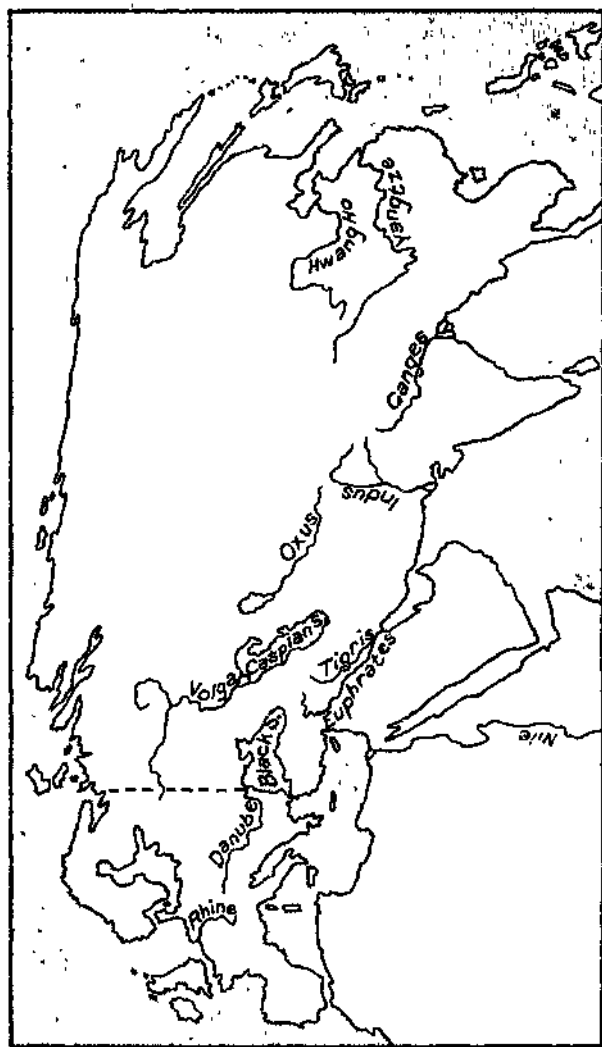
## CHAPTER II

### PALESTINE AND THE EAST

#### THE TIME OF THE PERSIANS

MUCH of the story of the Mediterranean is concerned with the struggle for power of the East against the West, and in dealing with the European situation, it is never wise to forget for long the existence of those Eastern States which were only waiting for opportunity to move westward. A glance at the map of the great land-mass which constitutes Asia and Europe will shew that it would not have been geographically unnatural for Europe to have become a mere appendage of Asia; indeed, whenever the predominant Power in the East was strong enough, attempts were made to conquer and annex as much of the European Peninsular as could be reached by land or sea. It will be well, therefore, at the outset, to form some idea of the main trend of events in the East before attention is turned to Greece and Rome.

Civilisation in the East had two centres, both determined by the presence of a water supply. On the southern side was Egypt, situated in the fertile valley of the Nile, and in the north, Mesopotamia (which means 'midst of the rivers') watered by the Euphrates and the Tigris; in each of these river basins, civilisation reached a high level. These two countries—Egypt and Mesopotamia—are connected by a narrow bridge—that part of the fertile crescent which separates the Desert of Arabia on the one side from the Mediterranean Sea on the other. For the possession of this bridge, the Powers on the north and the south were continually in conflict, and this chiefly with the object of

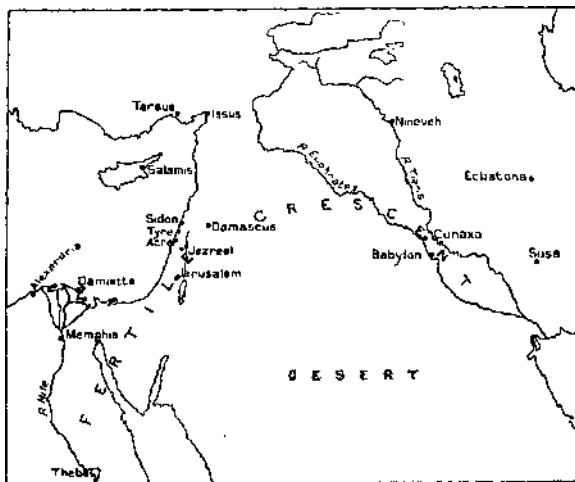


EUROPE AND ASIA

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gaining a springboard, each against the other, and also, in later times, for the sake of the valuable timber found in the forests of Lebanon. The valley of Jezreel, or the Plain of Esdraelon, overlooked by Nazareth, was the scene of many a battle from the earliest times of the ancient Egyptians down to the Great War of 1914-1918.

Yet ancient Egypt was not at first a warlike nation: the



THE FERTILE CRESCENT

This should be compared with a physical map of the district and the relation to the mountains, deserts, etc., studied.

Egyptians of the pre-pyramid days were a peaceable people, but the threat of attack from the surrounding deserts on every side forced them to take up arms and adopt the military profession. Egypt is a difficult place for a hostile army to enter, but once an entrance has been effected, it is comparatively easy for an armed force to complete the

conquest of the country. One such entry was effected by the Hyksos Kings, who were Semites, and remained in possession of the whole of Lower Egypt for a hundred years (1680-1580 B.C.); they were eventually expelled by Thutmose the First, acting from Thebes. This Thutmose was at first only a local ruler, but his prowess against the Hyksos marked him out as the obvious King of all Egypt and, as such, he became the founder of the famous XVIIIth dynasty, which of late years has been brought so prominently to notice by the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamen. Thutmose the Third was the mighty warrior, the Napoleon of Egypt, who carried the Egyptian arms in a series of brilliant campaigns right up to and even beyond the Euphrates itself. In his time all Palestine and Syria owned the sway of Egypt;<sup>1</sup> yet the most interesting King of this dynasty is not, after all, the great conqueror who gained the Syrian Provinces for Egypt, but the lonely, despised, heretical King Akhnaton who lost them. This Akhnaton renounced war, gave up the somewhat barbaric religion of his forefathers and taught his people new and better ideas of God, which bear remarkable resemblances to the probable teaching of Moses. But although Moses—more than a century later—was brought up at the Egyptian Court, it would be rash, with our present knowledge, to conclude that there was any direct connection between the two reformers.

In Egypt, with the exception of the Hyksos, all the many Kings of the various dynasties were native to the land over which they bore rule—there was no change from one ruling nation to another for many hundreds of years—but in the Northern river basin the course of history was very different and we find a succession of various races in control of Mesopotamia and the lands in contact with it. Sumeria,

<sup>1</sup> Cleopatra's Needle, now on the Embankment, is one of his monuments, and is inscribed with accounts of his conquests. A similar **column** is in New York.

## MEDITERRANEAN CIVILISATION

Babylonia, Assyria (with its capital at Nineveh on the Tigris), then Babylonia<sup>1</sup> again, held sway before the Medes and then the Persians came from yet further East and conquered the entire district.

A knowledge of what is happening in Egypt on the one side and in Mesopotamia on the other will generally furnish enough material to enable us to form a good idea of the state of affairs on the Palestinian bridge between the two. Thus, when the grip of Egypt on Palestine was relaxed and before the Northern Power had had time to establish itself and begin to work Southward towards Egypt, Palestine was left to itself. This is the time of the Hebrew conquest after the Exodus, and the short-lived united monarchy—under Saul, David, and Solomon. After the split between Israel and Judah in 933 B.C., the Northern Kingdom of Israel, with Samaria as capital, maintained a somewhat precarious independence for a time and then began to feel the pressure from the North. Samaria fell to Assyria in the year 722 B.C., but the Assyrians failed in their attempt on Judea and before they could make any further advance towards Egypt were themselves displaced by the Babylonians. It was in 612 B.C. that the Babylonians or Chaldees beat the Assyrians and destroyed Nineveh, and in 605 B.C. the battle of Carchemish placed Egypt also in the power of Babylon. Jerusalem attempted several rebellions, but was taken and partially destroyed in 586 B.C. The Assyrians had been a purely military people, but the Chaldeans were something more than mere fighters, and the influence of Babylon is strongly marked in certain parts of the Old Testament, for it was as exiles in Babylon that some of the authors spent their days.

The arrival of the Medes and Persians brought about another great change, and from the time of Cyrus the Great (559 B.C.), the Persians were the dominating race in the

<sup>1</sup> The Chaldees were the people who at this time occupied Babylonia.

East. Before conquering Palestine and Egypt they began to work through Asia Minor towards Europe. In about the middle of the century, Cyrus conquered Lydia and came into direct contact with Europeans—the Greek colonists who had established themselves in large numbers along all the Western coasts and islands of Asia. Under King Darius the First (521-485 B.C.), the Persians actually entered Europe and crossed the Danube in pursuit of the Scythians. Darius failed to make any impression in Scythia, but his armies conquered Thrace and Macedonia and it was during his reign that the first great conflicts between the Greeks and the Persians took place. But before we turn our attention to the West, we must deal with an event which took place in Jerusalem in the year 621 B.C.—unnoticed at the time by the great races of the world, but destined to have far-reaching consequences throughout the whole of Europe.

#### THE REFORM OF JOSIAH IN 621 B.C.

The chief contribution to Mediterranean civilisation from Palestine was the purity of worship that grew up round the Jewish synagogue. There are many indications in the words of the five great pre-exilic prophets of the eighth and seventh centuries B.C., *Amos*, *Hosea*, *Micah*, *Isaiah*, and *Jeremiah*, that in the religion of Moses there was no room for any system of sacrifices and that these sacrifices—animal and human—had been borrowed by the Hebrews from the Canaanites whom they had conquered. These prophets seem to be unanimous in their belief that the sacrificial system was a set-back which occurred when the Israelites turned from a pastoral to an agricultural mode of life. So strong were the force of superstition and the fear of a failure of crops that, for centuries, the prophetic party were but just able to maintain their own existence and keep alive the pure Mosaic tradition. After the failure of the Assyrians under Sennacherib to take Jerusalem in c. 700 B.C., Isaiah, who had predicted a Jewish success and encouraged the

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defenders of the city, used his temporary popularity to persuade the King, Hezekiah, to effect a partial reform, but his work was all undone by the reactionary King Manasseh. In the year 621 B.C. there came the justly famous reform of Josiah. This was a statesmanlike compromise, for it abolished all the local sanctuaries and allowed sacrifices to take place at Jerusalem alone. Like all compromises, this *Law of the One Sanctuary* (embodied in the book of Deuteronomy) did not and could not completely satisfy anybody, and it was, of course, hopelessly illogical; for if it was wrong to sacrifice at Hebron (one of the most ancient and important of the sanctuaries destroyed), it must have been equally wrong to sacrifice in Royal Jerusalem. On the other hand, if God wanted sacrifices, the more there were of them everywhere, the better would He be pleased. Yet this strange compromise won almost universal acceptance and became from that time onwards the law of all Hebrews wherever they found themselves. Already there were many Jews in Egypt, and the time soon came when they were to be found in all parts of the world, and wherever they went they continued to obey the law of the one sanctuary. These were known as the Jews of the Dispersion, and so far as they were concerned, the law of the one sanctuary meant that there were no sacrifices at all. Their distance from Jerusalem was too great to permit of visits thereto and sacrifice might be made nowhere else. Finally, in 70 A.D., the Temple at Jerusalem was utterly destroyed and Jewish sacrifices came to an end. The reform of Josiah was thus a far greater victory for the non-sacrificial party than anyone, friend or foe, in 621 B.C., could possibly have imagined, and the consequence of it was the growth of that form of worship which was associated with the *Synagogue* or meeting-house.

The Synagogue was thus born in the year 621 B.C. and the form of worship to which it gave rise differed in no essential way from that in use in the Churches of all civilised countries to-day—Prayer, Praise, Study, and Preaching.

This was destined ultimately to be the great contribution of Palestine to the culture of Europe, for the Synagogue not only represented in itself a new and wholesome religious movement, but it is difficult to see how Christianity could have come into existence without the background of the Synagogue and still more difficult to see how it could have conquered the pagan world. The Synagogue was the cradle of Christianity.

## CHAPTER III

### THE EARLY DAYS OF GREECE

#### THE TROJAN WAR.

THE Trojan War probably took place soon after the year 1200 B.C. and our only account of it is to be found in the pages of Homer and in those other stories which supplement the two great epic poems—*The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*—and go to make up what has always been called the Homeric cycle. Although this is all poetry and legend, the explorations that began in the last century—themselves almost the subject for a romance—point quite clearly to a substratum of solid fact. That there was a war between Greeks and Trojans is certain and, to say the least of it, the course and termination of it cannot have differed very widely from the traditional account. Except for the expedition of the Argonauts to the Black Sea, this is the first recorded instance of that age-long struggle for the supremacy of the Levant between Europe and Asia, and victory went to the Europeans. What it was all about it is impossible, at this time of day, to determine with any certainty, but the close proximity of Troy to the Hellespont (four miles from and within sight of the opening of the straits) points to some dispute concerning the trade between Greece and the ports of the Euxine Sea. Possibly the Trojans attempted to enrich themselves at the expense of ships passing up the Dardanelles by exorbitant tolls or inflated prices for water and other necessities, but this in no way discredits the famous story of the abduction of Helen, which may well have been the occasion of the outbreak of the war. But if this is only

speculation, it is certain that the story as told in the Homeric Cycle is one of the most enthralling that has ever been written or sung and that it has provided a never-ending supply of subjects for creative artists of all kinds—sculptors,



## EXTENT OF HELLAS

Showing the state boundaries and islands.

painters, poets, dramatists, moralists—throughout all the ages, from the days of Homer to the present time. The Homeric Cycle was the school book of all well-educated Greeks, and if one single book is to be made the foundation of education, it would be very easy, even to-day, to make a worse choice.

## EXTENT OF HELLAS

Some time after the Trojan War (possibly about the year 1000 B.C.) an event occurred which had a marked influence on the subsequent history of the Greeks. The Greeks themselves always spoke of it as "the return of the sons of Heracles" to claim their rightful heritage as lords of the Peloponnese. Possibly Heracles was an entirely mythical character and, in any case, the claim of his sons must have been of the slenderest nature, but there is, nevertheless, again some historical truth underlying the legend. What really happened was an invasion, or series of invasions of people from the North, who, starting from somewhere in the neighbourhood of Doris, crossed the Gulf of Corinth, probably from Naupactus ("ship-building"—afterwards Lepanto), and took possession of many parts of the Peloponnese. These invasions made a deep impression on the life of Hellas, for not only did the Dorians, as they were called, afterwards become the dominant race in the Peloponnese, but their coming forced many of the other Greeks to seek a refuge elsewhere and thus begin that process of colonisation which, continuing for many centuries (roughly 1000-550 B.C.), spread the Greeks over much of the coast of the Eastern Mediterranean basin and even in two directions (West and North-East) considerably beyond these limits. By the year 550 B.C., Greek settlements were to be found on all the islands and on every coast—west, north, east—of the Ægean Sea, both sides of the Dardanelles, Propontis, Byzantium, on the south coast of the Euxine, parts of the coast of Africa, most of Sicily, all the coast of Southern Italy, and as far west as Marseilles (Massilia) and Spain. It is probable that Greeks settled on the north side of the Black Sea as well as on the south, but, if so, they mingled with the natives there and ceased to be purely Hellene.

The Greeks have always called themselves "Hellenes" and their land "Hellas," but it should be observed that "Hellas"

## THE EARLY DAYS OF GREECE

to them meant, not the Greece of a modern map nor indeed any particular place with definite boundaries, but the whole extent of the land—mostly on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea—where Hellenes were to be found in possession. There were so many Greeks in Southern Italy that the coast-line cities came afterwards to be spoken of as "Magna Graecia." The word "Hellas" was taken from an obscure tribe (or a mythical man Hellen) at one time inhabiting a part of Thessaly, while our word "Greek" came from the Romans, who made the acquaintance of the Hellene race by meeting with a colony from Graia in Locris settled not far from where Naples now is (Naples itself is an old Greek town—Neapolis=New City). From these Graians the Romans are said to have learnt their first lessons in polite letters—but some say that the Graeci were a tribe of Hellenes settled in Western Epirus and that contact between Rome and Greece was made by that route.

Now this great spread of the Hellenes is not to be attributed entirely, or even mainly, to the pressure exerted by the Dorian invaders. The invasions were all over before the year 800 B.C., whereas most of the Greek colonies were founded between that year and the middle of the sixth century. Dissatisfaction with affairs of state at home drove many Greeks, like the Pilgrim Fathers of a later age, to found new cities, where they could have matters arranged more to their own satisfaction. The discontent was political and it arose, almost inevitably, when trade fostered the growth of a rich and intelligent middle class for which the ancient constitutions had made no provision. Moreover, trade itself, without any political considerations, led to the foundation of settlements in other lands.

The foundation of a colony was looked upon as a very serious undertaking requiring the approval of Delphi (the most important centre of religion in all Hellas) and the appointment of a definite leader, under whose guidance the constitution of the new city was drawn up and who, after

## MEDITERRANEAN CIVILISATION

his death, was revered as the patron hero. The connection between the metropolis (mother-city) and the colony was mainly one of sentiment. The daughter state sprang into existence full grown and quite independent, and, while it was considered impious in a colony to go to war with the mother-city, any interference with the internal affairs of the colony tended to absolve the daughter from filial obligations, at least in the view of the colonists. If the British Empire could be imagined as continuing to exist without even the pledge of loyalty to the Crown, the relationship that might then be supposed to lie between Great Britain and the other parts of the present Empire would provide a fair parallel. Nor was the counterpart to America lacking: Corinth quarrelled violently with her important and powerful colony Corcyra (Corfu), and the hatred between the two was both cruel and lasting.<sup>1</sup>

The foundation of colonies, in so much as it entailed the loss to the metropolis of many of her most enterprising young people, was probably a source of weakness to the particular state concerned, and it is worthy of note that the three states—Sparta, Athens, Thebes—which were destined in turn to take the leadership of Hellas were all states without colonies.<sup>2</sup>

The Dorian invasion of the Peloponnese will serve to emphasise and illustrate a matter of very great importance in all the history of Greece—there were two distinct types of Greeks: the Dorians themselves and what may conveniently, if not quite accurately,<sup>3</sup> be called Ionians.

The word "Ionia" itself generally means that part of Asia Minor of which Miletus and Ephesus were the chief

<sup>1</sup> Fortunately the parallel between America and Corcyra stops short at hatred and cruelty.

<sup>2</sup> The Cleruchies founded by Athens in the fifth century were totally different from ordinary colonies.

<sup>3</sup> The word "Ionian" is inaccurate because many of the Greeks were originally neither Dorian nor Ionian, but there exists no single word which might be considered an equivalent to "non-Dorian."

cities, but the Athenians always supposed (wrongly) that Athens was the metropolis of Ionia.

The Dorians occupied the Peloponnese, while non-Dorians were to be found in Attica and the islands of the Ægean Sea; the Ionians also settled on the eastern side of this sea, on the coasts and islands of Asia Minor.

Dorians and Ionians had remarkably opposing characteristics which are reflected in the geography of Greece. Its flat, fertile plains are shut in by mountains on every side except one, and on that side the sea invites man to adventure. Mountains divide countries, the sea joins them. Those who obeyed the call of the sea led the adventurous life of the trader to distant parts. These were the Greeks who always welcomed new ideas, were restless in their ways and progressive in their politics. Those who, for any reason, did not take to the sea, were almost inevitably forced into the restrictions of a rigid conservatism, with all its faults and also with its many virtues. Hence we find that the Dorians not only spoke a dialect different from that of their cousins in Attica, but were distinguished by certain differences in character from their neighbours; they were slower, more stupid, but also braver and better fitted to endure physical hardship, less enterprising, but more dogged.

For a very long time the leadership of Hellas lay with Dorian Sparta, but the leadership passed to Athens after the Persian Wars, partly because of her magnificent behaviour during those wars, but chiefly because of the powerful fleet she then possessed. Ionians were, as a rule, far better seamen than Dorians.

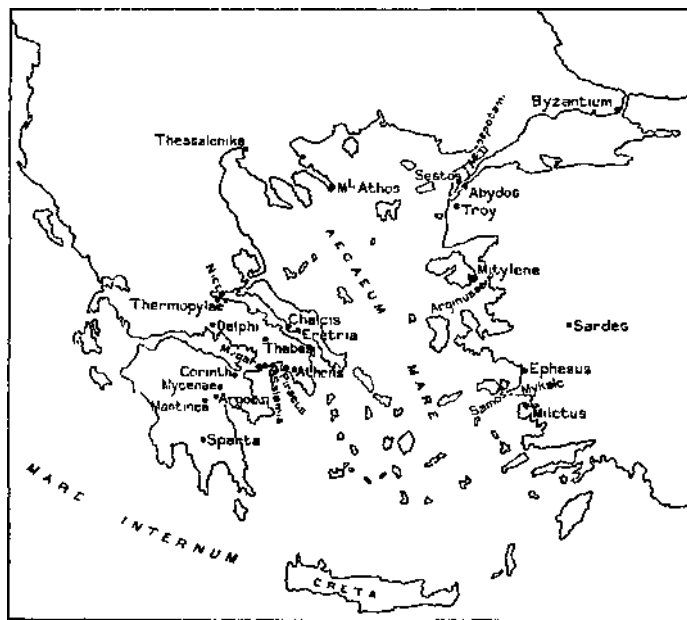
Most of the islands of the Ægean Sea were Ionian, but to this there were two notable exceptions. Both Ægina in the Saronic Gulf and Melos further south were nearer to the Peloponnese than were the other islands and were ancient Doric settlements.

This same division between Ionian and Dorian can be traced among the Greeks of Southern Italy and also in

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Sicily; on the mainland of Greece proper, Bœotia and Phocis (with its all-important religious centre Delphi) were Dorian in sympathy; while distant Thessaly, with its far-famed horses, was supposed to favour Athens.

The excavations at Mycenae shew also that, in early times,



THE CITIES OF THE AEGEAN

This should be compared with the map on p. 37.

there must have been a close connection between the life of Greece and that of Crete. The island of Crete was the meeting-place of the Dorian flood with the civilisation that had spread over from Egypt, and it was thus, probably, the indirect influence of Egypt that led to the first steps in the

development of Greek culture. Of their debt to Egypt, the Greeks themselves seemed to be in no doubt.

#### THE AGE OF THE TYRANTS, 600-500 B.C.

Before 600 B.C. all these Greek states seem to have been governed by kings; during the following century most of them were ruled by what are known as Tyrants and by the end of it these had nearly all been driven out. There were causes for these changes and they seem to have been operative, with local modifications, in all the states at about the same time. Probably the Kings were originally leaders in war, but as soon as the conditions of a community became more settled, the great land-owners or barons, as they would have been called in mediaeval times, grew jealous of the king's power and chafed against his over-lordship. Moreover, there grew up at the same time a middle class of merchants and traders who were freemen but not nobles. These, though men of substance, had no political power, and were eager for some change in the constitution which would offer them better prospects. Upon their support any noble who promised such a change could depend, but everything rested, in the last resort, with the fighting men—the army. It will be observed that the time had not yet come for a popular monarchy such as that of the Tudors in England, an alliance of the king and people as a check to the power of the nobles, and all the kings disappeared from Greece before 600 B.C. Then, in the sixth century, in one state after another some military leader arose who brought about a *coup d'etat*, upset the constitution and established a dictatorship.<sup>1</sup>

Such a man was called a "tyrant," and his government, though unconstitutional, was usually popular—at least in the beginning. Originally, therefore, nothing harsh was implied by the word "tyrant"—it referred only to the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the revolution of Jehu in North Israel in the year 843 B.C.—  
2 Kings ix. \*

manner in which power was obtained and not the manner in which it was used. Greece, in fact, owed much to her tyrants: many of them were patrons of the arts (Peisistratos, the Tyrant of Athens, to take one example, did something to popularise Homer, though precisely what it was that he did is to-day a matter of conjecture); all were, almost by hypothesis, men of ability if not charm, but the possession of so much arbitrary power often led to a sad deterioration of character.<sup>1</sup>

By the end of the sixth century all the tyrants had been expelled from Greece, and some of them had taken refuge at the court of the Persian King, where they remained ever watchful for any opportunity of return. The states they left behind them adopted one or other of two forms of government—democracy or oligarchy. In the first, the rule of the *demos* (people) did not mean all the people, but those who, nowadays, would be described as the men of property, employers of labour and the like and who, in those days, were the free men. In oligarchies (rule of the few), the political power was retained in the hands of the senate or nobles. For the most part, the Dorians preferred oligarchy, while democracy found favour among the Ionians.

The constitution of Sparta was peculiar and was probably the result of changes similar to those of other states, but brought about with much less violence. As Sparta moved on from monarchy to oligarchy and democracy, she kept more than vestigial remains of earlier conditions, so that in the Sparta of history are to be found: (a) two kings who were hereditary officers of very great importance and led the armies of Sparta to battle, but had few of the other powers of a ruler (that there were two of them is enough to show that they were not monarchs and, even if they had acted together as one man, their powers would not have been those of a tyrant); (b) the council of twenty-eight nobles who acted with the two kings as a senate; and (c) the five Ephors,

<sup>1</sup> Napoleon Buonaparte is a fair example of a "tyrant."

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annually elected from the people, whose powers were more extensive than those of kings and senate. The full body of citizens could also be called upon to decide, but not to propose, matters of policy in the state.

Sparta was thus neither oligarchy nor democracy, neither was it a monarchy, but it combined important features of all these methods of government. Nevertheless, it was conservative to the last degree and, probably on this account, was looked to for support by all those states which favoured oligarchy rather than democracy and also by the oligarchic party in such states as were governed by popular vote.

Fifth-century Athens, on the other hand, was the most outstanding example of democracy. Every Athenian free-born citizen was expected actually to take part in deliberations of state policy, in executive and in judicial functions. Anyone who failed to do so was regarded as unpatriotic. Such was the condition of Greece when the Persian Wars brought out all that was best in the race and some, also, that was not so good.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PERSIAN WARS

DURING the first half of the sixth century B.C., there flourished in Asia Minor the Kingdom of Lydia with its capital at Sardes. The Lydians had succeeded in reducing the Ionian Greeks of the coast to subjection, but their rule was not harsh and their kings were largely Greek in sympathy, as is shewn by their liberal contributions to Delphi. About the middle of this century, however, the last Lydian king Crcesus fell to Cyrus the Great,<sup>1</sup> founder of the mighty Persian Empire, and all the Greeks of the coast were brought within the Persian dominions. The Persian kings with their capital at Susa, three months' journey away, could not be expected to pay much attention to the susceptibilities of their subjects in this distant *satrapy*\* and the proud Greeks of the Ionian coast found their position galling in the extreme. About the end of the century they broke out in revolt and sent for aid from their fellow-countrymen in Europe. Sparta refused to help, but Athens and Eretria (on the island side of the straits of Eubcea) sent ships from which a raid was made on Sardes, the capital of the new Persian province. The raid took the Persians by surprise and the raiders, some say by accident, burnt the town; they failed, however, to make any impression on the citadel and, being pursued by the Persians to the coast and beaten in battle, they sailed away home again without having accomplished anything to assist their fellow Greeks but having done a great deal to annoy their enemies.

The Ionian revolt took a long time to suppress, but as

<sup>1</sup> See page 33.

<sup>2</sup> Persian word for " Province."

soon as it was over, and the unhappy Ionians brought into subjection again, the great king Darius the First (reigned 521 -485) bethought him of the insult offered to his arms by the Athenians and the Eretrians and in 492 B.C. sent a large punitive expedition under his son-in-law Mardonius to teach them not to interfere with Persian affairs. Mardonius went by the coast route and, passing through Thrace, met with some trouble from the wild hill tribes there. Moreover, and this was a more serious matter, his accompanying fleet was badly mauled by a great storm off Mount Athos, so Mardonius thought it best to retire and refit.

*Marathon*, 490 B.C.—The second expedition was devised on a totally different plan. It was commanded by Datis and Artaphernes and they had with them Hippias, the former tyrant whom Athens had expelled twenty years earlier. To the previous orders to bring representative Athenians and Eretrians back to the king in chains was now added an injunction to restore Hippias to the throne of Athens. No doubt the intention of Darius was twofold—to render the capture of the city easy by enlisting the help of the tyrant's friends within it and also to make sure of future submission by leaving his own creature in command. It was a well-conceived plan and it almost succeeded. This expedition avoided Mount Athos by taking the sea route by way of the Ægean Islands. The Persians sailed up the straits of Eubœa, landed near Eretria, and with the help of traitors in the city, took the place, put in chains as many of the inhabitants as they could lay hands on, and so fulfilled the first part of their mission. They then crossed the straits and rode at anchor in the bay of Marathon. So far all is clear, but what was the further plan of the Persians or even precisely what actually happened, is still a matter of much dispute. Herodotus is our only guide, and he leaves us without information on many points, but the most probable course of events would seem to be the following. When the Athenians knew that Eretria had

fallen,<sup>1</sup> they sent Philippides<sup>2</sup> on his famous hundred and forty mile run to Sparta with a request for immediate aid. The Spartans were very sympathetic, promised support, but urged religious reasons against making a start before the full moon. They did, in fact, send an army; and it arrived exactly one day too late—a significant fact, as the sequel will shew. The Athenians, in the meantime, had come to a momentous decision—they denuded the city of troops and sent their whole army, ten thousand strong, to meet the Persians at Marathon, twenty-six miles away. The risk was a double one: firstly, of allowing their enemies to slip round by sea and take possession of an undefended town (the walls of Athens at this time were in no condition to stand a siege); and secondly, that of a revolution engineered by the friends of Hippias in the town. The first has often been considered the greater peril of the two, but it may well be doubted whether it so appeared to Callimachus and the other Athenian generals. Their talk was all of the danger of treachery from within—their anxiety, at least the anxiety of Miltiades, and he carried the others with him, was to come to grips at once with the Persians even though, if they waited, they might reckon on help from the Spartans. The Persians, on the other hand, postponed action until the very last possible day before the arrival of the Spartans, for they hoped day after day that the standard of revolt would be raised at Athens. Datis might well be pleased that the Athenian army had come out to meet him at Marathon, for it seems likely that to make his attack from that side had never been part of his plan. In the battle which ensued and which the Athenians won by superior tactics and fighting, Datis made no use of his cavalry. Apparently this arm of his forces, which, properly used on the plain of Marathon,

<sup>1</sup> The Marathon campaign is full of difficulties for the historian. According to one recent reconstruction, the Athenian army moved northwards in order to go to the assistance of Eretria, which, it is supposed, had not yet fallen.

<sup>2</sup> Or Pheidippides.

would almost certainly have turned the day in his favour, was still on board the ships in the bay. There Datis awaited the long expected signal to tell him that the revolt in Athens had begun, or was about to begin. And there, on this very day, the signal was given: for what else can be the meaning of the shield flashed from the top of Mount Pentelicon seen by the Persians in their ships? It was seen also by Miltiades, at the end of the battle in supreme command by reason of the death of Callimachus, and he seems to have interpreted it in the same sense as the Persian commander, for he hastened all the troops back to Athens, which they reached just in time to see the Persian ships sail into the Bay of Phalerum. It was this march back to Athens, rather than the march to Marathon—which indeed must have been exactly what Datis wanted—that saved Europe in 490 B.C. from the menace of the Persians. It was a great feat for men to fight a fierce battle in the early morning and then march with their armour<sup>1</sup> twenty-six miles over hills and rough country. It was a marvel that any of them did it, and they must have been Titans and not men if they had been able to fight again without a rest. But there was no need to fight; the mere presence of the returned troops was enough to prevent a rising in the city. The Persians knew this too; they saw that all hope of a revolution in their favour was at an end; they also knew that the Spartans were rapidly coming up on what would be their flank if they landed, so they very wisely went home to revise their plans. Next time it would be no mere punitive expedition, but an army of conquest and occupation—never again would they pick the chestnuts out of the fire for a deposed tyrant and his weak-kneed adherents in the city; they would take Athens; they would take all Greece and keep it for themselves. Thoughts

<sup>1</sup> At this early date the Athenian armour may still have been of the light wicker kind, but even so it was an encumbrance on a long march. It is not certain that the army reached Athens on the evening of the day of battle. They arrived before the Persians, but it may have been on the following day.

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such as these must have filled the minds of Datis and Artaphernes, else how dared they return to their royal master with so little to shew for the result of their campaign?

*Thermopylae, Salamis, 480 B.C.; Platea, Mykale, 479 B.C.*—Not for ten years did the Persians come again to Europe. The delay was caused first by a revolt in Egypt and then by the death of King Darius in 485. The interval was well used by the Athenians who, under the brilliant lead of Themistocles, decided to build a fleet. Their persuasion to this momentous step was made all the easier by the annoyance caused to the Athenians by the interference of Ægina with their ships in the Saronic Gulf. Thus it came to be said that the little war between Ægina and Athens saved the Greeks from the barbarians because it compelled the Athenians to build a fleet.

Vast preparations were made by King Xerxes, son of Darius, and vast was the host that set out from Sardes to the conquest of Greece. Ships and men, they came in hordes<sup>1</sup>—the coast route was used again this time, the Hellespont was crossed by a bridge of boats and the canal of Xerxes, there to this day, was cut through the promontory of Acte so that the fleet might avoid terrible Mount Athos.

The council of Greece met at the Isthmus of Corinth to consider plans of defence. They despatched a small army of some six or seven thousand men to take up positions guarding the passes on the route that the army of Xerxes was expected to take. The first intention was to make a stand at the northern end of Thessaly, but a reconnaissance soon showed that there were several passes in the neighbourhood and that the Persians might take any one of them. As the Greeks had insufficient men for the defence of all routes, they were obliged to abandon Thessaly and concentrate on

<sup>1</sup> Recent investigations of the route followed, while they confirm many interesting details in the story as given by Herodotus, make it clear that the numbers given by this historian are in the last degree unlikely. Probably the fighting force consisted of between 150,000 and 200,000 men of all arms, excluding the fleet.

the defence of Thermopylae, on the south side of the Malian Gulf and opposite the northern extremities of the long island of Euboea.<sup>1</sup> There is now a mile of level ground between mountain and sea, but in 480 B.C. the sea washed the base of the cliffs and there was but a narrow path along which an enemy must pass unless the far longer and very complicated inland route was utilised. Here Leonidas, a Spartan king, posted himself with the greater part of his troops—three hundred Spartans,<sup>2</sup> seven hundred Thespians, and a few thousands of other allies. To watch the inland route, he sent the Phocians, who planted themselves on high ground overlooking the road.

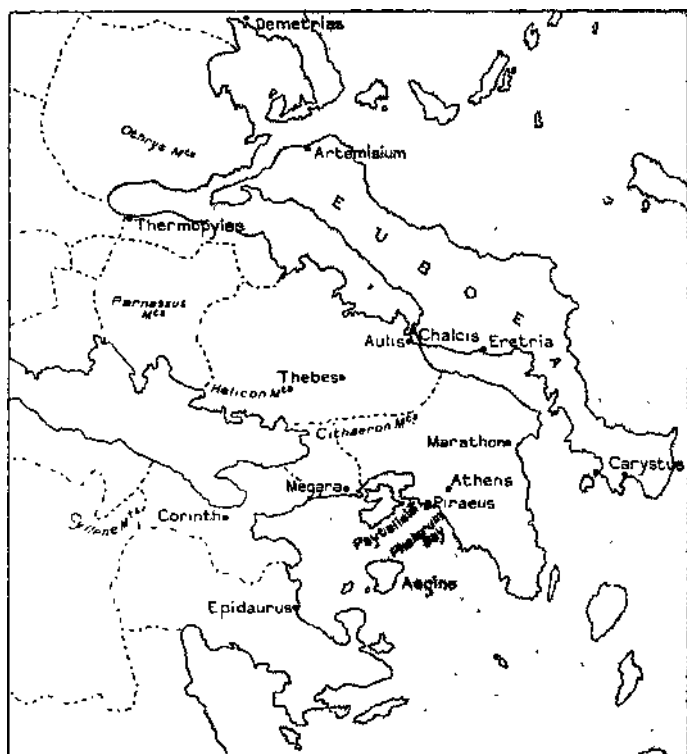
At first Xerxes tried frontal attacks, but he only succeeded in losing valuable troops without making the slightest impression on Leonidas: and when he saw that the position must be turned, he despatched a small body of picked men under Hydarnes by the inland route, compelling a Greek (Ephialtes, always afterwards held in dishonour and eventually murdered) to act as guide through the bewildering labyrinth of mountains and dales which forms the hinterland of Thermopylae. This detachment eluded the Phocians<sup>3</sup> by night and were making for the comparatively open ground on the other side of the pass almost before the Phocians had realised what had happened. The pass was thus turned and Leonidas had two courses open to him—either to evacuate Thermopylae or to send some of his troops to detain

<sup>1</sup> The Greeks were trying to hold the line of defence Thermopylae-Artemesium. The Persians, having failed in their naval actions to turn the Greek right, were obliged to attack the Greek left at Thermopylae. When the Greek line gave way, as a result of Thermopylae, the next line was Corinth-Salamis, but this was an impossible line to hold without an immediate action, for the Greek right was in the air. Euiyadiades wanted to withdraw the Greek right (*i.e.* fleet) to make better contact with the army. Themistocles preferred immediate action.

<sup>2</sup> The king's own bodyguard.

<sup>3</sup> It has been suggested that the Phocians were blocking the more western road leading straight into Phocis and that the Persians took the eastern route and so evaded them.

Hydarnes while he himself still kept the pass. He seems to have adopted the second plan, but Hydarnes beat or evaded the men sent against him. Leonidas was thus surrounded,



THERMOPYLAE AND SALAMIS

and he and his three hundred Spartans and seven hundred Thespians fought to the last man and were all slain amid the heaps of the dead Persians they had killed. One Spartan escaped. With a companion, Aristodemus was away on

some duty or on sick leave when he heard that Leonidas was lost and, instead of returning to Thermopylae, as the other did, while there was yet time, he went home to Sparta. There, none would hold any intercourse with him, so at the next opportunity, namely at Plataea in the following year, he fought with reckless bravery and found death at the hands of the Persians. Such was the spirit of Sparta.

Bceotia, through which the Persians had next to pass, offered no resistance—in fact, the Boeotians, according to later and perhaps biassed accounts, helped rather than hindered the invader—so that the Isthmus of Corinth became the next natural line of defence. This meant the abandonment of Attica and the Athenians were obliged to leave their city to be burnt by the Persians and take refuge on the island of Salamis and other places reached by sea. The Greek fleet, which had already done excellent service in daily skirmishes at the top of the Eubœan straits and had only retreated when the fall of Thermopylae rendered their presence at Artemesium useless, was now assembled at Salamis, whither the Persian ships gradually followed.

To understand what happened next, it is necessary to realise that Themistocles was in command of the Athenian contingent only and not of the Greek fleet as a whole. The Athenians contributed about one-half of the total number of ships, but the commander-in-chief was the Spartan Eurybiades, and he was for withdrawing the fleet to defend the shores of the Peloponnese. Most of the other admirals, being also Peloponnesians, agreed with Eurybiades; yet Themistocles was right; the only chance of success for a fleet, which, however good, was heavily outnumbered, was to deny the enemy sea room by fighting on the confined waters of a bay<sup>1</sup> where it was easily possible for numbers to be a positive

<sup>1</sup> The Greeks carried out a brilliant tactical plan which lured a large part of the Persian fleet into a trap. For details see Cambridge Ancient History, Vol. iv.

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disadvantage. When he saw that the other admirals were bent on retreat, Themistocles took a course which must surely be without parallel in history; he sent a spy with a message to Xerxes himself telling him of the intentions of the Greeks and suggesting to him that, if he wished to prevent them from getting away, he should stop up the western entrance to the bay of Salamis. In other words, Themistocles asked his enemy to surround him. Xerxes obligingly complied and, when dawn came, the Greeks found that they could not escape and must therefore fight.<sup>1</sup> Thus was the battle of Salamis fought and the result was a complete victory for the Greeks.

After the battle of Salamis, Xerxes, probably wisely, returned himself to Sardes to keep an eye on the Ionians and prevent them from cutting his lines of communication and, the year being now far spent, Mardonius was left in command of a picked body of troops with which he took up his winter quarters in Thessaly. Attica was, for the moment, free again and the Athenians returned to what was left of their city. They had to evacuate it again next year, however, for Mardonius advanced a second time to the coast. In this year—479 B.C.—he tried hard to make an alliance with the Athenians against the Spartans, who were certainly behaving very badly, for they did not keep their promise to send their army across the Isthmus. They were selfishly trying to keep it for home defence,<sup>2</sup> and not until it was pointed out to them that, if the Athenians failed to remain loyal to the cause of Greece, Sparta and the Peloponnese could be reached by sea, did they send their army across the Isthmus. When it had arrived at the other side of the Isthmus, there was nothing for Mardonius to do but withdraw again to Thebes.

At Plataea, a bare eight miles from Thebes, the decisive

<sup>1</sup> See footnote to p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> At least, this is how their action must have presented itself to the Athenian people. Whether it was good Greek strategy to send the Peloponnesian army across the Isthmus may well be doubted.

battle took place and the Persians were utterly defeated. At about this same time in the year 479 B.C. the remnant of the Persian fleet was also defeated at Mykale on the coast of Asia Minor and the Persian menace was removed from Europe for ever. Then also the expected Ionian revolt took place and this time, with the assistance of the Greek fleet, it proved successful.

For the salvation of Greece, it is clear that, in spite of Thermopylae and in spite of Plataea, Athens had done far more than any other state, with the result that the leadership passed from Sparta to Athens. Two other things contributed to the change—one was that the Spartan Regent Pausanias, victor of Plataea, was convicted, very shortly after these events, of a guilty intrigue with the Persians themselves and, moreover, had made himself very unpopular with the other Greek States by his insufferable arrogance; and the other was the fact that the Persians could only be kept permanently out of Europe by a State holding command of the sea, and this State was Athens.

## CHAPTER V

### THE LEAGUE OF DELOS AND THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR

#### THE LEAGUE OF DELOS

THIS league was the direct outcome of the Persian wars; it was composed of a great many originally independent states—nearly all the islands of the Ægean Sea, most of the coast towns of Asia Minor and of Thrace, and, of course, Athens itself. Some of the larger states furnished ships and men, but the smaller ones paid a contribution in money. The objects of the league were two-fold: first, to repair the damage done by the Persians, especially to build again the temples of the gods destroyed by the Barbarians; and second, to maintain a force—and particularly a fleet—large enough to keep the Persians out of the Ægean Gulf. So long as it lasted, the League of Delos was a complete success and much of the credit of its success must be given to Aristides the Just. Such was the confidence of everybody in the honesty of this man that the assessment of the various contributions was left in his hands, and although he stipulated for a re-assessment every four years, his figures were hardly altered during the whole course of the next fifty years; and whenever a change was made, it was always for special and political reasons.

At first the headquarters of the league were at Delos; there the war chest was kept and there the leaders met in council, but Athens inevitably took the lead from the very beginning. What was formed as a confederation of free and equal states rapidly became the Dominion of Athens.

The Empire of Athens thus arose out of the League of Delos, but the word "empire" is an anachronism and is somewhat misleading; the Greek word was *arche*, meaning "rule," so that "Dominion" would be a good translation. The subject states were usually called "allies"; as to their relations with other states—foreign policy—they were entirely<sup>1</sup> under the control of Athens, but they were allowed to manage their internal affairs very much as they liked.<sup>1</sup> Athens favoured the democratic form of government and most of the members of the Delian league were democracies. Thus, by almost imperceptible changes, the free subscriptions of independent states became tribute money collected by Athenian ships; even so, it was of moderate amount and, whatever may be said against Athens, on the grounds of arrogance and oppression, it must be remembered that she kept the main part of her contract. No Persian dared to interfere with the states of the Ægean, on either side of the water, so long as the rule of Athens prevailed, but her great power excited the alarm and envy of other Greek states, especially Corinth, Thebes, and Sparta.

#### THE FIFTY YEARS

The time from Platæa and Mykale (479 B.C.) to the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War between Sparta and Athens (431 B.C.) is known as the Fifty Years, and throughout this period the power of Athens was increasing almost uniformly. There were, indeed, some set-backs, notably the failure of the Egyptian expedition and the break-up of the short-lived attempt to control the mainland of Greece, but wherever the fleet could exercise a decisive influence, there the Athenians succeeded in making themselves supreme.

<sup>1</sup> Both these statements need qualification. We know very little about the details of the agreements between Athens and her "allies." It seems that there was great variety; some allies had much greater independence than others. As time went on, Athens took more and more power upon herself and certain lawsuits were transferred to Athens from the courts of the allied cities.

All efforts on the part of the Allies to break away were crushed, and Athens maintained a position of authority such as had never before been seen in Hellas. It is not astonishing that a city so powerful should have provoked the hostility of states outside the League of Delos and especially of Sparta, who had forfeited her pride of place as leader of Hellas, and Corinth who, from her position at the head of two separate sea arms, was of necessity a commercial rival to any seafaring neighbour. Moreover, the League of Delos, or Rule of Athens, had within itself one serious source of perpetual weakness. In each one of the states composing the League was a senatorial party who would seize any opportunity of upsetting the democratic form of government, which they disliked, and would not hesitate to make use of help from outside if it could be obtained. These oligarchs all looked to Sparta for assistance, but their view was effectually blocked by the Athenian fleet.

#### THE AGE OF PERICLES

During the greater part of the Fifty Years, Athens was completely under the domination of one remarkable man: year after year, Pericles was elected one of the *Strategoi*<sup>1</sup> and he managed so to impress the Athenians by his genuine eloquence, backed as it was by a lofty and disinterested character, that his time is rightly called to this day, "the Age of Pericles." Under his guidance, Athens rose to the height of her political and naval power, and, under his direction also, the wonderful works of art which adorn the Acropolis were designed and executed. He was responsible for great changes in the constitution of the city: the power of the Areopagus (senate) was gradually undermined by the increasing influence of the assembly of the people. The democratic ideals which actuated Pericles and his desire that

<sup>1</sup> Each of the ten tribes of Athens annually elected a *strategos* or general. These *strategoi* led the Athenian forces in war and formed a sort of cabinet for the management of affairs of state.

all should participate in the government of their city were attractive in themselves and easy of comprehension, and so long as the people put their trust in men of the sagacity of Pericles, all seemed well with the state. It was not until death removed the author of these changes that the dangers inherent in them began to manifest themselves. Men of a very different stamp gained the ears of the assembly and ultimately brought about the ruin of Athens. Yet it must not be supposed that the two well-known demagogues, Cleon the Tanner and Gleophon the Lyre-maker, who were successively thrown up by the turmoil of the Peloponnesian War, were without a certain ability as administrators or were worthless in character. They were men full of energy, and Cleon, in particular, put life into the administration of the war at a time when things were beginning to go very badly for Athens; but these demagogues lacked that true wisdom which comes from an understanding of other men, and the balance of which such wisdom is the result. Time and again, during the war, the Athenians might have obtained a peace most favourable to themselves, but they were persuaded to risk the substance for the shadow by these flattering demagogues who proved themselves to be their evil spirits.<sup>1</sup>

To understand both the outbreak and the course of the Peloponnesian War, it is necessary to go back to Pericles. Two men, almost alone among Athenian statesmen, come in for unstinted praise from Thucydides the historian, and these were the two who, above all others, were responsible for the rise of Athens to power—Themistocles and Pericles, and a greater contrast both in character and circumstance between two men, both of outstanding ability, it would be difficult to find. Themistocles was poor,<sup>2</sup> unknown, of humble birth and with no great party in the state at his

<sup>1</sup> Yet Grote makes out a plausible defence for both Cleon and Cleophon.

<sup>2</sup> Poor at first. He became rich !

back; Pericles was rich, nobly born, with a powerful faction ready for his leadership. Both had the capacity for foreseeing coming events, and if Themistocles was more conspicuously successful in dealing with them when they arrived, it must not be forgotten that the problems of Pericles, being more political and less military, demanded a more profound and delicate knowledge of human nature. Each was able to get rid of his chief political opponent by the method of ostracism (temporary and honourable banishment), but a difference should here be noted. The Athenians were wise to banish Aristides,<sup>1</sup> when in 482 B.C. they had once decided on the naval policy of Themistocles, because it was best that the navy should be created in a spirit of single-mindedness, when the enemy was almost at the gate. It was a very different matter to silence the opposition to Pericles, in time of peace, by the exile of Thucydides (not to be confused with the historian of the same name) who was providing a much-needed, critical but loyal opposition to the government and to the far too rapid development of democratic principles and, at the same time, was ably and sympathetically voicing the cries of the down-trodden "allies" who had now sunk to the level of oppressed subjects.

Themistocles was a rascal whose plans were always right and were always carried to a brilliant completion; Pericles was a man of outstanding probity whose fate it was to have his own way, although that way was not always right. Instead of pampering the people at home, he ought to have enured them to hardship and discipline, while the allies should have been treated with the utmost kindness and

<sup>1</sup> Aristides the Just was banished for ten years because he opposed the building of a navy. When the Persians arrived he was granted permission to return. He arrived in Salamis on the night before the great battle. He it was who brought the news to the Greek commanders that the Persians had surrounded them. He saw the Egyptian squadron on its way to block up the western entrance to the Bay of Salamis (p. 54).

consideration consonant with the predominant position of Athens as leader. A state of affairs in which the allies bore nearly all the expense and the Athenians had sole control should have been recognised from the first as being inexpedient, even though conceptions of political justice were rudimentary in the fifth century B.C. If the policy of Pericles at home and abroad had been reversed, the rule of Athens, being more tolerable, might well have lasted for a long time.

Next, his policy immediately before the outbreak of the war was as near suicidal as anything well could be. The imbroglio at Gorcyra<sup>1</sup> was none of his making and therefore Pericles cannot be blamed for the mortal offence given to Corinth, but since the hostility of one of the two guardians of the Isthmus had been incurred, it was all the more necessary to remain on a friendly footing with the other one; yet by his Megaran decrees,<sup>2</sup> Pericles aimed such a blow at the commerce of his neighbour that he drove her straight into the arms of the Peloponnesians and thereby laid the path open to the invasion of Attica. True, the provocation offered by Megara was grave and the oligarchic revolution which took place there made friendly relations with Athens extremely difficult, but what is the work of statesmen if not to find solutions to such difficult problems?

Then, when war broke out, Pericles was responsible for the disastrous overcrowding within the city walls. Probably he was right not to attempt any serious military opposition to the invasion of Attica, but surely the ships at his command could have been requisitioned to take off the farmers and their families to the safety of the neighbouring islands. There was even a precedent—two precedents, 480 and 479—ready to hand for such a temporary migration. Not only

<sup>1</sup> Corcyra, at war with Corinth, offered her alliance (with her fleet, second only to that of Athens herself) to Athens. To refuse meant to throw the Corcyran fleet into the scales against Athens. To accept meant war with Corinth.

<sup>2</sup> Forbidding trade with Athenian allies.

would the overcrowding have been thus avoided, but the farmers themselves would have been spared the pain of seeing, from the City walls, their own homesteads going up in flames. But need the invasions have taken place at all? Pericles seems to have had little idea of amphibious warfare and, though perhaps he can hardly be blamed for not realising what we ourselves understood very imperfectly until the Seven Years War, some combined naval and military expeditions to the Peloponnese ought to have been organised at once. In 425, when Pylos was attacked, there was a hurried evacuation of Attica on the part of all the Peloponnesians engaged there. On the other hand, in justice to Pericles, Epidaurus must not be forgotten. Some mysterious operations were undertaken there by the Athenians and they ended in disaster. Probably it was the Athenian Gallipoli.

#### THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR

The Peloponnesian War lasted for twenty-seven years (431-404 B.C.) and was crowded with exciting and important incidents. It was a war between a great Naval Power on the one side and a great Military Power on the other. Each side could reckon on the support of allies bound to them either by interest or by force; in this manner, nearly all the numerous states of Hellas were involved in the war. A conflict between a state which has control of the sea and another which has control of the land could only be ended in one of three ways: (a) one side might be persuaded to give way to the other because it was exhausted and saw no prospect of achieving its war aims; (b) the sea Power might inflict an unexpected defeat on its enemy on land; (c) the land Power might, equally unexpectedly, succeed in destroying the fleet of the sea Power. Both these last two possibilities seemed, in the case of Athens and Sparta, to be in the highest degree unlikely and for a long time, therefore, both sides hoped that the other would grow so war-weary

as to desire peace on any tolerable terms. Actually such peace overtures were made many times during the course of **the** war, but each time the side holding the advantage for the moment refused the terms offered by the other. Once, indeed, peace was signed (the Peace of Nicias, 421 B.C.), but the Spartans were unable to persuade their own allies to carry out its stipulations.

If the Athenians had made good use of their opportunities they would almost certainly have worn their enemy down, but the mistakes they made were both more numerous and more grievous than those made by their opponents and they thus threw away their chances of victory. The climax was reached in the year 415 B.C. when the Athenians sent a huge armament to Sicily with the capture of Syracuse as its main objective. The plan was not ill-conceived and ought to have been successful, but unfortunately the Athenians forced the command, much against his own wishes and advice, on Nicias who was, at this time, old, ill, and incompetent. There can never have been a more complete and disastrous failure: hardly a man or a ship came back from Syracuse and Athens, in 413 B.C., seemed to be at the mercy of her foes. She made, however, a wonderful recovery and was able to carry on the war for another nine years—nor need she have been beaten in the end but for the criminal folly of her naval commanders which enabled the Spartans, in 405, to gain a complete and overwhelming victory over the last remaining Athenian Fleet. Athens was then starved out.

Those readers who are acquainted with the thrilling story of the Peloponnesian War as told by Thucydides may find some of those vivid scenes brought back to them by the following summary of the chief events.

In the beginning there were the successive invasions of Attica by the aged Archidamus, King of Sparta; the exciting siege, eventual capture and utter destruction of heroic little Plataea; the crowding of the countrymen into

Athens and subsequent plague from the after-effects of which Pericles himself perished and from which Thucydides suffered and recovered to tell the tale; the wonderful funeral oration pronounced by Pericles in the second year of the war in praise of the young men who had laid down their lives for Athens—in praise, too, of the Athens for which they had died; the naval victories, against fearful odds, of Phormio in the Corinthian Gulf with his famous attack on the porcupine circle of the Peloponnesians and his equally famous "above all, don't talk" order; the initial failure of the Athenian general Demosthenes in the wilds of Ætolia, followed by his brilliant successes in the neighbourhood of the Amphilochian Argos; the revolt of Mitylene and the amazing reversal of the savage decision (taken by the Athenian people at the instigation of Cleon, the demagogue) to destroy all the inhabitants of the offending city; the establishment of the fort at Pylos followed by the siege of the Island of Sphacteria, Cleon's mad boast and its fulfilment when eventually some ten thousand Athenians succeeded in taking alive one hundred and twenty Spartans; the triumphs of Brasidas—the man who didn't speak badly "for a Spartan"—in Chalcidice, which led to the loss of Amphipolis to Athens and the twenty years' exile of Thucydides and so to the writing of the great history; the simultaneous deaths of Brasidas and Cleon in battle before the walls of this same city and the so-called peace of Nicias; the two campaigns of King Agis against Argos which resulted in the failure, at Mantinaea, of the "Argive policy" of Alcibiades; the siege and destruction of poor little Melos by the Athenians followed, in the next year, by the huge expedition to conquer Sicily; the mutilation of the Hermae and the consequent defection of Alcibiades to Sparta; the utter destruction of the great armament at Syracuse which ultimately proved to be the ruin of Athens, though she made a remarkable temporary recovery; the Ionian War, the return of Alcibiades and the further great naval victories of

Athens under his able leadership; the pathetic message of the Spartan admiral's secretary after Cyzicus, " Luck gone. Mindarus dead. Men starving. Don't know what to do"; the second dismissal of Alcibiades, this time on a most unjust charge, and the battle of Arginusae, when the Athenians won their last great victory and then executed the six generals for their failure to rescue the drowning sailors of their disabled ships; and—the end.

iEgospotami in the Hellespont saw the end, for there the Athenians, through gross mismanagement or, as some said, through treachery, allowed almost the whole of their last remaining fleet to be captured by the Spartan Admiral Lysander. The *Paralus*, one of the few ships that escaped, made her way quickly to Athens with the terrible news. On the night of her arrival it is said that no one slept in the whole city; all knew that further resistance was hopeless for, as Athens was entirely dependant on her fleet for supplies, she was inevitably starved into surrender and was obliged to accept any terms whatever that her enemies cared to dictate.

Fortunately, Athens found some mercy at the hands of her foes, and although she lost her dominions, she escaped with her life; but Greece soon learnt what Sparta had meant when she repeatedly posed as the liberator of Hellas. The ten years which followed the victory of the Spartans witnessed a more complete enslavement than was ever contemplated by Athens in her most arrogant mood, and what was perhaps worse, the Persians were allowed to assert themselves again in the affairs of Greece. Whatever faults may be found with the rule of Athens, and they were many, she had at least kept the main terms of her agreement with the allies and secured freedom from the barbarian. Lysander won his victory by the aid of Persian ships and of Persian gold and the price demanded and paid was the liberty of all the Greeks living in Asia Minor, which now came entirely under barbarian rule once more,

## SOCRATES

Socrates was one of the very best men produced by Greece; he was a great thinker and moral teacher. He wrote no books, but is the hero of most of Plato's dialogues, and his influence over his numerous followers was both powerful and lasting. We are not entirely dependent on Plato for our knowledge of his character and teaching; he was obviously an interesting and well-known figure in Athens throughout his long life of seventy years. Xenophon was one of his pupils and wrote memoirs of him. In 399 B.C. (live years after the end of the Peloponnesian War, in which Socrates had rendered conspicuously brave service) he was tried on a charge of unorthodoxy and put to death—the earliest known martyr to truth.

This will be a convenient place to compile a table of some of the friends of this remarkable man. In addition to the men who find a place in this table, there were a whole host of interesting people to be met in the streets of Athens at this time. Indeed it may well be doubted whether so many remarkable men have ever before or since been collected together in one place at the same time. The table, therefore, is merely given as an aid to memory and as a base from which to pursue further knowledge. Most of the actors in the drama of the fifth century have already been mentioned, but there are others whose names will never be forgotten—Anaxagoras, the philosopher and the friend of Euripides and of Pericles; Pheidias, the great sculptor, and Ictinus, the architect; Aristophanes, the comic poet, to mention only a few of the better known.

NAMES WHICH CAN BE CONNECTED WITH SOCRATES  
ÆSCHYLUS

SOPHOCLES

EURIPIDES

SOCRATES-  
d. 399.

-Alcibiades

-Critias

XENOPHON

PLATO

ARISTOTLE- -ALEXANDER  
d. 323.

#### EXPLANATION OF THE CHART

Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides were the three great tragic poets of Greece; they were all Athenians and their dates are easily remembered by their connection with the Battle of Salamis, 480 B.C. Æschylus wrote 'The Persar' in celebration of the victory (he actually fought both at Marathon and Salamis, and his brother was killed in the Battle of the Ships in 490), Sophocles sang as a choir boy at the service of thanksgiving and Euripides was born in the year—some say on the very day—of the battle and on the Island of Salamis itself whither his mother had fled along with many others when Athens was evacuated. Both Plato and Xenophon were pupils of Socrates and we learn a great deal about their beloved master from each of these writers. Plato was followed by *his* pupil Aristotle, "the brains of the Academy," and Aristotle was, for three years, tutor to Alexander, who, though Macedonian by race, was Athenian by training.

Alcibiades and Critias were two of the numerous friends

and admirers of Socrates and did his reputation considerable harm in the eyes of the ignorant, for both worked much mischief to the state, the one during and the other after the Peloponnesian War. Socrates and Euripides appear to have been on very good terms with one another. Euripides went into voluntary exile; Socrates was judicially murdered.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE RETREAT OF THE TEN THOUSAND AND THE CONQUESTS OF ALEXANDER

#### THE AFTERMATH OF THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR

THE Peloponnesian War was a disaster unmitigated to the Greeks themselves and to all the world. The mountains, the sea with its inlets, the multitudinous islands, all combine to give the impression to anyone living there, that Hellas is a much bigger place than it really is. If only the Greeks had seen a map of the world, they might have realised that the most important thing at the time was for Greek civilisation to maintain itself against the possibility of destruction at the hands of the surrounding barbarians and that the question of leadership within the bounds of Hellas was a matter of secondary concern. It is quite clear from our records that even without the aid of maps, the truth did so present itself to some alive at the time, but they were no more powerful to prevent War than were wise Europeans in the year 1914 A.D.

The Peloponnesian War led quite naturally to an incident of little apparent importance in itself, but made interesting by the vivid account of it given to us by Xenophon and destined, as it happened, to have far-reaching effects.

#### THE RETREAT OF THE TEN THOUSAND

There was one barbarian Prince who, as Thucydides might have said, was "a gentleman—for a Persian"; this was Cyrus the Younger, who was a great friend of Lysander, and from his capital at Sardes had well used his oppor-

## MEDITERRANEAN CIVILISATION

tunities of observing the Greeks. His observations had led him to the conclusion that the Hellenes were immeasurably superior to the Persians, at least as fighters. He determined, therefore, to make use of Greek soldiers when, in 401 B.C., he set out to wrest the throne of Persia from his elder brother Artaxerxes. The end of the Peloponnesian War saw many soldiers out of employment; most of them were, of course, Spartans, and Cyrus succeeded in leading upwards of ten thousand of them, as mercenaries, right into the middle of Asia. The real object of the expedition was known only to Clearchus, the chief of the Greek generals, until the force had proceeded too far to turn back. Fifty miles from Babylon, near a village called Cunaxa, they came in sight of the hordes of Artaxerxes bearing down upon them and there—on the left bank of the River Euphrates—a remarkable battle was fought.

In disobedience to the command of Cyrus, Clearchus insisted on keeping to the right wing in order to have the protection of the river for his flank. His disobedience might not have had such ruinous effects if he had not also committed the usual blunder of a successful wing commander and pursued his enemy too far. As soon as the battle was joined the Greeks drove away all the Persians opposite to them with the greatest ease, but they followed them up so hard that they immediately lost touch with Cyrus and actually did not know until the next day that he was dead. What had happened was this: Cyrus, on the left of his own army, was so vastly outnumbered that he found himself opposite to the King's centre, but in spite of the obvious danger of being outflanked, Cyrus might have won the battle but for his own impetuosity. He attacked the Persians in front of him and was meeting with some success when he caught sight of his detested brother, and crying, "I see the man," rushed at and wounded him, but was himself at once surrounded and slain.

After the battle of Cunaxa, the Greeks were in a parlous

## THE CONQUESTS OF ALEXANDER

condition. Their cause was lost, their leader defeated and killed, and they were in the heart of a hostile and unknown country, fifteen hundred miles from their base. Even this was not to be the full extent of their misfortune, for shortly after the battle, Clearchus and all the senior officers were lured to the camp of the Persians and murdered in an act of more than usually savage treachery.

Yet this small force got back to Greece, and with no loss worth the mention. Xenophon, an Athenian who had joined the expedition as a private gentleman, was himself elected a general and given command of the rear-guard and it was largely due to him that these intrepid Greeks made their way across the mountains of Armenia and coming down to the coast of the Euxine once more caught sight of their beloved "*thalassa, thalassa*" (the sea, the sea). Xenophon tells the story of this *anabasis* (going up) into the heart of Asia, and it was this event which revealed to all Greeks the real weakness of Persia and so eventually led to the mighty expedition of Alexander.

When Xenophon at last reached Athens again, he found that the Athenians had signalised the recovery of their democratic institutions by putting to death his friend and master Socrates; Xenophon left Athens and was afterwards found fighting in the ranks of her enemies.

It has been shewn that among the immediate results of the Peloponnesian War were the domination of Sparta, which proved to be far more irksome to the rest of the Greeks than had been that of Athens at its very worst, and the return of the Persians down to the coast of Asia Minor. These effects were bad enough, but ultimately this disastrous war brought about the utter collapse of the whole of Greece. This is not so surprising as that there was enough energy left even for an accidental *anabasis* and a glorious retreat. The lessons of the war were not learned; nothing but continual strife would satisfy the surviving Greeks. At first rebellion against Sparta became the order of the day,

and it was not long before the walls of Athens and Piraeus,<sup>1</sup> destroyed as one of the conditions of peace in 404 B.C., were built up again; but it was Thebes—under the truly great Epaminondas—that took command for a while. Epaminondas reformed the army and beat the Spartans on their own ground, but he fell in battle against them at the moment of victory and left no permanent mark on history except for one thing. His reformed army gave to Philip of Macedon his ideas for the famous Macedonian phalanx with which his son Alexander conquered so much of the world.

#### ALEXANDER (c. 333 B.C.)

As far back as the end of the fifth century B.C., some great men, such for example as Euripides, had found refuge from the stormy atmosphere of Athens at Pella, where was the court of Archelaus, King of Macedonia. This king did much to subdue the wild tribes of the hinterland, whose activities had been one of the main causes of the relative backwardness of Macedon as compared with the Greek States. The real founder of Macedonian greatness, however, was Philip the father of Alexander. He it was who not only reduced his own realm to order, but established Macedonian rule over the whole of Greece. (It was against him and his policy that the great Athenian orator Demosthenes delivered his famous "Philippics".)

It will be noticed that, on account of her late arrival on the stage of Greek politics, Macedonia was still under the rule of kings; she was, in political development, several stages behind the Greek States, and this probably gave her some advantage in her conflict with Greece, but the chief reason for the fall of the Greek States to Macedonia was the weakness brought about by the perpetual strife of the Greek States among themselves.

Philip was murdered in 336 B.C., and, not without many

<sup>1</sup> Piraeus was the port of Athens and was five miles from it. The defences of the two places were connected by parallel "long walls."

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difficulties, his son Alexander ascended the throne which was his birthright. He was then obliged to subdue first Greece, then Thrace, then Illyricum, and lastly Greece again before he was able to begin his life-work of the conquest of Persia and the East. Thus, seventy years after the retreat of the ten thousand had revealed the real weakness of Persia, the grand invasion of Asia by Europe began. Setting out from the Hellespont, Alexander worked his conquering way down the west coast of Asia Minor, then along the southern coast until he met and overcame the forces of the Persian King Darius the Third at the important battle of Issus in the year 333 B.C.

Before continuing his Eastern march, Alexander turned south and fought his way through Syria and Palestine to Egypt. Then returning on his tracks northward, he pursued the Persians and fought another great battle against their King whom he utterly defeated at Guagamela<sup>1</sup> or Arbela (331). This put an end for ever to the power of the Persians, but Alexander was not contented with even this immense success for he did not turn back—and then with the greatest reluctance—until he had penetrated to India where, to this day, traces of the mighty conqueror may still be found. The Hydaspes (Jhelan) was the limit of his invasion of India. He made the Indus roughly the frontier of his Eastern dominions. What might have happened if Alexander had lived on, none can tell, for in 323 B.C. fever seized him and he died at Babylon while yet in his youth. It is perhaps as well for Alexander and for the world that the fates would not allow him a longer life, for his character had begun to shew marked signs of deterioration. The visit to Egypt had done him no good; he borrowed thence the idea of a deified monarch; he entered Egypt as the son of Philip and left it as the son of Zeus. It is not well for a man to become a god;

<sup>1</sup> The battle was fought at Guagamela but Arbela was the base of the Persian forces. There is a distance of thirty miles between the two places.



ALEXANDER'S EMPIRE

The crosses represent its boundary. The route of the Ten Thousand is shown by dots.

## THE CONQUESTS OF ALEXANDER

Alexander's power for good was almost at an end, and when he died, his work was done.

The nature of the work which gives to Alexander a unique position in history should be clearly understood. The importance of Alexander does not lie in his military exploits, unparalleled as they possibly are, but in the mission that he undertook of spreading Greek culture throughout the East—and this included Palestine, to which we must shortly turn our attention again. Having absorbed Greek culture from his very birth, and having had no less a Greek as his schoolmaster than the renowned Aristotle himself, it is Alexander's glory that he set out consciously and deliberately to spread this unique product of an unique age all over the world.

The Macedonians conquered Greece, but they adopted, preserved, and spread Greek ways of thought, Greek art, Greek literature, Greek drama, Greek education, philosophy and sport wherever they went.

### PALESTINE

As was shewn in Chapter I I , Palestine is the bridge connecting Mesopotamia with Egypt, and the people living on it were seldom free from the overlordship of one or other of these river powers. In ancient times, Egypt had stretched forth her hand over them. Then the power of Egypt declined, the Israelites escaped and managed to establish themselves in the land of Canaan and there followed a time of comparative immunity from outside interference, but it was quickly followed by successive troubles from the north; thereafter, Palestine was seldom free from subjection to whatever power ruled Mesopotamia—first Assyria, then Chaldea, then Persia—and now the Macedonians had arrived.

As a result of the conquests **of Alexander**, two **of the main** streams of Mediterranean civilisation **were brought face to face**. Hitherto the Hebrews had always been able to regard

themselves as superior in culture and religion to their successive conquerors, but their superiority of culture was not so obvious when it was challenged by the Greeks, and there was much searching of heart in Judea during the early Greek period. Many were for the whole-hearted adoption of everything Greek and the consequent abandonment of the Jewish religion, but a few, especially in the country districts, went to the opposite extreme and contended for the rigid exclusion of all that was foreign to the Mosaic Law. For a long time there was no serious clash between the two parties, and if things had been left to themselves, a *modus Vivendi* might have been peaceably found, but events took place in the second century B.C. which forced the issue.

When on the death of Alexander, his extensive dominions split up into several parts, Palestine was at first attached to Egypt under the Ptolemies, but after a time the Syrian kings conquered it for themselves, so that the Hebrews were once more subject to a northern power. Then, in the second century, there arose as ruler the famous King Antiochus the Fourth, surnamed Epiphanes (Theos Epiphanes—God Manifest—was his full claim), who was neither a bad man nor a bad king but something more dangerous than either—a fanatic. He determined that all his subjects should be Greeks and adopt the Greek gods, and so the statue of Olympian Zeus was put up in the Temple of Jerusalem. This is the "image that Nebuchadnezzar the King hath set up" mentioned in the Book of Daniel. The attempt of Antiochus to suppress the Jewish religion by force produced first a fierce persecution and then a great rebellion under the Maccabees. The revolt began in 168 B.C. and the first phase of it ended in 165 B.C. with the capture of the Temple and its rededication to Jahveh.<sup>1</sup> The war went on, and ultimately in 142 B.C. the Syrians were compelled to recognise

<sup>1</sup> As an aid to memory it may be noted that 166½ is half 333 (Alexander's date) and is half-way between 168 and 165.

## THE CONQUESTS OF ALEXANDER

the independence of the Jews, who then obtained their freedom for the last time. They were ruled by their High Priests who were virtually kings, and they remained independent of foreign interference until the coming of Pompey and the Romans in 63 B.C.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE ARRIVAL OF ROME

ACCORDING to a myth related and embellished by the great Roman poet Vergil, the Roman race sprang from the Trojans. Æneas was a distant cousin of Priam, King of Troy, and took his share of the fighting in defence of the city. When Troy fell, Æneas managed to escape and made his way to Europe. Eventually he arrived in Italy and so became the ancestor of the Roman people. There is one germ of truth in the story: the Romans, Greeks, and perhaps Trojans as well, once belonged to the same stock and, presumably, descended from the north and settled in the two peninsulas of Italy and Greece and (if the Trojans were also of their number) on the coast of Asia Minor. The similarities between the Latin and Greek languages are far too numerous and deep-seated to be accounted for in any other way than a common though far-back origin. There is also a certain likeness between the gods of Rome and those of Greece, but the equivalence often assumed by the Romans was generally more apparent than real. Unfortunately, most of the Greek gods were first introduced to us under their Latin names. This is due to the Italian Renaissance and it is wise to remember that Greek ideas tend to lose much by translation into Latin. The foundation of the City of Rome by the hero Romulus was supposed to have taken place in the year 753 B.C. and from this event the Romans always reckoned their dates.

From about the year 800 B.C., the Western Mediterranean was in the hands of various rival peoples—Etruscans and other tribes in Italy, Greeks and Carthaginians. The

Romans and the Latins together defeated the Samnites, the Etruscans and the Volscians and—as time went on—spread their influence further and further down the Italian peninsula; but during the time when Greek civilisation was taking shape and spreading itself over so much of the known world, the very existence of the Romans was known to but few Greeks. In these early years of her history, Rome suffered many changes of fortune and was actually captured and burnt in 390 B.C. by the Gauls—a race of barbarians always threatening the peace of Northern Italy. From 390 onwards, however, the Romans began to meet with almost unbroken success and by 300 B.C. they were virtually in possession of the whole of the Italian Peninsula with the exception of that part in the north called Cisalpine Gaul, and the Greeks in the south were in a state of almost universal discontent.

In the north the interference of the Romans was welcomed, or at least tolerated, because they promised a fair measure of protection against the savage Gauls who inhabited what is now the Lombardy Plain and who were ever ready to make raids upon their more peaceable neighbours to the south.

In the southern part of Italy, where no such danger existed, the extension of the rule of Rome met with more hostility. This opposition is all the more easy to understand when it is remembered that there were numerous Greek colonies on the coast and that Greeks cherished their independence above all things and were devoted to their City States. One such State was Tarentum, situated on the coast and near the middle of the "instep" of Italy. The gulf which forms the instep retains to this day the name of "Taranto." When the Roman power reached so far south that it threatened the independence of Tarentum, that State sent an appeal to Pyrrhus, the King of Epirus, and this led to the Pyrrhic War, which has some claim to a permanent place in history.

**PYRRHUS**

Pyrrhus is important for what he tried to do and also for what he unintentionally did do. He is also interesting as the author of a very profound historical prediction and the originator, again without intention, of the famous expression "Pyrrhic victory," namely, one gained at such a cost to the victor as to be nearly, if not quite, as bad as a defeat.

He made an attempt, beginning in 280 B.C., to do in the West what his cousin Alexander had done in the East, namely, to spread the culture of the Greeks by force of arms. He was the ablest general of his times and was a man of great chivalry and nobility of character. His failure was due to two causes: first, the supineness of the Tarentines, who had called him to their assistance and apparently expected him to do all the work with the troops he had brought with him from Epirus; but second, and even more serious, he was opposed by the determination of a stubborn and brave people. Livy may be right when he suggests that Alexander himself might have met with no greater success than Pyrrhus if he had had to contend with Romans instead of Persians.

After two useless victories in Italy, the already disgusted and disillusioned Pyrrhus went over into Sicily to help the Greeks there against the Carthaginians. Here his experiences were similar to those on the mainland—victories which led nowhere, discontent where he had a right to expect support, and a final failure (before Lilybæum). So Pyrrhus returned to Italy and on leaving the Island of Sicily gave utterance to his famous "what a magnificent fighting ground I leave for the Romans and the Carthaginians."

Being defeated at Beneventum in the year 275 B.C., he returned to Epirus. His end was a miserable one, for he was killed while fighting at Argos in 272 B.C. by a tile hurled from a housetop by a woman. He had completely failed to extend the power of the Greeks, but he had made it clear to all the world that a new star of the first magnitude had come

to light in the West. From this time may be dated the rise of Rome to the position of a world power. Before the Romans, however, could take their place as undisputed masters of the Western Mediterranean the prediction of Pyrrhus was to be fulfilled and accounts settled with Carthage.

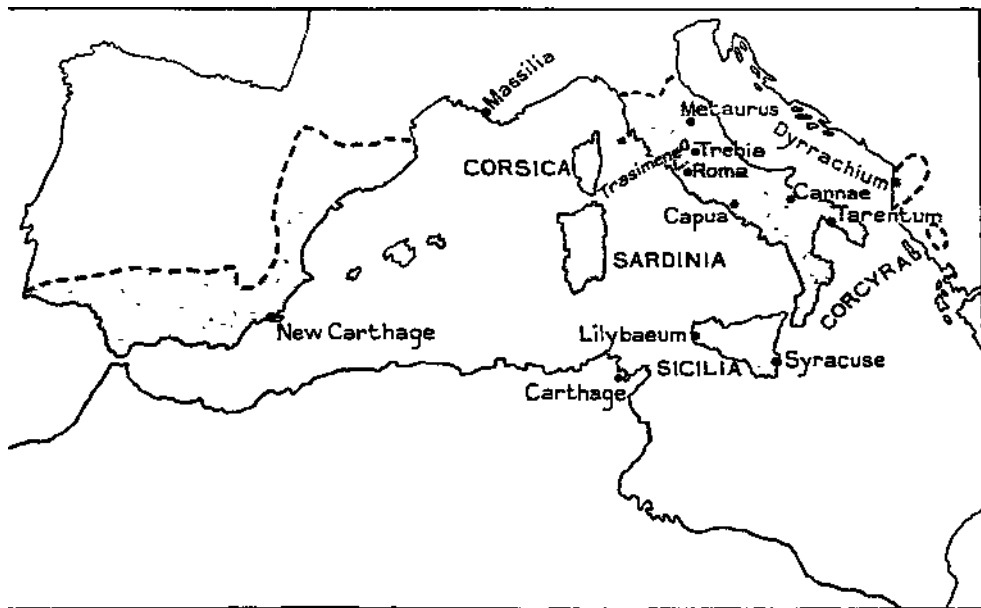
#### STORIES OF ANCIENT ROME

The spirit of Rome was very different from that of Greece; in Rome we find but little of the intellectual vigour and subtlety of the Greek mind, and when, as in later times, a great literature arose in Rome, the inspiration was still found to come from Greece. It is not without significance that the first notable writer on Roman history was Polybius—a Greek writing in the Greek language (204-122 B.C.).

The stories of ancient Rome cannot be compared for artistic charm with the immortal tales of Greece, yet they have a flavour of their own and illustrate a spirit of patriotism the lack of which proved the ruin of Greece. The following are fair examples of the kind of story on which a Roman boy of noble birth would be brought up.

*Cincinnatus*.—cincinnatus was a nobleman, wise and well proved in war, who spent most of his life cultivating a very small farm in the country. In the year 458 B.C., the Roman army got itself into great difficulties in a war with the Æquians and it was believed that cincinnatus was the only man who could deliver Rome from its peril and so he was appointed Dictator—that is, supreme ruler, for the time being, of the State. When the summons reached him, cincinnatus was actually engaged in ploughing. He left his plough, assumed his immense responsibilities, saved the army from its impending disaster, laid down his dictatorship, and was back on his farm within sixteen days.

*Marcus Curtius*.—It is related that, in the year 362 B.C., a chasm opened in the forum at Rome and the terrified people were told by the oracle that it could only be filled up by casting into it Rome's most precious treasure. Marcus



ROMAN POSSESSIONS IN 200 B.C.

The shaded portion indicates their extent.

Curtius, a young noble, reasoning that the most precious treasure of any state must be her young men, clad himself in full armour and, mounting his charger, rode into the chasm, which immediately closed over him.

*Publius Decius.*—Publius Decius was the plebeian consul<sup>1</sup> in 340 B.C., and he and his colleague both dreamt the same dream on the eve of a decisive battle in the Latin wars. In their dreams, they each saw a man of great stature who told them that on the morrow one side would lose its commander and the other its army. The two consuls agreed that whichever of them, as wing-commander, seemed to be getting worsted in the battle should sacrifice himself, and it fell to Decius on the left of the line of battle to devote himself to destruction; for when his wing was beaten back, he cast himself into the thick of the enemy ranks and so perished, but the Romans gained a great victory. The effect of a good family tradition is well illustrated by the fact that the son of Decius repeated in 295 B.C. the action of his father by sacrificing himself in a great battle with the Gauls.

*Regulus.*—Doubtless such stories as these had helped to mould the character of Regulus, who, during the course of the first Punic War, was sent to Africa to attack the *Carthaginians* in their own home; at first he met with great success but, after a time, his fortune changed and in 255 B.C. he was badly beaten by Xanthippus, the Spartan mercenary general, and he himself was taken prisoner. After five years of captivity he was sent by the Carthaginians to negotiate peace, or, failing that, an exchange of prisoners, of whom he himself would have been one; but when he reached Rome, he advised the Senate and people neither to make peace nor to exchange prisoners and then, resisting the entreaties of his friends and relatives, he returned to Carthage to answer his parole and to suffer a cruel death.

<sup>1</sup> The Romans appointed two consuls every year. They were the most powerful officers in the State and, at this time, it was the law that one should be a noble and the other a plebeian (one of the people) •

## CHAPTER VIII

### CARTHAGE AND ROME

THE Phoenicians were a race of Asiatics who, with bases at Sidon and Tyre, had become a great seafaring people. They traded with most of the Mediterranean ports and even ventured beyond the Straits of Gibraltar and are reputed to have reached the British Isles. Since the Greeks were also traders and used the sea as a means of transport, clashes between the two races were of not infrequent occurrence. There were many Phoenician ships fighting for King Xerxes at the Battle of Salamis, and at that very time a war was being waged in Sicily between Greeks and Carthaginians who were an offshoot of the Phoenicians from Sidon and were always anxious to take possession of Sicily. Carthage was the most important Phoenician settlement and, from early times, had been the leader of all Western Asiatics. The Greeks of Sicily were successful in keeping the Carthaginians out of the eastern half of the island, but they could never feel secure so long as Carthage herself remained untouched and, moreover, in occupation of the western part of Sicily. The Sicilian Greeks, as we have seen, tried to make use of Pyrrhus, and when Rome had made herself undisputed mistress of the whole of the Italian peninsula, it was to her, perforce, that they looked for help against their African foes. A glance at the map will shew that some such conflict between Rome and Carthage was very likely to take place in Sicily. From 264 B.C. to the end of the century the struggle between these two powers was being waged. There was, it is true, an interval of peace, from 241 to 218, and this enables a convenient division to be made

into the first and the second Punic Wars; but the peace was not regarded as anything more than a truce by the more long-sighted on either side.

#### **THE FIRST PUNIC WAR, 264-242 B.C.**

This was really a fight for Sicily and was largely a naval war. On the sea the Carthaginians had initially a very great advantage over their opponents, but they did not make the best use of it and in the end were actually beaten in a battle (*Ægates*) off the north coast of the island. At the beginning of the war, the Romans knew nothing of the sea, but they received much assistance from the large number of Greeks living in their midst, who captained and manned their ships. As a result of the first Punic War, the Romans gained possession of Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, the northern coasts of Spain and some of those parts of the Balkan Peninsula which are nearest to Italy.

#### **THE SECOND PUNIC WAR, 218-202 B.C., AND HANNIBAL**

The second Punic War was a life and death struggle against Hannibal and for this reason the Romans always rightly called it "the Hannibalian War," and not "the second Punic War."

Though envy and hatred and malice have written his history, Hannibal stands out as not only one of the greatest, but one of the most attractive, of all the men of antiquity. He was nine years old when his father Hamilcar made him swear eternal enmity to the Roman people, before taking the boy with him from Carthage to Spain where, by diplomacy and arms, a new Carthage was built up, and Hannibal was but twenty-six years old when, in 221, his father being dead, he was called to the supreme command of all the Carthaginian forces in Spain and almost immediately set about the fulfilment of his boyhood oath.

In 219 Hannibal began the war by the eight months' siege and capture of Saguntum, a town in Spain under

Roman protection. Then, early in 218, he set out on his famous march from Spain to Italy. This march is itself an indication of the change that had taken place since the beginning of the Punic Wars, for the most natural route for Hannibal would have been by sea—but the Roman fleet prevented any such passage. Hannibal moved too quickly for the Roman army sent to oppose him near the mouth of the Rhone, and he crossed the Alps (probably by the Little St. Bernard Pass) in October. Before the year was out he had fought and won two battles against the Romans (Ticinus and Trebia). This was enough to cause all the Gauls in North Italy to join him. In 217 he won the great victory of Trasimene Lake and, proceeding southward, inflicted on the Romans the greatest defeat they ever sustained; this was at Cannae in Apulia in 216 B.C. After Cannae most of the south sided with Hannibal and his purpose in invading Italy was fulfilled as far as fulfilment was possible. His plan had always been to break up the Italian confederation of which Rome was the head and then, with reinforcements from Carthage, to attack Rome herself. He had very few Carthaginians in his army and after the losses he inevitably suffered on his march from Spain, he was obliged to make use of any Gauls who, in hope of plunder, offered their services to him. The very presence of these Gauls in his army was a grave hindrance to the plans of Hannibal, for no north Italian farmer was willing to exchange the protection of Rome for the rule of an invader who brought with him bands of these hated marauders. In the south no such danger was felt and, after the battle of Cannae, the southern states came over almost entirely to the side of Hannibal. Probably no one realised the hopelessness of his position after Cannae except Hannibal himself. He sent urgently for reinforcements—and a siege train—from Carthage, but none came. Practically deserted by his own Government, Hannibal performed the almost miraculous achievement of remaining, with his army

unbeaten, in the midst of a hostile country for seventeen years. His brothers Hasdrubal and Mago in Spain made gallant attempts to assist him and it was the defeat of Hasdrubal at the battle of the Metaurus in 207 which really brought about the end, though it was not until late in the year 203 that Hannibal left Italy and then it was to help in the defence of Carthage itself against an invading Roman army commanded by Scipio. The battle of Zama, where the raw Carthaginian recruits, even though led by Hannibal, were no match for the Roman legions, ended the second Punic War in the year 202 B.C. and left Rome in undisputed command of the West.

After Zama, Hannibal proved that he could be as great in peace as in war. In a short time he had reformed the constitution and restored the finances of Carthage to such an extent that the Romans, fearing a revival of their powerful enemy, took alarm, and Hannibal was obliged to go into exile. Then, as he had once raised all the West, so now he raised the East against Rome. Already, in 215, the year after Cannae, he had entered into alliance with Philip, the King of Macedonia, who lent him some feeble assistance and thereby opened the way for an Eastern policy to the Romans. Was any man more cruelly treated by the fates than Hannibal? His genius had only served to establish Rome firmly as the supreme power in the West, and his subsequent career served only to commit his enemies to a policy whereby the Roman legions were to be marched further and further eastward until the whole of the Mediterranean world was brought under the dominion of Rome. As for poor Hannibal, he found asylum in court after court in the East, but was never fortunate enough to serve under a prince who had sufficient sense to accept his counsel and in the end (183 B.C.), he took poison to avoid falling into the hands of the Romans.

## CHAPTER IX

### JULIUS CÆSAR

AFTER the end of the second Punic War, the third great formative influence of Mediterranean civilisation had established itself and was ready to mingle with or confront the other two. By 200 B.C., Rome had not only become the sole ruling power of the West, but also found herself committed to expansion towards the East. This eastward expansion continued until in 63 B.C. Pompey entered Jerusalem and the Jews once more lost their independence—this time for ever.

Much, however, happened between 200 B.C. and 63 B.C., and it must be summarised. In 196 B.C., the Romans struck off "the fetters of Greece," which were the three fortresses at Chalcis, Corinth, and Demetrias, by which the Macedonians had held Greece in subjection; this noble attempt to restore freedom to Greece was a failure—the Greeks were still unable to agree among themselves and were as ready as ever to intrigue with foreign powers, so that it was found necessary, in 146, to make Greece into the Roman Province of Achaia. The same year saw the utter destruction of Carthage in what was called the third Punic War, but was, in reality, a dastardly and unprovoked attack on an inoffensive and defenceless city.

In the North, although the Gauls of Italy no longer caused trouble, there were wild tribes from further off continually threatening a descent on the fertile plains of the peninsula. The Teutones and Cimbri were German migrants who seem to have come from the Baltic shores with the object of raiding Italy. They were defeated in two great battles in

the south of Gaul by the Roman General Marius (102 and 101 B.C.).

Thus the Northern menace was removed and, outwardly, therefore, during the century and a half that followed the defeat of Hannibal, things went very well with Rome; but inwardly it was far otherwise, and to understand the work of the greatest Roman of all—Julius Caesar—it will be necessary to make some acquaintance with the internal disorders which began to affect the Roman State immediately after her delivery from the perils of the Hannibalian War.

The success of Republican Rome had been due to two things—the wisdom of the Senate and the sturdiness of the citizens.

Originally the soldiers were simply the citizens who returned to their ordinary life after each campaign. But the increase of the Empire meant longer campaigns, and gradually the army became professional. It also became personally attached to its general and expected rewards and pensions from him. Yet no provision had been made for the return of the soldiers to civilian life. Small farms in the country had been deprived of their owners, grouped together and worked by slave labour. Thus the countryside was denuded of just that hardy stock of men that had previously produced the Roman legions, while the city, on the other hand, was crowded with people seeking employment and, not finding any, demanding to be fed. Meanwhile, treasure of all kinds poured into Rome—money, goods, food, slaves—with the result that, after a time, there were to be found, on the one side, a ruling class obtaining their posts by open bribery and on the other, a proletariat that seemed to exist only to be pampered and amused. The wars of Rome went on, by which they provided honourable employment for the army; these very wars added to the dangers at home by continuing the supplies of all kinds of riches from abroad. The rich became more and more

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selfish, the poor more and more enervated, while both **were** blind to the threats of a justly discontented Italy, shut out from anything like full participation in the rights of Roman citizenship. The wars had brought into Italy a very great many slaves and these, being almost always treated with cruelty, were a source of continual danger.

Many attempts at reform were made, notably those of the two Gracchi; both these noble brothers were murdered—the elder, Tiberius, in 133 B.C., and the younger, Gaius, just ten years later. In the early part of the first century B.C., Marius and Sulla were nominally leaders of the popular and senatorial parties respectively, but in fact they were little more than generals fighting each other for supreme command. Their quarrels produced much bloodshed and misery but no reform, and matters became so bad that it was soon evident that improvement could only come by a drastic change in the constitution. The virtues of the old Roman Republic were disappearing and the machinery by which a city could manage its own affairs was found to be unfitted for the government of the whole world. The old Republic was slowly dying and to destroy it and in its place to lay the foundations of the Roman Empire was the work of Julius Caesar. So well were these foundations laid that the Empire which was built on them lasted for nearly five hundred years in spite of some destructive and incompetent rulers.

In spite of his ambition, if that be always a fault, Caesar was one of the world's greatest men—and perhaps his versatility was the most remarkable thing about him. A man of wonderful personal charm, he found time to write history as well as to make it; he reformed the calendar as well as the constitution. The month of July was named after him and the word "Emperor" too is of his choosing, for it comes from "imperator," adopted by Caesar from the army, where it was accorded on the field to any successful general. As applied to Caesar, it became what it has since always



ROMAN POSSESSIONS IN 14 A.D.

The shaded portion indicates their extent.

## MEDITERRANEAN CIVILISATION

been—at least in theory—the one and only supreme head of the one and only state. Caesar's military exploits, like his own accounts of them, fall naturally into two groups—the Gallic War (58-51 B.C.) by which he conquered the whole of Gaul and so added a most important country to the Roman Dominions—and the Civil War, whereby he defeated the senatorial party and his rival Pompey (Pharsalia in Thessaly was the name of the decisive battle—48 B.C.) and so gathered all the power into his own hands. Caesar was magnanimous towards his defeated fellow-countrymen, and after the civil war there was none of those proscriptions (lists of political opponents doomed to death), which had so much disgraced and embittered the wars of Marius and Sulla.

Although his government was obviously a military despotism, Caesar was wise enough to wish to be judged, not by his five hundred victories in the field which gave him all the power of the Roman State, but by the use which he made of that power. He reigned but a few months, and in that short time he shewed that he had sound conceptions of the vast Empire which was to rise on the foundations he laid. He seemed also to be aware of the chief external danger which threatened the Roman State and which ultimately overwhelmed it, and if he had lived for another two years, he would have rounded off the boundaries of the Empire by taking in the whole of North Germany, which, according to his well-matured plan, was to be attacked from both East and West at once.

The year 44 B.C. is a date which serves to mark the end of an era and also as a reminder of what might have been the course of history if this great man had been allowed to finish the work he had begun. Even as it was, Julius Caesar gave five hundred years of life to the Roman Empire. After yet more civil strife, the first Emperor—Augustus—was able to enjoy the fruits of his great-uncle's genius and the golden age of Rome set in.

## CHAPTER X

### THE FULNESS OF TIME

IT seemed to be the most natural thing in the world for the Greek to be continually at loggerheads with his neighbour; his very vigour of intellect acted against his interests in this respect, for it produced just that intense individualism which prevented political union. The Greek, therefore, made his glorious contribution and disappeared for ever from the political stage which, if he had possessed a different character, he might have controlled for a very long time. Fortunately for the world, the Romans, like the Macedonians before them, recognised the immense superiority of the Greek in all matters of intellect and adopted as much of the Greek art and philosophy as they were capable of appreciating. Politically, Rome made an easy conquest of Greece, **but** intellectually, the conquest of Rome by Greece was no more difficult and quite as complete. The Roman possessed what in the Greek was conspicuously lacking—a strong sense of patriotism. The true God of the Roman was Rome. To live for self is bad and political selfishness was far too common among the Greeks.<sup>1</sup>

To live and to die for one's country is a very great deal better, yet "patriotism is not enough." That something more which can raise man above all the turmoil of life and

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle rightly says that man is a political animal; that being so, it must be admitted that the average Greek was a bad political animal and therefore a bad man. Fortunately this is only partly true, for there were in all times and places men of noble heart who broke themselves in an endeavour to make their political leaders see the folly and wickedness of their ways, but these men met with very little success.

## MEDITERRANEAN CIVILISATION

give that peace which the world cannot give, which can shew mankind how to live in the world and yet always be above it—that greatest of all contributions was to come from neither the Greek nor the Roman and yet through both. In the fulness of time—a time of profound peace, of political unity when there was but one government throughout the whole world and when just the one Greek language would take a man or a message from one end of the Mediterranean to the other—in the fulness of time came Jesus Christ.

When the Emperor Augustus died in 14 A. D., the Mediterranean world had achieved a large measure of unity. There was one government, under Rome; one language (Greek) was spoken by nearly every one; there was one culture, also Greek; there was universal peace—the *Pax Romana*.

In a sense, too, there was one common religion, but paganism, with its many gods and goddesses, was by this time much discredited. The more thoughtful people of all races despised it in their hearts. Herein lay, in fact, almost universal evidence of the one thing lacking, though the "signs of the times" were very far from being understood by the leaders of the age. There were plenty of philosophic systems, many of them quite good in their way, but there was no really satisfying religion. The masses were untouched by philosophy and the classes were becoming more and more hopelessly corrupt. Romans ii gives an excellent but terribly dark picture of the pagan world in the first century of the Christian era, and the account is only too well supported by contemporary evidence.

The heathen world was waiting for a religion which would satisfy the common people on the one hand and yet not outrage the intelligence of the educated and cultured on the other.

Could the Jews have supplied this want? It is quite possible that they might have done so, and it will be worth while to see exactly why they did not.

Ever since the reform of Josiah in 621 B.C., the religious

life of the Hebrews had tended more and more to centre round the synagogue as opposed to the Temple.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, their political misfortunes had driven so many of them into compulsory or voluntary exile that there were Jews (often in large numbers) in nearly every city of the Roman Empire. Thus the pagan world was made acquainted with a form of religion which in many ways seemed to satisfy their deepest needs. Here, in the Jewish synagogue, they found a pure form of worship, with prayer and song, reading and study, in place of the horrible rites of bloody sacrifice to which they were accustomed in their own Temples. They found also just that emphasis on morality, just that connection between religion and ethics which was felt to be utterly wanting in their own religion. The fact that right-minded people were aware of something seriously wrong is shewn by the success of the mystery religions, some of which offered to their votaries both purity of worship and salvation from sin.

The Hebrews offered this to the pagan world: moreover, their religion centred round a pure and lofty monotheism, set forth in a noble literature of hoary antiquity. But there was one fatal flaw in the Jewish offer to the pagan world—to obtain the benefits of the covenant a Gentile must first become a Jew. A proselyte must accept the whole of the Mosaic Law. To a Gentile of the first century this was a grievous condition, for it involved separation from his friends; he would not be able to eat with them and would find it extremely difficult to live with them on any terms. The Mosaic Law affected all the ordinary and intimate details of daily life and the difficulty of accepting it can only be partly gauged by imagining an Englishman turned Moslem who, dressed in Eastern garb, would make use of a praying carpet in the London streets.

It is possible, therefore, to see that in any synagogue of the first century there would be gathered together, Sabbath by Sabbath, three quite distinct classes of people.

<sup>1</sup> See pages 33/.

First, the Jews themselves, who had founded<sup>1</sup> the synagogue and to whom, of course, it belonged. These were expected to keep the whole of the Jewish law, but they often found themselves obliged to compromise.

Second, the proselytes; these, though pagan born, had voluntarily accepted the Jewish law and had therefore become Jews. This group would seldom be very large and in many synagogues would be entirely missing.

Third, a group of people called "the God-fearers." These were Gentiles who were much attracted by the purity of worship presented to them in the synagogue and who came Sabbath after Sabbath to eat of the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table.<sup>2</sup> This group would vary in numbers, in intelligence and in social standing, but at different times and in different places it must have contained the very salt of the earth.

It was but natural that the Jewish members of the synagogue should wish to convert those in this group into real proselytes, but there is not much evidence of their efforts meeting with success on any grand scale.

Suddenly there came upon the scene a fiery preacher who seemed to offer all the advantages of Judaism without the terrible burden of the law. No wonder that Saint Paul was looked on as the bearer of good tidings. The Gospel of Jesus Christ was indeed good news to these God-fearers. No wonder, also, that he incurred the fierce hatred and opposition of the Jews wherever he went. He was making converts of the very people whom they wished to gather into their own fold, and doing it by the sacrifice of all that they held dear and for which they had suffered so much.

The Jews, moreover, had another cause of bitter complaint

<sup>1</sup> Any ten Jews are permitted to form a synagogue. In the first century there were four hundred synagogues in Jerusalem—a sign that the worship of the synagogue was preferred to that of the Temple.

<sup>2</sup> This probably provides the clue to the parable.

the effect of their work was to make converts drawn in the main from the ranks of the "God-fearers." Nor were the terms upon which these Gentiles were to be admitted to the Christian Church determined beforehand, and there was great alarm among the Palestinian Christians when it was learnt that Paul had released his converts from every precept of the Mosaic Law except in so far as it found confirmation by the greater Law of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Fierce and bitter was the controversy, as is shewn by the tone of Saint Paul's letter to the Galatians (the people of Iconium, Derbe, and Lystra), and the matter was not settled until the conference held in 50 A.D. at Jerusalem. Acts xv gives a minute of this meeting and if the decision had gone against Saint Paul, it is difficult to see how Christianity could ever have become one of the great religions of the world.

The decision of this, the first great Church Council, was that Gentiles might become Christians without first becoming Jews. The Council was held as a result of the first missionary journey and the decision meant that the work of Saint Paul was officially approved by the Church and allowed to continue.

Saint Paul had succeeded where Gamaliel the Jew and even Saint Peter the Christian would have failed.

#### THE TEN PERSECUTIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

In addition to its many other advantages, the Christian religion was all-embracing; it appealed to all people on equal terms. Rich and poor, learned and ignorant, bond and free, men and women—all were welcome. In spite of, or perhaps because of, the persecutions of the next three hundred years, Christianity made great progress among all classes of society.

It is usual to count ten persecutions of the Christians, the first being the one which took place under the Emperor Nero in the year 64 A.D. and probably included both Saint

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Peter and Saint Paul among its victims; the last and fiercest continued for eight years, 303-311 A.D., under Diocletian. Most of the ten persecutions, however, were local and sporadic; even during the reign of Diocletian, Spain, Gaul, and Britain were for the most part spared. Generally speaking, the better the Emperor, the worse the persecution of the Christians—an especially notable example of this being the great and good Marcus Aurelius, one of the best of rulers and yet one of the most hostile to Christianity.

It is not very difficult to see how this tragic misunderstanding arose. It was customary for every subject of the Emperor to do homage to him as to a god. As an act of religion, this meant little or nothing to an educated pagan, who had long since lost all belief in gods and goddesses, but as an act of loyalty to the Empire, it implied a great deal. The Christian, on the other hand, was obliged by his beliefs to attach religious importance to this act of homage; to him the offering of incense before an idol was a grave act of disloyalty to Jesus Christ. Thus far, however, the Jew was in much the same position as the Christian and persecutions of both did sometimes take place, but there were factors which told against Christians and not against Jews. The Eucharist was naturally and inevitably celebrated before converts alone and, in times of danger, behind locked doors, so that, to those outside the Church, it seemed that the Christians were not only a political party disloyal to the State, but also a secret society probably plotting actual mischief to the Empire. Furthermore, the Christian, unlike the Jew, was not immediately recognisable—he did not belong to any distinct race. Anyone might be a Christian, almost without the knowledge of his friends and certainly without the knowledge of the world at large.

The Christian Church at this period, therefore, presented the appearance of a disloyal, secret political society working its way into the innermost recesses of the Empire.

## FROM SAINT PAUL TO CONSTANTINE

### THE COUNCIL OF NICÆA, 325 A.D.

The first Church Council—the one at Jerusalem in or about the year 50 A.D.—took place without causing any great stir, though the matter there decided was of the greatest importance in the world's history. The second oecumenical (general) Church Council met at Nicaea in 325 A.D. in very different circumstances. The matter to be decided—whether the doctrines taught by Arius were orthodox or not—may not seem to be of absorbing interest to anyone outside the ranks of trained theologians, but the Council will always be memorable as being the first one to be held under the protection of the Emperor himself. The fiery trials of the Christians were over and the bishops—more than three hundred of them—were able to come from all parts of the Empire not only without fear of arrest and condemnation but in triumph as the honoured guests of the Head of the State. The reason for these great changes is to be found in the conversion of the Emperor Constantine to Christianity. It is by no means certain, however, that Constantine cared very much whether he subscribed to the worship of the pagan gods or to the God of the Christians, but he was quick to recognise the advantages of harnessing the young and vigorous Church to the chariot of his own state. The old theology had been dead, or moribund, for a long time and by adopting Christianity, Constantine solved many of his problems at one stroke.

The position of Nicaea and the name of the Emperor combine to remind us that the capital of the Empire had now been shifted from Rome to Constantinople, which, before this time, had been Byzantium/and which Constantine chose as his seat of government because of its magnificent position. He probably foresaw, too, that the danger of invasion from the north which, already in his day, had begun to threaten the Near East, would be more successfully withstood from Constantinople than from Rome. Nevertheless, the removal

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of the Capital is the first of a series of events which led to the great split both in State and Church between East and West. The Council of Nicaea also has some bearing on this point, for the followers of Arius found more favour in the East than in the West and Constantine himself was baptised—on his death-bed—by an Arian bishop.

The party which, for a moment, gained the ascendancy at the court was anti-Arian, and its great protagonist was Athanasius, but the creed which eventually took shape as a result of the Church Council was the Nicene.<sup>1</sup>

The adoption of Christianity by the Emperor put the finishing touch to the process of unification which had been going on in the Mediterranean for five hundred years.

Now to one Empire and one Emperor can be added one religion, one Church, and, shortly afterwards, one Pope, for the Bishop of Rome came to be regarded as the head of the Church. Thus was brought into being the main political and ecclesiastical ideal of unity which prevailed during the Middle Ages. Thus also place has been found in Mediterranean civilisation for the three contributions—Palestinian, Greek, and Roman.

One of the objects of this historical survey has now been fulfilled and henceforth it is proposed to choose some conspicuous dates and events to enable the reader to follow the general lines of European History down to the Reformation and the Renaissance.

<sup>1</sup> The Athanasian Creed was a much later production and even the Nicene Creed, as we have it, was a development from rather than a mere statement of the resolutions of the Council of 325 A.D.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE BARBARIAN INVASIONS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES

#### THE GREAT BARBARIAN INVASIONS

IT has been seen that, in Constantine's mind, one consideration for the transference of his capital from Rome to Byzantium was fear of the hordes of barbarians who had already begun to threaten the peace of the Roman world. These barbarian tribes were the Goths (East and West), the Vandals, and the Huns who were a Mongolian race from Asia pressing on the Goths and Vandals from behind. Constantine had correctly estimated the direction from which the danger was to be expected and the blow at the Eastern Empire was, for a time, averted; but meanwhile the split had occurred between the East and the West, a division which had certainly never formed any part of Constantine's plan. A temporary division into East and West took place in 364 and a final one in 395 under the sons of Theodosius. In spite of this, however, it is important to remember that men still clung to the idea of One Empire and One Church, and the Ruler at Rome was considered as the vice-regent for the real Emperor at Constantinople.

Another undesigned and unforeseen result of the removal of the capital from Rome to Constantinople was the increased importance and power of the Bishop of Rome. His prestige was enhanced still further by the brave conduct of the bishops as compared with that of the temporal rulers when the barbarians were ravaging the country, for the Western part of the Roman Empire soon fell to the Goths,

## MEDITERRANEAN CIVILISATION

who swarmed down from the north and overwhelmed Italy. Rome itself was sacked by the Goths under Alaric in the year 410 A.D., but 476 is the more interesting and important date and it is usually taken as marking the end of Ancient and the beginning of Mediaeval times.

In the year 476 A.D., the Roman Emperor Augustulus, who was but a boy and had been placed on the throne by his father Orestes, was compelled by the all-conquering Goths to resign his command, not, be it noted, into the hands of his conquerors but into those of the reigning Emperor at Constantinople, while the Gothic leader Odoacer himself took the more modest title of King of Italy. This illuminating fact illustrates two important points:

First: The barbarians were as much impressed by the majesty and power of Rome as were those who had for centuries been part of the Roman Empire. They tried to preserve as much of the Roman civilisation as they could understand.

Second: The idea of the one only state and church was as firmly rooted in the minds of all, barbarian or Roman, as ever it had been. The idea stood for law, order, unity, peace—a Roman peace (*Pax Romano*) imposed from above, but still—peace.

In spite of the fact that the barbarians did their best to preserve for themselves as much as they could of the civilisation of ancient Rome, their coming was a very great disaster and the designation of the subsequent centuries as the Dark Ages is not wide of the mark. Civilisation received a severe set-back—progress was delayed for hundreds of years, and when the awakening came at last, so much time had been lost that it was again a matter of centuries before Europe could claim to be as civilised as the ancient Greeks. In some respects, apart from the remarkable progress in man's knowledge of nature, it may be said that the twentieth century A.D. is still behind the fifth B.C.

## THE BARBARIAN INVASIONS

If there be progress in the affairs of man it is assuredly not uniform, and the swamping of Mediterranean Europe by the barbarians in the fifth century A.D. was an almost unrelieved misfortune.

The evil effects of the invasions would doubtless have been more grievous than they were if the barbarians themselves had not been so much impressed by the prestige of a Rome that had, for five centuries, ruled the whole of the then known world. And the influence of Rome on subsequent history is partly dependent on the absorption by the Romans, like the Macedonians before them, of as much as they were capable of understanding and appreciating of the grandeur of Athens. If it had been otherwise, the glorious heritage from Greece could not have been ours to-day.

### BRITAIN

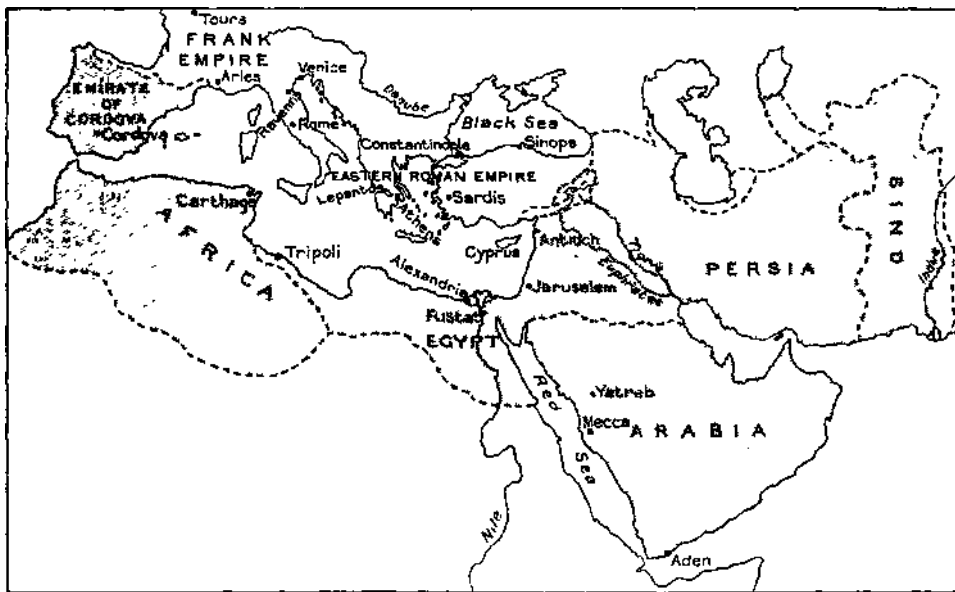
During all the long time when Palestine, Greece, and Italy were building up the civilisation of the Mediterranean, Britain, by its position on the outskirts of Europe, was compelled to play an insignificant part. Julius Caesar visited Britain in the year 55 B.C. and again in the following year, but he made no permanent conquest and it was not until nearly a century later, in 43 A.D., that the southern part of this island became a Roman province. For nearly four hundred years after this, Britain remained as the extreme northern limit of the Roman Empire and therefore of civilisation, and it was about the time of the capture of the Imperial City (410 A.D. or earlier) that the Roman forces were removed from Britain. No part of the Roman Empire suffered more from the crash than did Britain, and, though the good work of the Romans was not entirely undone, the relapse, almost to barbarism, was accelerated by the attacks of sea-faring marauders who drove out some of the original inhabitants and subjugated those who remained. One fact will serve as an indicator—Christianity had come to Britain during the Roman occupation and it

became the official religion of the island when it was adopted by the Emperor. When the Roman legions were withdrawn, and the Picts and the Saxons attacked, Christianity retreated before the advance of paganism and took refuge in Cornwall, Wales, and Ireland. The second conversion of Britain to Christianity must be credited in part, to Saint Augustine, who landed in Kent in the year 597 A.D. with a commission from the Pope himself. The Welsh Celtic Church refused to co-operate with Rome, but missionaries from Ireland converted the north with more success than the Roman missionaries, though ultimately England adopted Roman as opposed to Celtic Christianity. Owing to the Saxon conquest, for nearly two hundred years there was no official connection between Rome and Britain and when relationship was once again established, it was by means of the religious and not the civil authority of Rome.

#### EUROPE AND ASIA

The collapse of Rome under the pressure of the avalanche from the north had an important bearing on the conflict between Europe and Asia, for the control of the Mediterranean, but as the East held firm at Constantinople, the effect of this disturbance of the balance was not immediately manifest. Since the days of Alexander, there had been such incidents as the Mithridatic Wars<sup>1</sup> to remind Europe that forces were still to be reckoned with in the East, but Rome had always in the end proved victorious, and so long as the Roman Empire lasted, the scales were heavily down on the European side. When, however, the Western half of that Empire collapsed, the weight might have been at once transferred to the other side but for the continued existence of the Eastern half of the Empire with its capital at Constantinople. In the seventh century A.D., the Eastern danger

<sup>1</sup> Wars between Rome and Mithridates, King of Pontus in Asia Minor (88-63 B.C.).



#### THE CONQUESTS OF ISLAM

The shaded portion indicates the territory gained 622-750 A.D.

was greatly increased when an entirely new force came into operation in the form of the Mohammedan religion.

Mohamet was born in the year 571 and he died in 632, and it is to the religion which he founded that the increasing power of the Saracens and Turks is to be traced. The Saracens were Arabs, while the Turks were Tartars, but both were Mohammedans.

The Mohammedan tide flowed steadily westward from this time on, but in Europe itself it was checked on the confines by the defences of Constantinople. It therefore took a more southerly course and spread along the African coast.

700 A.D. is roughly the date of the capture of Carthage (actually 698) and the subjugation of the mixed races which extended westward from Carthage and were known as the Moors. The Moors adopted Mohammedanism and so the tide pressed on right up to the Straits of Gibraltar. Nor did it stop there, for in 711 A.D. the Moors crossed over into Spain and established themselves firmly in the southern part of the peninsula. Still fighting their way onward they were hardly stopped by Charles Martel (battle of Tours, 732).<sup>1</sup>

It will be convenient to summarise these events as follows :

600 A.D. (1) Mission of Saint Augustine to Britain.  
(about) (Actual date of arrival, 597.)

(2) Pope firmly established as Head of the  
Christian Church in the West.

(3) Birth of Mohammedanism.

700 A.D. The Moors. Fall of Carthage (598). Moors  
(about) enter Spain (711). Battle of Tours (732).

<sup>1</sup> There is a parallel to this when at *Ethandun* in 878 Wessex saved Western Christendom from the pagan Northmen.

## CHAPTER XIII

### EMPIRE AND PAPACY

#### CHARLES THE GREAT (CHARLEMAGNE)

THE dates 600 A.D. for the second conversion of Britain to Christianity and 700 A.D. for the arrival of the Moors in Europe are only approximately correct, but 800 A.D. (an easy year to remember) is actually the one in which took place what was perhaps the most momentous event in Europe during the Middle Ages.

On Christmas Day in the year 800 A.D. Charles the Great (Charlemagne) was crowned as Roman Emperor by Pope Leo the Third in the Basilica of Saint Peter at Rome. Ever since the downfall of the ancient Roman Empire, men had held fast to the ideal of unity for all Europe—one Empire, one Church, one Emperor, one Pope—and looked back to the times of Constantine as the golden age of peace and plenty. In 800 A.D. there seemed to be a heaven-sent opportunity for a realisation of the ideal. The circumstances were certainly unique. To begin with there was the man—Charles was without a rival and was indeed worthy above all others to sit on the throne of the Caesars. He was a Frank, a mighty man of valour, who had built up a great kingdom in the north with its capital at Aix-la-Chapelle (where his tomb may still be seen) and whose notable services to Christendom were of two kinds. First, he had completed the work of Charles Martel by beating back the Moors in Spain; and second, he had saved Italy and the Pope from the ravages of the Lombards, who were the

## MEDITERRANEAN CIVILISATION

last of the great barbarian races to establish themselves within the confines of what had been the Roman Empire.

So far, therefore, as the West of Europe was concerned, there could be no doubt as to the desirability of Charles'



CHARLEMAGNE'S EMPIRE

The shaded portion indicates the gains during his rule.

election, but the idea of unity would be violated if there were two Emperors, and Constantinople had still to be taken into account. Ever since 476 A.D. the Emperor reigning in Constantinople was, in theory, ruler of the whole Empire, East and West, but it so happened that in 800 A.D. there was no Emperor in the East. There was an Empress, and she was an usurper. Irene had deposed her own son, Constantine the Sixth, put out his eyes, and reigned in his stead. There was thus a good opportunity for the transference of

against Paul in that he brought contempt on their whole race by preaching that their long expected Messiah was One who, in their eyes, seemed nothing more than a condemned criminal.

Yet Saint Paul offered the world exactly what the world wanted and had been wanting ever since the complete breakdown of pagan theology. Surely the cause of the success of Christianity is to be found here rather than in all Gibbon's famous five reasons put together.

## CHAPTER XI

### FROM SAINT PAUL TO CONSTANTINE

SAINT PAUL AND THE FIRST CHURCH COUNCIL, 50 A.D.

SAINT PAUL had qualifications which were probably unique for the work of co-ordinating the three great dominating influences of the Mediterranean—Hebrew, Greek, and Roman.

First, he was himself a thorough-going Jew, well versed in the Law, "a Pharisee and the son of Pharisees," brought up "at the feet of Gamaliel," perhaps the most celebrated Rabbi of his time. Second, he was a very fair Greek scholar, possessing at least a nodding acquaintance with the Greek classics, a citizen of "Tarsus, no mean city," where was a famous Greek University. Third, he was a Roman citizen by birth, and he understood and appreciated the benefits of Roman rule. His appeal to Caesar<sup>1</sup> may have been a mistake from some points of view, but it was a perfectly natural step for Paul to take.

Paul and Barnabas (Acts xiii) set out from Antioch on a peculiar mission, but it is not certain that they were themselves fully aware of the magnitude and importance of the task to which they had put their hands. Did they intend, from the first, to preach to the Gentiles or was their main intention to make an appeal to the many Jews dispersed up and down the Roman Empire? Certainly it was always to the Jews that they made their first appeal in any place that they visited, and only when their message was rejected by their co-religionists did they turn to the Gentiles; but

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxv, 11, and xxvi, 32.

the Empire from East to West, and Charles was accordingly numbered as the sixty-eighth Emperor, Constantine being the sixty-seventh. The 25th December 800 A.D. may therefore be regarded as the birthday of the Holy Roman Empire, though the adjective 'Holy' was not added until Otto's time, late in the following century. Between the times of Charles and of Otto there was division and even anarchy consequent on the death of Charles in 814 A.D. and the break-up of his kingdom. The partition of the Empire by the Treaty of Verdun (843) roughly into France and Belgium, Germany, and Italy, caused Europe to relapse into chaos. Some would say that to this is due, not only the struggle between Papacy and Empire (for Charlemagne was the Pope's protector), but the international wars which are characteristic of Europe during the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries.

The historian Gibbon does not find it difficult to bring both the character and the achievements of Charlemagne down to the level of very ordinary men, and, though all must admire the tremendous energy of the man, his unique position in history is probably to be ascribed as much to the strange circumstances of the time as to the genius of the Emperor himself. At all events, the work for which he was himself more particularly responsible fell to pieces at his death, and when the Holy Roman Empire was established by Otto in 962 A.D., the Imperial crown passed for ever from the Franks to the Germans.

If we are allowed to take 800 A.D. as the beginning of the Holy Roman Empire, the institution lasted with varying vitality—decreasing rapidly with age—for just over one thousand years. It came to an end in 1806 A.D., when an announcement appeared in the newspapers that the Emperor Francis the Second would henceforth be known as the Emperor of Austria. Perhaps ideas were entertained of the revival of the Empire, and with it the hegemony of Europe, when Bismarck stated in 1871 at Versailles, that

## MEDITERRANEAN CIVILISATION

Kaiser Wilhelm was to be the successor of the Emperors. If so, the end of the Empire was marked by the flight of the ex-Kaiser to Holland in 1918.

### EMPIRE AND PAPACY

However doubtful the date of the beginning may be and however fitful the end, there can be no question as to the power and influence of the Empire when it flourished under such men as Charlemagne, Otto, or Charles the Fifth, but along with the Empire, and founded on similar ideas, there also flourished the papacy. Empire and Church were co-terminous ; all owed allegiance alike to the Emperor as head of the temporal power and to the Pope as head of the spiritual. Emperor and Pope were as the two sides of the same shield. This was the theory—in practice, there was often disagreement between the two powers, nor was it ever decided which was the superior of the other. Did the Emperor receive his power from the Pope who—sometimes—placed the crown on his head, or was the Pope the mere exarch of the Emperor whose duty it was to protect him and defend the faith? This very important point which, in theory, ought never to have arisen, was never, in practice, decided. There were times—in the ninth and tenth centuries, for example—when the Emperor made and deposed popes at his own pleasure, and yet the next century supplies the outstanding example of the supremacy of the spiritual power, for it was in 1077 that the Emperor Henry the Fourth was forced to wait as a barefooted penitent in the snow of the castle yard at Canossa till it pleased Pope Gregory the Seventh to admit him to his presence—and little good did his exhibition of humility do for him!

Grand was the idea of a united Empire and a united Church, but the idea was never translated into the realms of practical politics and the state of Europe during the centuries following the inrush of the barbarians from the north shewed a marked decline both from the splendour of

Rome and the glory of Greece. There was, in fact, more than a partial decline into savagery. When Mohammedanism arose and the Moors invaded Spain, and when, as in the time of the crusades, Europe tried once more to invade Asia, it would be difficult to make out a convincing case for the superiority of the West over the East. Such learning as existed was to be found only among the monks and, later, the schoolmen, and in both it was more than tinged with pagan superstition; while, on the other hand, there were Moors and Arabs to be found as whole-heartedly devoted to the pursuit of knowledge as the best of Christians. Astronomy and medicine flourished among the Moorish races and our Arabic figures are proof that, during the Dark Ages, some help was forthcoming to Europe from the East; help too, though of a very different nature, came from the north.

#### **ROLLO AND THE NORMANS, 912-932 A.D.**

Although Viking raids on Britain and France began a century earlier, the arrival of the Normans may be conveniently dated as about 900 A.D.; they made their impact on Northern Europe as terrible raiders whose habit it was to swoop down on any badly defended coast, to murder and to plunder; they made extensive use of rivers in order to strike at the interior of any land they wished to ravish. Many of these Northmen, however, shewed qualities of a very different kind from those of the common pirate, and when they settled down, as they sometimes did, in the land of the people they had conquered, they proved themselves to be rulers and organisers of no mean order.

By far the most interesting and important of these Northern marauders was Rollo, who sailed up the Seine as far as Rouen, compelled the French King Charles to grant him the rule of a large part of North-west France, built the fortress of Caen and so became the first Duke of Normandy and founder of the great dynasty which, in the next century,

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played such an important part in shaping the history of these islands.

The coming of Rollo and his Normans is not only of especial interest to us, but it is also of much importance in the study of European History, for their influence was widely spread and even went as far southward as Sicily, where, in the twelfth century, the court of the Norman Kings at Palermo was the meeting place of Arabic, Latin and Greek culture, and was the most splendid and enlightened of its age. There was a parallel awakening in France at the same time, but the far greater brilliance of the Italian City States of the fifteenth century has, by comparison, somewhat dimmed the lustre of the earlier renaissance of Sicily and France.

Rollo's own share in the wonderful success of the Normans was a very great one and the account of his life reads like a romance. For the first sixty years of it, he was nothing better than a fierce pirate and brigand; then he settled down at Caen and became, for the last twenty years (912-932 A.D.), one of the wisest and most just of rulers, whose sole object seemed to be the well-being and happiness of his country; so that when he died, at the age of eighty, he left behind him a sorrowing people and a firmly established dynasty.

It may perhaps be said that the dark ages ended with Charlemagne, but it was the Normans, with their strength and vigour, their organising power, their capacity for firm government and love of fair play, who brought fresh life into Europe. They were the better able to perform the work of rejuvenation because, with fifteen centuries of their own civilisation behind them, they cared less than did the Goths and Huns for the respectability of the old Roman Empire and encouraged people to strike out new lines for themselves. Much of the work of the Normans has had a permanent effect on the history of Western Europe and they have left us many enduring monuments in the form of castles and cathedrals.

## CHAPTER XIV

### SAINT FRANCIS, 1212 A.D.

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI is so different from most of the heroes of history that it is very difficult to find a suitable place for him, yet no account of Mediterranean civilisation would be complete without him. To assert that he was, in himself, the best product of the Middle Ages is to make too modest a claim for him, since even to-day he has lovers willing to maintain his pre-eminence in charm and in virtue over all. None, perhaps, has suffered more at the hands of his friends—both those who misunderstood his aims and, in an attempt to popularise his ideals, succeeded only in debasing them, and those who, in his lifetime and after, put miracle in place of what was pure mystery and surrounded his simple and courtly figure with a mist of legend. No doubt Saint Francis did perform many deeds which seemed miraculous—remarkable men do remarkable things—but that was not the feature of his life on which he wished his friends to dwell. It was rather, as he told Brother Masseo, that he was just an ordinary man of like passions with us, whom God could use in His own wonderful way to fulfil His own purposes. Francis, like his own Master, insisted that all could, and therefore should, do the works that he did. This was the secret of his whole life, the mainspring of all his thoughts, words, and actions—to be in every way exactly like his Master. *Imitatio Christi*—imitation of the Christ—was his sole and sufficient guide. Not that his life was a mere mechanical copy; he had too much original genius and was too much an artist to be satisfied with so feeble an idea. It was the Spirit of Christ that found expression in his beautiful

life. Nevertheless, it is well to remember that the conditions of life in the thirteenth century made possible a literal interpretation of some of the injunctions of Christ which modern society renders undesirable and which modern scholarship shews was probably not part of the Christ-mind when the words were first uttered.

Francis himself seems not to have been without some inkling of this truth and he was certainly aware of the danger of separating society into two groups by allowing some men and women to be withdrawn from the ordinary work of the world to lead lives of religious retirement. He was himself ever a hard worker, even in the usual meaning of the word, and he insisted on the adoption of a trade by all the members of his community. He was not a monk and it would be difficult to say how much the Franciscan movement owed to monasticism—probably the debt was not very great. Francis was often tempted to withdraw himself from the world and gain a life of peace, and it will always be one of his chief glories that he never yielded to the temptation. Modern notions of mediaeval sainthood are likely to be misleading on another important point—the vow of poverty. Francis always referred to Poverty as his *Bride*; with her he was in love, to her he was wedded. Poverty meant liberty—"having nothing, yet possessing all things." So without thought or suspicion of arrogance, we find him claiming the sun as his brother. It was the *slavery* of riches from which he escaped.

It is therefore clear that while the ordinary picture of a mediaeval saint in a stained-glass window probably does injustice to all the saints of the calendar, such a picture, as a representation of Francis, is not merely untrue but positively grotesque. He was a courteous gentleman, full to the brim with real, strong, pulsing life, no beggar but a worker; stern with himself, kind to all others; a Knight-errant of his Lady Poverty; an intense lover of God, of man and of nature; a poet, a troubadour of God, who went through life singing.

When, worn out with work, he sank down to die, a blind man, old at forty-four, he found strength to add a verse to his immortal "Song of the Sun" in praise and in welcome of Sister Death.

Just as the Normans put new physical vigour into the life of Europe, so Saint Francis breathed a new spirit into religion and made the dry bones of ecclesiastical Christianity live again by shewing, at long last, after more than a thousand years of failure, that it was possible to be a Christian and yet live—that, in very truth, no other life can exist for long on this planet.

No better time than the year 1212 A.D. could be chosen for a glance at Francis. He and his handful of companions had just been turned out of a barn, which had been their headquarters, by a boorish peasant who claimed the use of it for his ass, and moved into the Portiuncula—that home and workshop combined, where the brothers spent what were probably the happiest years of their lives. In this year also, Sister Clare renounced worldly riches and became the foundress of the second order of Franciscans—the Poor Clares. Better, perhaps, than anyone else on earth, Clare understood the mind of Francis and appraised his work at its true value—certain it is that once during his absence and again after his death, she withstood popes and prelates rather than allow any departure from the Rule of Poverty which was the very centre and soul of the movement. It was to Clare that Francis turned for advice and encouragement at the time when everything he held most dear was threatened with destruction—nor did he turn in vain.

The foundation of the Second Order removed the barrier of sex from the progress of Franciscan ideals, but Francis was still unsatisfied until his institution of the Third Order in 1221 threw open the movement to all those—men and women—who could in no ordinary sense withdraw from the life of the world. A much more difficult matter, this—complete service of the Lady Poverty could be only for

the few, but there was that in the Franciscan spirit which brooked no bounds and expression could be found for it by any who would bear in mind that worldly possessions are not our own to do with as we will, but are loans from God to be used for His purposes. Man is not owner but steward.

Yet to speak in this way of the founding of the three orders is to give not merely an inadequate but a misleading report of what really took place. There was no founding of orders—at least not by Francis. What happened in 1212 was a repetition of what had happened three years before when Bernard, a rich young man, divided all his goods among the poor and threw in his lot with Francis. In 1212, it was a rich young woman—Clare of the noble family of the Scifi of Assisi—who determined on the same course. She was soon joined by others, among them her fourteen-year-old sister Agnes, and together they lived in the little Church of Saint Damian, which had been the first to be restored by the hands of Francis himself and which was now but two miles from the Portiuncula with Francis and his friends.

So again the Third Order was not really founded in the year 1221, it took its rise from the first heart to be touched by contact with the magical personality of Francis.

Since he was no recluse, Francis always took a profound interest in the affairs of his native Assisi and at least once he provided a most striking example of the inheritance of the earth by the meek. It cannot have been long before the year 1212 that he prevented the outbreak of a civil war in his native city. Nobles and people were about to fly at one another's throats when it occurred to both that there was in their midst one who was trusted by all. Spontaneously the cry arose, "Let Francis decide"; an agreement on the lines suggested by him was drawn up (it survives to this day) and accepted as a peaceful solution by all parties in Assisi. Fortunate are the people who have a Francis or an Aristeides to whom matters of dispute may be referred.

While Saint Francis gathers up in his own person **all that**

was noblest and best in the Middle Ages, he serves also, by contrast, as a reminder of the darker side of mediaevalism. It was again in this same year 1212 that Saint Francis began to take an active part in the Crusades. These Crusades had been going on ever since 1096, when Peter the Hermit first roused Europe to a state of indignation at the behaviour of the Mohammedans towards the Christian pilgrims to the Holy Places. It is customary to reckon eight Crusades—the last one being in 1272—and they make up one more chapter in the story of the conflict of Europe and Asia for control of the Mediterranean. Although Jerusalem was, for a time, recovered by the Christians, victory ultimately lay with Asia. Saint Francis thought that the best way of recovering the Holy Land for Christianity was to convert the Moslems who were in possession of it, and it was with this intent that he set out for the East. In 1212, he was sent back by storms at sea, and a similar attempt on Morocco was equally unsuccessful, but in 1219, Francis succeeded in reaching the Christian army, then besieging Damietta in Egypt. He managed to cross the hostile lines and visit the Saracen camp and there was a famous interview with the Soldan who, like every one else, was immensely impressed alike by the preaching and the personality of the Saint. Francis may not have converted many Moslems, but he certainly proved his point, and there can be no doubt that if all those who professed and called themselves Christians had been like him there would have been little need for arms.

In 1212, too, there took place that most touching example of mediaeval simplicity—the Crusade of the Children. In France, thousands of boys and girls all about twelve years of age, went on Crusade firmly believing that, when they came to the sea, it would open for them and give them a dry passage to the Holy Land. Innocence would succeed where might had failed. The fate of these little ones is too terrible to contemplate; some merchants took them on board ship at Marseilles and two ships were wrecked

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and the children in them drowned. These were the fortunate ones, for the others were sold into slavery—at least, that seems the most probable account though the sequel is not known with any certainty. One hears with some satisfaction that the merchants were subsequently hanged in Sicily. The whole story illustrates much that was worst and also much that was best in the Middle Ages.

While the south was producing saints, the good people of the north found expression in stone for the religious truth that was in them, and great cathedrals began to rise all over France and the British Isles. Men seem to have worked with Franciscan ardour and humility on their mighty buildings for no one knows, for the most part, who were the designers and craftsmen—like the Franciscans, they possessed the supreme virtue of self-effacement. Here and there a bishop or an architect has left a name behind him but, generally, these great works of art may be regarded as the efforts of many artists and craftsmen whose reward lay in the work itself. Though the date varied in different parts of the country, the year 1212 may quite fitly be taken as the time of complete emergence of the true pointed Gothic style out of the magnificent and more rugged Romanesque. The foundations of Salisbury—the most perfect existing example of the Early English style—were laid in the year 1220.

Saint Francis, too, was a builder, for he began his career by repairing with his own hands the partly ruined Church of Saint Damian. He was the unconscious forerunner both of the Renaissance and the Reformation—of the Renaissance, because by being the first poet who wrote in the common Italian tongue instead of in Latin, he cleared the way for Dante, who was only a generation or so behind him—and of the Reformation, in that his independence of mind and action made a reformer of him in essence. How near it brought him to a ban of excommunication from the Roman Church, he himself never knew.

At this same time, there was, however, an unmistakable sign of the coming religious revolution. In 1212, the Albigenses in Southern France were being mercilessly persecuted, and by 1242 they had been virtually exterminated. In some ways the Albigenses were certainly heretical; they refused, for example, any form of belief in the "real presence," and some of their beliefs were clearly mistaken, but they were honest, fearless people who were, by any tests that could then or now be applied, living more Christlike lives than were most of their persecutors. They were heretics and therefore a crusade was preached against them; they were hunted to death as though their doctrines were more hostile to Christianity than those of Mohammedanism. One incident will serve to sum up the whole of this melancholy business. In 1209 the city of Beziers, not far from Narbonne in Toulouse, was captured from the Albigenses and the Papal Legate was asked how the soldiers of the orthodox could distinguish between the heretics and the true believers. They were told to kill all because "God could tell his own." In this manner the heresy was stamped out and the fate of the Albigenses is usually quoted to shew that sometimes persecution, if only it be thorough enough, can be successful in suppressing religious belief. For a time it seemed to be so, but truth cannot be suppressed for ever and the blood of martyrs nourishes the ground for future generations of reformers; the fervour of the Albigenses proved to be the false dawn of a glorious day.

The early thirteenth century may be regarded as the coming of age of mediaevalism. Saints, cathedral-builders, heretics and crusaders are products of its youthful maturity and all these can be knit together by their relationship to the Church. It so happened, moreover, that the guidance of the Church at this time was in the hands of one of its most remarkable leaders. Innocent the Third was Pope from 1198 to his death in 1216, and proved himself to

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be one of the most powerful rulers who ever sat on the throne of Saint Peter; under him the Church attained what was probably its highest position in the political world. The days of the Emperors were over, and the aim of Innocent was to extend the rule of the Church over every kingdom of the Christian world. He regarded himself as the Vicar of Christ on earth. The ideal underlying this claim is not an ignoble one, but, even if it could be realised, its success would entirely depend on the extent to which the vicar is in true harmony with the spirit of his Master. The arguments by which the Church attempted to defend its claims to rulership of the world were both simple and effective. The Emperor controls the bodies, the Pope controls the souls of all the people. But the soul is of much greater importance than the body, moreover the motions of the body are themselves controlled by the dispositions of the soul. Furthermore, the affairs of the body are temporal while those of the soul are eternal. Much of this argument will always remain true, and all of it was easily accepted by the mediaeval mind; but any modern might hesitate to draw the logical conclusion that the Pope should control the Emperor and all kings, that, indeed, Emperor, kings, and all magistrates owe allegiance to the Pope as supreme head not of Church only, but of State. Yet this was the main principle of Innocent's life, and it was by no means new in his day. Other popes before him had put forward such claims; but perhaps none of them came quite so near to their realisation as he. He was strong enough to put England under an interdict and force King John's obedience to his legate. He acted similarly towards the French King and other rulers; he made and deposed kings and princes and in comparison with his power that of the Emperor paled into insignificance. It is easy to picture the astonishment of such a potentate as Innocent the Third when confronted by the poor little Francis who came to ask for his blessing on a company of men whose chief desire was to be allowed to

own nothing! This Pope could never hope to understand Francis; at first indeed he thought he saw signs of heresy and herein he was probably correct, for Francis persisted to the end in taking his own counsel on the most important matters without consulting pope or priest. Innocent, however, thought that it would be wise to make use of the Franciscan movement for the benefit of the Church, and in this he was to be ultimately successful, though not until the command of the Franciscan Society had passed from the hands of its founder.

But if Innocent tolerated the Franciscans his treatment of the Albigenses was very different. Here were people who, however good in themselves they might be, were rebellious against his rule and consequently were destructive of the ideal of Church Unity for which he stood. For this reason the brutal soldiers who carried on the wars against the Albigenses were styled crusaders, although their leaders were aiming at political gain and the soldiers concerned mainly with thoughts of plunder. As for the crusades against the Moslems, it was perhaps Innocent's chief disappointment in life that he could so hardly persuade the Christian princes to continue these unsuccessful wars.

Pope Innocent the Third was himself a man of blameless private life and of fine commanding presence. Among the good things that he did must be placed a genuine attempt to reform the Church from within. He recognised that one source of strength both to the Albigenses whom he persecuted and to the Franciscans whom he tolerated was to be found in the contrast of their lives with those of the worldly and avaricious priest. Towards the end of his life, Innocent called together a great council to deal with all these matters. Nor was his labour altogether in vain, and if his work in this direction had been followed by his successors, the history of reformation times might have been different.

## CHAPTER XV

### THERENAISSANCEANDTHEREFORMATION

#### THE RENAISSANCE

THE thousand years of the Middle Ages (476-1492) were brought to an end by the Renaissance and the Reformation. Neither of these two great movements can be pinned down to a single date and both are really culminating points of a process which had been going on for a very long time. The Renaissance may best be studied in the Italian Cities which played such a prominent part in the closing centuries of the Middle Ages, but the movement was by no means confined to one country. The Italian City States present an interesting picture; independent as they were, yet always threatened with interference from a neighbour; democratic in origin yet, in action, harsh to the extent of cruelty; thoroughly commercial yet splendidly artistic; they seem to have offered harbour not only to writers and philosophers, painters and sculptors, but even, at times, to men of daring religious originality. It is true that some of these men, such as Galileo and Savonarola, got themselves into serious trouble as soon as their tendency seemed to cross certain well-defined lines in Church or in State, but it is nevertheless true that it was the City State which brought them into being. The Italian Cities provided the cradle for the Renaissance, though the causes of the great awakening were operative through a far wider area. Europe was rousing herself from a long intellectual sleep.

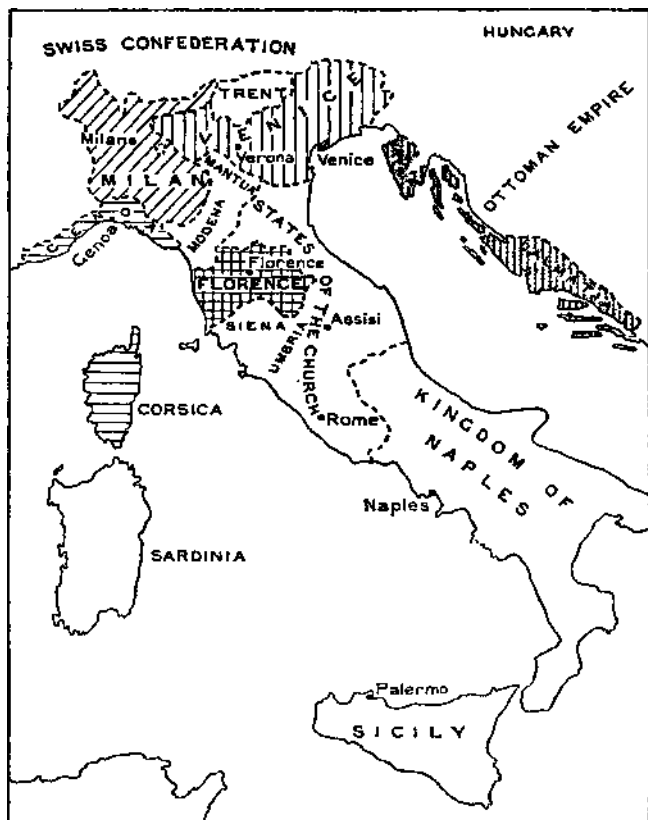
The revival manifested itself first in tremendous artistic activity and then in a renewed interest in the classical

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times of Greece and Rome. Everything literary and artistic began to flourish in Italy and this, too, long before the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453—an event which, though it was not the cause of the Renaissance, did, by scattering the scholars from that ancient university, add impetus to a movement already in full swing.

These Italian City States arose in this way: during the troubled times in the early days of the Holy Roman Empire, towns that were large enough and strong enough to do so, built fortifications and established independent political units. This was the first stage and the second was the expulsion of the nobles and the foundation of flourishing trade guilds. In Florence, for example, every citizen was obliged to belong to some one or other of the guilds and to keep up at least the appearance of carrying on a trade or craft. Thus we find that Dante was an apothecary. Then, as trade developed and prosperity increased, some families became very rich and soon discovered that wealth could be used to procure political power. This discovery quickly led to the establishment of a despotism—plutocracy became virtual monarchy, but since the monarch had to seize the power and to maintain it against rivals when he had seized it, these states resembled the tyrannies of ancient Greece rather than the monarchies of modern times.

A brief account of Florence during the fifteenth century will make this abundantly clear, for it is the story of the rise of the Medici family to power. The cunning way in which this was achieved throughout the opening years of the century would take a long time to tell, but by 1459 a permanent council of one hundred of his adherents had been established by Cosimo Medici; while Guicciardini, the contemporary historian, says: "It would have been impossible for Florence to have a better or more delightful tyrant." Cosimo was an eager student of the classics, and at the fall of Constantinople he persuaded the eminent scholar Agyropoulos to take up his residence in Florence; by paying



#### THE ITALIAN STATES

About 1570 A.D. It is impossible on so small a scale to indicate the names and boundaries of the minor States. The shading indicates that Corsica belonged to Genoa; Istria and Dalmatia to Venice.

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**the** debts of a great collector, whose enthusiasm had made him bankrupt, he acquired the four hundred codices with which he founded the now very famous Medicean Library of ten thousand Greek and Latin manuscripts. He it was who gave the Convent of St. Mark to the Dominicans and caused it to be decorated by the frescoes of Fra Angelico. **No less a** man than Donatello had voluntarily gone into exile with him. In addition to being the Rothschild of his day, he seems to have been of a religious and contemplative turn of mind. At a conference held in 1439 to attempt to bring together the Eastern and Western Churches,<sup>1</sup> Cosimo entertained the Emperor Paleologus, the Patriarch, and a numerous company of Prelates and men of letters from Constantinople. Two popes were his intimate friends, and one of them lived for nine years in Florence at the court of Cosimo. Foreign monarchs seem to have held him in great regard, Louis the Eleventh referring to him as "cousin" in their correspondence. Indeed the admiration of Machiavelli for this man resembles very much that of Thucydides for Pericles, and he extols the good fortune of a city in which some wise citizen arises to assuage the conflicts for ever raging between the "advocates of licence and the advocates of enslavement."

Cosimo Pater Patriae, as he was created by public enactment, was succeeded by his son Piero, nicknamed "The Gouty," who reigned, however, only five years. Piero was by no means a nonentity. He had been ambassador for his father to Milan, to Venice, and to France. He had received from Louis the Eleventh the right to bear the *fleur de lis* on his shield, but his health made it impossible for him to be the man his father had been or his son was to be. Born in 1549, this son Lorenzo,<sup>2</sup> even in his father's lifetime, took a

<sup>1</sup> The Eastern Church separated itself from Rome in 1054.

<sup>2</sup> There are good portraits of him in Botticelli's "Magnificat" Madonna and in the splendid frescoes by Benozzo Gozzoli which adorn the chapel of his grandfather's palace, commemorating the visit of **the** Emperor of the East.

good deal of power into his own hands and, upon his death, rapidly showed himself the possessor of qualities the brilliance of which was not equalled by any ruler of his time. Lorenzo gathered about him artists of all kinds, Poliziano and Botticelli being his closest associates, and he himself was a poet whose verses suffer from choice of subjects rather than from execution. One of his first public acts was to go to Naples, with which city Florence was at war, and in person win over the king by his charm and diplomacy. For the rest of his reign he is justly credited with keeping level the balance of power in Italy, though this task was rendered easier by the Turkish menace which naturally put a check on the local rivalries of Christendom. In his last years the lustre of Lorenzo the Magnificent was somewhat dimmed by the rise of that remarkable man who for a time was to wrest the power from the hands of the Medici. This was Savonarola. Although from the first this great reformer aimed most of his invective at the extravagances of Lorenzo's court, it was Lorenzo who caused him to be recalled from exile in 1486. Savonarola's life and work in Florence can be read in the *Biography* by his disciple Pico della Mirandola who was present at his martyrdom; here there is but space to say that he was no "ascetic foe of the arts," as he has been represented, but a supreme influence on the work of Fra Bartolomeo and Michelangelo, the Delia Robbias and Botticelli, while Pico della Mirandola and Poliziano, the greatest students of Greek philosophy of their time, desired to be buried in his convent wearing the Dominican habit. It was his continued attacks on the famous—or infamous—Borgia Pope, Alexander the Sixth, which brought about the end of one of the most remarkable governments ever witnessed in a state at any time. For four years, from 1494 to the time of his martyrdom in 1498, Savonarola ruled Florence for Christ from the pulpit of the Duomo. Twice he went in person to rebuke Charles the Eighth, King of France, with such severity that that monarch diverted his march from the

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city. He wrote letters to the kings of France, England, Spain, and Hungary, asking them to form a council to depose Alexander; that to the French King found its way *via* Ludovico il Moro to the Pope, who threatened Florence with an interdict. At first the Government was firm, but at length they gave way and forsook the great Prior, whose last days and hours will be found so vividly described in George Eliot's *Romola*. The 23rd of May is marked by the scattering of violets on the little slab let into the floor of the great piazza to commemorate the site of his burning.

Rome, on account both of its geographical position and its history, was always in a different case from other cities, although, even in Rome, similar developments can be traced, but the best known and most important of the Italian City States are Florence, Venice, Genoa, and Milan. As a result of the endless warfare between each city and its immediate neighbours, the bigger and more prosperous cities swallowed up the smaller ones and became real "powers," just as we have seen that they did in the time of the Greek City States. Florence and Milan might be compared politically with Thebes, while Genoa and Venice more resembled Athens for, being on the sea coast, they almost inevitably built fleets, traded abroad, and maintained overseas possessions. The Crusades gave a specially favourable opportunity to Venice, and her enterprising merchants soon made her the chief port for all the trade with the East. At one time Venice controlled as much of the Levant as could be saved or wrested from the Moslem Power; all the Peloponnese, for example, was hers, and the effects of Venetian occupation are in evidence there to-day. It was her geographical position that gave Venice the opportunity to rise to commercial and political greatness and it was a change in geographical outlook that caused her subsequent decline. The discovery of America in 1492 completely altered the map of the world, and Venice lost her central position for ever.

When these cities ceased to be independent states, they

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retained much of their commercial and nearly all of their artistic importance. To this day, Milan is a large manufacturing city, Genoa a flourishing port, while the glory of Florence and the beauty of Venice still remain among the priceless possessions of mankind.

### THE REFORMATION

The Reformation followed hard on the heels of the Renaissance, and it would be easy to fall into the mistake of supposing that the one was the sole cause of the other, that the Reformation was a movement to gain religious freedom following, as a natural consequence, the great advance which had been made in all branches of human learning. Such a view, however, would give a most distorted picture of the time; the Reformation in essence and at first was neither an intellectual movement nor an attempt to gain religious freedom, though it had an intellectual side and it was destined ultimately to bear religious freedom as one of its fruits. The object of the reformers at first was purely moral and their work was made necessary, not by the oppression of the leaders in the Roman Church, but by their moral obliquity; it was, in particular, the sale of indulgences that roused the monk Luther to such a fury of indignation that in 1517 he raised the standard of revolt by nailing his thesis on the subject to the gate of the castle church of Wittenberg. The birth of the Protestant faith may well be dated from the year 1530, when a great assembly of princes met at Augsburg and drew up the famous Confession which goes by the name of this place of meeting and became for the time the charter of Protestantism.

Although, however, the Reformation was essentially a moral movement, the form which it assumed was partly determined by the spread of the new learning. The translation of the Bible, for example, into languages understood by everybody, brought into glaring contrast the ideals held by the Christians of the Apostolic Age compared with the prac-

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tice of the authorised exponents of the Christian Church in the sixteenth century. The great mistake indeed which the reformers made, was in placing one infallibility where another one had been—the Book instead of the Church. Any external infallible guide to life is dangerous, but, of the two, a Church (provided that it is in a healthy moral condition) is to be preferred to a book. Moreover, the scholars of the sixteenth century had too little knowledge at their disposal for them to reach any interpretation of the Bible which had the remotest chance of being acceptable to later ages. Ever since the Reformation, it may be said, each generation has been trying to do the work of the sixteenth century over again and in a better and better way as more and more knowledge has come to light. As for religious freedom, there was little enough of it when the reformers had their way, and it would probably be true to say that more freedom of thought was tolerated in the Roman Church at the end of the sixteenth century than in Protestant Churches at the same time. This is not to belittle the reformers or their work, but no good can ever come to the student of history by ascribing to people virtues which they did not possess and of which, moreover, they shewed little appreciation. The struggle for religious freedom was yet to come—nor is the battle, even now, completely won.

The Reformation took hold of the northern parts of Western Europe, and many and bitter were the wars waged between Protestants and Roman Catholics. Religion was often mingled with politics and even with the private desires of princes, as in the case of our own Henry. It was open to enemies to say that England turned Protestant because the King wanted a divorce from his wife and an opportunity for robbing the monasteries of their wealth.

## THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA

The discovery of America in the year 1492 is one of the turning points in the world's history and may fitly be taken

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as the end of mediaeval and the beginning of modern times. As a result of it, Europe has been entirely reshaped, and every problem—political, economic, and moral—has been recast, while many new ones have been added. Up to this time Europe, together with those parts of the Mediterranean coast which belong to it geographically, had been a self-contained whole. In Roman times "the world" had meant "Mediterranean world," for no other was known, and in mediaeval times it had meant "Europe." In both, the East was something to be kept out and it had little influence upon any aspect of human life. True there had always been a certain amount of trade with the East, but there had been no vital contact such as might have influenced the life and thought of Europe to any appreciable extent.<sup>1</sup> The East was rather a matter of curiosity than of serious study—yet it was the will of the gods that it should be the lure of the East that was to produce that discovery of the West which completely altered the balance of forces.

With the growth of Moslem power, there arose a state of affairs in Europe that differed in some respects from anything that had gone before. The Mediterranean world seemed to be ringed round by a circle of Mohammedan foes on every side; these Moslems were not only obnoxious in themselves, but they prevented free access to that Far East from which came the spices, the gold, and so many other amenities of life. As all attempts to break through the ring had failed, attention was turned to the possibility of finding a way round it. Hence came those voyages of discovery that provide so much excitement and romance in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In 1498 Vasco de Gama reached India by a way round the southern end of Africa, and it was six years before this that Columbus discovered America.

Now the discovery of America was a result of the revival of learning; new scientific instruments came into use and one of them—the compass—revolutionised the art of sailing.

<sup>1</sup> For obvious exception see page 114.

Up to this time, even the boldest of sailors had been obliged to keep as close to the land as possible, and if he ever shaped his course across a large bay or a small sea, it was only when he knew that, though the heavenly bodies were obscured throughout the voyage, there was yet a reasonably good chance of making a known landfall on the other side. It was just in this that the novelty of the voyage of Columbus lay; he sailed straight out into the west; the compass had turned what would formerly have been a foolhardy expedition into one still involving risk, but only such risk as brave men are entitled to take in the interests of human knowledge. While the sun and the stars are indispensable for an accurate determination of a ship's position, the compass<sup>1</sup> enables a course to be set even when all the heavenly bodies are obscured.

Even as far back as the time of the Greeks there had been speculators who hazarded the guess that the Earth was a globe and not a disc, but it was not until the Renaissance that the belief began to gain acceptance. Columbus staked his life on it and, armed with his compass, set out to find India by steering west. It was America he found, not India.

By the passage round the Cape of Good Hope and the discovery of the New World, Europe was set free from the ring of enemies surrounding her, but at the same time, she thereby lost her proud state as comprising the whole of the known world. Europe was exchanged for the Globe. Consequences of this momentous change were at once evident, but their effects have not yet been fully worked out; to mention but one of the more important results of the discovery of the New World, Europeans have been brought face to face with all the complications of race and colour. The white man has now to attempt to find solutions to problems which were quite unknown to his ancestors.

One other consequence of the enlargement of the world

<sup>1</sup> The compass was known before the fifteenth century, but in Columbus's day it had been much improved and came into general use among sailors.

as a result of the voyage of Columbus must be emphasised and to us it is the most interesting and important of all. The discovery of vast lands on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean fundamentally changed the position of Britain, and



THE LAND HEMISPHERE

from being a group of small islands off the coast of a much larger and more important Continent, the British Isles took up the position of one of the foci of the world's most important trade routes. The rise of Great Britain to the place of eminence it now occupies must be taken to date from the voyage of Christopher Columbus in the year 1492 A.D.

## CHAPTER XVI

### CONCLUSION

IN this book we have traced the development of European civilisation from early Greek times until the discovery of the New World deprived Europe of its unique position and at the same time placed these islands on which we live in a central place on the world's map. We have, as it were, taken an aeroplane flight over the events of more than two thousand years, alighting in our journey on the mountain peaks. Each mountain top has given us a view backward and a prospect forward; it is natural, now that we have reached the last summit, to attempt to see some little way into the future. Even if the view is somewhat obscured by mists, it may be possible to make out some of the more prominent landmarks; but the search must be made with caution and humility, for objects that, seen from afar, appear to be real, solid, and large, dwindle down, on approach, to something minute and unimportant or even vanish altogether away, while others, the very existence of which was unsuspected, spring into prominence.

Since the discovery of America, the rule of Great Britain has **spread** itself far and wide until now, both in numbers of **people and** in square miles of territory, this community of **nations** exceeds anything that the world has ever before known. Comparisons with the mighty Empires of the past, however dangerous and misleading such comparisons may **be, are** inevitable and, if undertaken in a proper spirit, need **not be unprofitable**. The most natural comparison, or at least the one that comes first to the mind, is with the **Empire of Rome, but here at the** outset we come upon a

most important difference. The Romans, although their dominions were but a fraction of ours in actual extent, were rulers of the whole known world; we only of a part of that world. Rome was free to do as she would with her own people and with those over which she bore rule. The far greater freedom of our Dominions places us in a position very different from that of the Romans, but the advantage should be with us. The very fact that we have, as it were, to work out our own salvation and that of those whom the fates have, at least temporarily, given into our keeping, makes us move with greater care and with greater sympathy and therefore with more wisdom than the Romans ever found necessary.

We pride ourselves on the fact that we leave those over whom we bear rule as much as possible to themselves as regards religion, customs, and internal government, only insisting on justice and equity to the great benefit of the governed, especially the weaker members. All this, so far as it is true, is very good; but the same claim could be made for the Romans, and if their toleration was the result of contempt, is it always certain that ours is the natural outcome of respect, of sympathy, and of understanding? In so far as the proper answer can be given to this question, in so far does our rule rise above that of the Romans and in so far, therefore, are we justified in hoping for more lasting and useful effects.

There is one point in which we can clearly claim to have moved forward; we do not exploit our possessions—at least we do not do so officially and that is, surely, something to the good, though it is not infrequently discounted by the trade methods of some unscrupulous people who are satisfied with nineteenth century commercial ethics. There is nothing, however, to our discredit in the very least comparable to the farming out of taxes which was the almost universal plan of the Romans, and which proved, in direct and indirect effects, to be such a source of weakness to the Roman Empire.

One last point is worthy of mention, and although it is of great importance, it has not always received the attention it deserves and its neglect has more than once proved the discomfiture of those who, for various reasons, have planned the downfall of the British rule. The British people have a wonderful and often unexpected power of sinking all differences in the face of a common enemy. How often, with other peoples, has the desire of a party to secure ascendancy in the affairs of its own country led to the calling in of an outside power and the consequent loss of liberty. The extension of the Roman Empire was largely brought about by such calls—nor is it in the very least necessary to attribute cynical motives to the power thus called in to assist one party in a neighbouring state; nevertheless, once in, it is often extremely difficult for an interfering power to get out again, as witness our own experiences in Egypt. But the British people have shewn a remarkable capacity for settling their internal disputes without seeking the foreigner's aid.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, not once in our history, but over and over again it has seemed to the outside observer that foreign interference would be welcome to a considerable number of our countrymen. Our enemies in the times of the religious controversies of the sixteenth century thought so; the French thought that Lord Russell would be at the very least half-hearted in his country's cause at the battle of La Hogue even if he were not quite prepared to surrender the British Fleet to his country's enemies; Napoleon thought that he had only to land in England to find himself surrounded by thousands of enthusiastic supporters, and the Germans apparently made the same mistake in their calculations of what might be expected to happen in India, in Ireland, or in Africa. The reasoning has always seemed good, but it has been false.

<sup>1</sup> Such apparent exceptions as the presence of a few Dutch troops with William the Third and of Hanoverian soldiers with Wade are but exceptions, which prove the rule.

Perhaps the most astonishing example is afforded by the loyal support given to Great Britain in 1914 by the Dutch of South Africa; there, if anywhere, and then, if ever, it was to be expected that one party would welcome the enemy from abroad. Only twelve years had elapsed since there had been a struggle to the death between the two races but, in those twelve years, Great Britain had been wise enough to grant self-government to South Africa with a result that must have caused astonishment and disgust to our enemies, for the very men who had been in the field against us were found to be fighting on our side in the Great War.

It is perhaps worthy of note that there has never been a coalition of many nations having as its main and ostensible object the destruction of the British Commonwealth of Nations. There are many reasons for this tolerance. The policy at home of imposing taxes for revenue purposes only and never with the idea of excluding the foreigner should be reckoned as one of these reasons. Anything like a Zolverein of the British Dominions would be a provoking challenge to other people, and their hostility would probably be manifested at a moment when, from quite different causes, the very existence of the country was in danger.

# APPENDIX A

## SCHEME OF DATES

| <i>Date.</i>    | <i>Event.</i>                   | <i>Explanation.</i>                                     |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| C. 1200 B.C.    | Fall of Troy.                   | First known success of Greeks (Myccenian Age).          |
| C. 1000 B.C.    | Return of the Sons of Heracles. | Dorians established in Peloponnese,                     |
| 1000-550 B.C.   | Founding of Greek Colonies.     | Greek influence spread over Mediterranean coast.        |
| 621 B.C.        | Reform of Josiah.               | Birth of Synagogue.                                     |
| 600-500 B.C.    | Age of Tyrants.                 | Arts encouraged.                                        |
| C. 550 B.C.     | Fall of Croesus.                | Arrival of Persia.                                      |
| C. 500 B.C.     | Revolt of Ionia.                | Athens arouses the hostility of Persia.                 |
| C. 500-480 B.C. | Persian wars.                   | Rise of Athens.                                         |
| 480-430 B.C.    | League of Delos.                | Turns into Arche of Athens.                             |
| 431-404 B.C.    | Peloponnesian War.              | Ruin of Athens.                                         |
| 401 B.C.        | Retreat of the Ten Thousand.    | Weakness of Persia revealed.                            |
| C. 333 B.C.     | Alexander.                      | Greek civilisation) spread Eastward, reaches Palestine. |
| C. 280 B.C.     | Pyrrhus.                        | His failure heralds coming of Rome.                     |
| 264-202 B.C.    | Punic Wars.                     | Rome supreme in the West (Zama, 202 B.C.).              |
| 168-165 B.C.    | Revolt of Maccabees.            | Judaism refuses to combine with Hellenism.              |
| 63 B.C.         | Pompey enters Jerusalem.        | All the World under Rome.                               |
| <b>44 B.C.</b>  | Murder of Julius Caesar         | Foundation of Empire. North of Danube left outside.     |

## CHRISTIAN ERA

| <i>Date.</i>   | <i>Event.</i>         | <i>Explanation.</i>                                                                    |
|----------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| C. 50 A.D.     | Saint Paul.           | Better religion and purity of worship offered on acceptable terms.                     |
| c. 60-300 A.D. | The ten persecutions. | Christianity regarded as politically disruptive.                                       |
| 325 A.D.       | Council of Nicaca.    | Christianity has been adopted by the Emperor.<br>Constantinople has just been founded. |

*Henceforth there is, in theory, One State and One Church.*

|          |                     |                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 476 A.D. | Augustulus resigns. | The barbarians have swamped the Western half of the Empire (the split between E. and W. is complete but it is to Zeno, of Constantinople, that Augustulus resigns). |
|----------|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## END OF ANCIENT TIMES.

## DARK AGES

|                   |                         |                                                |
|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| GOO A.D. onwards. | Rise of Moslem power.   | West much weakened by the barbarian invasions. |
| 711 A.D.          | Moors cross into Spain. | The East more civilised than the West.         |

## MIDDLE AGES

|                     |                                    |                                                               |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 800 A.D.            | Charles the Great crowned Emperor. | Real beginning of the Holy Roman Empire (though not in name). |
| <b>912-932 A.D.</b> | Rollo in Normandy.                 | Infusion of new blood into Western Europe.                    |
| c. 1100-1300 A.D.   | Crusades.                          | Feeble attempts of the West to conquer the East.              |
| 1212 A.D.           | Children's Crusade.                | Saints and Gothic cathedrals: Europe begins to awake.         |
|                     | Saint Francis.                     |                                                               |

| <i>Date.</i> | <i>Event.</i>                  | <i>Explanation.</i>                                  |
|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 1208-42 A.D. | War against the Albigenses.    | Foreshadows the Reformation.                         |
| 1492 A.D.    | Discovery of the New World.    | Modern times begin.                                  |
| 1530 A.D.    | Augsburg Confession.           | The charter of the Reformation.                      |
| 1571 A.D.    | Lepanto.                       | Tide turns against the East.                         |
| 1648 A.D.    | Peace of Westphalia.           | Independence of Holland. Growth of national feeling. |
| 1789 A.D.    | Outbreak of French Revolution. | Rise of Modern Democracy.                            |

## APPENDIX B

### EAST AND WEST

THE struggles between East and West for the control of the Mediterranean form the background for all the history we have been considering in this book and it will be useful to collect the main incidents in a table.

| <i>Date.</i> | <i>Event.</i>              | <i>Explanation.</i>                             |
|--------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 1200 B.C.    | Siege of Troy.             | Europe successfully invades the fringe of Asia. |
| 500-479 B.C. | Persian Wars. <sup>1</sup> | Invasion of Europe by Asia is crushed.          |
| 401 B.C.     | Cunaxa.                    | Weakness of Asia revealed.                      |
| c. 333 B.C.  | Alexander.                 | Europe successfully invades Asia.               |

The Romans take over complete command of the Mediterranean and while their power lasts there is no question of invasion from the East.<sup>2</sup> Soon after the collapse of the Roman Empire there comes:

| <i>Date.</i> | <i>Event.</i>                  | <i>Explanation.</i>                   |
|--------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| c. 600 on    | Rise of the Mohammedan powers. |                                       |
| 711 A.D.     | Moors cross into Spain.        | East invades Europe by way of Africa. |

<sup>1</sup> During the Persian invasion of 480 B.C., there was a struggle between the Greeks and the Carthaginians in Sicily. The Carthaginians were really Asiatics and this war was a part of the contest between the East and the West for the control of the Mediterranean. The Carthaginian attack, which had perhaps been timed to coincide with the invasion of Xerxes, was beaten off, so that the Greeks were entirely successful in both theatres of war.

<sup>2</sup> The first and second Punic Wars, which occupied the greater part of the third century B.C., also belong, in a proper sense, to this series of conflicts and in these, too, the West, as represented by Rome, defeated the East.

| <i>Date.</i>      | <i>Event.</i>                  | <i>Explanation.</i>                                  |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 732 A.D.          | Battle of Tours.               | Charles Martel checks further progress of Moors.     |
| c. 1100-1300 A.D. | Crusades.                      | Repeated and unsuccessful invasions of East by West. |
|                   | *                              |                                                      |
| 1453 A.D.         | Fall of Constantinople.        | Asia established in the South-east corner of Europe. |
| 1571 A.D.         | Lepanto.                       | Western victory.                                     |
| 1829 A.D.         | Independence of Greece.        | Further decline of Turkish power.                    |
| 1912—1918 A.D.    | Balkan Wars and the Great War. | Turkey driven very nearly out of Europe.             |

## APPENDIX C

### A NOTE ON THE BIBLE AND OTHER HISTORICAL BOOKS

#### THE BIBLE

No book has played a more prominent part in the history of the British people than the Authorised Version of the Bible. The criticism—historical, literary, and religious—to which it has been subjected during the last hundred years has changed our regard for it in many ways and it can never be to the twentieth century exactly what it was to the sixteenth, but its value, so far from being diminished, has actually been increased by the enormous amount of scholarship that has been brought to bear upon it. The Bible is to be studied under three differing though not mutually exclusive, aspects; it is history, it is literature, and it is religion, and under each heading it possesses qualities which mark it off from any other collection of writings and give it a unique value.

As history, the Bible must not be considered as the finished product of historians—its authors seldom attempt the writing of history as now understood, but, partly for this very reason, it presents us with a magnificent set of source books. Here the reader can see history in the making and that, too, considering the time covered, on a scale altogether impossible in any other single volume of the size of the Bible—he can even reconstruct the past for himself and so obtain some of that keen joy of discovery usually denied to all but the expert and professional scholar.

Furthermore—and this is a point of the very greatest interest to the historian—the Bible gives utterance, throughout almost its entire length, to the voice of the politically unsuccessful. The pageant of history is described by those who were thrust aside in the race for worldly power. We may speak of the Empire of the ancient Egyptians, of the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Athenians, Macedonians, Romans—and nearly all our records, of necessity, deal with the periods of domination of these various peoples from the point of view of the conquerors themselves—the successful. There never was a Hebrew Empire; the Bible tells us what history looks like from the point of view of the down-trodden and the defeated. This alone would give to the Bible a position unique among historical source books.

## NOTE ON HISTORICAL BOOKS

To all who can appreciate fine writing, the Bible will make a special appeal as LITERATURE. The Authorised Version is one of the noblest examples of the heights to which our language can rise. We owe it in the main to William Tindale, who suffered martyrdom in the year 1536. If there were no historical value and no religious thought in the Bible, it would always be a priceless possession as pure literature. It is true that the English Version is a translation and this fact must not be ignored, but, though the Greek of the New Testament is not classical, the Hebrew of the Old Testament is the best that has survived. From a literary point of view, translations are not without their dangers—it is well to bear in mind, for example, that the Authorised Version makes no distinction between the somewhat crude Greek of Saint Mark, who was using a medium that was not his mother tongue and the polished style of the writer of the third Gospel and the Acts, who was himself a Greek, and there are probably passages in both Testaments which have actually benefited by passing through the hands of our translators—yet Job, we are assured by Hebrew scholars, is an even finer poem in the original than it is in the Authorised Version. Then, too, the Bible provides literary problems of a very peculiar and interesting kind. The composite nature of many of the books, especially those of the Old Testament, challenges the wits of an investigator and leads him to grapple with some of the most fascinating questions of date, authorship and interpretation that are to be found in the whole realm of literature.

All these considerations have a bearing on the value of the Bible as a book of religion which tells, in a manner different from any other, of the dealings of God with man and of the development of man's ideas of God. The Bible has had more influence on mankind, at least in Europe, than any other book and, for this reason alone, it must always occupy a large place in the thoughts of the historian. It may, however, be well to point out that, in addition to the important points already mentioned, the Bible shews how purity of worship came to be established in Europe and, above all, deals in the only known satisfactory way with the problem of evil.

*General Warning as to the Reading of History.*—All historians write with a bias of some kind; this must be so, because they are obliged to select a part only out of an enormous amount of material. Mere catalogues of facts are not history and, even if they were, selection, and therefore opinion, would enter in; all that we have any right to expect from an author is that he shall give enough to his readers to enable them to check, and maybe refute, the conclusions at which he himself arrives. This, most of our well-known historians

do, but the bias still remains to be allowed for and guarded against. In the following list of standard works the bias is indicated, but, even in these lines, the reader must beware the bias of the present writer.

HERODOTUS. First and still a most interesting historian. Wrote of the Persian Wars, but in his nine books gives almost a complete account, so far as was known in his day, of Egyptian, Lydian, Mesopotamian, and Greek civilisation. His was a great mind with a firm grasp of affairs in their world-wide aspect. He loved a fine story for its own sake, but many that he tells, though often mere legend, are true indications of character, racial or individual. Moreover, he usually gives his authority for his stories and hints that his readers are not obliged to believe all the tall ones. What he has himself observed is recorded with great accuracy and his history is remarkably free from bias. The greatness of Herodotus lies in the wonderful way in which, despite the wanderings in space and time, he never allows his readers to lose sight of the main problem—the struggle between East and West for control of the Ægean seaboard.

THUCYDIDES.—In the eyes of many, the greatest of historians. A marked contrast to Herodotus—a cold, calm, restrained account of the Peloponnesian War, in which he himself took a part and of which he was an observer throughout. He is wonderfully impartial as between Athens and Sparta, but his very restraint constitutes a danger and the reader should be on his guard against a partly concealed bias in favour of Pericles at the beginning and—somewhat inconsistently—a bias against the Athenian Democracy as the theme develops. His description of the final disaster at Syracuse is one of the most moving things in literature. He lived only long enough to bring his story down to the year 411 B.C.

XENOPHON continued the work of Thucydides, but his intense admiration for all things Spartan (though—perhaps because—he was an Athenian) mars this book (*The Hellenica*); and his just fame as a historian depends upon the *Anabasis*, an incomparable account of the famous expedition of the "Ten Thousand" into the heart of Persia and their subsequent retreat. (Xenophon was a great sportsman and wrote, among other things, most interesting books about horses and hounds.)

The general reader will probably content himself with making the acquaintance of all these, and other Greek authorities, in the pages of Grote.

GROTE'S *History of Greece*, in spite of its defects, remains a classic. It is absurdly biased in favour of the Athenian Democracy, but the

## NOTE ON HISTORICAL BOOKS

reader is usually, though not always, given enough material to form his own judgment. Grote's transcriptions of Thucydides and Xenophon are beyond praise.

MOMMSEN'S *History of Rome* is the standard work on the rise of the Republic and the foundation of the Empire. It has a very strong Caesarian bias, but the reader is provided with most of the available evidence, so he should not be led far astray.

GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* is a classic which it would be an impertinence to praise; its bias against Christianity need not mislead anybody.

BRYCE'S *The Holy Roman Empire* is a standard book of great value for the study of the Middle Ages. It deals rather with the ideas than the details of history.



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